



Office of the City Manager

CONSENT CALENDAR  
October 14, 2025

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council  
 From: Paul Buddenhagen, City Manager  
 Submitted by: Eleanor Hollander, Economic Development Manager  
 Subject: Revenue Grant: FEMA Seismic Hazard Mitigation Grant Program

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a Resolution authorizing the City Manager to submit a nonbinding letter of commitment of matching funds for a seismic Hazard Mitigation Grant application for the *City of Berkeley Civic Center Project-Seismic Retrofit of MSB and VMB* to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and subject to its award, to accept the grant, execute any resultant revenue agreements and amendments, accept any additional funding allocations from the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP), and designate the City Manager as the applicant's authorized agent. If awarded, the grant will underwrite the seismic retrofit of two historic and critical buildings in Berkeley's Civic Center, the Maudelle Shirek Building ("MSB" or "Old City Hall") and the Veterans Memorial Building ("VMB").

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

The City of Berkeley has been deemed eligible to apply for a grant of up to \$16.5 million as part of FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program to seismically retrofit two historic Civic Center buildings, the Maudelle Shirek Building (MSB) and the Veterans Memorial Building (VMB), to address critical structural deficiencies and reduce collapse risk during major earthquakes.

FEMA requires applicants to provide a letter committing to expend matching funds equating to 25% of the award amount over the four-year (48 month) grant duration, for a total project amount of \$21.9 million. The City match portion of \$5.4 million includes in-kind expenditures for project management. The grant application includes a request for grant management expenses, which do not require a local match. The projected grant administrative costs of (\$136,080.00) are well below the allowable 5%.

If awarded, the HMGP grant would provide nearly \$16.5 million to the City of Berkeley to seismically retrofit two historic Civic Center buildings, the Maudelle Shirek Building (MSB) and the Veterans Memorial Building (VMB). These retrofits will transform both seismically deficient structures into resilient community assets capable of withstanding design-level

earthquakes with only limited, repairable damage, preserving their historic fabric and ensuring continuity of essential civic and community functions in Berkeley’s Civic Center.

The building-specific seismic retrofits include the following elements:

- The MSB (2134 Martin Luther King Jr Way), constructed in 1909, will be upgraded to a Damage Control Plus (DC+) performance level through a 2,760 sq. ft. reinforced concrete rear addition with 12-inch core walls, an 18-inch mat slab, and 60 micropiles to create a continuous lateral load path, along with Fiber Reinforced Polymer (FRP) wrapping of select beams and columns and reinforcement of the spire and facade.
- The VMB (1931 Center Street), built in 1928, will be upgraded to BPON+ (Building Performance Objective Equivalent to New Standards) by strengthening diaphragms with new plywood sheathing, improving wall-to-diaphragm anchorage, adding steel collectors and chords, wrapping deficient concrete columns with FRP, and stabilizing tall walls with 12-inch shotcrete and exterior buttresses.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

The Berkeley Civic Center Project will seismically retrofit two historic and critical buildings: the Maudelle Shirek Building (MSB, Old City Hall) and the Veterans Memorial Building (VMB) located at the heart of Berkeley’s Civic Center. MSB, built in 1909, predates seismic codes and last underwent major renovation in the 1970s, which excluded seismic upgrades. VMB, built in 1928, similarly lacks seismic design and last received rehabilitation in 1993 without structural strengthening. Both buildings lie less than two miles from the Hayward Fault, and sustained impacts from the 1989 Loma Prieta (M6.9) and 2014 South Napa (M6.0) earthquakes. Both buildings are seismically deficient pre-code structures and do not meet the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) 41-17 Basic Performance Objectives. They pose life safety hazards and risk partial or total collapse in a major earthquake.

The Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) funds plans and projects that reduce the effects of future natural disasters. HMGP grants are funding provided by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to states. In California, these funds are administered by the Cal OES (Office of Emergency Services) HMGP Unit. The HMGP grant requires a 25% local match of the total award, and if granted would be significant (\$16.5M). Awarded projects must be cost-effective, demonstrated by a benefit-cost ratio (BCR) of 1.0 or greater. The *City of Berkeley Civic Center Project – Seismic Retrofit of MSB and VMB* grant, will be submitted with a combined BCR over 2.0.

