



AGENDA COVER MEMO

Memorandum Date: 11/18/2024

Order Date: 12/03/2024

TO: Board of County Commissioners

DEPARTMENT: County Administration, Policy Division

PRESENTED BY: Alex Dreher, Grant Strategy Manager

AGENDA ITEM TITLE: ORDER 24-12-03-01/ In the Matter of Accepting the FY24 Inflation Reduction Act Community Change Grant from the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for Lane County Transformation for Resiliency Through Equity and Engagement (Lane TREE), a partnership with United Way, to Invest in Six Facilities and Create a Network of Community Resilience Hubs and Delegating Authority to the County Administrator to Execute the Grant Award and Associated Contracts, Subcontracts, Subawards, and Related Documents.

I. MOTION

Move to accept the FY24 Inflation Reduction Act Community Change Grant from the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for Lane County Transformation for Resiliency Through Equity and Engagement (Lane TREE), a partnership with United Way, to invest in six facilities and create a network of community resilience hubs and delegate authority to the County Administrator to execute the grant award and associated contracts, subcontracts, subawards, and related documents.

II. AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

The Board is being asked to accept an FY24 Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Community Change Grant that will invest in six facilities to create a network of community resilience hubs to support residents during emergencies and during extreme events such as wildfires and heat waves.

III. BACKGROUND/IMPLICATIONS OF ACTION

A. Board Action and Other History

The Board of County Commissioners has discussed and taken many actions to

address hazard mitigation and community resilience. This includes establishing a climate change strategy for Lane County (Order/Resolution 20-02-04-04); a discussion on 3/31/2020 about the development of action initiatives related to climate and economic development; reviewing the draft FY19 Lane County Internal Operations Greenhouse Gas Inventory on 4/21/2020; and discussing climate change projections for Lane County and impacts of ocean acidification on 5/19/2020.

The Lane County Climate Advisory Committee was established with Board Orders 20-06-16-11 and 20-08-18-07. Citizen and Commissioner advisory members were appointed to the Climate Advisory Committee with Orders 20-09-16-01, 20-09-16-02, 21-11-09-06, 22-03-01-05, 22-03-15-02, 22-04-26-02. Lane County joined the County Climate Coalition on 8/18/2020.

A draft Climate Action Plan Phase 1: Operations Recommendations Report was discussed by the Board on 9/16/2020, and the final Climate Action Plan Phase 1: Operations Recommendations Report was adopted via Board Order 20-10-20-08.

A County-Wide Greenhouse Gas Inventory was discussed by the Board on 12/8/2020. On 12/7/2021 the Board discussed a draft Climate Action Plan Phase 2: Community Greenhouse Gas Mitigation Action Plan, approving the final Climate Action Plan Phase 2: Community Greenhouse Gas Mitigation Action Plan with orders 22-01-25-05 and 22-04-12-03.

The final phase of the Climate Action Plan, Phase 3: Community Climate Resilience Plan, was approved via order 22-12-13-08. With the completion of the Climate Action Plan, Lane Manual Chapter 3 was amended to remove the Climate Advisory Committee (Order 22-12-13-09).

The Board adopted the Lane County Multi-Jurisdictional Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan Version 4.0 via Board Order 23-10-10-12, which identifies community resilience hubs as a priority action item.

On 7/16/2024 the Board received a Climate Action Plan update wherein the EPA Community Change Grant award was referenced as one of many significant accomplishments to implement recommendations from the Climate Action Plan.

B. Policy Issues

Transformation for Resiliency Through Equity and Engagement (Lane TREE) Network funded by the EPA Community Change Grant will help make significant progress on several of the policy priorities enumerated in Lane County's Climate Action Plan.

As climate change affects weather patterns, Lane County faces increased risk from natural hazards, including smoke and polluted air, wildfires, extreme heat and cold, severe winter storms, and flooding induced by atmospheric rivers as well as drought due to decreased snowpack. The need to evacuate and shelter can

occur whether there is a direct risk or damage to households such as through wildfires or flooding, or if there is a systems failure, such as widespread power outages. Rural residents face an increasingly harsh climate with repeated disaster events. Since 2010, Lane County has been included in six Major Disaster Declarations and have evacuated or sheltered during each. These trends are accompanied by public health concerns. Air quality is increasingly hazardous, measured by the number of days where the Air Quality Index (AQI) is above 150, or unhealthy for all groups. Based on data from the Lane Regional Air Protection Agency, the county experienced on average 20 days of unhealthy air in four of the past six years, primarily from wildfire smoke.

