Introduced: 1/17/2023 **Current Status:** Agenda Ready
Version: 1 **Matter Type:** BoS Resolution

a. Approve and authorize the Director of Housing and Community Development or his designee to accept grant funding and execute award documents from the California Energy Commission CalAPP grant (GFO-21-402) in the amount of $80,000
b. Authorize the Auditor-Controller to amend the FY 2022-23 Housing and Community Development Adopted Budget by increasing appropriations and estimated revenue by $40,000 to Appropriation Unit HCD002, Unit 8543 funded by the grant from the California Energy Commission CalAPP grant (GFO-21-402) for costs associated with implementation of SolarAPP+, Solar Automated Permit Processing, 4/5th vote required.

RECOMMENDATION:
It is recommended that the Board of Supervisors:
a. Approve and authorize the Director of Housing and Community Development or his designee to accept grant funding and execute award documents from the California Energy Commission CalAPP grant (GFO-21-402) in the amount of $80,000 of
b. Authorize the Auditor-Controller to amend the FY 2022-23 Housing and Community Development Adopted Budget by increasing appropriations and estimated revenue by $40,000 to Appropriation Unit HCD002, Unit 8543 funded by the grant from the California Energy Commission CalAPP grant (GFO-21-402) for costs associated with implementation of SolarAPP+, Solar Automated Permit Processing, 4/5th vote required.

SUMMARY/DISCUSSION:
The County of Monterey Housing and Community Development (HCD) applied for a population-based funding opportunity from the California Energy Commission's (CEC) CalAPP grant (GFO-21-402) to fund costs to implement SolarAPP+. As applications for CalAPP grant funds are evaluated and awarded on a first-come, first-served basis, staff was unable to bring a concept letter for approval in advance. HCD provided a memo informing the Board of Supervisors that should the County be invited to accept an award for this funding, staff will bring it to the Board for consideration. HCD has since received notification that the County was awarded a total of $80,000 and estimates that $40,000 would be used during FY2022-23 to begin the integration process with the existing permit system and the remaining $40,000 to be utilized prior to the Grant Agreement liquidation date of June 30, 2027.

The purpose of the CalAPP grant is to provide funding for California jurisdictions to establish online, automated solar permitting. Senate Bill 129 (Skinner, Budget Act of 2021, Item 3360-006-0001 of Section 2.00) appropriated $20 million to the CEC to support this purpose. Per the 2021 Senate Bill

100 Joint Agency Report, achieving 100% clean electricity in California requires an acceleration of the development of rooftop solar projects. CalAPP funding is intended to encourage cities and counties to further streamline permitting processes and accelerate processing and turnaround time, particularly regarding plan review. Overall, funding is intended to promote the development of residential solar, decrease approval times, cut permitting costs for local governments and homeowners, and help California meet its greenhouse gas emission reduction goals.

SolarAPP+, Solar Automated Permit Processing, is an online web portal that automates the plan review and process for issuing permits to install code-compliant residential rooftop photovoltaic (PV) systems. Based on model building, electrical, and fire codes, SolarAPP will automatically perform a compliance check based on inputs supplied by the contractor to ensure the proposed system is safe and code compliant. Installation practices, workmanship, and adherence to the approved design will then be verified by HCD through the inspection process facilitated by SolarAPP+ checklists that correspond with the automated review.

SolarAPP+ was created by The National Renewable Energy Laboratory with funding from the U.S. Department of Energy and matching in-kind commitments from industry partners to develop an online software tool that facilitates automated permit review of residential PV systems, thereby reducing the time to process a permit. SolarAPP+ has been reviewed by the International Code Council, International Association of Electrical Inspectors, National Fire Protection Association, Underwriters Laboratories, and many local governments. SolarAPP+ permitting specifications are based on model building, electrical and fire codes and are cross-referenced to the leading permitting guidebooks from California, New York, and the SolSmart National Simplified Permit Guidelines for Residential Photovoltaic Arrays.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:
Budget committee support was received at the December 15, 2022 meeting.

FINANCING:
SolarAPP+ is available to all jurisdictions nationwide at no cost, however HCD will realize costs associated with integration with the department's existing permit system, as well as with implementation and training for both staff and the public. HCD does not expect these costs to exceed the awarded CalAPP grant funds and as staff time is included in the HCD FY 2022-23 Adopted Budget, HCD will effectively see cost savings as a result of reimbursement. Additionally, the California Energy Commission is not requiring a match from the CalAPP grant awardees. The increase in Appropriations and Estimated Revenues will be in HCD Unit 8543, Appropriation Unit HCD002.

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS STRATEGIC INITIATIVES:
This recommendation supports the Economic Development and Administration Initiatives by enhancing and accelerating solar permit processing and turnaround time by reducing County staff time spend on plan review as well as promoting the development of residential solar.

DocuSign Envelope ID: 67F448B1-E664-471F-81DC-59B235A7D85B

Mark a check to the related Board of Supervisors Strategic Initiatives

X Economic Development
X Administration
__Health & Human Services
__Infrastructure
__Public Safety

Prepared by: Karen Riley-Olms, Management Analyst II, x5132
Reviewed and Approved by: Erik V. Lundquist, Director of HCD

DS
El

The following attachments are on file with the Clerk of the Board:
Attachment A - Draft Resolution
Attachment B - Memo to Board of Supervisors
Attachment C - CalAPP Grant Agreement & Appendix