Subject:	**Community Resilience Centers Program: Round 1 Planning Grant Recommendations**
Reporting Period:	July 2023 – February 2024
Staff Lead:	Amar Cid, Deputy Director of Community Investments and Planning, SGC

Recommended Action

Community Resilience Centers (CRC) Staff recommend that Council award $5,000,000 in funding from the FY 2022-23 General Fund for the Round 1 CRC Program to fund the eight (8) top-scoring Planning Grant proposals and the three (3) top-scoring applications from Native American Tribes.

Summary

This Staff Report summarizes the California Strategic Growth Council's (SGC) CRC Planning Grant Program, the Round 1 Application Process, and CRC Staff award recommendations. Attachments include proposal summaries and applicant scores.

The CRC Round 1 Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) made $5 million available for Planning Grant awards for up to $500,000 each. In Round 1, the Planning Grant program received eighty-seven (87) applications. Of the 87 applications, Program Staff recommend eleven (11) applicants for award. To maximize the impact on California communities, Program Staff recommend awarding $470,813.69 to ten (10) applicants and the requested amount of $291,863.10 to one (1) applicant.

Background

The CRC Program (Program) was created by SB 155 (Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review, Chapter 258, Statutes of 2021), to provide "funding...for the construction or retrofit of facilities to serve as community resilience centers that mitigate the public health impacts of extreme heat and other emergency situations exacerbated by climate change." The Program provides funding for new construction and upgrades of neighborhood-level resilience centers to provide shelter and resources during climate and other emergencies, as well as funding for year-round services and ongoing programming that build overall community resilience, and campus amenities that support usage of Community Resilience Center facilities, such as transportation options and community gardens.

Separately, AB 211 (Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review, Chapter 575, Statutes of 2022) directs the Program to ensure applicants demonstrate collaboration with community members, including involvement with community-based organizations and local residents in governance and decision-making and that applicants have multi-stakeholder partnerships. To ensure this statutory requirement is met, the Program requires the formation of a Collaborative Stakeholder Structure, which creates localized, place-based partnerships to provide support for community engagement and drive decision-making throughout project implementation.

The Program seeks to build and support community resilience to climate impacts and aims to do this through:

- the development of multi-benefit community-serving spaces;
- services and programming to support communities both during disasters and year-round;
- supporting development of community-driven partnerships;
- expanding economic opportunities; and
- supporting grassroots engagement in local decision-making processes.

Priority Communities

While all communities in California are eligible to apply to the CRC program, statute directs the program to prioritize projects located in and benefitting under-resourced communities, as defined by Health and Safety Code Sections 39711 and 39713. The CRC program has identified the following additional priority communities for Round 1:

- Tribal Lands that meet the definition of an under-resourced community
- Rural communities that meet the definition of an under-resourced community
- Unincorporated communities that meet the definition of an under-resourced community

All applicants are required to discuss if and how their proposal considers, involves, impacts, and benefits priority communities.

Priority Populations

Each proposal must identify, work with, and intentionally serve the needs of priority populations in the proposed neighborhood containing the CRC facility. In alignment with the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) and other State agencies, the Program has identified the following priority populations:

- Individuals with physical, developmental, or intellectual disabilities

- Individuals with chronic conditions or injuries

- Individuals with limited English proficiency

- Older adults, children, and pregnant people

- Low-income, homeless, and/or transportation-disadvantaged or public transit-dependent people

Funding Targets

To illustrate the Program's commitment to statewide geographic diversity required by statute, the Program commits to awarding at least one grant (of any grant type) to each of the six Cal OES Fire and Rescue Mutual Aid Regions. The Program also has a Tribal Funding Target intended to prioritize a portion of Program funding for California Native American Tribes,

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similar to a Tribal set-aside. The program intends to fund a minimum of five (5) qualifying Tribally-led proposals across all grant types.

