



# City of Culver City

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## Staff Report

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**File #:** 20-1056, **Version:** 1

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**CC - Adoption of a Resolution Authorizing Application for Local Government Planning Support Grant Program Funds in the Amount of \$150,000 to support a Focused Study of the Sepulveda Boulevard Corridor, informing the General Plan Update Land Use Element.**

**Meeting Date:** June 22, 2020

**Contact Person/Dept:** Ashley Hefner/Advance Planning

**Phone Number:** (310) 253-5744

**Fiscal Impact:** Yes ☐ No ☒ **General Fund:** Yes ☐ No ☐

**Public Hearing:** ☐ **Action Item:** ☐ **Attachments:** ☒

**Commission Action Required:** Yes ☐ No ☒ **Date:**

**Public Notification:** (E-Mail) Meetings and Agendas - City Council (06/18/2020)

**Department Approval:** Sol Blumenfeld, Community Development Director (06/11/2020)

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### **RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends the City Council adopt a resolution authorizing application for Local Government Planning Support Grant Program funds in the amount of \$150,000 to support a focused study of the Sepulveda Boulevard Corridor informing the Land Use and Housing Elements in the General Plan Update.

### **BACKGROUND**

Increasing the availability of affordable homes statewide is critical to improving the quality of life of all Californians and to ending homelessness. In the 2019-20 Budget Act, Governor Gavin Newsom allocated \$250 million for all regions, cities, and counties to do their part by prioritizing planning activities that accelerate housing production to meet identified housing needs of every community. With this allocation, HCD established the Local Early Action Planning Grant Program (LEAP) with \$119 million for cities and counties. LEAP provides one-time grant funding to cities and counties to update their planning documents and implement process improvements that will facilitate the acceleration of housing production and help local governments to prepare for their Sixth Cycle Regional Housing Need Assessment (RHNA) much like the Senate Bill 2 (SB 2) Planning Grants.

The 2019-20 Budget Act provides incentives, resources, and accountability to meet California's housing goals. Some specific elements include:

- Local and regional planning grants (LEAP and SB2 Planning Grants)
- Prohousing preference points on competitive funding applications
- Additional funding resources
- Accountability (penalties for non-compliant housing plans)
- Reform (collaborative processes to reform regional housing needs)

On August 12, 2019, the City Council authorized staff to apply for SB 2 grant funds through HCD in order to facilitate work on the Housing Element as part of the General Plan Update. SB 2 grants will make funding available to local governments in California for the preparation, adoption and implementation of plans that streamline housing approvals and accelerate housing production. The City was awarded the full amount requested of \$82,500.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Program Objective**

The principal goal of the LEAP grant is to make grant awards and provide technical assistance available to local governments in California for the preparation and adoption of planning documents and process improvements that accelerate housing production and facilitate compliance with the Sixth-Cycle RHNA.

### **Eligible Applicants**

The LEAP Grant requires applicants to have an eligible project that demonstrates a nexus to accelerate housing production.

### **Eligible Activities**

Eligible activities must demonstrate an increase in housing related planning activities and facilitate accelerated housing production and may include a smaller geography with a significant impact on housing production which may include:

- Planning documents for a smaller geographic area (less than jurisdiction-wide) with a significant impact on housing production, including an overlay district, project level specific plan, or development standards modifications proposed for significant areas of a locality, such as corridors, downtown or priority growth areas
- Rezoning and encouraging development by updating planning documents and zoning ordinances, such as General Plans, community plans, specific plans, implementation of sustainable communities' strategies, and local coastal programs
- Other planning documents or process improvements that demonstrate an increase in housing related planning activities and facilitate accelerating housing production

### **Proposed Activity**

The City is seeking grant funding under LEAP to support new and expanded housing production along the Sepulveda Boulevard Corridor from the city's northerly boundary to the southerly boundary. This includes planning around two potential Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) transit stations at Venice Boulevard and Sepulveda Boulevard and Hannum/Slauson/Sepulveda Boulevard. Much of the Sepulveda Boulevard Corridor has been a backwater to reinvestment and the economic realities

brought on by the pandemic suggest that the City rethink traditional area land use and study the opportunity for creating new transit focused neighborhoods of housing, retail and support services.

The Sepulveda Corridor is widely served by several bus lines and the focus of mass transit plans being prepared in LA Metro's Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project. It is also a transit priority area in the City's Transportation Study Criteria and Guidelines (anticipated City Council adoption on June 22, 2020). The LEAP grant will enable the City to study the precise location and extent of new residential development in this area in greater detail than the Housing Element currently being updated. The preliminary scope of the study includes:

- Engagement of Sepulveda Corridor stakeholders
- Evaluation of the economic resilience and the future of retail along the corridor in light of pandemic impacts
- Assessment of methods to maximize new residential development in the area related to existing and new transit opportunities
- Assessment of specific properties that should be repurposed for residential and mixed use development
- Preparation of design studies of select parcels based on the corridor typology
- Identification of incentives, standards, and fees that may impact residential development
- Financial feasibility analysis of potential residential and mixed use development in the areas to determine what changes may be needed to promote housing production

The grant study findings will be used to inform the update of the Land Use Element for the area along the Sepulveda Corridor relative to potential land use and zoning changes, development standards modifications, and incentives to promote housing production.

#### Award Amount

The LEAP award amounts are based on population estimates as of January 1, 2019. The minimum award amount is \$25,000. The City of Culver City is eligible to apply for up to \$150,000 as a small jurisdiction (population 20,000-59,999).

#### Program TimeLine

The following provides a summary of the LEAP Grant timeline:

- NOFA release - January 27, 2020
- Applications due - July 1, 2020
- Awards - Made on a rolling over-the-counter basis upon application review
- Technical assistance - February 2020 through December 31, 2023
- Expenditure deadline - December 31, 2023

### **FISCAL ANALYSIS**

There is no fiscal impact related to the submission of a grant application. In the event the City Council approves the recommended motion, there will be costs associated with staff time and resources. If the full grant funding is awarded from HCD, the amount of \$150,000 will support the focused study of the Sepulveda Corridor, informing the General Plan Update Land Use Element.

There is no match requirement with this grant.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

1. 2020-06-22\_Proposed Resolution Authorizing Application for HCD LEAP Grant
2. 2020-06-22\_HCD LEAP Grant Notice of Funding Availability

## **MOTION**

That the City Council:

1. Adopt a resolution authorizing application for Local Government Planning Support Grant Program funds in the amount of \$150,000 to support a focused study of the Sepulveda Corridor, informing the General Plan Update Land Use Element;
2. Authorize the City Attorney to review/prepare the necessary documents; and
3. Authorize the City Manager to execute such documents on behalf of the City.