



Legislation Text

File #: 2019-1069, **Version:** 1

To: Board of Supervisors, County of Sonoma
Department or Agency Name(s): County Administrator
Staff Name and Phone Number: Michael Gossman, 565-7056
Vote Requirement: Majority
Supervisorial District(s): All

Title:

Recovery & Resiliency Framework Implementation 2019 Quarter 2 Report and Staff Development and Wellness Benefit Expansion

Recommended Action:

- A) Receive the Recovery & Resiliency Framework Implementation 2019 Quarter 2 Report.
- B) Direct staff to expand the County Staff Development and Wellness Benefit to include emergency preparedness equipment as an allowable reimbursable purchase.

Executive Summary:

Office of Recovery and Resiliency staff provide the Board and community regular updates on disaster recovery efforts, including rebuilding permits issued; external funding and grant efforts; and relevant legislation. These updates are prepared as standing agenda items for each Board meeting and are typically included on the consent calendar. In December 2018, the Board approved the Recovery & Resiliency Framework (Framework) and directed staff to provide quarterly updates on the Board's Top 10 Priority Framework Projects and other activities for each of the five critical strategic areas: Community Preparedness and Infrastructure, Housing, Economy, Safety Net Services, and Natural Resources.

Attached to this item is the second quarterly Framework implementation report; the next quarterly update to the Board is scheduled for November 5, 2019.

Also included in this item is a request to direct staff to expand the County Staff Development and Wellness Benefit to include emergency preparedness equipment as an allowable reimbursable purchase.

Discussion:

Recovery & Resiliency Framework Implementation

Your Board approved the Recovery & Resiliency Framework (Framework) on December 11, 2018 which included a comprehensive list of potential activities and actions that, if implemented, would help the County and community recover and become more resilient to future disasters. While County departments have been actively pursuing many recovery efforts, your Board directed staff to prioritize the following Top 10 Priority Projects:

1. Establish a comprehensive Alert and Warning System.
2. Work with the community to identify hazards, risks, mitigation strategies, including evacuation routes.
3. Facilitate construction hardening techniques appropriate for wildfire urban interfaces and seismic

- retrofits for rebuilding and for existing homes through education and grant programs.
4. Work with private utility providers on solutions related to hardening infrastructure and on coping with destroyed utilities in a disaster, including undergrounding where appropriate and necessary.
 5. Help property owners navigate vegetation management opportunities through partnership with Fire Safe Sonoma and similar programs.
 6. Continue to advocate for substantive changes to insurance regulations.
 7. Engage the community to raise awareness about how to prepare and plan ahead for disasters.
 8. Expedited permitting for homeowners who are rebuilding.
 9. Enhance the 2-1-1 System.
 10. Develop a One-Stop Shop Resource Center.

Summary updates for the Top 10 Priority Projects are provided in the *Recovery & Resiliency Framework Implementation 2019 Quarter 2 Report* (Attachment A). The report also includes recovery activity highlights for the five strategic area of recovery: Community Preparedness and Infrastructure, Housing, Economy, Safety Net Services, and Natural Resources as well as a description of ongoing grant activity and Recovery & Resiliency Framework project funding opportunities for the next fiscal year.

Recovery Ad Hoc Committee

At the December 11, 2018 Board meeting, your Board approved the creation of a Recovery Ad Hoc Committee (Ad Hoc) to provide input and guidance to County Administrator's Office staff on Recovery and Resiliency Framework implementation during 2019. At its discretion, the Recovery Ad Hoc Committee seeks input from fire survivors and other community groups on implementation. The Ad Hoc will exist through December 31, 2019.

The Recovery Ad Hoc Committee has convened five times in 2019 to receive status updates from Project Leads for the Top 10 Priority Projects and to discuss other important recovery topics. The Committee received recovery updates from a group of community partners on March 18, 2019 and met again with partners and block captains on May 13, 2019 for additional updates and a training on earthquake preparedness. Regular monthly Ad Hoc Committee meetings will continue and monthly meetings with block captains are being planned.