Resilience Hubs are community-serving facilities augmented to support residents and coordinate resource distribution and services before, during, or after a natural hazard event. They leverage established, trusted, and community-managed facilities that are used year-round as neighborhood centers for community-building activities. The development of the Lane TREE Network of Hubs includes five complementary projects:

- 1) Renovate six existing community facilities to turn them into Resilience Hubs;
- 2) Engage local communities to inform the development of each Hub and surrounding resilience ecosystem;
- 3) Build the capacity of local organizations to participate in planning and better serve their community through targeted grants and technical assistance;
- 4) Support a diverse network of community members prepared to respond in a disaster and build resilience of their community year-round;
- 5) Improve emergency response by enhancing communication, coordination and cultural responsiveness.

C. Board Goals

The Lane TREE project aligns with Lane County Strategic Priority #4: “Our People and Organizational Health,” Objective C.4. “Enhance revenue for core services that impact the health and safety of our organization and community and pursue our legislative priorities that emphasize needed repairs or enhancements to systems.”

Resilience Hubs were identified and prioritized in the Lane County Climate Action Plan Phase 3: Climate Adaption and Resilience Plan and the Multi-Jurisdictional Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan (Action Item 04.1).

D. Financial and/or Resource Considerations

Accepting this grant will bring at least \$19,555,386 in federal revenue into the Lane County community including almost \$2.7 million for Lane County personnel and non-personnel costs. This grant award will also be used to leverage additional investments to bolster Lane County as a leading community in the

resilience and preparedness sphere. Lane TREE would invest in six Resilience Hubs, located in the Cities of Cottage Grove, Florence, Oakridge, and Veneta; and invest in community assets within the Bethel School District and those of Willamalane Parks and Recreation District in Springfield. Funds will also be used to support community-based organizations as they partner to create a coordinated resilience ecosystem within each targeted area and a coordinated Network across the county to build social and economic capacity, provide safe places during disasters, and improve the coordination and equity of disaster response.

E. Health Implications

The primary focus of the EPA Community Change Grant-funded project, “Lane TREE Network,” is to improve indoor air quality and community health. This will be achieved primarily by reducing exposure to wildfire smoke and other pollutants. Co-benefits anticipated include improvements to outdoor air quality by reducing energy consumption in homes and apartments, and by promoting the use of electric vehicles by installing EV charging stations.

Resilience Hubs will provide protection for the community from smoke and other forms of air pollution. Five of the six facilities that receive investments through this funding opportunity will make improvements that protect the air quality within the building through HVAC improvements and measures to seal the building envelope.

Lane County’s Mobile Public Health (MPH) team provides chronic disease management and brings public health services to disadvantaged community members living in the Hub network areas. This program will be able to use the Hubs as set locations from which to support measurement of lung function and other health assessments related to poor air quality and exposure to harmful environmental contaminants.

F. Analysis

Receipt of this grant award represents the outcome of years of diligent partnership, coordination, and collaboration among stakeholders via the Climate Advisory Committee and Lane Regional Resilience Collaborative (LRRC). Lane County plans to deepen its partnership with United Way of Lane County, who will act as the statutory partner for this grant. Working with the LRRC, the six facilities identified for resilience hub investments from the EPA Community Change Grant are Bethel School District’s Clearlake Elementary School, Willamalane Parks & Recreation District’s Bob Keefer Recreation Center, and public facilities in the Cities of Cottage Grove, Florence, Oakridge, and Veneta. These six locations will serve as the backbone Resilience Hubs for the Lane TREE project. Lane County submitted the application in March 2024 and was notified of selection for award in July 2024.

Recent natural hazard events and disasters in Lane County have threatened and impacted communities, cities, and unincorporated areas alike. As a result, Resilience Hubs were identified and prioritized in the county's Climate Action and Natural Hazard Mitigation Plans, developed in collaboration with community organizations and citizen advisory groups. There is a need for Resilience Hubs throughout the county, given its vast size and climate threats.

