



**COUNTY OF NEVADA
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AGENCY**

950 MAIDU AVENUE, SUITE 170, NEVADA CITY, CA 95959-8617
(530) 265-1222 ~ FAX (530) 478-5799 <http://mynevadacounty.com>
Trisha Tillotson, Agency Director

Agricultural Commissioner

Building

Environmental Health

Farm Advisor

Planning

Public Works

**NEVADA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
BOARD AGENDA MEMO**

MEETING DATE: August 22, 2023

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Trisha M. Tillotson, Community Development Agency Director

SUBJECT: Resolution authorizing a Memorandum of Understanding between the County of Nevada and the Nevada County Resource Conservation District for the coordination of roles and responsibilities in a proposed grant application for the Sustainable Agricultural Land Conservation Planning Grant Program.

RECOMMENDATION: Adopt the attached Resolution and Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

FUNDING: The Nevada County Resource Conservation District (DISTRICT) will be the lead applicant and will be responsible for the administration of grant funds if awarded. No match is required for the County, and funding for County staff hours spent directly on this project will be reimbursed (at a fully burdened rate in accordance with grant requirements) through the grant. Estimated that time spent on the grant is approximately 70 hours of Government Information Services (GIS) staff time and up to 680 hours of senior staff time. No general fund is required. The grant period begins January 2024, with final reporting in September of 2026.

BACKGROUND: DISTRICT, in partnership with County staff, has identified the Sustainable Agricultural Land Conservation Planning Grant Program (SALC) as a valuable planning tool to promote agricultural, conservation, and economic priorities in Nevada County. Proposals are due on September 8th, and DISTRICT will be seeking \$500,000 to fund the creation of an Agricultural Working Landscape Conservation Plan (AWLCP). According to SALC guidelines, DISTRICT is not eligible to apply as a lead applicant without an established MOU with their county. As such, DISTRICT has developed an MOU with the County of Nevada. DISTRICT has developed the application, will apply with support from the County, expressed through a letter of support and proposed MOU, and will oversee the grant project in cooperation with the County if awarded. This planning grant, and AWLCP, directly support Board priorities of Economic Development and Climate Resilience. The Economic Development Office will be the primary point of contact for this project.

The Sustainable Agricultural Lands Conservation Program (SALC) is a State Grant program through the California Department of Conservation and is component of the Strategic Growth Council's Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities (AHSC) Program, supports California's greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reduction goals by making strategic investments to protect agricultural lands from conversion to more GHG-intensive uses.

Despite growing efforts to plan for and address climate resilience in Nevada County on part of both government and non-government organizations, there is no conservation plan that directly addresses the agricultural sector. With economic factors creating hardships for many of the generational farming families, addressing agricultural working lands is an essential part of planning for the future sustainability of our rural county.

The completed plan will include five major components:

- 1) Agricultural Economic Development Strategy;
- 2) Land Use policy assessment and consideration of updates that support investment in and protection of agricultural land;
- 3) Climate Resiliency Strategy focusing on natural and working lands;
- 4) Education and Awareness Strategy; and
- 5) A stakeholder engagement plan.

The core team will include the Nevada County Resource Conservation District, the County of Nevada (including the Economic Development Office), the Nevada County Agricultural Commissioner, Planning Department, and a consultant (to be determined). Other identified partners include the Nevada Irrigation District, Northern Sierra Air Quality Management District, the Nevada County Farm Bureau, the Bear Yuba Land Trust, and Sierra Harvest.

Staff is requesting the Board to authorize the MOU and a Letter of Support, presented here, so DISTRICT may apply to the SALC Grant Program. DISTRICT will serve as the lead applicant and fiscal administrator; Nevada County staff will be reimbursed for time spent on this project. The application deadline is September 08, 2023. A copy of the MOU, Letter of Support, Executive Summary, and proposed planning project from the preproposal phase, as well as application instructions and guidelines are included in this packet.

We respectfully request that this Board approve and authorize the chair to sign the attached MOU.

Item Initiated: Amy Cobden, Administrative Analyst II

Approved: Trisha M. Tillotson, Community Development Agency Director

Submittal Date: August 8, 2023