



COUNTY OF SONOMA

575 ADMINISTRATION
DRIVE, ROOM 102A
SANTA ROSA, CA 95403

SUMMARY REPORT

Agenda Date: 3/10/2020

To: Board of Supervisors

Department or Agency Name(s): County Administrator's Office, County Counsel's Office and Auditor-Controller-Treasurer-Tax Collector

Staff Name and Phone Number: Peter Bruland 565-3086

Vote Requirement: Majority

Supervisorial District(s): All

Title:

District Formation Funds - Work Plan

Recommended Action:

Approve the use of up to \$25,000 of funds allocated to district formation in order to complete a comprehensive review of options for Municipal Advisory Councils (MACs), and Community Advisory Councils (CACs) in the unincorporated county that are interested in exploring options to gain greater funding for or control of municipal services.

Executive Summary:

The County of Sonoma includes a significant number of unincorporated communities as well as rural areas that face increased demand for municipal services. In some cases, it may be appropriate and desirable to the community to establish formal structures that allow for self-generated funding to address these challenges. In order to facilitate these potential activities, the Community Investment Fund policy approved in April includes a \$175,000 annual allocation to the District Formation Fund for costs associated with forming new districts. This item requests Board approval to use a portion of the funding, which is already budgeted, to allow County Counsel and Auditor-Controller-Treasurer-Tax Collector to research and prepare a report on options to allow for revenue generation and, where appropriate, for broader community input into provision of services. This document will return to the Board before the end of fiscal year 2019-2020 and will provide communities and the Board with the information needed to determine the best options to meet the needs of the diverse communities of Sonoma County. The estimated cost of preparing the document is \$20,000. While the item requests \$25,000 to allow for a contingency should additional staff time be needed, only actual costs will be charged to the District Formation Fund. Appropriations are available within the adopted budget.

Discussion:

The County of Sonoma includes a significant number of unincorporated communities as well as rural areas whose residents may wish a greater degree of local input into decisions on the provision of services. In order to begin facilitating this input, four Municipal Advisory Committees (MACs) and two Community Advisory Committees (CACs) have been created, and others are under consideration. The current MACs and CACs are: Dry Creek Valley CAC (formed 8/21/2012), Mark West Community CAC (formed 6/14/2016), Lower Russian River MAC (formed 9/25/2018), Sonoma County Coast MAC (formed 9/25/2018), Geyserville MAC (formed 12/11/2018) and Springs MAC (formed 12/11/2018).

While the MACs and CACs allow for a formalized process to provide input on relevant issues in the communities, they are limited by state law to an advisory role, and do not have the ability to raise revenues to enhance services provided in the communities. As such, some have expressed interest in exploring options to form special districts or other mechanisms that allow for raising funds and increasing decision-making authority.

In order to facilitate these potential activities, the Community Investment Fund policy approved in April 2019 includes a \$175,000 annual allocation to the District Formation Fund for costs associated with forming new districts, with the first allocation in FY 2019-2020. The Policy states: "Rural areas of Sonoma County are experiencing an increased need for municipal services. Funds may be used for professional services to establish Special Districts that will enable communities to provide self-generated funding to address municipal challenges. " In order to ensure that communities have the information to make decisions and use funds effectively, this item requests approval to use up to \$25,000 of this funding to pay for County Counsel and Auditor-Controller-Treasurer-Tax Collector to research and prepare a list of options, ranging from continuing with the current arrangements as MACs and CACs through creation of various dependent or independent special districts and up to incorporation. The document will briefly lay out the authorities and responsibilities granted with the options, the governance models of each option, and other relevant information. This document will return to the Board before the end of Fiscal Year 2019-2020 and will provide communities with the information needed to determine the best options to meet the needs of the diverse communities of Sonoma County.

If, after reviewing the list of options, a MAC or CAC desires to move forward with a particular model for revenue generation and governance, they will bring a request for the use of District Formation Funds to the Board. Funds may be used for consultants and other professional services, such as surveying and mapping, that may be necessary for district formation. The Board will prioritize requests for the limited available funds.

Prior Board Actions:

July 18, 2017 - Municipal Advisory Council Policies and Procedures

FISCAL SUMMARY

Expenditures	FY 19-20 Adopted	FY20-21 Projected	FY 21-22 Projected
Budgeted Expenses	\$25,000		
Additional Appropriation Requested			
Total Expenditures	\$25,000		
Funding Sources			
General Fund/WA GF			
State/Federal			
Fees/Other	\$25,000		
Use of Fund Balance			
Contingencies			
Total Sources	\$25,000		

Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:

The expected cost of conducting the research and putting together the required memo includes approximately 60 hours of County Counsel and 20 hours Auditor-Controller-Treasurer-Tax Collector time, for a total cost of approximately \$20,000. Costs associated with this time will be recouped from District Formation Funds budgeted for the creation of special districts to enable communities to provide municipal services. Actual costs will be billed and may be slightly greater or less than this estimate, and so a 25% contingency is included, for a total ask of \$25,000. Only actual costs will be billed to the District Formation fund.

Staffing Impacts:			
Position Title (Payroll Classification)	Monthly Salary Range (A-I Step)	Additions (Number)	Deletions (Number)

Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):

None

Attachments:

None

Related Items "On File" with the Clerk of the Board:

None