



Kate Harrison
Councilmember District 4

CONSENT CALENDAR
October 29, 2019

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
From: Councilmembers Harrison and Hahn
Subject: Budget Referral: Allocate \$27,000 from the General Fund to Secure Potential Matching State Certified Local Government Landmarks Preservation Grants

RECOMMENDATION

Refer to the FY 2021 November Budget Process to allocate \$27,000 from the General Fund to secure potential matching state Certified Local Government landmarks preservation grant.

BACKGROUND

Each year the State of California Office of Historic Preservation (SHPO) allocates Federal funds to local governments through its Certified Local Government (CLG) Grant program.¹ The program is funded by the federal Historic Preservation Fund Grants Program. Berkeley is an eligible CLG city.

Grant proposals may include a historic study or documentation of a neighborhood, or a specific historic building project, or other types of preservation activities. The CLG grants are often used to hire expert consultants to conduct studies or prepare reports that can support local preservation work by the City.

Although the grants are competitive, not every city or county in California has a historic preservation ordinance, a requirement which limits the pool of applicants. According to current Berkeley Landmarks Preservation (LPC) commissioners, certain preference is also given to cities such as Berkeley that have not applied in recent years.

The City last received a CLG grant for the 2014/2015 fiscal year which was used to successfully prepare a Historic Context Statement for Downtown Berkeley. For the past two years the Berkeley LPC has unanimously supported applying for a grant, but without matching funds identified well in advance of the submission deadline, it proved impossible to prepare a successful application.

The details of the 2020/21 grant cycle have not yet been announced, but for several years the SHPO has allocated up to \$40,000 per grant, and required a local match of

¹ 2019-2020 CLG Grant Program, California Department of Parks and Recreation,
http://ohp.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=24493.

40%, or approximately \$27,000. With a state grant, the City would have a total budget of \$67,000. Grant applications are typically due by May 1, and funds are awarded in the summer and are made available for disbursement by October 1.

Possible themes for a grant application which would be relevant to Berkeley, including for city-owned buildings, include:

- Design Guidelines for Historic Properties
- Historic Structure Reports / Preservation Plans
- Historic Context Studies and Surveys
- National Register of Historic Places District applications
- Archaeological Preservation Plans / Ordinances
- Preservation Education and Outreach Programs

The LPC already has a subcommittee established to generate grant proposals and welcomes suggestions from Councilmembers with regard to geographical or topical areas of focus. The LPC plans to adopt specific grant proposals in early 2020.

Council would vote on the LPC grant proposal in spring 2020, and therefore would have discretion as to whether the \$27,000 should be assigned to the grant application or returned to the General Fund. By allocating matching funds in November, the Council is not pre-approving a particular grant. A specific grant proposal would come back to the Council through the normal grant approval process. This budget referral merely provides the LPC with the certainty that funds are available should Council approve a grant approval next year.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Council may decide in 2020 to assign \$27,000 from the General Fund to secure potential matching State Certified Local Government Landmarks Preservation grant.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Historic studies and surveys can help protect existing buildings, including civic buildings, which are associated with substantial embodied carbon.

CONTACT PERSON

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