



County of San Mateo

Inter-Departmental Correspondence

Department: COUNTY MANAGER: OFFICE OF SUSTAINABILITY

File #: 23-681

Board Meeting Date: 8/1/2023

Special Notice / Hearing: None
Vote Required: 4/5ths

To: Honorable Board of Supervisors
From: Carolyn Bloede, Director, Office of Sustainability
Subject: **Measure K:** Agreement with San Mateo Resource Conservation District for Administration of the Forest Health and Fire Resiliency Program

RECOMMENDATION:

Measure K: Recommendation to:

- A) Adopt a resolution authorizing the execution of an agreement with the San Mateo Resource Conservation District for administration of the Forest Health and Fire Resiliency Program for the term of August 1, 2023 to June 30, 2025 for an amount not to exceed \$400,000; and
- B) Authorize the Director of the Office of Sustainability, or the Director's designee, to execute contract amendments to modify the County's maximum fiscal obligation by no more than \$25,000 (in aggregate) and/or modify the contract term and/or services if the modified term of services is/are within the current or revised fiscal provision; and
- C) Approve an Appropriation Transfer Request (ATR) transferring \$400,000 of **Measure K** funds from the County Executive's Office to the Office of Sustainability to fund certain wildfire resiliency measures to be provided under the Agreement; and

BACKGROUND:

The San Mateo Resource Conservation District (RCD) is a special district within San Mateo County that provides comprehensive and integrated resource conservation services for the local community related to wildlife, water, climate change, and agriculture. The RCD has been at the forefront of reducing fire risk by supporting fire recovery, forest health, and fire resilience programs. This work is accomplished by working in close partnership with local agencies, organizations, and communities to provide the Neighborhood Chipper Program and other fire resiliency services including community engagement, technical assistance and education, strategic fuel break project support, and landscape fuels treatment and vegetation management.

District-discretionary **Measure K** funding has been previously provided to the RCD to support these efforts in San Mateo County. On March 26, 2019, a \$175,500 agreement for Wildfire Risk Reduction was awarded (Resolution No. 076501). On August 15, 2020, a \$150,000 agreement was awarded for post CZU fire recovery and implementation of the Neighborhood Chipping Program (Resolution No. 077794). On February 22, 2022, a \$400,000 agreement was awarded for the Forest Health and Fire Resiliency Program (Resolution No. 078732) of which \$100,000 was **Measure K** monies and \$300,000 was Net County Cost. On December 13, 2022, the February 22, 2022 agreement was amended to add \$405,000 of **Measure K** funds and to extend the term to June 30, 2023 (Resolution No. 079388).

Through these agreements, the RCD's forest health and fire resiliency efforts have effectively reduced wildfire risks along the coast, in rural areas, and the forested lands of San Mateo County. A few of the many accomplishments are listed below.

- Over \$13 million in additional funding was leveraged to support forest health and fire resiliency efforts in the County.
- The Neighborhood Chipper program has served over a dozen communities each year with roughly 4,500 homes served since 2019.
- Shaded fuel breaks and hazardous trees were removed across 100 acres of Quarry Park and project planning occurred for a 19-mile shaded fuel break around the community of La Honda.
- A wildfire risk assessment was completed for the community of El Granada and project planning for approximately 2,100 acres of forest health work in Butano State Park was completed.

DISCUSSION:

The proposed agreement with the RCD continues this critical work of the Forest Health and Fire Resiliency Program from August 1, 2023 through June 30, 2025. It will support the continued administration of the Neighborhood Chipping Program and critical projects in the realm of strategic fuel breaks, landscape fuels treatment, and vegetation management. Additionally, RCD will continue to seek grants for fire mitigation, provide technical assistance for property owners to reduce fire risk throughout the County, and provide technical services to County landowners on streamlining permitting, hazard tree removal, and fuel load reduction. The RCD will leverage broad public engagement where appropriate and will continue to connect stakeholders for an integrated approach to forest health and fire resiliency.

This agreement with the RCD will allow for a minimum of 15 communities (~275 to 550 homes/year) to receive chipping services one to two times per year. Additionally, the RCD will work on developing plans and permits for a minimum of three projects that reduce wildfire risk along the San Mateo County coast, such as strategic fuel breaks, prescribed burns, vegetation management, and landscape fuels treatment. Finally, the RCD will continue to advance permit streamlining tools to increase the pace and scale of fire resiliency work in San Mateo County and the region.

The ATR presented to this Board for appropriation of the **Measure K** funds has been approved by the County Executive and Controller or their authorized designees. The resolution contains the County's standard provision allowing amendment of the County's fiscal obligations by a maximum of \$25,000 (in aggregate). The resolution has been reviewed and approved by County Attorney as to form.

PERFORMANCE MEASURE:

Measure		
Continuation of the San Mateo Fire Safe Council's Chipper Program, permit streamlining, and support of fire resiliency related project development.	\$400,000	Provide chipping services to approximately 15 communities a year. Advance streamlined permitting initiatives related to CEQA, Coastal Commission, and resource agency permits. Develop a minimum of three projects.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Measure K funds will be allocated in the FY 2023-24 Adopted Budget for this specific \$400,000 **Measure K** request. The ATR will transfer **Measure K** funds in the amount of \$400,000 from the County Executive's Office to the Office of Sustainability.

ATTACHMENTS:

- Agreement with the San Mateo Resource Conservation District for administration of the Forest Health and Fire Resiliency Program
- Resolution authorizing the execution of an agreement with the San Mateo Resource Conservation District