



## City of Grass Valley City Council Agenda Action Sheet

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**Title:** Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) Grant

**CEQA:** Not a Project

**Recommendation:** That Council approve the submission of a Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) Grant in collaboration with the Fire Safe Council. The grant will support efforts to strengthen critical infrastructure, implement hazard fuels reduction using nature-based solutions, assist with hazard tree removal, expand the home hardening retrofit program, enhance the green waste program, and provide community education initiatives for the Grass Valley area.

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**Prepared by:** Timothy Kiser, City Manager

**Council Meeting Date:** 02/11/2025

**Date Prepared:** 02/05/2025

**Agenda:** Administrative

**Background Information:** The Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) grant program provides federal funding to state, tribal, territorial, and local governments for hazard mitigation projects that strengthen climate adaptation and resilience. The program prioritizes reducing risks from extreme weather events and long-term environmental stressors through innovative, nature-based solutions, capacity-building, and large-scale, community-driven initiatives. FEMA encourages projects that align with Good Jobs Principles, fostering equitable economic growth and workforce opportunities.

The City of Grass Valley is located in a high to very-high fire hazard severity zone within the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI). Decades of declining wildfire mitigation have resulted in overgrown vegetation, increasing fire risks. Historic buildings, many predating modern fire codes, are especially vulnerable. Additionally, several low-income census tracts house at-risk populations who lack resources for wildfire resilience measures such as defensible space, home hardening, and green waste disposal. The city's critical infrastructure—including transportation, utilities, wastewater and water treatment plants, medical facilities, and emergency services—faces a significant wildfire threat.

In partnership with the Fire Safe Council of Nevada County, this initiative will enhance wildfire resilience through home and infrastructure hardening, defensible space, hazardous fuels reduction, and nature-based solutions such as prescribed grazing. The project also includes green waste programs, environmentally friendly wood debris reduction and conversion systems, and workforce development to ensure long-term sustainability and fire risk reduction.

### **Proposed Grant Application Actions and Funding Allocation**

*Infrastructure Hardening of Critical Facilities - \$7,500,000*

- Strengthening hospitals, schools, assisted living facilities, utility infrastructure, and emergency shelters.

- Improving emergency preparedness and enhancing Temporary Refuge Areas (TRAs).
- Evaluating evacuation strategies and alternative routes in case major roadways are impassable.

*Hazard Fuels Reduction with Nature-Based Solutions - \$12,000,000*

- Treating 2,000 acres through a multi-method approach, including prescribed grazing.
- Creating defensible perimeters around structures and critical infrastructure.
- Allocating \$4 million to workforce development in prescribed herbivory for long-term maintenance.

*Hazard Tree Removal Assistance - \$3,000,000*

- Removing hazardous trees from private properties to enhance defensible space.
- Prioritizing at-risk communities to protect lives, property, and critical facilities.

*Home Hardening Retrofit & Defensible Space Program - \$10,000,000*

- Allocating \$6 million to retrofit at least 600 homes with up to \$10,000 per home for fire-resistant upgrades, prioritizing income-qualified residents.
- Investing \$4 million in defensible space treatments for at least 400 properties.

*Green Waste Program & Processing - \$4,500,000*

- Operating a three-year citywide green waste collection and processing program.
- Identifying viable environmentally friendly wood debris reduction and conversion systems.

*Education, Outreach & Demonstration Site - \$2,500,000*

- Conducting public outreach, evacuation planning workshops, and training sessions.
- Developing tailored evacuation plans for schools, hospitals, and assisted living facilities.
- Establishing a demonstration site to showcase fuels treatment methods, including prescribed herbivory and herbicide applications.

This comprehensive wildfire resilience initiative integrates hazard mitigation, emergency planning, and workforce development to reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfires. By implementing these coordinated efforts through the BRIC program, Grass Valley can enhance community safety, protect critical infrastructure, and build long-term resilience. Staff in conjunction with the Fire Safe Council of Nevada County is looking to apply for approximately \$40 million in grants that will require 10% to 25% match. Due to proposed grant scope Measure B could be a great match source, as the proposed grant areas align with expenditure plan for Measure B.

**Council Goals/Objectives:** This item executes portions of work tasks towards achieving/maintaining the Strategic Plan - This action executes portions of work tasks towards achieving/maintaining Strategic Plan objectives of Community Leadership, and Productive and Efficient Workforce.

**Fiscal Impact:** There is no immediate budget/financial impact associated with the proposed actions.

**Funds Available:** N/A

**Account #:** N/A

**Reviewed by:** Tim Kiser, City Manager

**Attachments:**

- Project Area Map
- Expanded Project Description