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C&CH Grants Coordinator/Services Project

Summary Presentation of Final Report - November 2025

Submitted by the Office of Economic Revitalization for Informational Briefing No. 9
Committee on Public Safety & Economy, November 20, 2025

MAYOR'S MESSAGE 176
PSE

Our Team



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ESSENTIAL LEAP

SR PARTNERS

- Grants acquisition and management ($2b+)
- Prior government experience (10+ years)
- Strategy, planning and implementation
- Complex project management

Thank you for entrusting us with this important initiative! *More than consultants, we strive to be part of your team.*

CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU
STATE OF HAWAII

CITY & COUNTY OF HONOLULU
OER
Office of Economic Revitalization

OFFICE OF CLIMATE CHANGE, SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCY
RESILIENT O'AHU
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

M·C·A
Mayor's Office of Culture & the Arts
HONOLULU

Department of Housing and Land Management

Executive Summary

Project results to date:

Total Requested:	$1,568,360
Total Awarded:	$ 259,999
Total Pending:	$1,093,360
Not Awarded:	$ 50,000

Grant Needs Analysis

Identify priority funding projects for MDOs* (OER, CCSR, MOCA, and HOU)

*HOU opted out on 11/24 due to reorg

Concept Paper Development

Drill down on 54 MDO projects across 22 variables and shape top priority projects (11 total)

Grant Funding Research

Align projects with viable funding sources

Grants Capacity Analysis

Assess internal capabilities, barriers, and potential solutions

Solutions

- Implement specific grants seeking and overarching solutions
- Revisit procurement and partnership processes/policies

Grants Needs Analysis - History



01

Table 1: Summary of the relative timeframes and aggregated dollar amounts of grants pursued and awarded per MDO

MDO	Timeframe	Aggregated Amount ($) Grants Pursued	Aggregated Amount ($) Grants Awarded
CCSR	January 2018-April 2024	$68,497,072	$17,302,072
HOU	N/A	None	None
MOCA	June 2023	$1,000,000	$1,000,000
OER	February 2023-May 2024	$1,615,000	$45,000
		Total:	**$18,347,072**

Concept Papers - Process

Process

01 Developed Concept Paper (CP) Template

02 Contractor trained MDOs on CP

03 MDO completed a CP per project

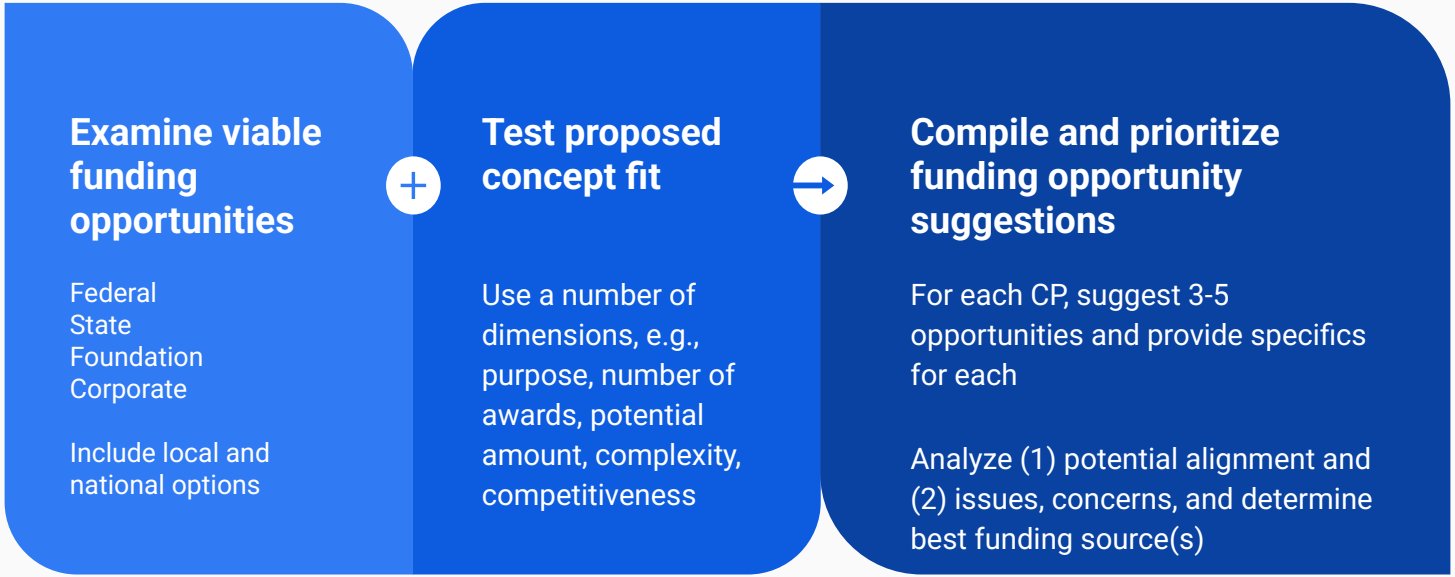
04 Contractor reviewed and provided feedback on CP

