



STAFF REPORT
6/10/2020

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council Members

FROM: Luis Lopez, J.D., Development Services Director
Celina Jimenez, Grants Manager

SUBJECT: Adopt Resolution No. 2020-24 of the City Council of the City of Coachella Authorizing the City Manager to Submit An Application to the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) for the Receipt of Local Government Planning Support Grant Program Funds under the Local Early Action Planning Grants Program (LEAP) in the Amount of \$150,000

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff is requesting the City Council adopt Resolution No. 2020-24, authorizing the City Manager, to apply for the California Department of Housing and Community Development (“HCD”)’s Local Early Action Planning ("LEAP") Grants Program, in the amount of \$150,000. Staff also recommends that the City Council authorize the City Manager to execute the Standard Agreement with HCD, if the funds are awarded.

BACKGROUND:

Increasing the availability of affordable homes statewide is critical to improving the quality of life for all Californians and to reducing homelessness. In the 2019-20 Budget Act, Governor Gavin Newsom allocated \$250 million for all regions, cities, and counties to do their part by prioritizing planning activities that accelerate housing production to meet identified needs of every community. With this allocation, HCD established the Local Early Action Planning Grant Program (LEAP) with \$119 million available for cities and counties. LEAP provides one-time grant funding to cities and counties to update their planning documents and implement process improvements that will facilitate the acceleration of housing production and help local governments prepare for their 6th Cycle Housing Element update which includes the latest Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) units.

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS:

This Program will make \$119,040,000 dollars available to jurisdictions for Program implementation, including state operations and expenditures, and technical assistance. The maximum (non-competitive) award amounts are based on population size as of January 1, 2019. The minimum expected award amount for the City of Coachella is \$150,000. Eligible activities

must demonstrate an increase in housing-related planning activities and facilitation of accelerated housing production. Staff is recommending that the City of Coachella's LEAP grant funds be utilized as prioritized below:

- 1) *Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000)* – To Process Four (4) Re-Zoning of Vacant Agricultural Parcels and Vacant Agricultural Land Clusters, pursuant to the Vacant Land Inventory Program as outlined in the City's 2013-2021 Housing Element, in order to meet the 5th Cycle RHNA units zoning capacity (approximately 2,450 dwelling units). The City started this with Zona Central. One of the issues discovered in collaboration with HCD is that the current zoning district designators do not specify a minimum density of 20 dwelling units per acre, which is mandated by State Law for these programs. One way to address this is for the City to process a Zoning Code Amendment to fix this and create an Overlay Zone that specifies RM (Urban) and RM (General) to better match the City's General Plan and specify minimum densities. The City has already been advised by HCD to do this for Zona Central but the City does not have a specific ordinance to address this. In addition, the City will also need to process Two (2) CEQA Negative Declarations for the Re-Zoning of Vacant and Agricultural Land Clusters, pursuant to a Vacant Land Inventory Program as outlined in the City's 2013-2021 Housing Element, in order to meet the 5th Cycle RHNA units. Two of the Re-zoning Parcels are exempt from CEQA. This is crucial because the City needs to get it done before the end of the year and prior to starting its 6th Cycle Housing Element Update. Otherwise, the City will have "carry-over" rezoning requirements and could risk having its Housing Element de-certified and lose out on other significant grant opportunities.
- 2) *Sixty Five Thousand Dollars (\$65,000)* – To prepare and adopt the mandatory 6th Cycle Housing Element Update of the General Plan to facilitate compliance with the SCAG Region RHNA units and the SoCal Connect policies. The City is mandated to process a General Plan Amendment, and related CEQA document and adopt the 6th Cycle Housing Element (2021 – 2029) by October 2021. Staff is soliciting proposals for this effort in mid-June 2020.
- 3) *Twenty Five Thousand Dollars \$25,000* – To partially fund a new land development software system that can meet the growing business needs of the City's planning/building/engineering divisions, and provide a centralized platform to effectively manage inter-departmental business operations with electronic plan checks, fee calculations and flagging systems, permit-tracking software, remote inspection logs, and related functions. A feasibility study for this system was completed in August 2019.
- 4) *Ten Thousand \$10,000* – To develop pre-approved architectural construction drawings for Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU's), and Junior Accessory Dwelling Units (JADU's) pursuant to State statutes and the City's urgency ordinance (Ordinance No. 1150).

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Adopt Resolution No. 2020-24 of the City Council of the City of Coachella Authorizing the City Manager to Submit An Application to the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) for the Receipt of Local Government Planning Support Grant Program Funds under the Local Early Action Planning Grants Program (LEAP) in the Amount of \$150,000 with the staff recommended priorities.
2. Adopt Resolution No. 2020-24 of the City Council of the City of Coachella Authorizing the City Manager to Submit an Application to the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) for the Receipt of Local Government Planning Support Grant Program Funds under the Local Early Action Planning Grants Program (LEAP) in the Amount of \$150,000 with modified funding priorities.
3. Continue this item and provide staff with direction (please be advised that the grant submission deadline is July 1, 2020).

FISCAL IMPACT:

The recommended action will allow the City of Coachella to be eligible to participate in the LEAP grant program and, if approved by HCD, be awarded up to \$150,000. Thus, this authorization will have positive fiscal impacts to the City's General Fund.

ATTACHMENT(S):

Resolution No. 2020-24