

# Jan 26, 2024

Johnice Williams

I am part of the Orange County Heritage Council and I am the Chair for the health village for the Black History Month parade and unity festival that takes place on February 3, from nine to four. This is in downtown Anaheim.

## **Jesse Ben Ron**

The state is currently facing a budget deficit. In the governor's budget, he had to make modifications to CERF. Originally, there was a much larger pot of money for implementation dollars, because catalyst gave Orange County and all the other regions guaranteed money, it lowered what would have been implementation dollars for projects to about \$270 million. They're going to break it up a bit instead of that \$270 million being available starting in July. About \$100 million of which \$25 million will be available just for the indigenous community, and then \$73 million for a broader implementation phase dollar. Then year after year \$100 million is available to apply for funding for projects. It doesn't impact catalyst, which is our work as a collaborative and those predevelopment activities.

On the positive side, it's not a reduction. I think the benefit of this is as we think about catalysts, and the predevelopment activities, by drawing out the implementation phase funding, it allows us to get funding through catalyst for a predevelopment activity, and then possibly fund the project when it's shovel ready or project ready. The con is we have to think about how much are we strategically going to be asking for in each of these phases, instead of asking for a larger amount of money, right out the gate.

## **Toni Symonds**

The governor's budget is just a proposal. When the governor released the budget, it looks like the deficit is going to be higher. We may want to be thinking about how we might support that as it gets reviewed by the legislature, to a sign on letter that would say that we believe this approach for the California jobs first program is reasonable.

## **Austin Lynch**

I really don't understand what we're doing. As far as I don't understand these strategies, where they come from, or how what incubation would mean. I don't understand, I really don't understand where we stand, or where we're headed as far as proposing projects.

## **Linda Dimario**

Who is competing for the \$73 million?

## **Jesse Ben Ron 18:12**

Our region versus other regions.

**Ish Herrera 18:44**

Projects that are not selected in that step of the process does not mean that those projects are not fundable and worthy of funding. This is where the fundraising effort kicks in within your county boundaries, to find public private partnerships are investors to provide the resources to implement those projects. The one of the goals with this program is to leverage any state and federal dollars they make their way to Orange County with local investments, from philanthropy from corporate giving, and from other sources,

**Michael Graff-Weisner 20:46**

What does this mean for OC in terms of funding? If you had a proportion of \$73 million because 73 what might that mean for Orange County?

**Jesse Ben Ron 21:42**

Again, \$73 million is just what's available now in June, then they're going to open another \$100 million, and then and they're going to open up another \$100 million come the next year. It's the same dollar amount, it's just broken up into three installments versus the one.

**Ish Herrera 23:13**

I wanted to just take a second to offer a reminder on what this process is. And so this is part two of ultimately your planning phase. The next few months are going to be dedicated to really focusing on developing a roadmap for Orange County that outlines the creation of high-quality jobs with priority sectors and industries that are showing a lot of potential in Orange County sectors and industries that you have a competitive advantage in compared to other parts of the state, that also outlines how those jobs are going to be equitably accessed by members of the community, and then there's the emphasis on how do you build out the Orange County economy in years to come with a an eye towards sustainability and resiliency.

Those are things to keep in mind this, these items, as we discussed today, the strategies in that Excel file, and as you raise questions on the content that's found in some of those Excel cells, you'll want to keep these things in mind.

**Austin Lynch 32:13**

I would really like for us to consider one option to not move forward on this framework. I have a spreadsheet of six categories with 15 options, and then there are six criteria by which I should evaluate each of those. I don't understand why a program talking about equity would be focusing on almost anything other than increasing economic equity. This feels overwhelming and frankly, impossible to understand what we're committing to, by voting on 90 possible strategies out of six categories. And I don't understand at all, what we're committing if I pick a strategy,

**Jesse Ben Ron 35:07**

The strategies listed did not come from the region, it came specifically from the state, they want the strategies to address these six things. You're going to have until 10 o'clock to discuss amongst the group, and then you'll have a week to vote. With the week that you have the vote, please refer back to

those so you get more flavor of what the state wants us to address. If we want to be compliant with this grant, we have to address these things. The importance of the strategies is to focus this group when we consider projects for implementation, but they are also meant to just address broader dynamics of the region. These strategies aren't necessarily 100% supposed to only meet the needs of CERF funding, but really think about what's impacting our community in these categories. We want to select projects based on our strategies that also meet the criteria of the state.

The process I'm about to explain was approved by the group last year. We just implemented a process that was already recommended to you and approved by you. We had the stakeholder group meetings in October. They essentially brainstormed what they thought are ways to address the strategies to recommend that group, then a poll was sent out with all those options. That group then voted for the top two per category, and that's the list you have here. It's the accumulation of what the top two from business, what the top two from CBOs, with the top two from our Native American community and all the different sub stakeholder groups. Now what we are trying to do is to get down to, I would say a top 10, I'm going to recommend top 12. It is essentially a focusing of what our priorities are.

**Luis Sarmiento** 43:20

I just wanted to second Austin's point. It just seems to me important that we listen when our members are expressing that we need to set aside time to review this information. Between now and next week, I'm not certain that I'll be able to process all of this information.

