



City Council Memorandum

City of Arts & Innovation

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL DATE: MAY 7, 2024

FROM: COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT WARDS: ALL
DEPARTMENT

**SUBJECT: A RESOLUTION TO ACCEPT \$100,000 IN GRANT FUNDS AND
AUTHORIZATION TO ENTER INTO A STANDARD AGREEMENT WITH THE
STATE OF CALIFORNIA ENERGY COMMISSION FOR THE “CALIFORNIA
AUTOMATED PERMIT PROCESSING PROGRAM - CALAPP” TO COMPLY
WITH SENATE BILL 379 AND FUND AN ONLINE, AUTOMATED PERMITTING
PLATFORM FOR RESIDENTIAL SOLAR PERMITS – SUPPLEMENTAL
APPROPRIATION**

ISSUE:

Approve a Resolution to accept up to \$100,000 in grant funds and authorization to enter into a standard agreement with the State of California Energy Commission for the “California Automated Permit Processing Program - CalAPP” to comply with senate bill 379 and fund an online, automated permitting platform for residential solar permits.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the City Council:

1. Authorize a Resolution for the acceptance of up to \$100,000 in Grant funds and authorization to enter into a Standard Agreement with the State of California Energy Commission to implement the California Automated Permit Processing Program (CalAPP);
2. With at least five affirmative votes, authorize the Chief Financial Officer or designee, to record an increase in revenue in an amount of \$100,000, and appropriate expenditures in the same amount in the Grants and Restricted Programs Fund, California Automated CalAPP Grant revenue and expenditure accounts; and
3. Authorize the City Manager or designee to execute all documents related to the application and administration of the CalAPP Grant including any applications, Standard Agreements, extensions, etc., making minor corrections as necessary.

BACKGROUND:

Approved by Governor Newsom on September 16, 2022, Senate Bill 379 requires most California

cities and counties to implement an online, automated permitting platform that issues permits in real time for solar energy systems.

In April of 2023 the City of Riverside was awarded a grant not to exceed \$100,000 and available for liquidation until June 30, 2027 by the State of California Energy Commission as part of the CalAPP Program to aid in complying with SB379.

DISCUSSION:

To meet its clean energy goals, California needs to facilitate new, renewable clean energy resources, including rooftop solar and storage systems. Achieving 100% clean energy in California requires an acceleration of the development of rooftop solar projects. CalAPP funding is intended to encourage cities and counties to further enhance permitting processes and accelerate turnaround times, particularly regarding plan review. Overall, funding is intended to promote the development of residential solar and solar-plus-storage systems, greatly decreasing approval times, cutting permitting costs for local governments and homeowners, and helping California meet its greenhouse gas emission reduction goals through an easier installation process.

The funding will be used to further enhance the City's permit tracking software (POSSE LMS) interface with the SolarAPP + system to help ensure a seamless process that captures all needed data in a timely manner while expediting solar permits online.

The City issues approximately 1,000 solar permits annually. Roughly 80% of those projects are small residential solar systems that may benefit from this streamlining effort.

The grant documents require that the city have an authorizing resolution in place for funding of the awarded grant. No matching funds are required for this grant.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

The State of California Energy Commission for the "California Automated Permit Processing Program (CalAPP)" contributes to **Priority 4 - Environmental Stewardship** and the following goals:

- **Goal 4.1:** Rapidly decrease Riverside's carbon footprint by acting urgently to reach a zero-carbon electric grid with the goal of reaching 100% zero-carbon electricity production by 2040 while continuing to ensure safe, reliable and affordable energy for all residents.
- **Goal 4.6:** Implement the requisite measures to achieve citywide carbon neutrality no later than 2040.

This item aligns with each of the five Cross-Cutting Threads as follows:

1. **Community Trust** – The CalAPP Program will provide opportunities that will benefit residents in the City of Riverside through the support of cost-effective methods of generating solar permits in real time for customers seeking solar energy systems.
2. **Equity** – The CalAPP Program will help the City continue to evaluate how solar can assist in achieving carbon neutrality minimizing impacts to all customers, specifically considering ease of access, and equity to all.

3. **Fiscal Responsibility** – Leveraging the CalAPP grant will benefit the city and its customers by allowing us to support and create the most cost effective and streamlined method of providing solar energy to our community.
4. **Innovation** – The CalAPP Program will provide cutting edge technology and innovation for solar opportunities by providing an automated permitting platform that verifies code compliance instantly and issues permits in real time for solar energy systems.
5. **Sustainability & Resiliency** – This project will improve the longevity of our infrastructure by continuing to develop green technology solutions that will help achieve citywide carbon neutrality in the future.

FISCAL IMPACT:

If awarded, the total fiscal impact of this action is up to \$100,000. No City matching funds are required. Upon grant award and City Council approval, an increase in revenue and an appropriation of expenditures in the amount of grant award will be recorded as outlined in the table below.

Fund	Program	Account	Amount
Grants & Restricted Programs	California Automated Permit Processing Program (CalAPP)	<i>Revenue</i>	
		9351200-334100	\$100,000
		<i>Expenditures</i>	
		9351200-440210	\$100,000

Prepared by:	Steve Coffey, Business Systems Manager
Approved by:	Jennifer A. Lilley, Community & Economic Development Director
Certified as to availability of funds:	Kristie Thomas, Finance Director/Assistant Chief Financial Officer
Approved by:	Rafael Guzman, Assistant City Manager
Approved as to form:	Phaedra A. Norton, City Attorney

Attachments:

1. Resolution
2. Standard Agreement
3. Grant Agreement