



DATE: NOVEMBER 15, 2023

FROM: COMMUNITY RELATIONS

SUBJECT: RESOLUTION NO. _____ - COMMUNITY INVESTMENT GRANTS FOR INTERNATIONAL TRADE EDUCATION PROGRAMS, INC. DBA EXP AND LOS ANGELES MARITIME INSTITUTE

SUMMARY:

Staff requests approval of the proposed agreements between the City of Los Angeles Harbor Department (Harbor Department) and International Trade Education Programs, Inc. dba EXP (EXP) and Los Angeles Maritime Institute (LAMI) for Community Investment Grants supporting their educational programs (Agreements).

EXP and LAMI were selected through the Community Investment Grant Program process. The proposed Agreements are for two years in the amounts of: 1) EXP - \$346,150 per year for a total of \$692,300; 2) LAMI - \$290,000 per year for a total of \$580,000. The combined two-year total for both Agreements is \$1,272,300. The Harbor Department is financially responsible for funding the proposed Agreements.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Board of Harbor Commissioners (Board):

1. Find that the Director of Environmental Management has determined that the proposed action is administratively exempt from the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under Article II Section 2(f) of the Los Angeles City CEQA Guidelines;
2. Find that the proposed Community Investment Grants are consistent with the criteria of the Board-approved Sponsorship/Hosting Policy (March 2010);
3. Approve the proposed Agreement with EXP for a term of two years and a total not-to-exceed amount of \$692,300;
4. Approve the proposed Agreement with LAMI for a term of two years and a total not-to-exceed amount of \$580,000;
5. Authorize the Executive Director and the Board Secretary to execute and attest to the proposed Agreements with EXP and LAMI; and

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6. Adopt Resolution No. _____.

DISCUSSION:

Background/Context – On March 1, 2023, the application for Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 Community Investment Grants was made available on the Port of Los Angeles' website. The Community Investment Grant program, which has been in place since FY 2014, funds a variety of non-profit groups that organize community programs and events benefiting both the Harbor Department and Harbor Area. A virtual workshop for those interested in applying was held in April and grant applications were due in May. The selection committee was comprised of six members with familiarity of the Harbor communities. The selection committee consisted of three Harbor Department employees, two community representatives and one Council District 15 representative.

Community grant proposals were split into two categories: General \$99,999 and under; and Large - \$100,000 and over. For the large grants, all six members rated the proposals and discussed appropriate funding levels for those programs selected to receive grants. The EXP and LAMI applications came in under the "large" category with requests of \$850,000 in total yearly funding. The selection committee is recommending funding at \$346,150 for EXP and \$290,000 for a period of two years each.

EXP - International Trade Education Programs, Inc. (ITEP) dba EXP, was established in 1999 by maritime industry leaders and founded by a former Port of Los Angeles Harbor Commissioner. Their goal was to bridge the gap between the port industry's need for a skilled workforce and the local high school's struggle to graduate students. ITEP recognized early on the importance of forging partnerships where businesses offer pathways to high growth careers, internships, apprenticeships, job shadowing and work-based learning opportunities. These real-world experiences offer students a glimpse into their future while giving them a competitive edge in the workforce.

In 2018, EXP completed a thorough review of its organizational strategy and stakeholder perceptions, developing a five-year strategic plan including a new brand identity that would capture the depth and breadth of EXP program services throughout the targeted service areas. EXP launched in September 2018. With the tagline "The opportunity engine," the EXP brand captures the organization's entrepreneurial drive, honors its enduring legacy in the Port of Los Angeles (POLA), and remains true to its core mission: to help young people gain experience, unlock doors and build the confidence they need to succeed in school and have a solid understanding of how they can pursue a career of their interest in the Port and maritime business ecosystem.

From a humble beginning serving a handful of students in one pathway academy, International Trade Academy, at Phineas Banning High School in Wilmington, EXP has

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grown exponentially. In 2013, EXP programs touched the lives of 1,500 students. By 2019, EXP reached more than 6,000 students in Southern California. Today, EXP is proud to make its programs accessible to approximately 8,200 students in 12 schools and 18 industry pathways spanning the Greater Los Angeles Region.

EXP works in collaboration with industry, education, student, and community partners to identify and address barriers and challenges, to effectively deliver services that are responsive to student and community needs. They are committed to maximizing their students' workforce development experiences and expose them to the vast array of college and career opportunities. EXP's comprehensive programs and services engage students throughout their high school journey and beyond in the following ways:

