

**B.13** Staff Report (For Possible Action): Acceptance of Grant Award from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) under the FY2024 Economic Development Initiative Community Project Funding Grant in the amount of \$1,000,000 for the purchase and installation of Solar School Zone Flashing Beacon Systems.

## STAFF REPORT

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**Date:** January 22, 2025

**To:** Mayor and City Council

**Through:** Jackie Bryant, City Manager

**Subject:** Staff Report (For Possible Action): Acceptance of Grant Award from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) under the FY2024 Economic Development Initiative Community Project Funding Grant in the amount of \$1,000,000 for the purchase and installation of Solar School Zone Flashing Beacon Systems.

**From:** Kurt Dietrich, Traffic Engineer

**Department:** Public Works

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**Summary:**

On August 28, 2024, the Congressional Grants Division (CGD) of the HUD Office of Economic Development granted official approval for the City of Reno's application for a \$1,000,000 grant for the Solar School Zone Flashing Beacon Systems project. This initiative aims to implement flashing beacon systems at multiple Washoe County Schools across the City.

As part of this initiative, Senator Catherine Cortez Masto, Senator Jacky Rosen, and Congressman Mark Amodei have allocated \$1,000,000 for the installation of Solar School Zone Flashing Beacon Systems. Staff recommends that the Council accept these funds to complete the installation of the Solar School Zone Flashing Beacon Systems and authorizes the Mayor to sign the grant agreement.

<b>Consent Review</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
1. Is this item an annual or standard item that comes before Council for regular approval?		<b>X</b>
2. Is this item an agreement required based on an item previously approved by Council?		<b>X</b>
3. Is this item included in the current budget approved and adopted by Council?		<b>X</b>
<b>Other Considerations</b>		
What percent of the total City budget does this item represent?	<b>N/A</b>	

**Alignment with Strategic Plan:**

Public Safety

Infrastructure, Climate Change, and Environmental Sustainability

Economic and Community Development

**Previous Council Action:**

There is no recent Council action relevant to this item.

**Background:**

Congress has approved funding for the Economic Development Initiative (EDI) Community Project Funding (CPF) through the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2024 (Public Law 118-42). These grants are awarded to communities under the EDI to assist with a variety of projects, including housing, homelessness prevention, workforce training, public facilities, parks, resilience planning, and other essential infrastructure services. In 2024, Congress allocated “grants for the Economic Development Initiative intended for Community Project Funding/Congressionally Directed Spending” within the Consolidated Appropriations Act. These funds support a diverse range of public projects, including essential infrastructure.

This grant was designated by Senators Catherine Cortez Masto, Jacky Rosen, and Congressman Mark Amodei as part of the FY2024 EDI CPF initiative and is managed by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The HUD Office of Economic Development, Congressional Grants Division (CGD), has officially awarded the City of Reno \$1,000,000 for the implementation of Solar School Zone Flashing Beacon Systems. The administration of these CPF awards falls under HUD's oversight, with funding governed by the regulations and spending categories defined in federal legislation and by HUD.

**Discussion:**

The goal of this initiative is to purchase and install solar-powered flashing beacons in multiple Washoe County school zones across the City. There are 70 Washoe County Schools in the City, and currently, there is a backlog of 115 out of 200 school zones in need of flashing beacons. With this grant funding, we can reduce this backlog by nearly 50%.

The school zone locations of greatest need have been identified using a predictive approach method outlined in the Highway Safety Manual (AASHTO HSM) by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials. This method evaluates road conditions, historical accident records, and traffic volumes at each location to predict the risk of collisions in each school zone. The school zones that are projected to have the highest incidence of accidents are prioritized for the installation of the flashing beacon systems. These prioritized locations will be

confirmed in partnership and collaboration with Washoe County School District staff to ensure they align with the priorities and timelines in the School District Facility Modernization Plan and Washoe County's Safe Routes to School program.

The flashing beacons that will be purchased with this grant will look like the image in Figure 1.

Figure 1: School Zone Flashing Beacon



**Financial Implications:**

These funds are received outside the normal City budget process and generally are unable to offset other City expenses outside the intended use for this grant. Uses for these funds are restricted and must follow HUD rules and guidance.

**Legal Implications:**

The acceptance of the grant requires the City to accept and comply with all terms and conditions of the grant and further approve and sign a grant agreement.