Contractor's general feedback on CPs

- Continue to refine CP based on feedback
- Share with Congressional staff, Grant PMs
- Define and justify the project with supporting details, references
- Determine needed staff / partner resources
- Quantify objectives / outputs / needs
- Break budgets into tasks and time periods
- ID cost share / in-kind resources
- Align to Federal Administration priorities

→ consider as living documents

Grant Funding Research - Process



Capacity Analysis - Objectives and Key Findings

- Objectives: (1) understand current capacity; (2) articulate the biggest barriers; and (3) develop insights to strengthen MDO capacity to successfully **seek**, **implement** and **administer** grant awards
- Process: Survey deployed March 2025 and 26 responses received across OER (12), CCSR (7), MOCA (3), MDO Administrative Services Office (current & former) (2), Budget and Fiscal Services (BFS) (1), and former BFS & CCSR staff (1); Two group meetings with staff across CCSR, OER, MDO, and MOCA

→ **Empowerment is high, but refinement in grant strategy and process is needed**

→ **Existing staff have the potential to increase their grant-related activities, but dedicated training and support to deliver growth and on-time results are needed**

→ **Procurement is the #1 biggest challenge to delivering high-impact and on-time grants**

→ **C&CH loses out on significant grants by not having clear, fit-for-purpose processes for offices to develop partnerships within required funder deadlines (#2 biggest challenge)**

→ **Novel approaches are occurring but are isolated and need support to be scaled up**

Capacity Analysis - Top 3 Recommendations to Increase City's Capacity

- Strategically review what staff capacity increases may be needed (i.e., Budget Manager & Grants Specialists) to support PMs in a way that is most cost effective; consider position(s) that work across MDOs to support procurements, grant administration, adherence to grant requirements.
- Study efficiencies for procurement seen in the past and determine what best practices could be leveraged/scaled to facilitate grants related procurement.
- Revisit procurement rules and develop fit-for-purpose policies, processes, training and templates for offices to develop partnerships and novel programs within funder deadlines. Involve BFS and appropriate City leadership in this process.

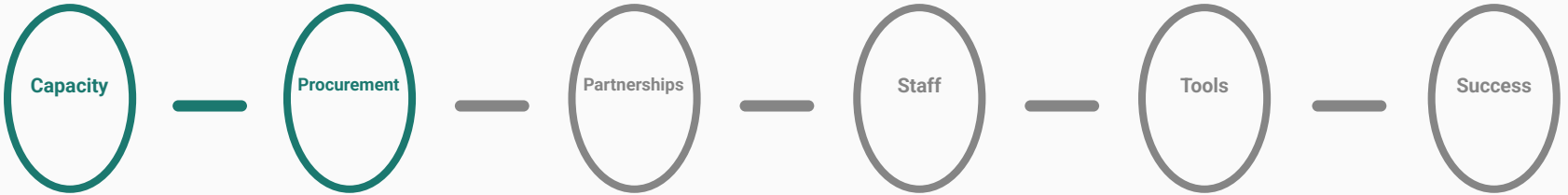
Capacity Analysis - Other Recommendations to Increase City's Capacity - Overarching

- Formalize and refine MDO grant strategies and processes. Develop templates for key grant processes within existing project management systems.
- Provide dedicated training to MDOs staff on (a) procurement, or (b) grant seeking, implementation and administration. Make this training widely available through the Citywide training channel, Honolulu-U, or similar system.
- Exchange information (e.g., case studies of successes and staff networking) and establish data gathering/synthesizing system on how much staff time is spent on applying for, administering, and implementing various types of grants to benefit decisions about future grant pursuit.

Capacity Analysis - Other Recommendations to Increase City's Capacity - Procurement

- Have a separate system/process such that procurement funded by grants aligns with grant timeline requirements
- Provide a shared software system (or other tools) widely available to staff in both MDOs and BFS to collaboratively deliver the necessary steps for procurements with grant funds
- Seek strategic advice from BFS/COR early in project design to avoid downstream issues

Overall Conclusions



Stretched Capacity

Lack of capacity and limited training leads to:

-Inconsistent strategy
-Delays
-Lower competitiveness

Procurement Bottlenecks

-Grant- and City-funded procurements compete

-Lack of shared tools slows coordination

-Past procurement learnings not leveraged

Underutilized Partnerships

-Process constraints lead to underutilized and hampered partnerships

-Difficulty forming internal partnerships hinders external partnerships

Lack of Training, Focus for Staff

Staff empowerment and motivation are high, but staff need:

-Training
-Clearer roles
-More resources

Tools Lacking Strategic Use

Strong foundational tools exist, but require:

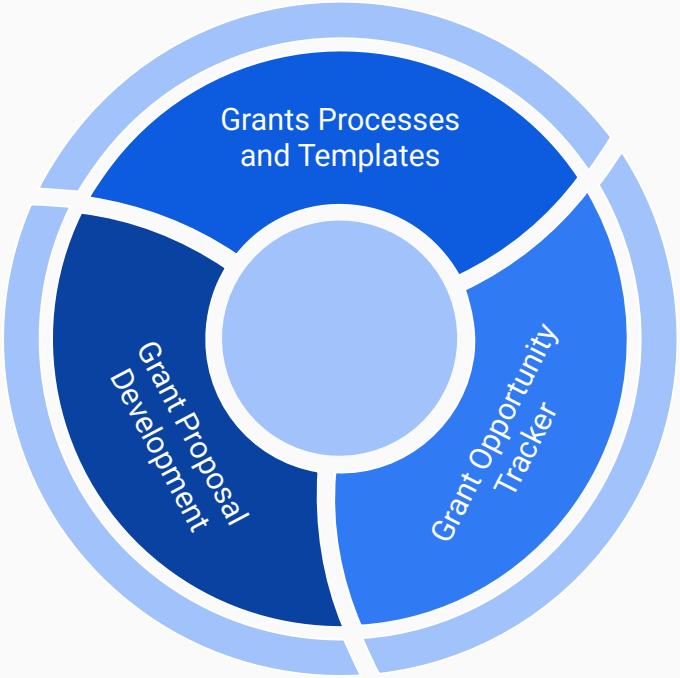
-Consistent updating
-Strategic, targeted, focused use

Desire to Increase Competitiveness

Increased grants success hinges on:

-Leadership action
-Process reform
-Disciplined grant selection

Next Steps



- End-to-end **grant proposal development** offered throughout contract period
- Grant **processes and templates** for grant prospecting and grant writing, inclusive of three **trainings**
- Grant opportunity **tracker** to organize and house applicable grant funding cycles, any grant applications submitted, and alerts to priority grants

Appendix

Grant Funding Research - CCSR

	Concept	Funding Opportunities
1	**Building Food System Resilience through Expanded Market Opportunities for Small- and Mid-Sized Producers and Food Hubs: A Regional (Oahu) Pilot**	• HUD Community Development Congressional Earmark • **USDA Regional Food Systems Partnerships*** • USDA Local Food Promotion Program
2	**Climate Champions Project**	• HUD Community Development Congressional Earmark • FEMA Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities • Climate Smart Communities • Thriving Communities Grantmaker Program
3	**Affordable Green Housing Retrofits Program**	• Thriving Communities Grantmaker Program • Weatherization Assistance - Enhancement & Innovation • HUD Community Development Congressional Earmark

* Project proposal submitted for grant funding.

Grant Funding Research - MOCA

	Concept	Funding Opportunities
1	**Cultural Events**	• **NEA Our Town*** • **NEA Grants for Arts Projects*** • NEA Challenge America
2	**Historic Walking Trail of Alii Statues**	• NEH Public Humanities Projects • NEA Grants for Arts Projects • HTA Umeke Kukulu Ola Programs
3	**MOCA Artist Workshops**	• NEA Our Town • NEA Grants for Arts Projects • NEA Challenge America

* Project proposal submitted for grant funding.

Grant Funding Research - OER

	Concept	Funding Opportunities
1	**Community Placemaking**	• EDA Economic Adjustment Assistance • HUD Community Development Congressional Earmark • NEA Our Town
2	**Digital Access, Advancement or Opportunity Initiative**	• **AARP Community Challenge*** • EDA Economic Adjustment Assistance • HUD Community Development Congressional Earmark • USDA Distance Learning and Telemedicine Grants
3	**Small Business Startup Incubator**	• SBA Administrative Provision Congressional Earmark • EDA Economic Adjustment Assistance • USDA Rural Business Development Grants
3	**Oahu Small Business Loan Initiative**	• SBA Administrative Provision Congressional Earmark • EDA Economic Adjustment Assistance • USDA Rural Business Development Grants

* Project proposal submitted for grant funding.

Grant Funding Research - HOU**

Concept		Funding Opportunities
1	**Facilitation, Research, and Analytic Services Related to the Implementation of the City's 2024 Comprehensive Housing Plan**	• HUD Community Development Congressional Earmark • Wells Fargo Foundation Grant

**HOU dropped off the project on 11/24 after Contractor completed the Funding Assessment for their concept.

Overall Recommendations

Project

- Update project matrices regularly
- Follow “project first” approach
- Share concept papers, treat as living documents

Funding

- Search and weigh sources across multiple dimensions
- Document research, analysis - including go/no-go
- Explore tracking platforms and systems

Capacity

- Strategically add staff capacity (i.e., Budget Manager & Grants Specialists) to support PMs. Add capacity in BFS and/or MDOs to support procurements, grant administration, and adherence to grant requirements
- Focus on procurement efficiency and implement enabling procurement rules/systems/processes
- Develop systems/processes for partnerships and novel approaches

Overall Recommendations - Capacity - Other

Capacity

Other Recommendations:

- Formalize grant strategy, processes, templates
- Provide dedicated training to MDOs staff and make it widely available
- Encourage information exchange and ather/synthesize data on time spent on grant activities
- Create a system/process so procurement funded by grants do NOT “compete” with those using general/City fund
- Provide a shared software system (or other tools) widely available to staff in both MDOs and BFS to collaboratively deliver the necessary steps for procurements with grant funds
- Seek strategic advice from BFS/COR early in project design to avoid downstream issues