

February 7, 2023

C-7

HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
City of Long Beach
California

RECOMMENDATION:

Authorize the City Manager, or designee, to execute all necessary documents, including subsequent amendments, with the California Energy Commission to receive and expend grant funding in the amount of \$100,000 to establish online solar permitting as part of the California Automated Permit Processing Program, for the period of November 18, 2022 through May 31, 2027; and,

Increase appropriations in the Development Services Fund Group in the Development Services Department by \$100,000, offset by grant revenue.
(Citywide)

DISCUSSION

On June 1, 2022, the State of California Energy Commission released a Grant Funding Opportunity for grants authorized under provisions of Senate Bill (SB) 129 for the California Automated Permit Processing Program (CalAPP). The purpose of CalAPP is to provide funding to California cities and counties to establish online, automated solar permitting to help meet clean energy goals by accelerating processing of permits for residential solar and solar-plus-storage systems.

On November 15, 2022 the City Council requested that the City Manager and Development Services Department (Department) report back on how to update and streamline solar installation, permitting and inspection processes. The Department remains engaged in this work and one intermediate step is the acceptance of a grant to further enhance the City of Long Beach (City) online solar permit process.

The Department applied for, and was awarded, a \$100,000 CalAPP grant which will, if accepted, be used to support development and implementation of an online platform that provides automated review for residential solar energy systems, including compliance checks and online payments. This platform already exists in beta form but will be refined and expanded through the grant.

The online platform will enhance permitting processes and accelerate plan review turnaround times because the platform will support the automated generation of permits by standardizing requirements and checking for code issues at the time of project submittal. Implementation of the platform supports the City of Long Beach's (City) compliance with SB 379, which establishes maximum permit processing deadlines and encourages new residential solar photovoltaic and energy storage system installations

HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

February 7, 2023

Page 2 of 2

and assists the City with meeting its Climate Action Plan goal to increase the use and storage of solar power.

This matter was reviewed by Deputy City Attorney Erin Weesner-McKinley on January 18, 2023 and Revenue Management Officer Geraldine Alejo on January 9, 2023.

TIMING CONSIDERATIONS

City Council action is requested on February 7, 2023, to receive and expend grant funding expeditiously.

FISCAL IMPACT

The City will receive grant funding in the amount of \$100,000 to establish an online solar permitting system. An appropriation increase in the amount of \$100,000 is requested in the Development Services Fund Group in the Department, offset by grant revenue. The grant has no required match or in-kind service mandate. The recommendation has no staffing impact beyond the normal budgeted scope of duties and is consistent with existing City Council priorities. The number of additional local jobs associated with this recommendation is unknown.

SUGGESTED ACTION:

Approve recommendation.

Respectfully submitted,



CHRISTOPHER KOONTZ
DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

APPROVED:



THOMAS B. MODICA
CITY MANAGER