

Date: April 29, 2021

Subject: Award Unallocated Transformative Climate Communities Planning Grant funds to the City of Bakersfield

Reporting Period: February 25, 2021 – April 29, 2021

Staff Lead: Saharnaz Mirzazad, Deputy Director of Community Investment and Planning

Recommended Action

Award \$35,926.61 of unallocated Proposition 84¹ Transformative Climate Communities Program planning grant funds to augment the City of Bakersfield's Round 2 TCC Planning Grant and extend the term of the grant to December 2021.

Summary

The City of Bakersfield, a Round 2 recipient of a Transformative Climate Communities Program (TCC) Planning Grant, has experienced challenges conducting community engagement during the COVID-19 pandemic. A large portion of the two-year grant term, which began July 10, 2019 and ends June 30, 2021, took place during the pandemic. Despite pandemic-related difficulties, the City in January 2021 published for public comment the first draft of its TCC-funded "Revitalizing Downtown Bakersfield Plan" (the "Plan"). The Planning area includes Downtown Bakersfield, Oldtown Kern, Oleander/ Sunset, and Lakeview. The Oleander/Sunset and Lakeview neighborhoods, located South of California Avenue, have the highest disadvantaged community (DAC) census tracts within the Planning Area. During the public comment period, residents of those neighborhoods asked the City to conduct more community outreach to identify projects in these neighborhoods or inclusion in the Plan.

Staff recommend that the Council augment by \$35,926.61 the City of Bakersfield's original \$200,000 TCC Planning Grant award for a total award amount of \$235,926.61. Following Council's approval, SGC's TCC implementation partner, the California Department of Conservation, will amend the grant agreement to extend the grant term to the end of December 2021. The additional funds and time would enable the City to conduct additional outreach to some of the hardest-to-reach populations in the Central Valley.

¹ Passed by California voters in 2006, Proposition 84 appropriated funding for a variety of activities designed to protect the State's natural resources, including the Sustainable Communities Planning Grants and Incentives Program (SCPGI). The Council approved three sets of awards for SCPGI, including \$16 million at its June 3, 2014 meeting. In July 2018, The Council approved the use of reimbursed Proposition 84 funds to support TCC Round II Planning Grants.

Background

About the TCC Program

The Transformative Climate Communities Program (TCC), established by AB 2722 (Burke, 2016), invests in community-led climate resilience projects in the state's most disadvantaged communities. The program objectives are to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, improve public health and the environment, and support economic opportunity and shared prosperity. TCC has awarded over \$200 million in more than 25 communities since 2017, through eight Implementation and 18 Planning Grants.

Background on the City of Bakersfield TCC Planning Grant Process

The Round 1 and 2 TCC Planning Grants were largely funded by funds reappropriated from Proposition 84: The Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Act of 2006, passed by voters to fund projects that, among other priorities, revitalize communities and make them more sustainable and livable by investing in sound land use planning (Chapter 9, Part C1). In 2018, the City of Bakersfield received a Round 2 TCC Planning Grant award of \$200,000 to develop a downtown revitalization plan focused on affordable housing, workforce development, and active transportation.

All Round 1 and 2 TCC Planning Grants are closed out with the exception of the City of Bakersfield's. Planning grantees the City of Los Angeles and Tulare County did not spend the full amount of their awards before closing out, leaving \$35,925.61 unspent. Based on conversations with the City of Bakersfield, staff identified that the best use for unspent funds is to reappropriate them to City of Bakersfield, which received significant stakeholder feedback that its community engagement efforts informing the TCC-funded "Revitalizing Downtown Bakersfield Plan" were not sufficient, and that the communities of Oleander/Sunset and Lakeview in Downtown Bakersfield need to be more involved in the selection of priority climate resilience projects. The City is willing to use these funds to extend the community engagement period and efforts, in order to better identify projects that serve the entire TCC planning project area.

Council Recommendation

Approve staff's Recommended Action as part of the consent calendar.

Attachments

Attachment 1: TCC Bakersfield Planning Grant Map

Attachment 2: SGC Staff Report, December 20, 2018, Agenda Item 6c