



Board Agenda Item 50

DATE: February 22, 2022

TO: Board of Supervisors

SUBMITTED BY: David Luchini, RN, PHN, Director, Department of Public Health

SUBJECT: Submittal and Acceptance of competitive grant award from the California Resilience Challenge 2021 Grant Program

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

- 1. Retroactively approve and authorize the Director of Public Health's previous submittal of the California Resilience Challenge 2021 Grant Program proposal and application to the California Resilience Challenge;**
- 2. Approve and authorize the Chairman to execute grant award Agreement with the California Resilience Challenge for the California Resilience Challenge 2021 Grant Program in support of the Fresno Understands Environmental Resilience Through Equity (FUERTE) Project beginning April 1, 2022 thru March 31, 2024, total to not exceed \$176,938;**
- 3. Approve and authorize the Director of Public Health or his designee to execute any and all notices, certificates, applications, reports, spending plans, work plans, amendments, extensions, and other documentation as may be required to carry out the grant except those that alter fiscal or material change terms of the Grant which are subject to approval by both the County Counsel's Office and the Auditor-Controller/Treasurer-Tax Collector's Office;**

There is no additional Net County Cost associated with the recommended actions. Approval of the first recommended action approves the previous submittal of the 2021 California Resilience Challenge 2021 Grant Program application as it was received December 1, 2021 with a deadline of December 15, 2021. The Department submitted the application subject to your Board's approval. Approval of the second and third recommended actions would provide a total of \$176,938 to support collaborative efforts between the Department and the community to inform and develop a plan to identify, and build local resilience, to health impacts from extreme heat, drought and wildfires. The Department is calling this project, Fresno Understands Environmental Resilience Through Equity (FUERTE), with a focus on public health and the healthcare sector. Taking advantage of several partnerships and collaborations, the Department has made several connections to start the discussions and gain interest and support for this work which will help build a strong foundation for future work and synergistic collaboration for climate health in the San Joaquin Valley. FUERTE's primary deliverable will be to conduct a multi-component vulnerability and adaptation assessment among Fresno County's most vulnerable communities to draw on and expand on published methods to engage communities directly impacted by these hazards to account for the diversity of Fresno County's population to create a roadmap to work and reinforce health for residents and healthcare infrastructure for climate adaptability. This item is countywide.

ALTERNATIVE ACTION(S):

Your Board could choose to not approve the recommended actions withdraw the application and reject the

grant award. The County would then lose its ability to be a strong guiding voice in support of the FUERTE project including guiding the assessment and developing a resiliency plan that aligns with County needs.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no increase in Net County Cost associated with the recommended actions. The California Resilience Challenge 2021 Grant Program does not require matching funds. The maximum amount of the award is \$176,938 to cover estimated projects costs. Funds will be advanced in two installments and will be used based on completed activities. As the fiscal year is almost concluding and some of the deliverables will require procurement processes to be followed, the Department of Public Health will be evaluating related estimated costs in this fiscal year and will bring forward budget resolutions if it is deemed necessary. Sufficient appropriations and revenues will be included in subsequent Fiscal Year budget requests.

DISCUSSION:

Funds received through this grant will support existing efforts mandated through legislation aimed at climate resilience, which aims to anticipate and prepare for impacts to reduce the damage from extreme weather events, as well as chronic, long-term shifts, including those resulting from or aggravated by drought, flood, wildfire, extreme heat, and rising seas. Making plans today to assess and adapt will yield significant future benefits for public health, safety, infrastructure, the economy, and the environment. The County of Fresno's extraordinary geographic, economic, environmental and cultural diversity calls for an equally diverse array of climate adaptation projects.

The California Resilience Challenge (Challenge) is a statewide effort, led by businesses, utilities, and a diverse range of partners, to build local and regional climate resilience and to support a shared vision for a resilient California in the face of increasing climate threats. The Challenge is providing grants for diverse, replicable and innovative climate change adaptation planning projects across California. These projects will reflect California's diverse geography and showcase leadership in climate change adaptation.

The project proposed by the Department is the Fresno Understands Environmental Resilience Through Equity (FUERTE) Project. FUERTE is a collaborative project to reduce the health impacts brought on by extreme weather and disaster events in Fresno County. The Department proposes a community-engaged vulnerability and adaptation (V&A) assessment of Fresno County to inform the development of a plan to build local resilience to health impacts from extreme heat, drought, and wildfires.

The intensifying effects of extreme climate events pose a clear threat to the health and well-being of California residents, particularly those living in the Central Valley. Projections from the Cal Adapt (<https://cal-adapt.org/>) database for Fresno County show in the next 30 years:

- An increase in number of extreme heat days (>94.3 oF) by 22-30 days over the average
- An increase of 8-12,000 acres annually burned by wildfire over the average

According to CalEnviro Screen, a mapping and assessment tool created by the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment, a division of the California Environmental Protection Agency, the Central Valley also ranks the highest for burden of pollution from multiple sources that are exacerbated by climate change, including PM2.5 and water contamination (<https://oehha.ca.gov/>). Central Valley communities that already experience health disparities based on race, income, neighborhood, language, immigration status, and other factors are particularly vulnerable to climate-related health threats while also having more limited access to resources necessary to protect themselves. In addition, the County's topography makes it particularly vulnerable to other climate extremes, and these vulnerabilities with relation to health impacts will also be part of this assessment.

The Department proposes a partnership with a broad range of stakeholders to achieve three interdependent aims:

- Gather information about current health risks, capacities, and vulnerabilities to inform climate resilience planning, especially in vulnerable communities.
- Develop outreach and advocacy programs to engage county communities toward climate resilience.
- Cultivate a network of collaborating agencies and advisors as part of a newly formed FCDPH working group called C6 (Central California Climate Change Clinical Collaboration).

Approval of the recommended actions will allow the County to accept grant funding and the proposed FUERTE Project. The Department would begin to work with agencies, advisers, organizations, and the public as stakeholders in the creation of the vulnerability and adaptation assessment. The assessment will provide a roadmap of vulnerabilities within the county based on infrastructure, topography, demographics, and health indicators.

ATTACHMENTS INCLUDED AND/OR ON FILE:

On file with the Clerk - Grant Agreement with California Climate Challenge
On file with the Clerk - Climate Resiliency Challenge Grant Application

CAO ANALYST:

Ron Alexander