Benefit Cost Ratio – Standard (MSB):	1.55
Benefit Cost Ratio – Standard (VMB):	4.17
Benefit Cost Ratio – Standard (Total):	2.43

The California Office of Emergency Services anticipates disbursing approximately many millions in Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) funding (the full scope and amount won't be known with precision until approximately January 2026), to reduce or eliminate risks from future disasters. In May 2025, Berkeley submitted a Notice of Interest (NOI) for a project to seismically retrofit two historic Civic Center buildings, the Maudelle Shirek Building (MSB) and the Veterans Memorial Building (VMB), to address critical structural deficiencies and reduce collapse risk during major earthquakes and was invited to develop a full application; with a submittal deadline of September 15, 2025.

If awarded, the grant proposes the following for the Civic Center buildings: MSB will be upgraded to Damage Control Plus (DC+), allowing it to withstand strong earthquakes with repairable damage in weeks to months. VMB will be upgraded to BPON+ (equivalent to new building standards plus), ensuring localized damage only, with low injury risk and repair timelines of months to a year. These upgrades will significantly reduce collapse risk, preserve historic assets, and ensure continuity of civic use after a disaster.

The proposed project is in conformance with Berkeley's FEMA-approved Local Hazard Mitigation Plan, which seeks to reduce the potential for loss of life, injury, and economic damage from earthquakes, and must help protect and enhance quality of life in Berkeley, by lessening buildings' earthquake vulnerabilities that may pose risks to life and/or emergency operations.<sup>1</sup> In addition, the project will also advance Berkeley's Strategic Plan goals of (1) creating a resilient, safe, connected, and prepared city and (2) providing state-of-the-art, well-maintained infrastructure, amenities, and facilities.

If awarded funding, this project will be co-managed by the City Manager's Office (of which the Office of Economic Development, or OED, is part) and the Department of Public Works (PW) who is charged with all municipal building facility and maintenance for the City of Berkeley. Attached to this report is a sample California Office of Emergency Services form entitled, "Cal OES 130 – Designation of Applicant's Agent Resolution" (Exhibit A). Full completion of the Cal OES130 form will come after a notification of award (if any) but is included herein for reference.

## BACKGROUND

Berkeley's Civic Center is a National Register-listed historic district in Downtown Berkeley, centering on Martin Luther King Jr. Civic Center Park and featuring significant historic buildings like the Maudelle Shirek Building (formerly City Hall, or often referred to as "Old City Hall") and the Veterans Memorial Building. The area serves as a vital public space for community events, and government functions, encompassing civic buildings, green spaces, and educational facilities. Planning for the Civic Center is guided by two documents both shaped by extensive stakeholder engagement; the *Civic*

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<sup>1</sup> City of Berkeley, *Local Hazard Mitigation Plan* or LHMP, page 49, B-41, adopted March 2025.

*Center Vision and Implementation Plan* (adopted September 2020) and the *Civic Center Design Concept* (adopted July 2023).<sup>2</sup>

After the adoption of the Civic Center Design Concept in 2023, the project moved to a third phase, one that focuses on the rehabilitation of the buildings and the attainment of funding for advancing the Vision Plan and Design Concept. The two structures, Veterans Memorial Building and the Maudelle Shirek Building (VMB and MSB) in the Civic Center were built in the first quarter of the 1900s and have not been updated to current seismic standards. The HMGP grant would provide the City with necessary financial support to complete the proposed seismic retrofit projects to enhance the structural integrity of both the MSB and VMB to be able to withstand a seismic event and mitigate against the hazard posed by an earthquake.

#### ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE IMPACTS

Both buildings will be less likely to suffer damage in the event of an earthquake, and as a result will be less likely than non-retrofitted structures to create additional environmental impacts from collapse. If the mitigation projects prevent the buildings from collapse, that would reduce injuries and local contamination from building debris.

HMGP funded efforts must undergo Environmental and Historic Preservation or EHP review. In the case of the Civic Center grant, EHP and Permitting will be conducted in collaboration with the project management team and the procured design consultant and are allocated for in the combined cost estimate for MSB and VMB during Phase 1 of the grant scope of work. As stated in the grant application, Phase 1 tasks include: Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) consultation and documentation, NEPA/CEQA review, State Historic Preservation Officer (or SHPO) Coordination, EHP clearance, and any other required tasks associated with EHP review. Council shall retain final discretion to approve, impose mitigation measures, or disapprove the HGMP-funded projects in light of any environmental impacts disclosed as a result of the CEQA/NEPA review or any other reviews conducted as part of this process.

#### RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

If the City receives funding under FEMA's Seismic Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, two remarkable and vulnerable structures in Berkeley's Civic Center will be retrofitted, preserving their historic fabric and ensuring continuity of essential civic and community functions in the event of a major seismic event.