**Recommendation:**

Staff recommends Council accept the FY2024 Economic Development Initiative Community Project Funding Grant Award in the amount of \$1,000,000 for the Solar School Zone Flashing Beacon Systems Installation, and authorize Mayor to sign the forthcoming grant agreement.

**Proposed Motion:**

I move to approve staff recommendations.

**Attachments:**

Award Letter



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20410-1000

OFFICE OF COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Wednesday, August 28, 2024

Jayna Litz  
Housing Manager  
City of Reno  
1 E. First Street  
Reno, NV 89501  
Email: litzj@reno.gov

Dear Community Project Funding Grantee,

In the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2024 (Public Law 118-42) (the FY2024 Act), and the Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2024 (Public Law 118-47) (the Further FY2024 Act) Congress made \$3,290,054,336 in funding available for Community Project Funding (CPF). These CPF awards are administered by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). HUD received the information below about your project from Congress. A Grant Number has been added and will be the unique identifier for your project throughout the grant process.

**Grant Number:** B-24-CP-NV-1514  
**Project:** Solar School Zone Flashing Beacon Systems Installation  
**Grantee/Recipient:** City of Reno  
**Amount:** \$1,000,000  
**HUD Grant Officer:** Jacqueline P. Johnson / Jacqueline.P.Johnson@hud.gov  
**HUD System Officer:** Janai C. Streat / Janai.C.Streat@hud.gov  
**HUD Regional Environmental Officer:** Elizabeth McDargh / Elizabeth.Mcdargh@hud.gov

This letter outlines initial grant award requirements and information needed from you to get started. This Grant Award Package also includes: The “FY2024 Community Project Funding Grant Guide” (FY2024 CPF Grant Guide), the template for your FY2024 Community Project Funding Grant Agreement, and the forms required to complete and submit information online to populate before we sign your FY2024 CPF Grant Agreement. A brief overview of these documents is below:

- 1) **FY2024 CPF Grant Guide**: The FY2024 CPF Grant Guide provides instructions for completing the requested information and filling out the required administrative forms to initiate your FY2024 CPF Grant Agreement. Please refer to this document as it includes important information and forms for accessing the online system (DRGR), as well as other information concerning reporting requirements.

**2) FY2024 CPF Grant Agreement for this Award:** The FY2024 CPF Grant Agreement specifies the applicable statutory provisions, regulations, and administrative requirements for this award. Please make sure all grantee information and award-specific information is entered completely and accurately before signing this Agreement. When you submit your grant materials on our DRGR Grant Processing Module it will create your customized FY2024 CPF Grant Agreement.

**3) Standard Forms and Required Materials:** The following forms will be needed:

- a. Form HUD-1044, Assistance Award/Amendment Form (Attached)
- b. Standard Form-424 Application for Federal Assistance (in the online system)
- c. SF-424-B, Assurances for Non construction Programs, and/or SF-424-D, Assurances for Construction Programs (in the online system)
- d. SF-LLL Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (as applicable in the online system):  
<https://www.grants.gov/forms/forms-repository/sf-424-family>
- e. SF-1199A - Direct Deposit Sign-Up Form: <https://www.gsa.gov/system/files/SF1199A-20.pdf> The form is to be completed by the grantee and grantee's financial institution. Grantees will need to submit the completed form and upload to DRGR.

### **Grant Award Process Overview**

Below is a step-by-step walk-through of the process and necessary documents and forms to execute your FY2024 CPF Grant Agreement. This process and the forms are also available in the FY2024 CPF Grant Guide, which can also be found on the program's webpage at:

[https://www.hud.gov/program\\_offices/comm\\_planning/edi-grants/FY\\_2024](https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/comm_planning/edi-grants/FY_2024) on HUD.gov and on this webpage <https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/cpf/> on the HUD Exchange.

1. Grantees should review the Grant Award Package documents.
2. Grantees should initiate or complete the HUD environmental review.
3. Grantees gather all required information and submit to HUD using the online system DRGR.
4. HUD provides access to DRGR system to access the Grant Processing Module to submit required information, answer questions, and upload documents. Once all required information is submitted online HUD will review the completed grant materials submitted.
5. HUD staff will review the information and documents for completeness. If there are any deficiencies the corrections and/or clarifying questions will be shared with the grantee for correcting or answering the clarifying questions. If not, HUD staff will submit the package internally for a second level review. Then, the Acting Director for the Congressional Grants Division will review the grant package. Finally, your Grant Agreement will be executed.
6. HUD will notify the grantee that their FY2024 Grant Agreement has been fully executed and will share additional materials with the grantee to complete to begin the payment processing activities to receive your funds.

