



Legislation Text

File #: 2021-0230, **Version:** 1

To: Sonoma County Board of Supervisors
Department or Agency Name(s): County Administrator's Office
Staff Name and Phone Number: Yvonne Shu 565-1739
Vote Requirement: Majority
Supervisory District(s): Countywide

Title:

Acceptance of Award from the Federal Emergency Management Agency Hazard Mitigation Grant Program and Allocation of \$11,000 from the General Fund Resiliency Set Aside

Recommended Action:

- A) Adopt a resolution authorizing the acceptance of a grant award and execution of a grant agreement with the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) for the Department of Emergency Management's (DEM) project, Radio Disaster Alert Devices for Vulnerable Populations.
- B) Allocate \$11,000 from the General Fund Resiliency Set Aside for the required local cost share for DEM's Radio Disaster Alert Devices project.

Executive Summary:

In May 2020, FEMA approved \$33,000 for DEM's project, Radio Disaster Alert Devices for Vulnerable Populations as part of its Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP), with a local match requirement of \$11,000. For access and functional needs populations, radio alert systems are more effective than traditional warning methods during an emergency. Acceptance of the grant and appropriation of \$11,000 from the General Fund Resiliency Set Aside require your Board's approval.

Discussion:

Acceptance of HMGP grant award for DEM's Radio Disaster Alert Devices for Vulnerable Populations

In the aftermath of the 2017 Sonoma Complex fires, County departments and agencies have sought funding through FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) to improve the resiliency of County facilities in the event of wildfires, seismic events, floods and other hazards.

The 2017 Sonoma Complex Fires of 2017 demonstrated that telephone systems are vulnerable during large-scale disasters, with over 70 cell phone towers destroyed or otherwise incapacitated during the initial stages of the fire. Additionally, cell phone alerts are usually relatively quiet and have a decreased chance of waking up the deaf and hard of hearing populations. Radio alert systems are more effective than traditional warning methods for access and functional needs populations, because the radios can remain passive in homes until activated remotely. A bed shaker attachment provides a robust method for waking the deaf and hard of hearing population, something that normal phones, sirens or neighborhood checks are unable to do. When coupled with public information campaigns (which include identifying the purpose of the radio warnings and taking appropriate action), the radio alert system will cover a critical gap in the County's notification

procedures and provide an additional layer of notification focused on our vulnerable populations.

FEMA approved \$33,000 for the implementation of this project in May 2020, with a local match requirement of \$11,000. The item was inadvertently delayed in coming to your Board. The resolution in **Attachment 1** formally accepts this award.

To date, one-third of the grant has been used to purchase 100 radios with pillow shaker units and strobe lights, which are being distributed through DCARA (Deaf Counseling Advocacy and Referral Agency). A webinar, hosted by DCARA and featuring the County's Alert and Warning Manager, is under development and will provide guidance how to use the devices.

DEM is currently waiting for an upgrade to the NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) weather radio model prior to ordering the remaining supply; DEM intends to distribute the radios in advance of the fire season.

Appropriation from the Resiliency Set Aside for the HMGP local match requirement

The cost share for HMGP is 75% federal and 25% local match. The County's share is projected at the beginning of the application process, and funding sources are identified before the application is submitted. DEM's Radio Disaster Alert Devices project requires a local match of \$11,000.

Since 2017, \$17.9 million has been awarded, or obligated, in HMGP grant funding, with total project costs of \$30.7 million. **Attachment 2** provides brief descriptions of the awarded projects.

Prior Board Actions:

FISCAL SUMMARY

Expenditures	FY 20-21 Adopted	FY 21-22 Projected	FY 22-23 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:

With your Board's approval, \$11,000 from the General Fund Resiliency Set Aside will be transferred to DEM for the local match of the Radio Disaster Alert Devices project. Offsetting revenue and expenditure appropriations for this project have been incorporated into the FY 2021-22 budget.

The County currently has active grant applications for new HMGP funding and for FEMA's Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) program. These projects will require use of the Resiliency Set Aside to meet the local match requirement. These match requirements are not included in the table below as their award status is pending.

Grant Match	\$ 4,000,000
Creative Sonoma-NEA Community & Economic Redev Projects	\$ 118,000
Awarded Projects - match amount	
Data Center Generator - Phase 2	\$ 146,684
Hood Mountain Soil Stabilization & Revegetation	\$ 77,703
Radio Disaster Alert Devices for Vulnerable Populations	\$ 11,000
Advance Assistance: Wildfire Adapted Sonoma County Phase 1	\$ 564,170
Fire Early Warning Camera System	\$ 680,680
Data Center Generator - Phase 1	\$ 8,861
Operational Area Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan Update	\$ 83,333
Community Wildfire Protection Plan Update	\$ 50,000
Grant Match Balance	\$ 2,259,569
HMGP projects under FEMA or CalOES review	\$ 616,019
Estimated Set Aside Balance for Grant Match	\$ 1,643,550

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

Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):

Attachments:

- 1) HMGP grant acceptance resolution for DEM's project, Radio Disaster Alert Devices for Vulnerable Populations
- 2) Descriptors of Awarded HMGP Grants since 2017

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