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<sup>2</sup> Civic Center Vision Statement: *Civic Center will be the heart of Berkeley's community. Civic Center will be the prime space for civic life, culture, and the arts. It will reflect the city's diverse identities, celebrate its history, and contribute to shaping its future. A place of shared resources and a platform for free expression accessible to all, Civic Center aims to manifest the city's values, advance social justice, and demonstrate the power of true public space.* (Adopted by the Berkeley City Council, September 2020).

ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS CONSIDERED

None.

CONTACT PERSONS

Eleanor Hollander, Office of Economic Development, 510-981-7536

Terrance Davis, Department of Public Works, 510-981-6303

Attachments:

1: Resolution

Exhibit A: Cal OES 130 – Designation of Applicant’s Agent Resolution

RESOLUTION NO. ##,###-N.S.

AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO COMMIT MATCHING FUNDS FOR A HAZARD MITIGATION GRANT APPLICATION FOR THE CIVIC CENTER SEISMIC RETROFIT FOR THE MAUELLE SHIREK AND VETERANS MEMORIAL BUILDINGS TO THE FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY (FEMA) AND SUBJECT TO ITS AWARD, TO ACCEPT THE GRANT, EXECUTE ANY RESULTANT REVENUE AGREEMENTS AND AMENDMENTS, ACCEPT ANY ADDITIONAL FUNDING ALLOCATIONS FROM THE HAZARD MITIGATION GRANT PROGRAM AND DESIGNATE THE APPLICANT'S DESIGNATED AGENT

WHEREAS, as a result of the declaration of a major federal disaster, the State of California is eligible for Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) funding aimed at reducing or eliminating future damages; and

WHEREAS, federal funding is provided under the Robert T. Stafford Emergency Assistance and Disaster Relief Act (Stafford Act) through FEMA and the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES), Cal OES is responsible for identifying program priorities, reviewing applications and forwarding recommendations for funding to FEMA, and FEMA has final approval for activity eligibility and funding; and

WHEREAS, the federal regulations governing the HMGP are found in Title 44 of the Code of Federal Regulations (44 CFR) Part 206, and the Uniform Administrative Requirements for Federal Awards are found in 2 CFR Part 200; and

WHEREAS, a Notice of Interest was approved for City of Berkeley Civic Center *Project- Seismic Retrofit of Maudelle Shirek Building and Veterans Memorial Building* on May 30, 2025, and the City of Berkeley will submit a full application for HMGP funding on or before September 15, 2025; and

WHEREAS, a letter committing at least 25% matching funds is required as part of the grant application, with matching funds from a non-federal source; and

WHEREAS, the match will consist of \$5.4 million over the four-year grant period, which will come from the general fund or future bond funds, with other interdepartmental service funds including the building maintenance and operation funds providing the remaining in-kind match through staffing and administrative costs associated with building's seismic upgrades; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Berkeley that the City Manager is authorized to submit a nonbinding letter of commitment to provide \$5.4 million in local matching funds for the City of Berkeley's application for a \$16.5 million seismic Hazard Mitigation grant from FEMA, and to accept the grant, and execute any resultant revenue agreements and amendments.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Manager is authorized to provide a completed Cal OES Form 130 (Exhibit A) to the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) for all matters including assurances and agreements pertaining to this grant if awarded.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Council shall retain final discretion to approve, impose mitigation measures, or disapprove the HGMP-funded projects in light of any environmental impacts disclosed as a result of the CEQA/NEPA review or any other reviews conducted as part of this process.

Exhibit A: Cal OES 130 – Designation of Applicant's Agent Resolution



Cal OES ID No: \_\_\_\_\_

**DESIGNATION OF APPLICANT'S AGENT RESOLUTION FOR NON-STATE AGENCIES**

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE \_\_\_\_\_ OF THE \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Governing Body) (Name of Applicant)

THAT \_\_\_\_\_, OR  
 (Title of Authorized Agent)

\_\_\_\_\_, OR  
 (Title of Authorized Agent)

\_\_\_\_\_  
 (Title of Authorized Agent)

is hereby authorized to execute for and on behalf of the \_\_\_\_\_,  
 (Name of Applicant)

a public entity established under the laws of the State of California, this application and to file it with the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services for the purpose of obtaining federal financial assistance for any existing or future grant program, including, but not limited to any of the following:

