



Board Agenda Item 50

DATE: September 10, 2019

TO: Board of Supervisors

SUBMITTED BY: Steven E. White, Director
Department of Public Works and Planning

SUBJECT: Planning Grant Application for Additional Residential Property Connections - County Service Area No. 39, Zone AB

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Adopt Resolution authorizing the Director of the Department of Public Works and Planning to approve, execute, and submit a Financial Assistance Application to the California State Water Resources Control Board for the planning improvements (additional connections to the water system) necessary to the drinking facilities serving County Service Area No. 39, Zone A and B - Beran Way - Prospect/Grove; and designate authorized representatives to sign and file the application and other required instruments and to give required assurances, certifications and commitments for financial assistance planning to request (\$500,000).

Approval of the recommended action will authorize the Department of Public Works and Planning to submit a financial assistance planning grant application to the California State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB). The grant will fund planning and design of the improvements needed to connect additional residential properties to the water system serving County Service Area No. 39 Zones A and B - Beran Way - Prospect/Grove (CSA 39AB). If the SWRCB awards the planning grant, the Department will return to the Board with a district boundary change proceeding to include the additional properties, as well as a construction grant. This item pertains to a location in District 1.

ALTERNATIVE ACTION(S):

Your Board may choose not to approve the recommended action; however, it would require the residential properties attempting to connect to the CSA 39AB water system to find an alternative source of planning funds.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no Net County Cost associated with the recommended action. The planning grant for \$500,000 would fund the planning and design of system improvements necessary to connect 20 residential properties and a church to the water system. The grant will reimburse all associated costs related to the connections through funding agreements with the SWRCB, including Department staff time. If awarded in the current fiscal year, the Department will return to the Board with an agreement and budget resolution to increase appropriations and estimated revenues.

DISCUSSION:

The Board formed CSA 39AB in 1990 to provide domestic water service to two residential subdivisions west

of the City of Fresno (City), see Exhibit A, site map. There are 138 residential properties, West Park Elementary School, and a small market connected to CSA 39AB's water system. Potable water for the community is purchased from the City, delivered through two master meters, and distributed to each connection.

On March 1, 2016, the Board approved and authorized the Department to work with Self-Help Enterprises (SHE) to submit an application for a United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Emergency Community Water Assistance Grant, on behalf of CSA 39AB, to fund costs to connect seven residential properties that were outside the boundaries of CSA 39AB. The grant was not awarded because the USDA determined that the application had insufficient justification for an emergency water situation.

Since 2016, Department staff have attended several meetings with SHE and other interested parties, including owners of residential properties outside the boundaries of CSA 39AB. During the meetings, SHE has communicated the continued interest of the original seven residential property owners and several added property owners seeking to connect to CSA 39AB's water system, due to ongoing poor well water quality and/or wells running dry. To date, 21 property owners are requesting connection; two are within CSA 39AB boundaries. The 19 properties outside of CSA 39AB will require a Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) proceeding to be annexed into the CSA.

In October 2018, SHE requested that the County submit an application for a SWRCB Financial Assistance Planning Grant on behalf of the property owners to fund the planning and design of system improvements necessary to connect additional properties to the water system. SHE prepared the application and required supporting documentation with recommended modifications from the Department, on file with the Clerk. The application requests the maximum for a planning grant award. SHE conducted outreach to identify 21 property owners requesting connection, but it is possible that additional property owners could express interest between the time of application submission and award, a period of at least eight months, which is why the Department did not include the total number of connections in the recommended action. The Department cannot fully define the scope and design necessary to connect the properties; the work will be completed with awarded planning grant funds.

If SWRCB awards the planning grant, Department staff will retain an engineering consultant to assist with completion of the planning phase. The Department anticipates the planning phase will consist of a LAFCo proceeding to change the boundaries of CSA 39AB, a rate study and adoption proceeding in accordance with Proposition 218, and engineering design of system improvements necessary to connect additional properties. Budget permitting, improvements will include system-wide replacement of fire hydrants, installation of new water meters, and leak detection and repair. The planning phase will conclude with preparing the SWRCB construction grant application. The properties requesting connection must be finalized by construction grant submission, which will occur approximately two years from the approval of this agenda item.

REFERENCE MATERIAL:

BAI #43, March 1, 2016

ATTACHMENTS INCLUDED AND/OR ON FILE:

Exhibit A

On file with Clerk - SWRCB Resolution

On file with Clerk - SWRCB Planning Grant Application

CAO ANALYST:

Sonia M. De La Rosa