

# CITY OF WESTMORLAND

## REPORT TO CITY COUNCIL

**MEETING DATE:** October 23, 2024

**FROM:** Laura Fischer, Manager

**SUBJECT:** Information USDA Federal Application for Funding of Public Safety Building.

### INFORMATION ONLY:

The city received a notification that our application to USDA Disaster Relief Funding **was selected to move forward in the funding process**. The announcement is attached to this report for your review.

After speaking with our local representative who assisted the City with the application process, we learned that our application was one of 65 applications submitted to the USDA National office, which included applications from across the country. There were 18 applications qualified from the State of California and our application was the ONLY one selected to move forward for funding from California. There were fifteen applications selected from 10 states and Puerto Rico.

You may recall that staff contacted USDA and learned that they had an open grant for disaster relief funding. The local representative, Mr. Edgar Ortega, was extremely helpful in guiding us with our application, which was due in just 4 hours from the time we learned about the grant availability. Staff quickly submitted the application for the public safety building (the same application we submitted for the FEMA grant) and also included an application for equipment for the fire department.

Mr. Ortega called the next day and asked staff to modify the application and make some improvements. This was happening at the same time that staff was attending meetings with local city representatives, state representatives, private funding and CBOs. During that meeting, I met representatives from the Institute for Local Government and we scheduled a meeting for the next day at City Hall. When we met, I mentioned that I had to rework a grant and that it was due in less than a week. They said they would help and they really did a great job. Without their assistance, I wouldn't have been able to get all of the work done that was needed to submit on time.

Thanks to the team at the City (Chief Cruz, Chief Mara), along with a group from the Institute for Local Government, and Mr. Ortega from our local USDA office, we submitted a successful application!

### GRANT INFORMATION

The grant application was two parts, the first was for the construction of a public safety building on property owned by the City. The property consists of multiple lots adjacent to each other. One has a building that is currently being rented to an Early Learning Center and the other lots are vacant land.

The application was to modify the existing building, construct fire bays, and purchase fire and police equipment. The total application was for \$5M, but our total was reduced to \$2,737,500.00. Our application must be modified to include all of the construction and equipment we can put into the project to total this amount.

The modified application, with updated budget is due to our local USDA office on November 8<sup>th</sup>. Staff will be working with our Chiefs, Building Inspector, and engineers, to get a better handle on the cost for construction needed. Our team members from the Institute for Local Government will be updating the narrative.

Congratulations to the City for moving forward in the funding process. We should know if we are selected after our modified application is reviewed, which should be by the end of November.

Regarding the possible funding from Congressman Ruiz' office. We are still waiting to hear back if we are approved, but our application is still in the mix. These funds can be used for the same project and being awarded USDA funds will not stop the process or funds from the Congressional office.

When we modify the construction application we are going to add phases to the project. Phase 1 would be funded by USDA and phase 2 by congressional funding. This may allow the city to construct the public safety building and purchase some equipment needed.

Respectfully submitted,  
Laura Fischer