- **Federally declared Disaster (DR), Fire Mitigation Assistance Grant (FMAG), California State Only Disaster (CDAA), Immediate Services Program (ISP), Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP), Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC), Legislative Pre-Disaster Mitigation Program (LPDM)**, under
- Public Law 93-288 as amended by the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act of 1988, and/or state financial assistance under the California Disaster Assistance Act.
- **Flood Mitigation Assistance Program (FMA)**, under Section 1366 of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968.
- **National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program (NEHRP)** 42 U.S. Code 7704 (b) ((2) (A) (ix) and 42 U.S. Code 7704 (b) (2) (B) National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program, and also The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2018, Div. F, Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, 2018, Pub. L. No. 115-141
- **California Early Earthquake Warning (CEEW)** under CA Gov Code – Gov, Title 2, Div. 1, Chapter 7, Article 5, Sections 8587.8, 8587.11, 8587.12

That the \_\_\_\_\_, a public entity established under the  
 (Name of Applicant)

laws of the State of California, hereby authorizes its agent(s) to provide to the Governor's Office of Emergency Services for all matters pertaining to such state disaster assistance the assurances and agreements required.



**Please check the appropriate box below**

- This is a universal resolution and is effective for all open and future disasters/grants declared up to three (3) years following the date of approval.
- This is a disaster/grant specific resolution and is effective for only disaster/grant number(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Passed and approved this \_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
 (Name and Title of Governing Body Representative)

\_\_\_\_\_  
 (Name and Title of Governing Body Representative)

\_\_\_\_\_  
 (Name and Title of Governing Body Representative)

**CERTIFICATION**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, duly appointed and \_\_\_\_\_ of  
 (Name) (Title)

\_\_\_\_\_, do hereby certify that the above is a true and  
 (Name of Applicant)

correct copy of a resolution passed and approved by the \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Governing Body)

of the \_\_\_\_\_ on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_.  
 (Name of Applicant)

\_\_\_\_\_  
 (Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
 (Title)



### Cal OES Form 130 Instructions

**A Designation of Applicant's Agent Resolution for Non-State Agencies is required of all Applicants to be eligible to receive funding. A new resolution must be submitted if a previously submitted resolution is older than three (3) years from the last date of approval, is invalid, or has not been submitted.**

When completing the Cal OES Form 130, Applicants should fill in the blanks on pages 1 and 2. The blanks are to be filled in as follows:

#### **Resolution Section:**

**Governing Body:** This is the group responsible for appointing and approving the Authorized Agents.

Examples include: Board of Directors, City Council, Board of Supervisors, Board of Education, etc.

**Name of Applicant:** The public entity established under the laws of the State of California.

Examples include: School District, Office of Education, City, County or Non-profit agency that has applied for the grant, such as: City of San Diego, Sacramento County, Burbank Unified School District, Napa County Office of Education, University Southern California.

**Authorized Agent:** These are the individuals that are authorized by the Governing Body to engage with the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services regarding grants for which they have applied. There are two ways of completing this section:

1. **Titles Only:** The titles of the Authorized Agents should be entered here, not their names. This allows the document to remain valid if an Authorized Agent leaves the position and is replaced by another individual. If "Titles Only" is the chosen method, this document must be accompanied by either a cover letter naming the Authorized Agents by name and title, or the Cal OES AA Names document. The supporting document can be completed by any authorized person within the Agency (e.g., administrative assistant, the Authorized Agent, secretary to the Director). It does not require the Governing Body's signature.
2. **Names and Titles:** If the Governing Body so chooses, the names **and** titles of the Authorized Agents would be listed. A new Cal OES Form 130 will be required if any of the Authorized Agents are replaced, leave the position listed on the document, or their title changes.



**Checking Universal or Disaster-Specific Box:** A Universal resolution is effective for all past disasters and for those declared up to three (3) years following the date of approval. Upon expiration it is no longer effective for new disasters, but it remains in effect for disasters declared prior to expiration. It remains effective until the disaster goes through closeout unless it is superseded by a newer resolution.

**Governing Body Representative:** These are the names and titles of the approving Board Members.

Examples include: Chairman of the Board, Director, Superintendent, etc. The names and titles **cannot** be one of the designated Authorized Agents. A minimum of three (3) approving board members must be listed. If less than three are present, meeting minutes must be attached in order to verify a quorum was met.

**Certification Section:**

**Name and Title:** This is the individual in attendance who recorded the creation and approval of this resolution.

Examples include: City Clerk, Secretary to the Board of Directors, County Clerk, etc. This person **cannot** be one of the designated Authorized Agents or Approving Board Member. If a person holds two positions (such as City Manager and Secretary to the Board) and the City Manager is to be listed as an Authorized Agent, then that person could sign the document as Secretary to the Board (not City Manager) to eliminate "Self-Certification."

