



AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

City Council

STAFF

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SUBJECT

First Reading of Ordinance No. 143, 2023, Making a Supplemental Appropriation, Appropriating Prior Year Reserves, Authorizing Transfers and Authorizing Intergovernmental Agreements for the Air Toxics Community Monitoring Project.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City was awarded a \$499,139 Air Toxics Community Monitoring Project Grant from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to provide air toxic monitoring that responds to concerns of residents in underserved communities, builds a broader understanding of air quality issues through innovative approaches including storytelling and art and empowers residents to engage in policy and regulatory discussions. This three-year project will be conducted in partnership with Colorado State University and the Larimer County Department of Health and Environment, with support from the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment and various community organizations.

The purpose of this item is to support the *Air Toxics Community Monitoring project* by:

- Appropriating \$499,139 of unanticipated grant revenue awarded by the EPA
- Appropriating \$70,178 from the General Fund reserves
- Utilizing matching funds in the amount of \$3,230 from existing 2023 appropriations into this new grant project

This item would authorize the City to accept the grant award and comply with the terms and conditions. This item would also authorize the City to enter into an agreement with Colorado State University to conduct the work contemplated by the grant agreement.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommend adoption of the Ordinance on First Reading

BACKGROUND / DISCUSSION

The primary mission of the EPA grant awarded to the City is to support the City, in partnership with Colorado State University (CSU), Larimer County Department of Health and Environment (LCDHE), Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) and a suite of community groups, to implement

monitoring of select hazardous air pollutants (HAPs), aligned with efforts to inform and engage underserved residents of Northern Colorado through data sharing, and accessible relevant educational activities.

The EPA funds totaling \$499,139, will be combined with staff resources provided by both City and Larimer County personnel, as well as City and Larimer County funds in support of the *Air Toxics Community Monitoring Project*. Total project costs of \$623,977 will be used to: 1) leverage local air monitoring expertise to collect, interpret, and share air toxics data that responds to community pollution concerns; 2) expand the engagement of community groups to establish monitoring priorities so they address specific emission sources or sectors and prioritize the needs of underserved residents; 3) increase awareness and understanding of air pollution and air quality data, including the impacts of air toxics exposures; 4) increase the capacity of residents to engage in policy and regulatory discussions and decisions; and 5) build trust across diverse groups.

Goals of this project will be met through three project tasks:

1. **Forming an Air Quality Monitoring Advisory Committee.** The City and Larimer County will collaborate to form a new community Air Quality Monitoring Advisory Committee (AQ-MAC) to establish the criteria for monitoring deployment and community prioritization of locations/sources of concern. Diverse representation is essential to the Advisory Committee. The committee will be composed of community members and organizations, professionals, air quality experts, and government representatives in Northern Colorado. Committee responsibilities will include establishing monitoring site criteria, reviewing findings, making recommendations to the Project Team, and liaising with constituent organizations/residents.
2. **Air Toxics Monitoring.** The strategy will leverage the existing air quality monitoring expertise at CSU using commercially available instrumentation to measure a suite of high-concern air toxics. We have focused our approach on the problem of oil and gas development encroaching residential areas and high-occupancy buildings in Northern Colorado but will also use mobile survey techniques to identify any large, unknown sources in residential areas.
3. **Community Outreach, Engagement, and Air Quality Education.** CSU's Center for Environmental Justice, in collaboration with the City's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Office, the Fort Collins Community Action Network (FCCAN) and Fuerza Latina, will organize and host a set of workshops aimed to build storytelling skills among youth, build skillsets for policy and civic engagement, and facilitate educational and public awareness events on air pollution.

The North Front Range of Colorado is home to growing population centers and to rapidly expanding oil and gas production. The Denver/Metro North Front Range region is also designated as a severe nonattainment for ozone (O₃). Community concerns are mounting about the adequacy of existing data monitoring networks to identify potential air quality issues, and the ability of local governments to characterize and address risks. Additionally, climate change is exacerbating these issues along the Northern Colorado Front Range, particularly for Latinx residents, children living near the poverty level, and residents with asthma, diabetes, fair or poor health status, or lacking health insurance.

The project will serve underserved populations in Northern Colorado by providing air toxics monitoring that responds to concerns of residents, increasing residents' awareness and understanding of air pollution and air quality data, including impacts of actual and perceived air toxics exposures, increasing residents' capacity to engage in policy and regulatory discussions and decisions, and building trust across diverse groups.

The EPA grant agreement does not require signature by the authorized representative for the City. As noted therein, by drawing down funds awarded by the EPA, the City agrees to award terms and conditions.

As demonstrated in the grant agreement, the City will provide \$73,408 in required match, which accounts for both City personnel time and costs in support of community engagement activities. Larimer County will

provide in-kind services totaling \$51,430. The City will recognize the \$51,430 as in-kind revenue from Larimer County through the life of this project. The combined \$124,838 in local match from the City and Larimer County meets the required 20.01% match under the EPA award.

CITY FINANCIAL IMPACTS

This item appropriates \$569,317 in costs to support the *Air Toxics Community Monitoring project* from:

- \$499,139 in unanticipated grant revenue
- \$70,178 in General Fund reserves to be used towards the required matching funds

Additionally, required matching funds in the amount of \$3,230 have already been appropriated in the 2023 General Fund in the Environmental Services operating Budget. The \$3,230 will be transferred from Environmental Services' 2023 operating budget to the grant project.

This grant from the EPA is a reimbursement type grant, meaning General Fund expenses will be reimbursed up to \$499,139.

The \$51,430 for in-kind services by Larimer County will be reported in this project as in-kind revenue through the life of the project a/k/a period of performance under the EPA grant, from 10/1/2023 through 9/30/2026.

BOARD / COMMISSION / COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

The Air Quality Advisory Board (AQAB) provided a letter of support included in the grant application.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

Prior to and during the writing of the application, the project team consulted with a consortium of community groups, including members of the Latinx community, via several meetings to respond to community concerns. This project has the support and involvement of partners such as the Fort Collins Community Action Network, Northern Colorado Medical Society, League of Women Voters of Larimer County, Sierra Club-Poudre Canyon Group, and the Regional Air Quality Planning Council, as well as others.

Additionally, recruitment for the AQ-MAC has been conducted with a diverse array of stakeholders, community groups, and individuals to ensure the committee is representative of the community that this project will serve. AQ-Mac members will provide their lived experience and expertise to the project team to shape the monitoring plans. The goal is that those most vulnerable to air quality impacts will have a significant voice in this project, leading to more equitable outcomes.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Ordinance for Consideration
2. Exhibit A to Ordinance
3. Grant Terms and Conditions
4. AQAB Letter of Support