About the CRC Planning Grant Program

CRC Planning Grants will support planning activities to prepare communities for future implementation or operation of community resilience center facilities and related programming. CRC Planning Grants also aim to support communities in pursuing funding opportunities that align with the CRC Program's objectives. Planning activities should focus on engaging key stakeholders and supporting project readiness, as well as broader community resilience to climate emergencies and intersecting social and economic issues. These may include but are not limited to:

- completing fiscal impact analyses; evaluating or updating local policies or codes;
- preparing or updating local jurisdictional plans;
- designing or enhancing community engagement;
- or developing collaborative partnerships that connect land use development with environmental, economic, and social justice priorities.

Planning activities must also demonstrate consistency with the State's Planning Priorities, identified in Section 65041.1 of the California Government Code. These priorities intend to promote equity, strengthen the economy, protect the environment, and promote public health and safety in the State, including urban, suburban, and rural communities.

Round 1 Guidelines Development

Program Staff developed the CRC Program Round 1 Guidelines (Guidelines) through an extensive public engagement and research process. This included listening sessions, meetings, and key information interviews to understand the needs and priorities of communities across the State. SGC released the draft Guidelines in December 2022 for a 45-day public comment period, during which Program Staff held seven (7) workshops that included regional and audience-specific workshops that covered all regions throughout the State and included rural communities and Tribes. Staff reviewed and analyzed over 750 public comments to identify key topics for further research, identify areas which needed further expertise, and to inform final guideline development.

Round 1 Application Process

The Council adopted the Guidelines on April 26, 2023. A Technical Amendment on December 14, 2023, updated the guidelines to reflect the expanded advance pay authority under AB 590 (Hart, 2023). The Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA), released on May 26, 2023, set a September 5, 2023 deadline for CRC grant applications. The NOFA was then revised on July 5, 2023, to extend the application deadline for all CRC grant applications to September 18, 2023.

The NOFA made $98.6 million available for all grant types. The total amount given to Planning Grant awards was $5 million, with awards ranging from $100,000 to $500,000 each. Following the NOFA release, CRC Staff (Program Staff) hosted 14 virtual Application Office Hour sessions in July, August, and the beginning of September – for general audiences, tribal, and rural

communities. Program Staff and the technical assistance providers provided ongoing technical assistance to a total of 50 applicants.

SGC received a total of 87 Planning Grant applications in response to the Round 1 solicitation, with 68 applications passing threshold review. Attachment B provides a complete list of the 87 applicants.

Round 1 Application Review Process
All 87 applications were evaluated through a multi-stage review process by Program Staff, a Technical Assistance (TA) Provider, and an Interagency Review Panel.

Submitted applications underwent the following review process:

- **Completeness Check:** The TA Provider and Program Staff reviewed the submitted application materials for completeness. Applicants were notified if their application was incomplete and were given a 48-hour window to reupload missing information flagged by Program Staff.
- **Program Threshold review:** The TA Provider performed the initial threshold reviews alongside Program Staff. Applications were reviewed based on the program thresholds defined by guidelines. After resubmission of missing materials identified in the Completeness Check, sixty-eight (68) applications passed threshold review.
- **Interagency Review Panel:** The 68 applications advanced to an Interagency Review Panel, selected by the California Strategic Growth Council (SGC). Nineteen (19) Interagency Reviewers scored proposals according to a scoring rubric developed by Program Staff using the scoring criteria listed in the CRC Guidelines. Panel members attended a training session to understand the program goals and review process prior to scoring applications. Each application was reviewed by two (2) Interagency Reviewers, and the reviewers' scores were averaged to determine a final score for each application. The maximum score was 100 points. The Interagency Review Panel included representatives from the following State entities:
  - California Air Resources Board (CARB)
  - California State Lands Commission
  - California State Library
  - Department of Water Resources (DWR)
  - Department Housing and Community Development (HCD)
  - California Infrastructure and Economic Development Bank (IBank)
  - Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR)
  - Office of Community Partnerships and Strategic Communications (OCPSC)
  - Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC)
  - Strategic Growth Council (SGC)
- **Deliberation:** Following the review period, Program Staff facilitated a deliberation session with Interagency Reviewers to discuss **proposals where reviewer scores significantly varied from each other's.** This deliberation period was intended to understand why each reviewer scored the application how they did and to ensure

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fairness in the scoring process. Reviewers had the opportunity to adjust their individual scores during and after the deliberation meetings, resulting in the final, averaged scores out of 100 points.

