



**COUNTY OF LAKE
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

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March 17, 2020

Integrated Climate Adaptation and Resiliency Program
Governor's Office of Planning and Research
Department of Conservation and the
Governor's Office of Planning and Research
1400 Tenth Street, Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Letter of Commitment for the Lake County Community Development Department's Planning Division to receive Proposition 84 Grant Funds to update the Upper Lake-Nice Area Plan, The Rivas Area Plan and update the relevant Zoning Ordinance

Dear Wildfire Resiliency and Recovery Planning Grant administrators,

This letter affirms the commitment of the Lake County Board of Supervisors to support the Lake County Community Development Department's proposed work to update the Upper Lake-Nice and Rivas Area Plans and make necessary Zoning Ordinance updates. We strongly support submittal of the grant application, and the County of Lake has a long history of completing work associated with state and federal grants in a timely manner, such as Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), which are supported through our retention of a CDBG Grants Administrator. Additionally, our Board has never been more committed to ensuring long-term planning efforts are well supported, to ensure County staff time is efficiently used to the maximum benefit of the communities we serve.

As you may be aware, since 2015, Lake County has endured an unparalleled 10 disasters, and those events exacerbated long-term economic hardship, causing many in our communities to question whether it was viable to remain in the County they love.

Lake County residents appreciate more than most the threats presented by wildfire, and, as a result, are committed to engaging in the safety of their communities. On Saturday, August 17, 2019, 300 volunteers, many residents of the very Riviera neighborhoods that will benefit most from an update of the Rivas Area Plan, lined State Route 281, clearing six miles of brush from roadsides in three hours' time.

Residents of the communities served by the Upper Lake-Nice Area Plans have shown strong engagement with the Western Region Town Hall Municipal Advisory Council (WRTH), demonstrating the level of care and concern necessary to support the efforts of County officials and other professionals to align Area Plans with the economic, safety, and resiliency needs of their communities.

Our Board is aware the Upper Lake-Nice Area Plan was last updated in 2002, and the Rivas Area Plan was last updated in 2007. So much has changed in our communities since that time.

Greater than 60 percent of our landmass has burned, and thousands of cars have evacuated through our roadways, demonstrating the profound needs associated with wildfire resiliency in an environment affected by climate change. 2018's Mendocino Complex Wildfire was the largest, in terms of total acreage, in California's modern history, and though we were greatly fortunate it ultimately affected largely unpopulated areas, it highlighted the need for enhanced planning.

Both the Upper Lake-Nice and Rivas Area Plans, and the communities served by them, will greatly benefit from the inclusion of climate adaptation strategies and activities that improve disaster recovery and incorporate resilience to future wildfire events. The Upper Lake-Nice Area was heavily affected by the Mendocino Complex event. The Rivas, by some estimates home to 10,000 Lake County residents, are among Lake County's areas of greatest risk to wildfire, and concern has been broadly expressed regarding relative difficulty relating to ingress and egress.

The Camp Fire reminded us all of risks inherent in communities built into hillsides. In 2019, Riviera Residents approved additional assessments for enhanced roadside maintenance, and area Homeowner's Associations and community groups are dedicated to becoming Firewise. The Community Development Department and Interim Director Scott De Leon have been integral partners in their efforts to become more resilient.

Support from the Integrated Climate Adaptation and Resiliency Program, enhanced efforts from the County, supported by Proposition 84 Grant Funds, and community collaboration and input will help us address lingering concerns, and could meaningfully affect the probability of a Camp Fire-like event in Lake County.

Lake County is on the rise, and committed to building a bright future. The Lake County Community Risk Reduction Authority (RRA) has already gathered Lake County's Fire Protection agencies and community stakeholders, helping to coordinate efforts to harden our communities. Recently, Lake County was became the first California jurisdiction approved to access the Community Mitigation Assessment Team process.

Our Local Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC) has also been activated. The ALUC recently authorized expansion of the Boggs Mountain Helitack Base, and is exploring Lampson Field development, in great measure to increase regional wildfire resiliency, and Scott De Leon has been integral to those efforts, as well.

The Upper Lake-Nice and Rivas Area Plans were created in a decidedly pre-2015 reality, when climate change, and the weather events and wildfire they have since wrought were considered by some to be speculation. Lake County's Community Development Department stands ready to update these plans and faithfully and dutifully execute any necessary Zoning Ordinance updates, and our Board is strongly committed to ensuring resources are available to get this critical work done on time.

Proposition 84 Grant Funds will provide and essential bridge in our time of great need, and genuinely may prevent a future disaster. Thank you for your serious consideration.

Respectfully Submitted,

COUNTY OF LAKE

Moke Simon
CHAIR, Board of Supervisors