



Folsom City Council Staff Report

MEETING DATE:	5/14/2024
AGENDA SECTION:	Consent Calendar
SUBJECT:	Resolution No. 11194 - A Resolution Accepting the California Automated Permit Processing Grant and Appropriation of Funds
FROM:	Community Development Department

RECOMMENDATION / CITY COUNCIL ACTION

Move to approve Resolution No. 11194 - A Resolution Accepting the California Automated Permit Processing Grant and Appropriation of Funds

BACKGROUND / ISSUE

In 2022 the California legislature enacted SB 379 (Solar Access Act) requiring cities with more than 50,000 residents to implement an online, automated permitting platform capable of verifying code compliance and issuing permits in real time for residential photovoltaic (PV) storage systems. The law is intended to reduce costs and delays of permitting. The federal Department of Energy’s National Renewable Energy Laboratory developed automated permitting software (SolarApp+) capable of processing solar systems. Communities can adopt SolarAPP+ or a functional equivalent and must submit annual reports demonstrating compliance over the next ten year period.

To help jurisdictions defray the cost of compliance, the State appropriated \$20 million for the California Automated Permit Processing Program (CalAPP) grant program. Folsom applied for and received a \$60,000 grant to purchase Symbium software and pay for the integration of that software into our existing permitting system. Because the grant amount is within the City Manager’s contract signing authority and no matching funds are required, this action accepts and appropriates the grant funds to implement an online automated permitting platform for solar panels consistent with new requirements of SB379.

POLICY / RULE

The City Council Adopted Resolution No. 7332 Financial Policies of the City of Folsom on May 25, 2004. Section D - Intergovernmental Revenues, Paragraph C - Grant Project Resolutions states, " All grants received from the Federal or State government for operating or capital purposes shall be recognized in separate grant project resolutions. A balanced grant project resolution must be adopted prior to beginning the project."

ANALYSIS

Staff researched and selected Symbium software as the preferred online, automated solar permitting platform to integrate with our current permitting system software. Grant funds would be used for the software, integration, as well as staff training and system maintenance over the next three- to six-month period.

Symbium permitting platform will perform an automated plan review for residential solar energy systems that complete automatic code compliance checks based on user inputs to enable or otherwise issue permits instantly when a project is confirmed as code compliant. There is no need for human review in this system. Online fee payment is supported with automatic permit fee generation. Once fees are paid for an application deemed compliant, an applicant can print a permit job card for the job site and records accordingly.

Folsom received the maximum grant allowance of \$60,000 under the CapAPP program for a jurisdiction of our size to implement a permitting platform for solar systems in compliance with SB379.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The California Automated Permit Processing Program (CalAPP) grant program award total is \$60,000 and does not require a financial match. All grant funds are required to be fully expended and reimbursed by August 30, 2024. Grant funds will cover Symbium software purchase, integration with the current permitting system, staff training, and maintenance. If accepted the grant award would increase revenue estimates and appropriations by \$60,000 in the General Fund (Fund 010). Costs would be funded initially through the General Fund and reimbursed by the CalAPP funds over two fiscal year periods; Fiscal Year 2023-2024 and Fiscal Year 2024-2025.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Grant acceptance is not considered a project under the California Environment Quality Act (CEQA) in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3). As a result, these actions are exempt from environmental review.

ATTACHMENTS

Resolution No. 11194 - A Resolution Accepting the California Automated Permit Processing Grant and Appropriation of Funds

Submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Pam Johns", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Pam Johns,
Community Development Director

RESOLUTION NO. 11194

**A RESOLUTION ACCEPTING THE CALIFORNIA AUTOMATED PERMIT
PROCESSING GRANT AND APPROPRIATION OF FUNDS**

WHEREAS, the State appropriated \$20 million for the California Automated Permit Processing Program (CalAPP) grant program to help jurisdictions defray the cost of compliance with SB 379 (Solar Access Act) requiring cities to implement an online, automated permitting platform capable of verifying code compliance and issuing permits in real time for residential photovoltaic (PV) storage systems; and

WHEREAS, the City applied for and received grant approval of \$60,000 to purchase qualifying software (Symbium), integration with the current permitting system, staff training, and system maintenance with no matching fund requirement; and

WHEREAS, grant acceptance is not considered a project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA); and

WHEREAS, sufficient funds are available in the City's General Fund and will be fully reimbursed by the CalAPP funds over two fiscal year periods Fiscal Year 2023-2024 and Fiscal Year 2024-2025.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Folsom hereby approves the acceptance of the grant award from the California Automated Permit Processing Program grant program in the amount of \$60,000 and authorizes the Chief Financial Officer to increase revenue estimates and expenditure appropriations by \$60,000 in the City's General Fund (Fund 010).

PASSED AND ADOPTED this 14th day of May, 2024, by the following roll-call vote:

AYES: Councilmember(s):
NOES: Councilmember(s):
ABSENT: Councilmember(s):
ABSTAIN: Councilmember(s):

Michael D. Kozlowski, MAYOR

ATTEST:

Christa Freemantle, CITY CLERK