



STAFF REPORT
4/24/2024

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council Members

FROM: Celina Jimenez, Economic Development Director

SUBJECT: Adopt Resolution No. 2024-03 Authorizing the City Manager to Apply for, Accept, and Execute a Partnership Agreement Including All Grant Related Documents to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for the Climate Justice Community Change Grant Program in the Amount Not-to-Exceed Twenty Million (\$20,000,000) Dollars for its “Coachella Prospera” Application

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the City Council considers adopting Resolution No. 2024-03 authorizing the City Manager to apply for, accept, and execute a Partnership Agreement including all grant related documents to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for the Climate Justice Community Change Grant Program in the amount not-to-exceed twenty million (\$20,000,000) dollars for its “Coachella Prospera” application. This grant application will help bridge the funding gap in its Transformative Climate Communities grant award.

BACKGROUND:

The Environmental and Climate Justice Community Change Grant program (Community Change Grants) offers an unprecedented opportunity to transform disadvantaged communities across the United States into healthy, climate resilient, and thriving communities for their current and future residents. The Community Change Grants will fund community-driven projects that address climate challenges and reduce pollution while strengthening communities through thoughtful implementation. The historic levels of support provided by these grants will enable communities and their partners to overcome longstanding environmental challenges and implement meaningful solutions to meet community needs now and for generations to come.

The Community Change Grants will support comprehensive community and place-based approaches to redressing environmental and climate injustices for communities facing legacy pollution, climate change, and persistent disinvestment. These concentrated local investments will fund community-driven, change-making projects that center collaborative efforts for healthier, safer, and more prosperous communities. Designed with meaningful community, Tribal, and other stakeholder involvement, the investments EPA makes through the Community Change Grants are intended to achieve the following objectives:

1. Provide resources for community-driven projects to address environmental and climate challenges in communities facing disproportionate and adverse health, pollution, and environmental impacts, and suffering from generations of disinvestment.
2. Invest in strong cross-sectoral collaborations with partners who bring a robust commitment to working with and for communities with environmental and climate justice concerns.
3. Unlock access to additional and more significant resources to advance environmental and climate justice goals from across the federal government and other sources.
4. Empower communities and strengthen their capacity to drive meaningful positive change on the ground for years to come.
5. Strengthen community participation in government decision-making processes that impact them.

EPA anticipates awarding approximately \$2 billion in funding through this NOFO, depending on funding availability, quality of applications received, EPA priorities, and other applicable considerations. EPA will consider applications under two separate tracks.

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS:

The City of Coachella is submitting a Track I Application in a not-to-exceed \$20 million dollars, which will feature community-driven investments for change and will feature multi-faceted Climate Action and Pollution Reduction Strategies to meaningfully improve the environmental, climate, and resilience conditions affecting the City of Coachella, a disadvantaged community. Awards under Track I are expected to be between \$10-20 million each and cannot exceed \$20 million. EPA expects to award approximately \$1.96 billion for approximately 150 Track I awards.

In addition, EPA is introducing several features to enhance community involvement and ease the application process:

- **Rolling Applications.** EPA will allow applications to be submitted on a rolling basis over a 12-month period, through November 21, 2024, and will permit applicants to resubmit an unsuccessful application after a debriefing with the agency. Further details about the rolling application and resubmission process are in Sections II and V.
- **Fast-Tracked Approach.** EPA will review and expeditiously select high-quality applications to deliver results and benefits to disadvantaged communities. Further information is in Section V.
- **Indirect Costs Limitation.** As further described in Appendix G, there is a 10% cap on indirect costs for certain recipients and subrecipients.
- **Track I Two-Phase Evaluation Process.** Applicants for Track I whose applications score

well following the written application review will be invited to participate in an oral presentation, at which they will have an opportunity to share information about the community-oriented nature of their projects and how they will successfully implement the grant.

The project partners include:

1. City of Coachella (Lead Agency)
2. GRID Alternatives Inland Empire;
3. Southern California Mountains Foundation (Urban Youth Conservation Corps);
4. Bound Corporation;
5. Center for Employment Training;
6. The LEAP Institute;
7. Alianza Coachella Valley (Statutory Partner);
8. Desert Recreation District;
9. Kounkuey Design Initiative; and the
10. University of California Regents

The Coachella Prospera proposal will include the following Track I application requirements:

Climate Action Strategy

- Green Infrastructure and Nature-Based Solutions
- Mobility and Transportation Options for Preventing Air Pollution and Improving Public Health and Climate Resilience
- Energy Efficient, Healthy, and Resilient Housing and Buildings
- Community Resilience Hubs
- Workforce Development Programs for Occupations that Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Air Pollutants

Pollution Reduction Strategies

- Outdoor Quality and Community Health Improvements

Community Engagement and Collaborative Governance Plan

- Community Outreach and Engagement Efforts
- Collaborative Governance Plan (Partnership Agreement)

Community Strength Plan

- Advancing environmental justice will require investing in and supporting culturally vibrant, sustainable, and resilient communities in which every person has safe, clean, and affordable options for housing, energy, and transportation. It is also necessary to prioritize building an equitable, inclusive, and sustainable economy that offers economic opportunities.
- Business Opportunities
- Job Opportunities
- Financial Savings
- Displacement Avoidance

Readiness Approach

- Government Approvals
- Federal Requirements for Construction Projects
- Alignment with Existing Plans
- Site Control
- Operations and Maintenance

Compliance Plan

- Ensure compliance with the grant's terms and conditions, including 2 CFR § 200.302(b) (financial management), 2 CFR § 200.303 (internal controls), and 2 CFR § 200.332 (requirements for pass-through entities); and
- Manage broader legal and compliance risks.

FISCAL IMPACT

Submission of this grant application has no fiscal impact on the City of Coachella.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Resolution No. 2024-03
2. Partnership Agreement