As climate change affects weather patterns, Lane County faces increased risk from natural hazards, including smoke and polluted air, wildfires, extreme heat and cold, severe winter storms, and flooding induced by atmospheric rivers as well as drought due to decreased snowpack. The 2020 Holiday Farm Fire destroyed over 500 structures and burned over 170,000 acres, producing some of the most hazardous air in the world for nearly two weeks. Recent successive ice storms in January 2024 caused significant damage to wide swaths of the County.

The need to evacuate and shelter can occur whether there is a direct risk or damage to households such as through wildfires or flooding, or if there is a systems failure, such as widespread power outages. The winter storms that struck Lane County in February 2019 and January 2024 demonstrated the vulnerability of rural infrastructure systems when some areas of the county were without electricity for 10 to 20 days. The built environment is older and the Oregon Department of Energy (ODOE) estimates that 70 percent of residences in Lane County lack adequate heating and cooling compared to 60 percent statewide. Infrastructure systems are increasingly vulnerable to stronger and more frequent storms.

Lane TREE Network will build welcoming, inclusive spaces that offer support, build community, and allow people to shelter safely. It is a strong cross sectoral partnership between United Way of Lane County (UWLC) and multiple programs within Lane County, including Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP), the Public Health Medical Reserve Corps (PHRC), and the Policy Division, which advances the Climate Action Plan (CAP) and supports the Office of Emergency Management (LCM).

Each local community will inform the functions of their Resilience Hub and surrounding ecosystem to meet their needs. County government and nonprofits will support these processes from their outset while working with communities to develop sustained operations past the three-year project period. With assistance from this funding, the Hubs will be equipped to activate during an emergency in coordination with disaster response.

G. Alternatives/Options

1. Accept the FY24 Inflation Reduction Act Community Change Grant from the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for Lane County Transformation for Resiliency Through Equity and Engagement (Lane TREE), and delegate authority to the County Administrator to execute the grant award and associated contracts, subcontracts, subawards, and related

documents.

2. Delay acceptance of grant award. Provide additional guidance to staff.

IV. RECOMMENDATION

Recommend acceptance of the FY24 Inflation Reduction Act Community Change Grant from the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for Lane County Transformation for Resiliency Through Equity and Engagement (Lane TREE), a partnership with United Way to invest in six facilities and create a network of community resilience hubs and Delegating Authority to the County Administrator to Execute the Grant and Associated Contracts and Documents.

V. TIMING/IMPLEMENTATION

Staff will initiate grant award and contract documents as directed.

VI. FOLLOW-UP

Staff will provide updates to the Board as needed.

VII. ATTACHMENTS

None.

BEFORE THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF LANE COUNTY, OREGON

ORDER NO. 24-12-03-01

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WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners adopted the Lane County Climate Action Plan Phase 3: Climate Adaption and Resilience Plan via Board Order 22-12-13-08, which identifies community resilience hubs as a strategic priority; and

WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners adopted the Lane County Multi-Jurisdictional Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan Version 4.0 via Board Order 23-10-10-12, and;

WHEREAS, the Lane County Multi-Jurisdictional Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan Version 4.0 identifies community resilience hubs as a priority action item; and

WHEREAS, Lane Transformation for Resiliency Through Equity and Engagement (TREE) would 1) Renovate six existing community facilities to turn them into Resilience Hubs; 2) Engage local communities to inform the development of each Hub and surrounding resilience ecosystem, 3) Build the capacity of local organizations to participate in planning and better serve their community through targeted grants and technical assistance, 4) Support a diverse network of community members prepared to respond in a disaster and build resilience of their community year-round, and 5) Improve emergency response by enhancing communication, coordination and cultural responsiveness; and

WHEREAS, the United States Environmental Protection Agency has notified Lane County that their application for FY24 Community Change Grant funds was selected for award;

NOW, THEREFORE, the Board of County Commissioners of Lane County **ORDERS** as follows:

1. Lane County accept the FY24 Inflation Reduction Act Community Change Grant from the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for Lane County Transformation for Resiliency Through Equity and Engagement (Lane TREE), a partnership with United Way, to invest in six facilities and create a network of community resilience hubs, and;
2. The County Administrator is delegated authority to execute the grant award, associated contracts, subcontracts, subawards, and related documents.

ADOPTED this 3rd day of December, 2024.

Laurie Trieger, Chair
Lane County Board of Commissioners