

 **NOSSAMAN** LLP | Memorandum

TO: Monterey County Board of Supervisors
FROM: Ashley S. Walker, Senior Policy Advisor
RE: Strategic Grant Services Program: 2020 Annual Report
DATE: January 11, 2021

I. Introduction

The Strategic Grants Services Program (SGSP) was created by the Board of Supervisors in recognition of the need to concentrate funding efforts on the County's highest priority needs and projects. Nossaman began working with County's CAO-Intergovernmental & Legislative Affairs Division (IGLA) in September 2014 on the new program to enhance the County's success at securing multiple and varied grant awards. Nossaman works in close collaboration with the IGLA office to align our efforts with the County's Legislative Program. This alignment ensures that the many narrowly focused state and federal grant funding opportunities still support the County's primary goals.

The designation of "priority projects" which Nossaman has/or will work on is based on the following criteria:

- Alignment with the Board's Strategic Initiatives & Milestones
- Alignment with the Board's Legislative Priorities
- Availability of grant funding
- Ability to meet grant requirements
- Grant matching fund requirements
- Analysis of the ability to develop a competitive grant application

Nossaman engages on a regular basis with County Departments to provide feedback and suggest strategies regarding funding needs for priority projects. Often times this preparation work sets up projects for future funding opportunities, such as upcoming bond programs.

II. Summary of Accomplishments in 2020

The SGSP has been a very successful partnership between the County and Nossaman. A summary of our accomplishments in 2020 include:

- **Total Grant and Funding Secured since September 2014:** Worked with County Departments to secure a total of **\$48,022,411** for high priority projects.
- **Funding in 2020 Successfully Secured: Nossaman and the IGLA office** worked with several county departments on the following four successful efforts for grant funding.
 - \$175,000 through the Sustainable Agricultural Lands Conservation Program. Nossaman and the IGLA office reviewed the application prepared by the County's Sustainability Program Manager.

- \$996,545 through the Proposition 64 Public Health & Safety Grant Program. Nossaman and the IGLA office participated in meetings with County departments to discuss the program and potential projects and assisted in reviewing the application.
- \$58,000 through the BJA Coronavirus Emergency Supplemental program. The IGLA office provided a review of this application.
- \$150,000 through the Cannabis Equity Grant Program. Nossaman and the IGLA office met with staff to discuss potential funding opportunity and reviewed initial draft application to provide feedback on competitiveness.
- **Grant Applications Submitted:** Assisted various county departments with the successful submission of four grant applications.
- **Alerts:** Nossaman alerted various county department of 34 different funding opportunities that may be of interest to those departments and nonprofit partners on topics such as homelessness, water, climate adaptation, public health, affordable housing, parks, and public safety.
- **Funding Research Requests:** Provided strategic consultation on potential funding opportunities for 12 County projects (detailed below).
- **Grant Application Support Letters:** Coordinated securing grant support letters for eight projects benefiting the County. Seven of these projects were led by applicants other than the County, and the support letter was on behalf of the Board of Supervisors. The eighth project was the CRFREE project and letter was secured from Congressman Panetta.
- **Grant Needs Inventory:** Consulted with all department heads and Supervisors to collect updated information on critical unfunded projects within the County. There is currently a backlog of over 160 County projects which need funding to proceed.
- **Strategic Grant Services Program Work Plan:** Under the guidance of the Board's Legislative Committee and in collaboration with departments, developed a work plan for calendar year 2020.

III. Strategic Advice Provided on Projects

Nossaman regularly assists with on-going projects in need of funding and provides research on grant opportunities at the request of Supervisors and/or Department heads. These efforts don't necessarily result in the immediate submission of a grant application, but rather lay the groundwork for future funding opportunities. Below is an outline of the projects we worked on in 2020.

- **BMX/Skate Park:** Nossaman continued to keep the County informed of potential Proposition 68 funds that could be used to develop a BMX/Skate Park.
- **Cannabis:** The IGLA office took the lead on a Cannabis Equity Grant application, requesting \$150,000 to conduct a cannabis equity assessment. The assessment is in partnership with California State University Monterey Bay (CSUMB). The County has preliminarily identified two groups that have been disproportionately impacted by the War on Drugs: the Latinx community that represents a majority of both population and workforce of the legal cannabis industry within Monterey County, and rural communities

that were subject to frequent searches and seizures. Nossaman participated in all the County meetings regarding the application, provided feedback and suggestions on the grant strategy and content, and reviewed the narrative.

Additionally, the County requested \$964,000 in funding through the Proposition 64 (BSCC) Public Health and Safety Grant to address improving coordination between County departments, the illicit market, and increase public education and community relations through a county-wide cannabis initiative. Nossaman participated in meetings with several County Department to discuss a potential application for this program. Nossaman and IGLA staff reviewed and provide feedback on the application prior to submittal.

