



City of Rialto

Legislation Details (With Text)

File #: 20-0940 **Version:** 1 **Name:**
Type: Agenda Item **Status:** Agenda Ready
File created: 1/14/2021 **In control:** City Council
On agenda: 1/26/2021 **Final action:**
Title: Request City Council to Approve the Submission of a Sustainable Communities Program Grant Application to the Southern California Association of Governments to Receive Technical and Administrative Assistance through the Housing and Sustainable Development Program.

Sponsors:

Indexes:

Code sections:

Attachments:

Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result
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For: City Council Meeting [January 26, 2021]
TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council
APPROVAL: Sean Grayson, Acting City Manager
FROM: Karen Peterson, Acting Community Development Director

Request City Council to Approve the Submission of a Sustainable Communities Program Grant Application to the Southern California Association of Governments to Receive Technical and Administrative Assistance through the Housing and Sustainable Development Program.

BACKGROUND

The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) released the Housing and Sustainable Development Call for Applications for 2020-2021. Through the Housing and Sustainable Development program, SCAG will provide local jurisdictions with technical and administrative assistance for projects that accelerate production of housing for all household types and income ranges. In addition, the program aspires to integrate and align housing goals with the region's adopted Sustainable Communities Strategy.

ANALYSIS/DISCUSSION

The City of Rialto is eligible to apply for a project to be completed by June 30, 2023. Eligible projects fall into three categories: Advancing Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) implementation; Housing Sustainability Districts, Workforce Housing Opportunity Zones, and Housing Supportive Tax Increment Financing Districts; and Objective Design Standards for Streamlined Housing, Prohousing Designation Program, and Parking Innovation. No matching funds are required.

The application process has become increasingly competitive in recent years. The most competitive projects will:

- Advance multiple planning goals, such as housing production near transit, increasing health and equity, and reducing vehicle miles traveled (VMT);
- Prioritize practical context-based needs;
- Innovate planning practices;
- Be clearly tied to accelerating housing production.

Staff has considered input from SCAG, evaluated Rialto's needs, and recommends the City update the Central Area Specific Plan and the Foothill Boulevard Specific Plan. Updating these planning documents can facilitate revitalization in core areas of the City, spur economic development, and promote development of high-quality housing that fits into the historic and hometown context of the City. In focusing on these documents, the City can plan to meet the increasing Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) and promote the production of diverse housing types to meet the needs of the elderly, families, the City's workforce, households in lower and moderate-income ranges, and others.

If awarded, the work effort would allow the City to explore alternative strategies to identify the most suitable for the City of Rialto. Strategies could include, but are not limited to, zoning more sites for residential and mixed uses, especially in proximity to the Metrolink Station and transit corridors, adopting objective form-based development standards, promoting of small-scale residential development, and infrastructure financing alternatives.

The next Regional Housing Needs Assessment allocation for Rialto is significantly higher than in previous cycles. This work effort will support the City in planning for additional housing needs, especially at higher densities, to comply with State Law. Funding this project would also complement the next Housing Element Update by assisting in identifying and implementing sites for additional housing production, amending land uses and regulations to accommodate additional units to be built by the private development community, and ensuring the City's policies and regulations are consistent with State Law. In addition, the project would positively contribute to revitalization of core areas of the City.

SCAG will provide for planning consultant services, SCAG staff resources, and technical assistance that will be directed by City staff. In addition, SCAG will be responsible for administrative procurement, contracting, and invoice processing while City staff would be responsible for non-administrative components of project management.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

Pursuant to Section 15378 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), a "Project" means the whole of an action, which has a potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment. Submittal of a grant application is not a project as defined by CEQA.

GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY

The activity is consistent with the Housing Element Goal 5-2 (Housing Availability and Production), which is to "promote and encourage housing development that adequately meets the needs of all socioeconomic segments of the community and region."

LEGAL REVIEW

The City Attorney has reviewed and supports this report.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Operating Budget Impact

There is no operating budget impact. SCAG would be responsible for funding the project and there are no matching funds required by the City. If granted, this will save the City the cost of updating two important planning documents, which is estimated at several hundred thousand dollars.

Capital Improvement Budget Impact

There is no capital improvement budget impact.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the City Council approve the submission of a grant application to the Southern California Association of Governments for updating the Central Area Specific Plan and the Foothill Boulevard Specific Plan.