



City of Santa Ana
20 Civic Center Plaza, Santa Ana, CA 92701
Staff Report
April 18, 2023

TOPIC: California Automatic Processing Program (CalAPP) Grant

AGENDA TITLE

Adopt a Resolution to Authorize the City Manager to Accept the California Automated Permit Processing Program Grant in the Amount of \$100,000 and Execute the Grant Agreement with the State of California Energy Commission, and Approve an Appropriation Adjustment Recognizing Funds

RECOMMENDED ACTION

1. Adopt a resolution authorizing the City Manager to accept and execute the Grant Agreement (APP-22-045) with the State of California Energy Commission (CEC) to receive a \$100,000 grant award under the California Automated Permit Processing (CalAPP) Program.
2. Approve an appropriation adjustment recognizing the CalAPP grant funds, in the amount of \$100,000, to revenue account number and appropriate same to expenditure account numbers. (*Requires five affirmative votes*)

DISCUSSION

CalAPP is a grant program managed by the CEC to assist local governments in California with implementing an online automated solar permitting platform to streamline the solar permitting process. The program was authorized with the passage of Senate Bill 129 (Skinner, 2021). In 2022, the implementation of such a system became mandatory for all local jurisdictions with the passage of Senate Bill 379 (Wiener, 2022). Available funding varies from \$40,000 to a maximum of \$100,000 based on the population size of the local jurisdiction. Applicants whose population is greater than 200,000 are eligible for the maximum \$100,000 award.

Building staff submitted the grant application on November of 2022, and was notified by the CEC on January 2023, of a grant award in the maximum amount of \$100,000. To receive the grant funding, it is necessary for the City Council to adopt a resolution authorizing actions by the City to accept, appropriate, and obligate the grant funds. Under the agreement, the City has until March 30, 2027, to submit all invoices and the grant terminates on May 31, 2027. The grant requires the implementation of an online automated solar permitting platform that automates project plan review, verifies code

compliance, and issues permits in real time for a solar energy system. A local jurisdiction has the option of implementing the SolarAPP+ software or propose a similar permitting tool to be developed by the City and separately vetted by CEC for compliance.

SolarAPP+ is a web-based portal developed by the National Renewable Energy Laboratory, a national laboratory of the U.S. Department of Energy. The platform has been vetted, pre-approved, and deemed by CEC to fulfill all the requirements of the grant. The City reviewed the functionalities of the SolarAPP+ platform and found it to be compatible with the land management system the City is developing and opted to submit the grant application to implement the CEC preapproved SolarAPP+ platform in order to streamline the implementation process.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

Implementation of an online-automated solar permitting platform will streamline the local solar permitting process and will reduce reliance on non-renewable energy. This will not result in any significant effect on the environment. Accordingly, the project is exempt from the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3) of the CEQA Guidelines as amended.

FISCAL IMPACT

Approval of the appropriation adjustment will recognize \$100,000 in funds from the CEC to revenue account (13116002-52025) and appropriate same to expenditure accounts (nos. 13116500-various).

Fiscal Year	Accounting Unit-Account #	Fund Description	Accounting Unit, Account Description	Amount
FY 23-24	13116500-various	Miscellaneous Grants	CA Automated Permit Program - Various	\$100,000.00
TOTAL				\$100,000.00

All funds are scheduled for expenditure in Fiscal Year 2023-24; however, any remaining balances not expected at the end of the fiscal year will be carried forward into FY 202425 for expenditure.

EXHIBIT(S)

1. Resolution
2. Grant Agreement and Exhibits

Submitted By: Minh Thai, Executive Director of Planning and Building Agency

Approved By: Kristine Ridge, City Manager