- **Carmel Lagoon:** Nossaman continued to monitor and research potential funding opportunities for the Carmel Lagoon project.
- **Carmel River Floodplain Restoration and Environmental Enhancement (CRFREE):** Nossaman reviewed the first draft of this application, along with comments from the Big Sur Land Trust, and the final application that was submitted in December 2019. The County was notified by FEMA that there was a concern about possible duplication of Federal programs related to the SR1 Causeway portion of the CRFREE project for the CALOES/FEMA Grant. In October 2020, County staff met with California Department of Emergency Services (CalOES/FEMA) and Caltrans to discuss the concerns. Based on that discussion, the County sent a letter clarifying technical points regarding the potential duplication of programs impacting the eligibility of the CRFREE project for highway funding. The County is waiting on a response from FEMA, and Nossaman has offered to assist in any way needed.
- **Deep Water Aquifer:** Nossaman met with the County's WRA to discuss the need for funding for the Deep Water Aquifer. Nossaman continues to research programs that could provide funding for the project.
- **Housing and Homelessness Related Grants:** Nossaman met with the County's Housing Program Manager on several occasions to discuss hurdles facing the County in addressing affordable housing and homelessness, which is a priority for the Board. Nossaman reviewed and notified the County of several funding opportunities that support the development of affordable housing and/or homelessness projects.
- **Interlake Tunnel & Fish Screens: Nossaman and the County** successfully lobbied for \$17 million in funding in the 2019-20 State budget, including testifying in hearings, meetings with Member of the Legislature, and meetings with the Administration. Nossaman helped coordinate several meetings with California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) to discuss drawing down funds and grant agreement details. Currently, the WRA is working with CDFW on a grant agreement to be completed by June 30, 2021.

Additionally, Nossaman participated in meetings with the federal government to discuss the WIIN Act and potential funding opportunities for the Interlake project.

Finally, Nossaman met with WRA to discuss Water and Energy Efficiency Grants that the Bureau of Reclamation (BoR) provides for projects that result in quantifiable and sustained water savings and support broader water reliability benefits. We coordinated a meeting with the BoR to discuss the Interlake Tunnel Project.

- **Old Jail State Budget Request:** The Resource Management Agency (RMA) made a presentation to the Board of Supervisors regarding the rehabilitation and project options for the Old Jail. Early on in 2020, we worked with RMA on preparing a one page summary of the state budget request to present to our Legislative Delegation, and Assemblymember Rivas had planned to assist the County with this effort. The request was put on hold due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **San Antonio and Nacimiento Dam and Spillway:** Nossaman worked with a statewide coalition to advocate for funding in a statewide bond that could be used for projects such as dam and spillway repairs.

Additionally, Nossaman coordinated a meeting with the I-Bank about financing opportunities for the project. The Infrastructure State Revolving Fund (ISRF) Program provides financing to public agencies and non-profit corporations, sponsored by public agencies, for a wide variety of infrastructure and economic development projects (excluding housing). ISRF Program funding is available in amounts ranging from \$50,000 to \$25 million with loan terms for the useful life of the project up to a maximum of 30 years. Nossaman has continued to keep in contact with the County and I-Bank regarding a potential application.

- **San Lucas Water Supply Replacement:** Nossaman coordinated several meetings with RMA and the State Water Resources Control Board to discuss the progress and timeline for review of the County's Drinking Water State Revolving Fund application for San Lucas. Most recently, the project has changed. The new project alternative would convert the temporary well to a permanent well and add a pipeline to an existing 300 gallon water storage tank. The County is working to provide the State Water Board information on a new project alternative in January 2021. Nossaman is working to coordinate the next meet with the Water Board regarding next steps to update the application and securing funding.
- **San Lucas/San Ardo Parks:** Nossaman researched funding opportunities for the development of neighborhood parks in the San Lucas and San Ardo communities. Nossaman provided the County with a summary of the Proposition 68 Statewide Parks Program that could be a potential funding source for these projects. The County has had internal discussions about options to maintain potential neighborhood parks, and has instead identified two other park projects to apply for Proposition 68 dollars that better align with County services.
- **San Lorenzo Park and San Antonio Reservoir:** Nossaman met with the Public Works, Facilities and Parks Department to discuss applying for San Lorenzo Park and San Antonio Reservoir. We will be assisting with the applications and have contacted State Parks for additional feedback about our project competitiveness. Applications are due March 12, 2020.

IV. Upcoming Grant Opportunities in 2020

There are several upcoming grant opportunities we have identified that align with County priorities and projects. Some of these programs are outlined in our 2021 Work Plan. Examples of upcoming opportunities include, but are not limited to:

- **Active Transportation Program (ATP):** Bike and pedestrian improvements, connectivity improvements.

- **Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities Program (AHSC):** Affordable housing related infrastructure, sustainable transportation infrastructure.
- **CalRecycle Food Waste Prevention and Rescue Grant Program:** Lower overall greenhouse gas emissions by establishing new or expanding existing food waste prevention projects California to reduce the amount of food being disposed in landfills.
- **California Drinking Water State Revolving Fund:** Assists public water systems in financing the cost of drinking water infrastructure projects needed to achieve or maintain compliance with Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) requirements.
- **Habitat Conservation Fund:** Eligible projects include: nature interpretation programs to bring urban residents into park and wildlife areas, protection of various plant and animal species, and acquisition and development of wildlife corridors and trails.
- **Joe Serna Jr. Farmworker Housing Grant Program:** Provides grants or deferred-payment loans for the construction and rehabilitation of housing for agricultural workers and their families.
- **Local Housing Trust Fund:** Provides matching funds for entities that set aside funding in a trust fund for affordable housing.
- **Proposition 68 Regional Parks Program:** Acquisition or development of park space to create, expand, or improve regional parks and regional park facilities.
- **Proposition 68 Rural Recreation and Tourism Program:** Create new recreation opportunities in support of economic and health-related goals in rural communities.
- **Proposition 68 Statewide Parks Program:** Local park rehabilitation, creation, and improvement grants to local governments to address deficiencies in neighborhoods lacking access to the outdoors.