Recommended Awards

CRC Program Staff recommend the Council approve the eleven (11) top-scoring applications for funding.

Due to the small point spread and requested funding amongst the top-scoring applicants, Program Staff are recommending ten (10) awards of equal size and one (1) award of a lower amount. For the ten applicants that requested $500,000, Program Staff recommend awards of $470,813.69. For the applicant that requested a lower amount, Staff recommend they are awarded their full request of $291,863.10. This enables the Program to maximize its impact across Priority Communities. Program Staff and the TA provider will support awarded applicants revise their proposals through a participatory process, to match the reduced award amount based on project or plan conditions.

Applicants recommended for award are in the table below. All eleven (11) grant proposals demonstrated multi-stakeholder engagement, project readiness, and community resilience to climate emergencies and intersecting social and economic issues. The applications varied across issue areas, including but not limited to energy independence, workforce development, food security, emergency response, and tribal sovereignty. Out of the eleven (11) Planning Grant award recommendations, seven (7) applications are located in and benefit SB 535 Disadvantaged Communities, eleven (11) applications are located in and benefit AB 1550-Designated Low-Income communities, three (3) applications are located in and benefit unincorporated communities (DUCs), four (4) applications are located in and benefit rural communities, and three (3) applications are led by California Native American Tribes. The recommended Planning Grants span CalOES Regions one (1), two (2), three (3), five (5), and six (6).

Attachment A contains a summary of each application recommended for award.

Table 1: Staff Recommendations for CRC Planning Grant Round 1 Awards

Lead Applicant	Score	Requested Award	Recommended Award
Inland Coalition for Immigrant Justice (ICIJ)	98	$500,000.00	$470,813.69
Mattole Restoration Council	96.5	$498,139.00	$470,813.69
United Domestic Workers of America/ AFSCME Local 3930 (UDW)	96	$500,000.00	$470,813.69
Ojai Valley Fire Safe Council	95.5	$500,000.00	$470,813.69

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Native Roots Network (NRN)	95	$500,000.00	$470,813.69
City of Redding	94.5	$291,863.10	$291,863.10
Santa Ana Building Healthy Communities, a fiscally sponsored project of Charitable Ventures	94	$500,000.00	$470,813.69
Greenbelt Alliance	94	$499,985.00	$470,813.69
Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians (FTBMI)	93.5	$500,000.00	$470,813.69
Tolowa Dee-ni' Nation	89.5	$495,525.00	$470,813.69
Cahuilla Band of Indians	88.5	$499,826.40	$470,813.69

Next Steps

Following Council approval, Program Staff will enter a Post-Award Consultation (PAC) process with each awardee. During the PAC phase, Program Staff will work with the awardee to refine the submitted application materials to ensure they follow all statutory, administrative, and CRC Program requirements. Awarded applications are subject to modifications based on input from the Council and/or SGC Staff. Program Staff will work with awardees to develop a grant agreement and review grant administration procedures during this phase.

Program Staff will provide feedback to applicants who were not recommended for the Round 1 CRC Planning Grant award after the April 2024 SGC Council meeting where the remaining grant types will be recommended for award. Staff will be available to discuss the identified areas for improvement during one-on-one sessions with applicants.

Council Recommendation

The Community Resilience Centers Program (CRC) Staff recommends the Council award $5 million total in funding from the FY 2022-23 General Fund for the Round 1 CRC Program to fund the eleven (11) top-scoring proposals for the CRC Planning Grant Program. Should the Council agree with the Staff's recommendation, the following motion language is suggested:

 "I move that the Council approve the recommended Planning Grant awards for Round 1 of the Community Resilience Centers Program."

Attachments

Attachment A: Project Summaries for Planning Grant Applications Recommended for Round 1 Funding

Attachment B: CRC Round 1 Planning Grant Application Final Scores

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