



Monterey County

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Board Report

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Receive a Mid-Year Report on the Strategic Grant Services Program.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Board of Supervisors receive a Mid-Year Report on the Strategic Grant Services Program.

SUMMARY:

The County Administrative Office Intergovernmental & Legislative Affairs Division launched the Strategic Grant Services Program in September 2014. Since that time significant work has taken place to get the program up and running, inventory countywide project and program funding needs, identify priority projects, and work on high priority grant submissions. This mid-year report provides an update on the past, current and planned future activities of the program.

DISCUSSION:

During the Board's June 2014 Budget hearings the County Administrative Office Intergovernmental & Legislative Affairs (IGLA) Division was authorized to spend up to \$60,000 in FY 2014-15 on the development and execution of a grants program aimed at identifying and aiding in the application for funding related to high priority projects.

In September 2014, IGLA contracted with grant services experts with a proven track record of success at Nossaman LLP, a legal, legislative advocacy, and grant writing firm based in Sacramento, California. The current contract provides for the development of an inventory of grant funding needs countywide, development of a strategic plan to identify possible funding sources for any identified need, and high level strategic advocacy and grant writing services on 10-12 high priority grant submission during the term of the contract. The term of the current contract with Nossaman is September 1, 2014 through June 30, 2015.

Under the Strategic Grant Services Program potential grant opportunities are evaluated based upon the following criteria:

- Alignment with the Board of Supervisors' Strategic Initiatives and Milestones;
- Alignment with the Board of Supervisors' Legislative Program;
- Timing of grant opportunities;
- Ability to meet grant requirements;
- Grant matching fund requirements;
- Competitiveness of the County's application - probability of receiving funding.

Since September, Nossaman and IGLA staff has:

- Met with members of the Board of Supervisors and Department Heads to develop a comprehensive inventory of funding needs countywide;
- Developed a priority list of projects for which to seek funding;
- Provided a steady flow of information to County Departments on upcoming grant opportunities related to needs identified in the needs inventory;
- Worked with the Department of Water Resources and Assemblymember Alejo's office to assist the Water Resources Agency (WRA) in gaining compliance under the California State Groundwater Elevation Monitoring (CASGEM) Program - which makes WRA eligible to apply for State funding opportunities;
- Conducted a comprehensive evaluation of all funding options for WRA projects, especially the Interlake Tunnel project.
- Identified and assisted County departments with the submittal of three (3) grant applications: one application was awarded and is currently being managed by the Parks Department in the amount of \$200,000 for quagga/zebra mussel prevention efforts at Lakes Nacimiento and San Antonio; two applications were not funded - but we plan to resubmit one of those applications for funding under an alternate program;
- Conducted significant work in the evaluation, and in some cases the development of applications, for grant opportunities which were not applied for, for various reasons;
- Conducted numerous reviews of applications or potential applications with granting authorities to determine the County's potential competitiveness, or to understand the shortcomings of an application in order to be more competitive in future applications;
- Served as a resource to County partners, such as the Transportation Agency for Monterey County (TAMC) on their grant applications;
- Developed processes and protocols for the Strategic Grant Services Program.

During the remainder of this fiscal year, IGLA and Nossaman, under the Strategic Grant Services Program, will continue to work on the following projects:

- Grant submissions under the Active Transportation Program (ATP)
 - \$2 million - Safe Routes to Schools project (Health Department)
 - \$5.9 million - Moss Landing Scenic Trail project (Resource Management Agency)
 - \$1.3 million - Los Lomas Drive (gutter, sidewalk, bike path, drainage improvements) (RMA)
 - Evaluating the repackaging of a previous \$1.0 million application for access, trailhead improvements to provide northerly access to Fort Ord National Monument. (RMA)
- Evaluation the feasibility of reapplying for funding under the Regional Conservation Partnership Program under the U.S. Department of Agriculture. WRA submitted a \$20 million pre-application to this program last year which was denied.
- Continued work with WRA to identify possible funding opportunities for high priority projects (Interlake Tunnel and others) under the Infrastructure Bank, Clean Water & Drinking Water State Revolving Fund programs.

- Development and submission of comment letters related to the guidelines under development for the various sections of Proposition 1 - Water Bond.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

The Legislative Committee will review this report at their May 4, 2015 meeting. If the Committee has any proposed recommendations they will be verbally provided at the May 5, presentation of this report to the Board of Supervisors. Regular reports on the program are provided to the Legislative Committee as many priorities overlap with legislative efforts.

IGLA works with its contracted grant experts at Nossaman LLP (Jennifer Capitolo and Ashley Setoudeh) on the development and execution of the Strategic Grant Services Program. IGLA also works extensively with County departments, granting entities (State or Federal agencies or private foundations), and with County partners (e.g. TAMC) on the evaluation, development and submission of priority grant applications.

FINANCING:

During the June 2014 Budget Hearings the Board of Supervisors authorized \$60,000 to be spent by IGLA on the development of a strategic grants program. IGLA contracted with grant experts at Nossaman LLP at a rate of \$5,000 per month for these services beginning on September 1, 2014, for a total cost of \$50,000 during FY 2014-15. Continued funding for this program was not included in the IGLA baseline budget. IGLA has submitted a budget augmentation request for consideration in the FY 2015-16 budget in the amount of \$84,000 in order to expand the program and to work on additional high priority grant opportunities over the next fiscal year. If this budget augmentation request is rejected IGLA will not have funding to continue this program.

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Approved by:

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Attachments:

Exhibit A - May 4, 2015 Memo from Nossaman LLP
Exhibit B - Inventory of Grant Funding Needs