

Agenda Report



MEETING DATE: Tuesday, January 14, 2025

TO: City Council

FROM: PUBLIC WORKS & UTILITIES DIRECTOR LINDBERG
ENVIRONMENTAL PROJECTS MANAGER VU-DUC

SUBJECT: ACCEPTANCE OF \$250,000 NOAA GRANT SUB-AWARD FOR
CLIMATE RESILIENCE OF MONTEREY BAY COASTAL
COMMUNITIES

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Staff recommends that the City Council adopt a resolution accepting \$250,000 from the National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Climate Resilience Regional Challenge grant program, as awarded through the California Marine Sanctuary Foundation (CMSF), appropriate such funds to the Special Grants Fund [0260], and authorize the City Manager to execute all agreements and any amendments necessary.

BACKGROUND:

On July 26, 2024, NOAA announced \$575 million for 19 projects recommended for funding through the Climate Resilience Regional Challenge. Of these, only one California proposal was successful: a \$71,100,000 grant awarded to the CMSF to address the Monterey Bay Area's highest priority climate risks, flooding, and wildfires, while growing regional collaborative capacity and workforce development to increase climate resilience in these communities. This grant set out \$250,000 to develop a funding roadmap to coordinate and deliver adaptation projects through the Monterey Bay Regional Climate Project Working Group (RCPWG), comprised of the Counties of Santa Cruz, Monterey, and San Benito, as well as the Cities of Santa Cruz and Watsonville. The City of Watsonville, as chairing member of the RCPWG at the time of the grant application, is the recipient of the \$250,000 task on behalf of the RCPWG.

DISCUSSION:

The NOAA grant was awarded to CMSF to fund a four-pronged strategy to grow regional resilience to climate change:

1. Regional Collaboration & Capacity Building
2. Workforce Development
3. Flood Risk Reduction and
4. Wildfire Risk Reduction.

CMSF leads this regional effort with the participation of 28 collaborators from local, regional, and state agencies and resource districts, land trusts, experts in natural resource restoration, monitoring, and forest management, academic institutions, foundations with expertise in financial management, and non-profits with expertise in community and Tribal engagement.

In addition to substantial funding for community-based capacity building efforts (item 1 above), the \$250,000 allocated to the City of Watsonville on behalf of the RCPWG invests in significant climate coordination across the region through its local government agencies. The mission of the RCPWG is to develop, prioritize, secure funding for, and implement regionally beneficial climate projects.

Many jurisdictions in the region have completed studies, adopted policies and formalized plans identifying climate adaptation hazards and mitigation measures. Yet implementation and funding for those measures remains piecemeal, unable to sustain the pace needed to build transformative climate resilience in the region. This funding will create a short-term, streamlined, regional roadmap to identify the long-term funding needed to take proposed climate adaptation measures from planning to implementation. The roadmap complements and supports other tasks within the larger project and will align with policies adopted by the individual RCPWG member jurisdictions.

CEQA Compliance: The proposed planning project will review CEQA requirements and compliance as the plan is developed.

STRATEGIC PLAN:

This project supports the following Strategic Plan areas:

2-Infrastructure & Environment

4-Fiscal Health

7-Efficient and Well-performing Government

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

The proposed project is 100% grant funded. All funds will be appropriated to the [0260] Special Grants Fund.

ALTERNATIVE ACTION:

No reasonable alternatives are known at this time.

ATTACHMENTS AND/OR REFERENCES (If any):

1. NOAA Grant Award Project Summary & Announcement
2. NOAA-CMSF-Watsonville Draft Sub-award Agreement