

Agenda Report

May 22, 2023

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council

THROUGH: Finance Committee

FROM: Department of Information Technology

SUBJECT: AUTHORIZE THE CITY MANAGER TO EXECUTE AGREEMENTS WITH THE CALIFORNIA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION FOR LOCAL AGENCY TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE GRANT FUNDS FOR A STRATEGIC BROADBAND PLAN

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the City Council:

1. Find that the proposed action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15061 (b)(3), the "common sense" provision that CEQA only applies to projects that may have an effect on the environment;
2. Authorize the City Manager to execute agreements with the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) associated with the receipt of \$325,000 in reimbursable Local Agency Technical Assistance (LATA) grant funding for a Strategic Broadband Plan; and
3. Amend the City's budget to recognize and appropriate funds for the LATA grant in the amount of \$325,000 to Capital Improvement Program Project 71167 (City Fiber Network Expansion FY 2020 - FY 2024) for expenses related to the development of a Strategic Broadband Plan.

BACKGROUND:

Established by the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) according to Senate Bill 156, the Local Agency Technical Assistance (LATA) grants support local government agencies and tribes in their efforts to expand broadband service to unserved and underserved Californians. The bill allocated \$50 million budget for grants including a \$5 million set-aside for tribes for technical assistance funding for planning work, including community needs assessments, environmental and engineering studies,

network design, and broadband strategic plans, that will facilitate high-speed broadband infrastructure projects.

The LATA grant program is open only to California local government agencies and tribes and will award grants on a first come, first served basis until funding is exhausted. The LATA grant program opened for applications on August 1, 2022.

On October 28, 2022, the Department of Information Technology (DoIT) applied for funding from the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) to develop a Strategic Broadband Plan to include a market analysis, feasibility study, and needs assessment. The goal of the plan is to increase broadband access to underserved and unserved areas in the City. The plan would also be used to help coordinate any investments with existing and potentially new telecommunications companies to improve competition, reliability, and resiliency of broadband services for the community. The Strategic Broadband Plan is an important step in ensuring that everyone in the City has access to affordable, reliable, and high-speed broadband.

The CPUC awarded \$325,000 on March 27, 2023 to the City that will fund the entire amount of the project within a 24-month timeframe. The City Council's approval will allow the City to receive reimbursement for project.

Therefore, staff is recommending authorization for the City Manager to execute all agreements with the CPUC to accept this LATA Grant, including, but not limited to the following documents:

1. Consent Form – this binds the City to the terms, conditions, and requirements of the CPUC's approved Decision 22-02-026 and the March 27, 2023 award letter; and
2. Payee Data Record – this is the State's standardized form STD 204 and is required for tax purposes.

Staff will have 24-months to complete the project outlined under the grant and will return to Council, as necessary, for consideration of any contract awards needed to meet this timeline.

COUNCIL POLICY CONSIDERATION:

By authorizing the City Manager to execute all agreements with the CPUC associated with the LATA Grant funds, it will advance the City Council's strategic planning goal to improve, maintain, and enhance public facilities and infrastructure by creating a strategic broadband plan to close the digital divide.

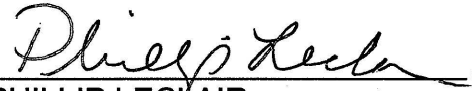
ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

The proposed action has been determined to be exempt from CEQA pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15061 (b)(3), the "common sense" provision of CEQA (formerly the general rule), which applies to projects which may have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. No direct physical changes to the environment are proposed.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The approval of this action will enable the City to receive \$325,000 in LATA Grant funding through the CPUC. The funding will be recognized and appropriated to Capital Improvement Program project #71167 (City Fiber Network Expansion FY 2020 - FY 2024). Therein, expenses will be tracked and monthly reporting for reimbursement submitted in accordance with the grant guidelines. There are no indirect or support costs anticipated as a result of accepting this grant funding.

Respectfully submitted,



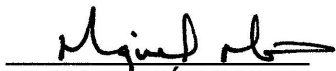
PHILLIP LECLAIR
Chief Information Officer
Department of Information Technology

Prepared by:



Chris Huynh
Telecom & Regulatory Administrator
Department of Information Technology

Approved by:



MIGUEL MÁRQUEZ
City Manager