## **Training and Tools**

**FY2024 CPF Onboarding Event:** This event will take place in September. We will review this letter and grant award package materials along with sharing next steps and how to sign up for a cohort. The event will be recorded and shared online after the event.

**FY2024 CPF Grantee Cohorts:** This provides you and your staff the opportunity to register for a four-part training for how to prepare your grant materials and submit them online. Information about the registration will be shared via email and during the FY2024 CPF Onboarding Event.

**FY2024 CPF Grantee Webinar Series:** This provides you and your staff with information about the regulations, requirements, and processes for your grant. Information about the registration for the webinar series will be shared via email and during the FY2024 CPF Onboarding Event.

**FY2024 CPF Grantee Online HUD Exchange Resources:** This website page includes general information and your specific Fiscal Year information along with links to past and future technical assistance opportunities. The site is also used for you to register for our listserv and for communicating updates to you and those on the listserv.

## **Overview of Requirements**

CPF grants are subject to several Federal requirements. HUD will provide additional information and further clarification regarding applicable requirements and the grant award process in upcoming webinars and additional technical assistance. The most essential requirements include:

- 1) **Administrative Requirements:** CPF grants are subject to the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (2 CFR Part 200).
- 2) **HUD Environmental Review Requirements:** EDI/CPF grants, like all projects funded by HUD, are subject to requirements under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), HUD's NEPA-implementing regulations at 24 CFR Part 50 or 24 CFR Part 58, and appropriate federal environmental and historic preservation laws, regulations, and Executive Orders.
  - To be eligible, activities and expenses must comply with applicable Federal requirements. This includes administrative requirements under 2 CFR Part 200, environmental laws, statutes and Executive Orders, and other "cross-cutting" federal requirements adhered to by HUD.
  - If the environmental review is being conducted by a local government responsible entity under Part 58, a Request for Release of Funds and Certification must be approved by HUD, as applicable. If the environmental review is being completed by HUD under Part 50, the environmental review must be approved and certified by HUD.

- HUD defines the “Federal Nexus” for a program or project as the event that triggers the requirements for federal environmental review under a host of laws, regulations, and Executive Orders, including the prohibition on choice limiting actions.
- For FY2024 grants, the date of the Act's enactment (March 9, 2024) is the federal nexus for compliance with all environmental laws. Once a project is federalized, in keeping with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and HUD’s NEPA-implementing regulations at 24 CFR Part 50 or 24 CFR Part 58, environmental reviews must be completed, and all necessary HUD approvals must be obtained prior to taking any choice limiting actions, such as acquisition, construction, ground disturbance, and entering into contracts.
- Further explanation and guidance on choice limiting actions and the environmental review process, including historic preservation review, is included within the CPF Grant Guide and on the program’s webpage at: <https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/cpf/>.
- Some projects may already be underway at the time of federal nexus and while it is still best practice to stop all work after the federal nexus before the environmental review is complete for EDI/CPF projects that are already underway at time of federal nexus, grantees are allowed to perform activities after the federal nexus, but only for activities which are part of a pre-nexus contract that obligates them to do so. However, grantees would be doing so at their own risk, as any activity performed, or proposed to be performed, after the federal nexus must be included in the project scope of a satisfactory environmental review to be reimbursable.
- A satisfactory review must show that the project activities will not result in unmitigable environmental harm and must not preclude consultation with the appropriate environmental authorities such as the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). Environmental authorities may refuse to consult if physical impacts are made to a site before consultation.
- HUD conducted a nationwide environmental review for FY24 EDI/CPF soft costs to clear activities such as administrative, planning, and operations and maintenance costs (including costs to prepare an environmental review). After execution of the Grant Agreement, eligible soft costs can be incurred after March 9, 2024 (see 2 CFR 200.403). Eligible hard costs can be reimbursed if incurred after a full environmental review is completed (see 2 CFR 200.403).
- HUD Environmental Officers:  
<https://www.hud.gov/sites/dfiles/CPD/documents/Community-Project-Funding-Portfolio-Assignments.pdf>.

If you, or your staff, have any questions regarding how to complete or submit the requires documents, please feel free to contact your Grant Officer or System Officer. Please note while your Grant Officer may change over time, we have a team approach to managing your project. Please include your grant number and project in all email correspondence. We look forward to working with you on this important project!

Sincerely,



Nadab Bynum  
Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary  
for Economic Development