



CITY OF BANNING STAFF REPORT

TO: CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Robert Fisher, Acting City Manager

PREPARED BY: Art Vela, Public Works Director

MEETING DATE: March 11, 2025

SUBJECT: Discussion of Fiscal Year 2026 Community Project Funding Request

RECOMMENDATION:

Discuss Fiscal Year 2026 Community Project Funding request and provide staff direction on which project to submit for potential funding.

BACKGROUND:

Congressional Members are allowed to direct spending for small projects in the annual appropriation bills for local projects they believe will benefit their communities, bypassing the traditional competitive federal grant process. However, there are several restrictions for this Community Project Funding (CPF). CPF is also referred to as House or Congressionally Directed Spending (CDS) in the Senate. The typical amount of money available for projects varies from between \$500,000 to \$3,000,000, but more commonly around \$1,000,000.

For example, in Fiscal Year 2022, \$1,250,000 was secured for the City of Banning's Wastewater Treatment and Groundwater Protection Project (attached). This project was supported by Rep. Ruiz, Sen. Feinstein, and Sen. Padilla and was funded through the Environmental Protection Agency, in the "State and Tribal Assistance Grant-Clean Water State Revolving Fund" account.

The CPF/CDS requests are submitted by members of Congress to the Appropriations Committee usually in early to mid March. Projects are then vetted for eligibility, feasibility, and community impact by the Member offices and the Appropriations Committee. Each member of Congress has a limited amount of funding they can direct to projects in their district or state. House Members are also only allowed to request a total of fifteen (15) projects each year.

Appropriations bills are usually released sometime in the late spring or early summer, however, funds are not available until nine months to a year after the Appropriation bill becomes law, so usually at least a full year after the project has been submitted to Congress.

A few key points of CPF/CDS funding included: there is guarantee that funding is awarded (awards are at the discretion of congress); projects must align with federal agency guidelines and committee priorities; and eligible recipients are usually state/local governments, non-profits and public institutions and no direct funding is given top for-profit entities.

Project Selection Process

Congressional Submission: The entity submits a formal request to its congressional representatives in the House and Senate. Each member of Congress has their own process and criteria for considering

requests. Letters of support from state and other local entities are required. Once a project is submitted to Congress, it is helpful to meet with the Congressman, Senators or their staff to discuss the details of the project and how it will benefit the greater community and even the state.

Congressional Review & Appropriations Process: Submitted projects are reviewed by the Appropriations Committee. Approved projects are included in federal funding bills.

Final Approval & Fund Allocation: If awarded, funds are disbursed through the appropriate federal agency.

Types of Projects Eligible for Funding

Eligibility is subject to congressional guidelines and varies by federal agency. Categories include:

1. Infrastructure & Transportation (roads, bridges, public transit improvements)
2. Water & Sewer Systems (stormwater projects, drinking water upgrades, wastewater treatment)
3. Public Safety & Emergency Services (fire stations, police equipment, emergency response facilities)
4. Economic Development & Workforce Training
5. Affordable Housing & Community Development
6. Environmental & Sustainability Initiatives
7. Healthcare & Public Health Programs

Types of Projects Likely to Receive Support

While eligibility is broad, successful projects typically have:

1. Strong Community Impact: Projects that address urgent needs and benefit large populations.
2. Project Readiness: "Shovel-ready" projects with clear timelines, feasibility studies, and matching funds (if required).
3. Broad Stakeholder Support: Endorsements from local, regional, and state entities.
4. Demonstrated Need & Return on Investment: Evidence-based justification for funding.
5. Projects with bipartisan appeal and strong advocacy from congressional representatives often have higher chances of receiving funding.

Projects that have been identified by staff that would be good candidates for this year's round of CPF/CDS funding include:

- Pedestrian Bridge across the San Geronio Avenue At-Grade Railroad Crossing (Planning/Design Phase)
- Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade and Recycled Water Project (Construction Phase)
- Hargrave Street Grade Separation Project (Planning/Design Phase)
- Chromium 6 Pilot Study Equipment (Purchase of Equipment)

JUSTIFICATION:

CPF/CDS funding is a great opportunity for the City to receive federal funds without going through the grant application development process which typically involves competitive grant funding programs.

It is important to select a project that has the greatest chance of receiving congressional support.

FISCAL IMPACT:

CPF/CDS funding, if awarded, will often times provide funding for projects that are currently unfunded or free up local funds so that they may be used on other projects. The amount awarded will vary.

ALTERNATIVES:

City Council could elect to direct staff to not participate in this year's CPF/CDS funding opportunity.

BUDGETED?:

No

CONTRACT/AGREEMENT:

No

ATTACHMENTS:

1. [FY22 Omnibus Interior - CPF Banning.pdf](#)