



AGENDA REPORT


TO: Jestin D. Johnson
City Administrator

FROM: Joe DeVries
Deputy City Administrator
and Chief Resilience Officer

SUBJECT: Community Change Grant Statutory
Partnership

DATE: March 14, 2024

City Administrator Approval


Jestin Johnson (Mar 14, 2024 22:56 PDT)

Date:

Mar 14, 2024

RECOMMENDATION

Staff Recommends that the City Council Adopt a Resolution Authorizing the City Administrator to Enter into a Statutory Partnership Agreement with the East Bay Asian Local Development Corporation (EBALDC) in Order to Apply for One of the One Hundred and Fifty Projects to be Awarded from the Environmental Protection Agency Community Change Grant that will Fund Community Based Climate Change Resilience Projects for Three Years Between Ten Million and Twenty Million Dollars (\$10,000,000 - \$20,000,000)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On November 21, 2023, the Environmental Protection Agency issued a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for the Environmental and Climate Justice Community Change Grants Program. The EPA received \$2 Billion through the Inflation Reduction Act for the Community Change Grant and will award 150 grants across the United States in all 50 States and Tribal Territories. As part of the funding requirements, the grants must be a partnership between a community-based organization and a local government. A specific requirement of the NOFO is that a legally binding Statutory Partnership Agreement (Agreement) be executed prior to submission of the application and entering into such an agreement requires Council authorization. In early March, the "Important Dates" section on the first page of the NOFO was revised to indicate that anticipated initial selections are expected in April 2024 and the anticipated start of the period of performance for initial selections is June 2024. This created a new urgency to submitting the application and adoption of this resolution will allow the City to enter into an agreement and submit an application in March. If awarded, staff will return to Council for grant acceptance and will include the executed partnership agreement for review.

BACKGROUND / LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

The Sustainability and Resilience Division has been meeting with the East Bay Asian Local Development Corporation (EBALDC) to develop a proposal since mid-January and agreed that EBALDC is the best choice to be the community-based organization in this partnership due to their ongoing work in distinct neighborhoods along the I-880 corridor including their work with the Healthy Havenscourt Collaborative, their extensive work in Chinatown, and their community

City Council
March 19, 2024

engagement work in West Oakland both in the Hoover-Foster Area and the Prescott Area. The City of Oakland (City) will be the lead agency, entering into the Agreement with EBALDCI but additional Collaborative Entities will be included as an additional requirement for award, but those partners do not need to be a part of this Agreement.

This Statutory Partnership Agreement will lay the foundation for further implementation of the Oakland Tree Equity Program for which the City was awarded an \$8 million grant from the United States Department of Forestry last year. That program was developed to fund the beginning implementation of the [Urban Forest Plan](#) and prioritizes maintaining the functioning Tree Canopy where it exists and planting additional trees where the canopy does not exist in the fullest benefits that provide CO2 sequestration, reducing heat island effects, and offer an effective buffer to vulnerable neighborhoods along the I-880 corridor.

Priority areas have been selected based upon EBALDC and the City participation in workgroups and committees in neighborhoods within the Havenscourt, Chinatown, and West Oakland communities. Through this effort, the projects that are prioritized for this opportunity focus on transit-oriented development and urban greenway expansion at Wilma Chan Park, the implementation of the Prescott Greening plan in West Oakland, and implementing Healthy Environment Priorities within the Healthy Havenscourt Collaborative. All three priority areas have been disproportionately impacted by the I-880 freeway, and projects selected will be designed to impact the air quality and long-term health of the respective communities. The Oakland Tree Equity Program was [awarded \\$8 million](#) in October, 2023; however the actual application was for \$22.5 million. This project will bridge the gap that is needed for tree planting in disadvantaged neighborhoods and support community engagement including at Lion Creek Crossings' park planning & community engagement process. It will also support the master plan design development for the Lake Merritt BART Plaza, and implementation of the Prescott Greening Project in West Oakland.

ANALYSIS AND POLICY ALTERNATIVES

This partnership represents an effort to address the historic impacts of underinvestment in frontline communities. This partnership model reflects the priorities of the Collaborative Stakeholder Structure created by the Better Neighborhoods, Same Neighbors Initiative that focuses on 5 square miles in East Oakland. Since the Community Change Grant does not have the same project area limitations, this partnership seeks to maximize the impact that a \$20,000,000 investment can have on 3 distinct areas of Oakland that are disproportionately impacted by the 880 freeway, including one of the original BNSN Neighborhood of Havenscourt.

The Citywide priorities advanced by this recommended policy action include: 1) holistic community safety, as studies have shown that neighborhoods with healthy tree canopies have lower crime rates and trees reduce carbon dioxide and reduce heat which improve people's health, 2) housing, economic, and cultural security, due to the impact of the community engagement efforts and the greening of park spaces in frontline neighborhoods, 3) vibrant, sustainable infrastructure, as the proposal will incorporate planning around the transit oriented development at the Lake Merritt BART Station, and 4) responsive, trustworthy government by strengthening existing partnerships with community based organizations in neighborhoods that have been historically underinvested in.

FISCAL IMPACT

Authorizing this Partnership Agreement has no immediate fiscal impact to the City but if the City is successful, the award could be as much as \$20 million over a three-year duration. A portion of that funding will go to EBALDC and shared with other Collaborative Entities while the majority will support the Oakland Tree Equity program implementation.

PUBLIC OUTREACH / INTEREST

There are required community engagement metrics to qualify for this award. EBALDC is a strong community partner that will implement, in partnership with the city, a robust community engagement plan.

COORDINATION

This project will be coordinated by the City Administrator's Office and the proposal development has included the Public Works Department.

SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES

Economic: Statutory Partners and Collaborative Entities to implement climate change resilience projects. This will create jobs for direct services within the grant and there will be an Economic and Workforce Development Component that is designed to train community members in priority neighborhoods in living wage green jobs.

Environmental: The projects implemented will address carbon sequestration, maintaining and developing tree canopy in equity neighborhoods, and provide increased access to greenspace.


Race & Equity: The impacts of climate change are already being felt, and the most vulnerable communities need to be prioritized in the building of sustainable and resilient physical infrastructure while creating economic and workforce opportunities that will financially improve resilience in priority neighborhoods. This partnership prioritizes communities historically impacted by redlining, inequitable policies, and outsized impact of climate change.

ACTION REQUESTED OF THE CITY COUNCIL

Staff Recommends Authorizing The City Administrator To Enter Into A Statutory Partnership Agreement With East Bay Asian Local Development Corporation (EBALDC) In Order To Apply For One Of The One Hundred And Fifty Projects To Be Awarded From The Federal Environmental Protection Agency Community Change Grant That Will Fund Community Based Climate Change Resilience Projects For Three Years For \$20,000,000.

For questions regarding this report, please contact Michael Dyer, TCC Program Manager, at (510) 238-6843.

Respectfully submitted,



Joe DeVries
Deputy City Administrator and Chief Resilience
Officer, City Administrator's Office

Prepared by:
Michael Dyer, TCC Program Manager
City Administrator's Office