

MENDOCINO COUNTY GRANTS UNIT SUMMARY – YEAR IN REVIEW

- **GRANT APPLICATIONS.** The County submitted over **\$118,000,000** in grants in 2023.
 - **\$ 50,116,590 - Wildfire Community Resilience Project – FEMA.** Wildfire mitigation project involving approximately 750 residential home retrofits using ignition-resistant construction materials, defensible space establishment, and hazardous fuels reduction to build community resiliency in the Sherwood Corridor. Match covered by the County's PrepareCA grant.
 - **\$5,907,296 - Rural EVCS Deployment Project, US Dept. of Transportation.** Proposes installation of up to sixteen (16) dual-port Level 2 EVCS and up to twenty (20) Level 3 DCFC EVCS at 10 sites to fill existing gaps in the current distribution of EVCS infrastructure in Mendocino County.
 - **\$328,570 - Multi-Jurisdiction Hazard Mitigation Plan, CalOES.** The project will result in a FEMA approved update of the County's Multi-Jurisdiction Hazard Mitigation Plan which was last approved in 2021 and is due for update in 2026. Match covered by the County's PrepareCA grant.
 - **\$10,000,000 - Community Wildfire Defense Grant, USDA Forest Service.** In October, the Grants Unit worked with DOT and Facilities to submit a \$10 million USDA Forest Service Community Wildfire Defense Grant Application. If awarded this five-year project, would implement aggressive vegetation management and hazardous tree removal throughout the County while building staff capacity through planning and capital equipment purchases.
 - **Catalyst Fund, California Jobs First.** The Grants Unit worked with Tony Rakes, DCEO, to submit a project idea for additional low-level design broadband planning in Mendocino County to Redwood Region Rise for their inventory of California Jobs First-aligned projects in November. Redwood Region Rise is soliciting proposed projects in the region that can be brought forward for \$14 million Catalyst funding from the State of California. Staff engages with the monthly Redwood Region Rise HRTC meetings.
 - **\$1,102,781 - Wildfire Prevention Grant Program, CalFire.** In December, the Grants Unit worked with the Prevention, Recovery, Resiliency, & Mitigation (PRRM) team to develop a \$1.25 million CalFire Wildfire Prevention Grant Program application to be submitted on 1/10/24. If awarded, this evacuation safety improvements project proposes safer evacuation routes and improved fire safety for communities along Old River Road and in the Branscomb Road corridor, improved evacuation planning throughout the County with an update to the Mendocino County Evacuation Plan, and vital County-led outreach and education activities throughout the year.
 - **\$692,581 - Flood Emergency Response Grant Program, Department of Water Resources.** The Grants Unit also worked with the PRRM team to develop and submit a \$692,581 pre-proposal to Department of Water Resources' (DWR) 2024 Flood Emergency Response Grant Program, which would enable improved planning and County response capabilities during climate hazards that could impact infrastructure, including dam failure or landslides caused by excessive rainfall, flooding, and severe storms.

- **\$50,383,900 – NOAA Climate Resilient Regional Challenge.** The County joined a multi-county collaborative led by the Sonoma Mendocino Economic Development District (SMEDD) to submit a Letter of Intent to the NOAA Climate Resilience Regional Challenge on 8/29/23 for the California North Coast Regional Resiliency Collaborative Project. Targets climate impacts posed by warming waters, rising seas, drought, and increased flooding through protection, restoration, and propagation of kelp forests, building economic resilience and supporting a just transition to a new climate reality, mitigation of estuarine flooding through enhanced ecosystem services and adaptation of critical harbor infrastructure and public access to rising seas, inspiring future generations of coastal stewards and facilitating cultural access for Tribal members. *(Not Awarded)*

- **GRANT MANAGEMENT**

- **Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)**
 - The Executive Office worked closely with Planning and Building Services to migrate management of identified CDBG grants to Executive Office staff.
 - Staff presented to the Board on 12/5/23 on the status of the CDBG program. The Board discussed the assignment of CDBG Program Income funds for FY 2023-2024, the development of eligible projects for the 2023/2024 Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) and provided direction to staff on using Program Income.
 - As part of CDBG's Public Participation Requirements, staff will solicit input on local community development needs and proposed activities via a public hearing on January 8, 2024. This hearing will be an opportunity to educate and inform residents regarding the program, provide a forum for community input, and obtain housing, economic and community development needs.
 - Identified needs and eligible project ideas will also be added to the proposed project list that will be presented to the Board at the regular board meeting on February 6, 2024.
 - In the February 2024 board meeting, staff will return to the Board of Supervisors to request final direction and approval on the project to be submitted to HCD for the 2023/2024 NOFA.
 - The 2023/2024 Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) will be released in late January 2024. It is expected that the NOFA will be for approximately \$19 million from 2023 CDBG funds for new over-the-counter infrastructure, public facilities, housing, or economic development "shovel-ready" projects. Jurisdictions will be limited to one application and a total award limit of \$3.25M.
 - With board direction, staff will develop and submit the County's application to HCD for the 2023/2024 NOFA by HCD deadlines.
- **Amplifund – Grant Management Software**
 - Amplifund, the County's new web-based grant management software, implementation moved forward as scheduled this year. Amplifund is

designed to streamline grant administrative tasks and maintain compliance with regulatory guidelines. Its key features include grant award tracking, expense, and budget tracking, due date tracking, impact measurement, and payment tracking.

- The Amplifund project team concluded process mapping interviews held in the Summer and Fall to survey a sampling of current department grant management processes to understand how the new grants management software can best be configured to meet the needs of the County's departments and identify potential grant project needs and grant management training needs.
 - Kelly Hansen of the Grants Unit and Trey Henson of IS lead the team.
- Meetings were successfully held with Air Quality, Department of Agriculture, Department of Transportation, Cannabis Department, General Service Agency, Probation Department, Child Support Services, Animal Care, Cultural Services Agency, District Attorney, Planning and Building and the Public Defender.
- To lay foundational skills in basic grant management principles, the Amplifund implementation team held two trainings (12/4/23 & 12/8/23) to provide grants management training open to all County departments.
- In mid-December (12/15/23), Phase One of the Amplifund rollout and training began with a select group of County Departments (GSA, CSA, Cannabis & Air Quality). Training will run through February.
- The Grants Unit is currently assisting General Services Agency to identify appropriate funding for fuels reduction work at county owned facilities and other funding needs. They also connected GSA with the Ukiah Valley Fire Chief to plan Ukiah's CWDG grant activities on County-owned property.
- The Grants Unit also provided assistance to the Cannabis Department with their recent Local Equity Entrepreneur Program (LEEP) Grant program audit, equity eligibility audit, and budget amendments. Grants also provided significant assistance with the Cannabis Department's Local Jurisdiction Assistance Program (LJAGP) Grant biannual report, program audit, program manual updates and budget amendments.
- During this period, the Grants Unit held the following seminars for staff:
 - Introduction to Marketing and Design
 - Fundamentals of Project Management
 - The Foundations of Grant Management
 - Unveiling the Amplifund Advantage