- 1) **College and Career EXPloration** is a comprehensive program initiative designed to empower high school students with the knowledge and skills they need to make informed decisions about their future education and career path. These programs include off-campus career discovery and exploration day events, where students learn about careers in an array of high-wage and high-growth industries and have the opportunity to interact with a variety of industry professionals. These activities are crafted to inspire, inform, and guide students on their journey towards higher education and meaningful careers.
- 2) **The EXPression Program** is an innovative and transformative initiative that places mentorship as its core, aiming to inspire and guide students on a journey of self-discovery, personal growth, and creative expression. This unique program platform allows students to connect with caring and experienced mentors that are passionate about nurturing talent, sparking creativity, and helping mentees unleash their full potential. EXP delivers a fall and spring Industry Coaching Program and a signature Young Fellows Program (mentoring) series.
- 3) **The Career EXPerience Program** is a dynamic work-based learning initiative that bridges the gap between education and the professional world by offering students real-world experiences. The program provides students with the opportunity to explore potential career paths, gain hands-on experiences, and build essential skills through work-based learning, ultimately helping them make informed decisions about their futures after high school. The Career EXPerience Program includes:
 - a. Signature Guest Speaker Series
 - b. Job Shadowing and Business Site Tours
 - c. College and University Tours
 - d. Career Fairs
 - e. Summer Maritime Immersion Program
 - f. 12-month Internship Program, featuring a series of career-readiness workshops, resumé and cover letter development, mock interviews,

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employer interviews, and a high-quality paid internship in a supportive professional environment.

- 4) **Career EXPanded Opportunities** is a transformative initiative that provides post-high school students and young adults with a wide array of employment resources, professional development, and networking opportunities as they navigate the critical transition to post-secondary education and/or career.

Notably, during the summer of 2023, approximately 80 EXP-supported students entering their senior year of high school participated in the Harbor Department's Summer Internship Program. The students receive a practical introduction and real-world work experience in careers related to maritime, trade, transportation and logistics, environmental, and security sectors, to name a few.

Exposure to the Port and other various maritime-related industries offered by this program helps generate awareness, interest, and preparation among EXP students; the next generation of maritime industry professionals. Likewise, the EXP program helps to ensure a continued strong, stable workforce which can greatly benefit the POLA and maritime industries for decades to come.

LAMI - TopSail is a program of the Los Angeles Maritime Institute, a non-profit, public benefit corporation which operates in conjunction with the Los Angeles Maritime Museum. TopSail is an experiential education program for at-risk youth which has been in operation since 1992. The program consists of three to five one-day sails in and around San Pedro Bay with the option of a multi-day voyage, usually to Catalina Island. TopSail's programs use the twin brigantines, the *Exy Johnson* and the *Irving Johnson*, the Official Tall ships of the City of Los Angeles.

TopSail is known as a highly successful program which promotes teamwork, teaches responsibility, and encourages leadership and self-esteem by providing character-building opportunities. At the same time, participants receive educational information regarding the Port and the maritime industry. For some of the participants, the TopSail voyages represent their first awareness of the Port and its operations. Testimonials from educators, participants and others indicate that the TopSail experience has served to encourage the majority of the students to stay in school and lead more productive lives. More than 100,000 students have been served over the past decade alone.

Agreement Requirements - All Harbor Department Community Investment Grants must be for programs, projects and events that are Tidelands Trust compliant. They must show a nexus to these requirements, and it must be clearly explained on the application. This is not only a factor for the committee in the selection process but is also reviewed by the City Attorney's Office before final selection is confirmed. Those without a Tidelands Trust nexus cannot be supported with Harbor Department Funds.

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The two large grant awardees in this case, have shown a Tidelands Trust nexus and have been reviewed by the City Attorney's Office.

Each grant Agreement requires the Grantee to list the benefits expected to be realized by both the Grantee as well as the Harbor Department if a grant request is funded. While Grantee benefits differ based upon their respective missions or goals, benefits realized by the Harbor Department typically include recognition of the Port's investment in the Grantee's outreach materials, website, eblasts, flyers, etc. Additionally, where appropriate, Harbor Department participation opportunities in Grantee programs are encouraged.

The Harbor Department's Community Investment Grant oversight does not end at the writing of the check. Community Relations staff monitor grantee programs, projects and events throughout the year and a wrap-up report is required from each grant recipient by the close of the fiscal year in which they received their grant. Failure to provide a wrap-up report or follow-through on Harbor Department recognition as detailed in their Agreement will detrimentally affect future year grant opportunities should these requirements not be met.

Past Agreements

ITEP/EXP - In FY 2007, the Board of Harbor Commissioners approved Agreement E2490, a one-year grant of \$440,000 to specifically assist ITEP with the expansion of its maritime education programs, start-up costs for establishing ITEP as an independent, non-profit corporation, and for development of marketing materials to solicit corporate sponsorships. In a letter dated December 14, 2005, the State Tidelands Commission approved utilization of Port revenue for this program and provided recommendations on future funding. The State Tidelands Commission stated that compliance with the recommendations were within the Port of Los Angeles' discretion, but not mandated by the Commissions' granting statute or existing public trust doctrine. In all subsequent actions, the Board of Harbor Commissioners has exercised its authority to determine the level of funding and how those funds should be used.

The Board subsequently approved Agreement E2646, providing funding of \$400,000 each year for FY 2008 and FY 2009 to assist with development of a model academy for potential implementation on a regional or state-wide basis. ITEP met or exceeded all requirements of Agreement E2646, including the establishment of academies at San Pedro High School, Barstow High School in the Inland Empire, Excel High School in Oakland and at high schools in Gardena and Carson.

