



Mendocino County

Legislation Text

File #: 19-0899, **Version:** 1

To: Board of Supervisors

From: Supervisor Brown

Meeting Date: October 1, 2019

Department Contact: Supervisor Carre Brown

Phone: 463-4221

Department Contact: Jim Donnelly

Phone: 234-6830

Item Type: Consent Agenda

Agenda Title:

Adoption of Resolution Authorizing the Filing of an Application for Grant Funding from the State of California Department of Conservation's Agricultural Lands Conservation Program, a Component of the Strategic Growth Council's Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities Program Administrated by the Department of Conservation, in Conjunction with the Natural Resources Agency and Authorizing the Mendocino County Agricultural Commissioner to Act as Agent to Accept Any Award of Grant Funding and Execute and Submit Any Necessary Related Documents on Behalf of Mendocino County if Awarded
(Sponsor: Supervisor Brown)

Recommended Action/Motion:

Adopt resolution authorizing the filing of an application for grant funding from the State of California Department of Conservation's Agricultural Lands Conservation Program, a component of the Strategic Growth Council's Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities Program administrated by the Department of Conservation, in conjunction with the Natural Resources Agency and authorizing the Mendocino County Agricultural Commissioner to act as agent to accept any award of grant funding and execute and submit any necessary related documents on behalf of Mendocino County if Awarded; and authorize the Chair to sign the same.

Previous Board/Board Committee Actions:

The Mendocino County Board of Supervisors during the FY 19/20 Budget Hearing on June 5th (agenda item 5 (a) attachment 1) approved to support the grant application with a match of \$10,000 allocated to the Department of Agriculture budget under Special Departmental Expenditures.

Summary of Request:

The proposed project, entitled "Mendocino County Sustainable Agricultural Land Conservation Program" will build upon the Mendocino County Sustainable Agricultural Lands Strategy 2017 3 (Ag Lands Strategy) developed under a 2016 planning grant funded by the California Department of Conservation. The goal of that Ag Lands Strategy was to gather data and conduct a planning assessment to document the agricultural status of Mendocino County and to protect agricultural lands from conversion to non-agricultural uses. The goals of this project are to protect valuable agricultural lands while also supporting sustainable housing development and build a sustainable and resilient agricultural community through promotion of climate beneficial farming practices that sequester carbon and reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. The proposed project will assist

the County of Mendocino and project partners in achieving these goals by moving forward with key action items recommended in the Ag Lands Strategy and by building community support for a growth management program that acknowledges the value of both housing and important ag land and includes reasonable urban growth boundaries. Recommended action items that will be implemented through the proposed project include the development of an agricultural component for a future countywide Climate Action Plan, the scaling up of a Carbon Farm Plan and Soil Health program, and increasing landowner participation in the Williamson Act and conservation easement programs. In addition, the project will collaborate with the housing development community, conduct an education and outreach campaign aimed at raising community awareness about ag land values, and embrace residential development strategies that include consideration for impacts on agricultural lands.

The project is being proposed at a pivotal time in Mendocino County. Like much of California, Mendocino County faces a significant housing shortage which has increased conversion pressure on agricultural lands. This issue has been further compounded by the loss of over 8,000 homes in the Northern California region due to wildfires over the last three years. Several proposals for re-zoning of agricultural land are currently under review in the Ukiah Valley, the County's largest municipality. The Ag Lands Strategy determined that many farmers were unfamiliar with the specifics of conservation programs and recommended an outreach campaign to raise awareness about the benefits of agricultural land preservation programs. The sense of urgency for new housing developments has overshadowed public discussion of the economic and environmental benefits that ag land provides. This project would stimulate a more thorough investigation of alternatives such as in-fill. The completion of the Ag Lands Strategy and the initiation of a Climate Action Plan presents a new opportunity to engage Mendocino County residents, farmers and public officials in a growth management effort that balances housing needs with agricultural protection. The proposed project will be accomplished through a collaboration between the Mendocino County Department of Agriculture (applicant) and the Mendocino County Sustainable Ag Lands Committee. Mendocino County does not have an Open Space District which makes this Committee an important conduit in developing ag land preservation strategies. Committee members include the Mendocino County Department of Agriculture (Ag Dept), Mendocino County Resource Conservation District (MCRCD), Mendocino County Board of Supervisors (BOS rep), Mendocino Land Trust (MLT), Inland Mendocino County Land Trust(IMCLT), Anderson Valley Land Trust (AVLT), Mendocino Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO), USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Mendocino County Farm Bureau, and local farmers and residents.

The Agricultural Land Conservation Planning Grant Application was submitted to the Sustainable Agricultural Lands Conservation Program, a component of the Strategic Growth Council's Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities Program administrated by the Department of Conservation, in conjunction with the Natural Resources Agency. The State funding source is allocated through the California Climate Investments Program.

Alternative Action/Motion:

Do not adopt Resolution.

Supervisory District: All

vote requirement: Majority

Supplemental Information Available Online At: n/a

Fiscal Details:

source of funding: Grant award and match funding of \$10,000

current f/y cost: N/A

annual recurring cost: None

budgeted in current f/y: Yes

if no, please describe:

revenue agreement: N/A

budget clarification: N/A

Agreement/Resolution/Ordinance Approved by County Counsel: Yes

CEO Liaison: Executive Office

CEO Review: Yes

CEO Comments:

FOR COB USE ONLY

Executed By: Lindsey Dunham, Deputy Clerk I

Date: October 3, 2019

Final Status:**Adopted**

Executed Item Number: **Resolution** Number:
19-349