Recovery and Resiliency Framework Project Funding Summary for FY 2019-2020

Your Board recently approved an investment of over \$41.2 million for FY 2019-2020 funding requests that support the Recovery and Resiliency Framework. This investment will, among other things:

- Enhance the newly formed Department of Emergency Management with over \$3 million to work on the creation of a comprehensive community and alert warning system;
- Support fire service agencies with over \$8 million, including an investment on a countywide fuels reduction campaign, and additional funding for REDCOM to enhance emergency, fire and medical dispatch to unincorporated areas of the county;
- Support affordable housing developments, grant distribution, and the Resiliency Permit Center with over \$15 million;
- Help implement a community preparedness plan for \$500,000 over the next two years to educate and empower Sonoma County residents to prepare for, respond to and mitigate emergencies; and
- Carve out \$4.9 million for local match requirements to bring in over \$33 million in federal funds for up to 22 Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) applications. The HMGP supports any sustainable

actions taken to reduce or eliminate long-term risk to people and property from future disasters.

This substantial investment demonstrates the County's ongoing commitment to funding recovery and resiliency efforts following the Sonoma Complex Fires.

Recovery and Resiliency Grants Update

County Departments and Districts have submitted 28 grant applications to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (Attachment B). These grant applications are a response to federally declared disasters DR-4344 (October 2017 Wildfires), DR-4353 (Southern California Wildfires) and DR-4407 (California Wildfires). The 28 applications were combined into 25 proposals to create efficiency and reduce overhead by bundling like projects together where possible. These applications have complimentary goals of implementing activities from the Recovery and Resiliency Framework.

Of the 25 applications submitted, Cal OES recommended 18 proposals for federal funding (DR-4344 and DR-4353). Six of the proposals are still in the CalOES review process (DR-4407), and one proposal has been waitlisted until additional funds become available. If awarded, this funding will allow for implementation of \$32.6 million in projects designed to reduce the risk of life and property loss from disasters. FEMA is concluding its review of the CalOES recommendation and will notify the County of the results.

On May 18, 2019, President Trump approved a Major Disaster declaration for 2019 Severe Winter Storms, Flooding, Landslides, and Mudslides (DR-4434), which opened up federally reimbursable Public Assistance funding to the County. A Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) for HMGP has not yet been announced; however based on past federal declarations, the NOFA is likely to be announced in October 2019. Through the Grant Steering Committee, the Office of Recovery and Resiliency is leading an effort to prioritize additional feasible grant applications in response to this specific federal declaration of disaster.

Insurance Commissioner Meeting in Sonoma County

California Department of Insurance Commissioner Ricardo Lara met with local block captains and officials on May 28, 2019 in the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors Chambers. The purpose of the meeting was to hear public testimony from fire survivors on their frustrations and difficulties with insurance carriers and to provide an update on the last year's legislative efforts.

The Department of Insurance has issued a notice to insurers requesting they extend additional living expense (ALE) coverage be extended by a full year to survivors whose additional living expense benefits will expire within months. ALE coverage typically includes food and housing costs, furniture rental, relocation and storage, and extra transportation expenses while a home is uninhabitable. The Department issued a second notice requesting that insurers not deduct the land value when survivors who suffered a total loss choose to purchase a new home in a different location. Many insurers deduct land costs, reducing the amount that a homeowner can receive.

On July 7, 2019, the Board of Supervisors sent a letter to Commissioner Lara thanking him for coming to Sonoma County to provide updates and hear from block captains and extended appreciation for his advocacy to help fire survivors throughout California. Commissioner Lara has offered to set up an additional meeting with block captains and officials in the coming months. Staff will follow with the Commissioner's office to schedule this.

Community Preparedness Survey Results

The ability to measure the effectiveness of the County's public awareness campaign is critical to the campaign's overall success. In order to establish a baseline, staff designed a brief disaster preparedness survey in both English and Spanish that was posted online from March 25, 2019 through April 12, 2019. The survey was based on prior surveys released by federal and state agencies, with review and input from local subject matter experts. Nearly 2,000 responses to the survey were received.

The results of the survey are summarized in the Community Preparedness and Prevention Survey Results (Attachment C). Several highlights from the survey results include:

Preparedness Results:

- 91% of people know what a "go bag" is, but only 36% have one.
- 81% of people with a "go bag" store it at home, 31% store it in their car, and 3% at work. (some people have more than one "go bag")
- 75% of people know what items should be in a "go bag."
- People are most concerned about earthquakes and wildfires in Sonoma County.
- 70% of people know what evacuation routes to use in an emergency.
- 62% of people know where to find public safety information during an emergency.
 - Majority get their information from radio and Nixle.