Funding was not provided to ITEP in FY 2010 because they were able to operate with prior year funds received from the Port.

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The Board approved Agreement 10-2897 in FY 2011, a three-year agreement which continued to provide ITEP with \$400,000 per year for its programs.

The Board approved Agreement 13-3154 on August 12, 2013, in the amount of \$400,000 for the academic year ending June 30, 2014, and in 2014, a one-year agreement in the amount of \$330,000 was approved.

Under the Community Investment Grant Program, the following grants have been made: \$680,000 total (Agreement 15-3350) for FY 2016 and FY 2017; \$700,000 total (Agreement 19-3672) for FY 2020 and FY 2021; and \$670,000 total (Agreement 21-9909) for FY 2022 and FY 2023.

LAMI - The Board of Harbor Commissioners initially approved a two-year agreement with LAMI for TopSail in March 1997 for FY 1998 and FY 1999, for a total of \$200,000 per year. At the conclusion of the second year, the success of the program was re-evaluated prior to eventual sponsorship of a third and fourth year at the same level.

Agreement No. 2177 was approved in March 2002 for annual sponsorship of \$300,000 for an additional three-year period. Subsequently, the Board approved the first Amendment to Agreement No. 2177 which increased the annual sponsorship by \$467,000 to assist with capital repayment costs for the completion of twin brigantines commissioned on April 27, 2002. Both actions were also approved by the City Council. Agreement No. 2177 covered fiscal years 2002 through 2004.

Agreement No. 2330 was approved in July 2004 for annual sponsorship of \$450,000 for an additional three-year period. This action was approved by the City Council in September 2004. Agreement 2330 covered fiscal years 2005 through 2007.

Agreement No. 2581 was approved on February 27, 2007. This agreement was for three years with a sliding financial package starting at \$525,000 and increasing three percent each year for a final year compensation of \$556,972.

Agreement No. 10-2890 was approved on October 13, 2010. This agreement was for three years with a financial package of \$350,000 per year for a total amount of \$1,050,000. An amendment to this Agreement in the amount of \$175,000 continued funding of the LAMI program through the end of calendar year 2013.

Agreement 13-3213 was approved on December 12, 2013, for \$175,000 bringing total funding in FY 2014 to \$350,000 and, in 2014, a one-year agreement for \$225,000 was approved.

Under the Community Investment Grant Program, the following grants have been made: \$510,000 total (Agreement 15-3351) for FY 2016 and 2017; \$550,000 total (Agreement

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17-3520) for FY 2018 and FY 2019; \$550,000 total (Agreement 19-3673) for FY 2020 and FY 2021; and \$520,000 total (Agreement 21-9837) for FY 2022 and FY 2023.

EXP submitted a grant application (Transmittal 1) which requested \$450,000 in funding to prepare high school students in underserved communities in the Harbor Gateway area, including the Wilmington, San Pedro, and Harbor City communities. Based upon its review of EXP's application, the selection committee recommended a grant of \$346,150 per year, or \$692,300 over a two-year period. Based upon the selection committee's recommendation, staff proposes entering into the proposed grant agreement (Transmittal 2) with EXP.

LAMI submitted a grant application (Transmittal 3) which requested \$400,000 in funding to administer the *TopSail Youth Program*. Based upon its review of LAMI's application, the selection committee recommended a grant of \$290,000 per year, or \$580,000 over a two-year period. Based upon the selection committee's recommendation, staff proposes entering into the proposed grant agreement (Transmittal 4) with LAMI.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT:

Find that the proposed action is administratively exempt from the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under Article II Section 2(f) of the Los Angeles City CEQA Guidelines as determined by the Director of Environmental Management.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

Approval of the proposed Agreements will commit \$692,300 to EXP and \$580,000 to LAMI to fund each of these grant agreements for a total of \$1,272,300 over a two-year period.

FY 2024 funding in the amount of \$636,150 is available within Account 52031 (Sponsorships), Center 0220, Program 000. If the agreements are approved, \$636,150 (\$346,150 for EXP and \$290,000 for LAMI) will again be requested to be budgeted as part of the Harbor Department's FY 2025 annual budget adoption process. If future fiscal year funds are not appropriated by the Board in any subsequent fiscal year, the agreements shall be terminated. However, such termination shall not relieve the parties of liability for any obligation previously incurred.

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CITY ATTORNEY:

The Office of the City Attorney has reviewed and approved the proposed Agreements as to form and legality.

TRANSMITTALS:

1. Grant Application - EXP
2. Agreement – EXP
3. Grant Application - LAMI
4. Agreement – LAMI

FIS Approval MB
CA Approval SO



CECILIA MORENO
Director of Community Relations



ARLEY BAKER
Sr. Director of Communications &
Stakeholder Engagement



DAVID LIBATIQUE
Deputy Executive Director
Stakeholder Engagement

APPROVED:

Marla Bleavins For

EUGENE D. SEROKA
Executive Director

ES:DL:AB:CM:JB:cp
Author: C. Piña