



Legislation Text

File #: 22-1895, **Version:** 1

Planning and Building Department, Economic Development Division, recommending the Board:

- 1) Accept a grant award from the California Public Utilities Commission for a Local Agency Technical Assistance grant in the amount of \$500,000; and
- 2) Delegate authority to the Planning and Building Department Director to execute the Grant Agreement and all grant-related documents including, but not limited to, amendments, requests for payment, reports, and all associated documents necessary to secure grant funds and implement the approved grant program.

FUNDING: Local Agency Technical Assistance Grant Funds.

DISCUSSION / BACKGROUND

In July 2022, the County was notified of a grant funding opportunity under the CPUC's LATA grant program, which provides grant funding for tribes and local agencies related to the development of broadband network deployment projects that benefit unserved or underserved Californians. Eligible projects include, but are not limited to, the costs of joint powers authority formation, environmental studies, network design, and engineering study expenses.

On August 1, 2022 the CPUC began accepting applications for a LATA grant program. Established by the CPUC, this grant program has a \$50 million budget which includes grants up to \$500,000 for tribes and local agencies with ministerial review and an additional \$500,000 through commission resolution, per fiscal year. Technical assistance funding is essential for planning work that will facilitate high-speed broadband infrastructure projects in the lower served communities.

In August 2022, Economic Development Division staff began working with the County's broadband consultant, Neo Connect, to evaluate the grant program, identify potential project areas, and complete the grant application. Upon completion, staff submitted the County's LATA grant application on August 31, 2022.

On October 6, 2022, staff were officially notified that the County's LATA grant application was approved for up to \$500,000 for the Broadband Network Design and Engineering Project as submitted.

It is anticipated that the funding under this grant program will provide for critical network design and engineering of planned future infrastructure improvements in the underserved project areas of Chrome Ridge, Coloma, Cool, Garden Valley, Georgetown (smaller sections), Pleasant Valley, Fair Play, Somerset, Grizzly Flats and Spring Creek in the County. In addition to this grant program, the County has received and/or obligated significant funding to position the County to further implement projects that address the lack of sufficient broadband service within the County.

ALTERNATIVES

The Board may choose to deny the acceptance of these grant funds. This would result in the forfeiture of the available grant funds awarded to the County under this grant program.

PRIOR BOARD ACTION

N/A

OTHER DEPARTMENT / AGENCY INVOLVEMENT

Chief Administrative Office

CAO RECOMMENDATION / COMMENTS

Approve as recommended.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There is no change to Net County Cost associated with this item and there are no local match funds required. Based on the terms of this grant, it's possible that the Planning and Building Department would incur expenses during Fiscal Year 2022-23 and not receive reimbursement until the following Fiscal Year. Staff will be working to finalize a project schedule and execute a contract for the design and engineering services, and will return to the Board for approval of the contract and budget transfer once the need for budget appropriations in Fiscal Year 2022-23 are identified.

CLERK OF THE BOARD FOLLOW UP ACTIONS

N/A

STRATEGIC PLAN COMPONENT

Economic Development- Invest in Infrastructure needs to improve and maintain competitiveness
Good Governance-Infrastructure

CONTACT

Kyle Zimbelman, Economic and Business Relations Manager
Planning and Building Department