Prevention Results:

- 71% of people agree they know what wildfire preventative measures to take to harden their home.
- 93% of people are familiar with how to create defensible space around your home.
- 97% of property owners are familiar with knowing it is their responsibility to ensure vegetation is properly managed on their property.
- 61% of people are familiar with knowing whether their home would benefit from retrofits such as the installation of earthquake bracing.
- 56% of people are familiar with understanding how to appropriately space plants and incorporate inflammable materials, like rock walls and brick paths to enhance a fire-safe landscape.

The County will issue surveys periodically to track how prepared our community feels they are over time, which will allow us to shape and steer the public awareness campaign going forward.

California HOPE Crisis Counseling Assistance Ended on June 30, 2019

The Crisis Counseling Assistance and Training Program, known locally as California HOPE, has been administered in Sonoma County through the County Department of Health Services, Behavioral Health Division. Services were initiated immediately following the October 2017 Fires to provide counseling services and emotional support to the community. The program has been funded through a \$4.3 million grant from FEMA, and an additional \$1 million grant from Kaiser Permanente. California HOPE counselors have provided over 70,000 services and counseling sessions to community members (this data contains duplicate individuals).

As of June 30, 2019, California HOPE counselors will no longer provide services, however, counselors are connecting community members with other services that are free, bilingual, and widely available to provide

support. Ongoing support is available through the following resources:

- Wildfire Mental Health Collaborative - Call NAMI at (866-960-6264) or visit www.mysonomastrong.com <<http://www.mysonomastrong.com>>
- Rebuilding Our Community (ROC) Sonoma County - Call (707) 535-3349 or visit <https://rocsonomacounty.org>
- Catholic Charities Disaster Case Management - Call (866) 542-5480
- Santa Rosa City Schools' Integrated Wellness Center - Call (707) 890-3827 or visit www.srscschools.org/domain/2112 <<http://www.srscschools.org/domain/2112>>
- Jewish Community Free Clinic - Call (707) 585-7780 or visit www.jewishfreeclinic.org/ <<https://www.jewishfreeclinic.org/>>
- Sonoma Community Resilience Collaborative - Call (707) 303-3600 or visit www.srhealth.org/about-us/resilience-collaborative/ <<http://www.srhealth.org/about-us/resilience-collaborative/>>
- Wellness And Advocacy Center Peer-to-Peer Mental Health Support - Call (707) 565-7800 or visit www.wellnessandadvocacy.org/ <<http://www.wellnessandadvocacy.org/>>

Staff Development and Wellness Benefit Expansion

The Office of Recovery and Resiliency, in partnership with the Department of Emergency Management and the Human Resources Department, is currently exploring the expansion of the Staff Development and Wellness Benefit available to County employees to include emergency preparedness equipment as an allowable reimbursable purchase. If your Board supports this expansion, staff will implement this option.

The County is the largest employer in Sonoma County and every employee is required to serve as a disaster service worker if needed during an emergency. Expanding this benefit will both increase opportunities for County employees and their families to be more prepared and increase their availability and capacity to serve the community during a disaster.

Possible emergency preparedness supply expenses could include pre-packaged preparedness kits for individuals, children, and families. Emergency kits are available at a number of retailers. Other potential expenses could include generators and other emergency power supplies and equipment for emergency animal transportation.

The Staff Development and Wellness Benefit is an established benefit for many County employees. Expanding items to purchase with this benefit has no additional fiscal impact to the County.

Sonoma Ready Day: Sunday, September 8th, 2019 from 10am - 3pm

The Office of Recovery & Resiliency is in the early stages of planning an Emergency Preparedness Day, Sonoma Ready Day, on Sunday, September 8, 2019 at the Sonoma County Fairgrounds, Saralee & Richard's Barn. The event will offer emergency resources, demonstrations, short lectures, emergency vehicle displays and tools to educate and empower community members to withstand and recover from emergencies. Planning is in the initial stages, however more information will be posted on the event page in the coming weeks:

<https://socoemergency.org/home/prepare/sonoma-ready-day/>

Prior Board Actions:

12/11/18 - Board approved the Recovery and Resiliency Framework

4/16/19 - Board received the Recovery & Resiliency Framework Implementation 2019 Quarter 1 Report and approved funding for United Way of the Wine Country's 211 Transition Plan.

FISCAL SUMMARY

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

Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:

No fiscal impacts at this time.

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

Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):

Attachments:

Attachment A: Recovery & Resiliency Framework Implementation 2019 Quarter 2 Report

Attachment B: FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Fund Projects Recommended by CalOES

Attachment C: Community Preparedness and Prevention Survey Results

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

