



City of Colusa California

STAFF REPORT

DATE: February 7, 2023

TO: City of Colusa Mayor and Council Members

FROM: Fernanda Vanetta, Grant Writer through Jesse Cain, City Manager

AGENDA ITEM: Levitt AMP Colusa Music Series – Award and Commitment

Recommendation: Council to approve for the City of Colusa to become a presenting sponsor as supported by Council Resolution 22-34 in the amount of \$15,000.

BACKGROUND ANALYSIS:

On November 15, 2022 the Mortimer & Mimi Levitt Foundation, a social impact funder supporting nonprofits nationwide at the intersection of music, public space, and community building, announced that Colusa County Arts Council in Colusa, California in partnership with the City of Colusa had been awarded a multi-year Levitt AMP [Your City] Grant Award of \$90K in matching funds to present a free outdoor music series at Veterans Memorial Park in 2023, 2024, and 2025.

Reflecting the Levitt Foundation's commitment that all Levitt projects be community-driven, the 2023–2025 grant recipients were selected following a public voting period and comprehensive internal review process. Combining 15 new and 18 returning grantees, the Levitt Foundation will award \$3 million dollars to nonprofits serving small to mid-sized towns and cities across the U.S. as part of the Levitt AMP Music Series, featuring a diverse lineup of artists, music genres and cultural programming to create inclusive experiences that are welcoming to all members of the community.

"Since the Levitt AMP Grant Awards began in 2015, we've seen grassroots nonprofits inspire transformation in their towns and cities through free outdoor concerts—activating underused public spaces, ensuring access to the arts, sparking additional investments, and strengthening the social fabric of their communities. Positive change happens when people of all ages and backgrounds come together and we're thrilled to support changemakers like Colusa County Arts Council," says Sharon Yazowski, Executive Director of the Levitt Foundation. "The first Levitt AMP Colusa Music Series will breathe new life into Veterans Memorial Park, amplifying community pride while connecting to a sense of resiliency as the area's diverse populations gather to celebrate music and the arts."

The Levitt AMP Grant Awards is an exciting, multi-year matching grant opportunity bringing the joy of free, live music to towns and cities with a population of up to 250,000 people. For the 2023–2025 grant cycle, the Levitt Foundation expanded the Levitt AMP program from an annual matching grant of \$25K into a three-year matching grant of \$30K per year, for a total grant award of \$90K per recipient. In April, the Levitt Foundation invited nonprofits to submit proposals that would reflect the three goals of the Levitt AMP awards: Amplify community pride and the city's unique character; enrich lives through the power of free, live Music; and illustrate the importance of vibrant public Places.

This is a great opportunity for Colusa to elevate the entertainment brought to the city while being able to showcase the City to a wider audience. The main goal is however to serve the residents of Colusa by building the Concert Series into a bigger and better event of which the city can be proud.

It is important to secure the funding commitment now so that we can book quality artists in a timely manner and make sure we are prepared for the summer series. A steering committee has been formed and a City Council person is participating in the organization of the event. Any community members interested in participating are also invited and welcome. For more information on volunteering please contact Fernanda Vanetta at grants@cityofcolusa.com.

About the Mortimer & Mimi Levitt Foundation

The Mortimer & Mimi Levitt Foundation is a private family foundation that exists to strengthen the social fabric of America. Through its commitment to creative placemaking, the Levitt Foundation supports the activation of underused public spaces—such as neglected parks, vacant downtown lots, and former brownfields—into welcoming, inclusive destinations where the power of free, live music brings people together to create more equitable, healthy, and thriving communities. The Foundation's primary funding areas include Levitt venues and the Levitt AMP [Your City] Grant Awards. Both of these programs present free concerts in outdoor, open lawn settings featuring high-caliber talent in a broad array of music genres and cultural programming. Levitt venues and Levitt AMP concert sites attract people of all ages and backgrounds and reflect the character of their town or city, while benefiting from the framework and best practices of the Levitt program.

The Levitt Foundation invests in community-driven efforts that harness the power of partnerships and leverage community engagement. Levitt venue nonprofits and AMP grantees partner with other local nonprofits and community groups to inform programming, outreach, and engagement, embodying the Foundation's funding philosophy and core values to support projects that are inclusive, catalytic and dynamic, and create connectedness and joy. Reflecting its ongoing commitment to self-reflection and contributing to the creative placemaking field, the Levitt Foundation invests in research to evaluate the social impact of Levitt programs in communities, which in turn informs the Foundation's evolving philanthropic practice.

BUDGET IMPACT: The impact to the budget would be \$15,000 to be split between the Recreation Department and Economic Development.