**Jasmine Pachnanda** 48:02

If we move forward with a vote and move forward with the top 10 or 12, is there opportunity to refine the strategies? It feels like there's an opportunity to prioritize some but I think there's an opportunity to strengthen what the strategies are. How do you envision the process working from here?

**Jesse Ben Ron** 49:19

It won't be delivered to the state until late June or August, so there's still plenty of time to refine and modify. I think this is a step in trying us to get to a place where we get a sense of what the group is feeling is most important.

**Jasmine Pachnanda** 51:16

I echo Toni's comment on here, which is maybe for purposes of even this vote, like if we bucket them, it might make it easier for people to get their heads it. As long as it's aligned with something on here, I think people could help, co create how things can be combined.

**Toni Symonds**

I think I've learned is that they wanted to honor that we had put in specific recommendations, and that everybody got to see that. What I came away with was that this voting is that the polling when you start to see how everything votes, then we might then we might learn something we don't know what the actual polling will reveal.

**Andrew Gonzalez** 55:22

I feel like we're making this more complicated than it needs to be idea about bucketing some of these ideas. They've already been bucketed. We got six strategy topics right here. They've been bucketed. I think we've got a bunch of projects here. Why don't we treat it like an RFP process and grade those projects based off this criteria, and see how they fit in and how many buckets they match. In the end, it's the state that ultimately matters, because they're the ones giving us the money.

**Linda DiMario** 56:36

We have responsibilities as members who have been engaged in this from the beginning, that yes, we have to use the time between meetings, to consume the information and be informed by it. So that when we do come together in this format, we're prepared to make good decisions. And I think it's time for us to recognize that we have all the tools in front of us.

**Luis Sarmiento** 59:53

Is it correct to understand and because also to clarify what it is that we'll be asked to vote on at our at our next meeting? Am I understanding correctly then that this spreadsheet, the stakeholders, strategies, spreadsheet will be used as a sort of criteria to select projects moving forward? Or are we voting on prioritizing any particular strategy? Or what exactly would be the proposed vote?

**Jesse Ben Ron** 1:00:44

This is definitely going to be the high-level framework of what we think are valuable projects, when we try to open up for CERF implementation dollars. I'm just focused on implementation, not catalyst. When we think about when we go to the community and say there's \$73 million available that may spread throughout the state, but we want to obviously submit for some projects, what do you have? However, it's not as if we're supposed to build strategies only to maximize CERF funding,

**Iosefa Alofaituli** 1:05:55

I just want to acknowledge that part of the richness and beauty of this HRTC is that we don't all agree, right. I think what I hear when folks are objecting to the process, it's really coming from a place of wanting to make sure that the people that they serve are heard. And we should honor that. I'm also wanting to encourage us to be open minded and courageous than just jump in and not and find ways to advocate while going through this process as well.

**Jesse Ben Ron** 1:09:19

I think we're going to have to move the conversation, the discussion of the strategies to the next meeting. Originally this group approved selecting the top 10, but I would recommend that we move to top 12 only because it makes the voting process easier. It's easier to say what are the two strategies that are selected per category.

**Austin Lynch** 1:11:30

I would suggest that we do four choices per category. We're cutting from 15, fours about a quarter. I propose that.

**Toni Symonds** 1:12:44

I would break the category of health and environment into two different categories. I think there are some recommendations that are very public health related and there are some that are very environmental related, and that if you ask people to vote, you're going to ask them to decide which one of the two were more important. It might be in an early evaluation to have a clearer idea of where on health people want to go and where on environment.

**Jodi Duva** 1:13:39

So as long as if we're being asked to select a top two, or three, or whatever we decide on per category, Jesse, will they be listed that way under each category, because my only concern and not seeing the poll was making sure that we don't just pick a top 12. And then they don't hit all of the sixth category.

**Jesse Ben Ron** 1:14:07

You're selecting the strategies under each category. So it's not all 90 listed. It's the 15 or so that were under economic diversification and the 15 or so for economic equity. That's how

**Ish Herrera** 1:14:51

Jodi suggested three per category as opposed to four. I wanted to just throw that out there for the groups consider iteration two, it's in the chat. So that we're clear on process, the first is separating environment and how to have their own columns and in the Excel spreadsheet their own categories. We probably want to take a emotion and action on that. The second is the suggestion of expanding the to two per category to potentially three per category or four.

**Iosefa Alofaituli** 1:15:46

You'll see similar strategies spread throughout multiple categories, so just being mindful that could dilutes or advantage a certain strategy. When looking at certain strategies, some of them seem they can build upon existing infrastructure and systems, so it seems like there's a quicker path towards impact. I'm just making light of it. Just noting that as we looked at these, we're looking at those that are you're infusing resources to grow versus starting something new.

**Ish Herrera** 1:17:14

The one that gets surfaced in the chat and in the comments is a desire for an additional space for folks to opt into, to provide time to review the strategy. We can talk offline about how we facilitate that.

**Linda DiMario** 1:18:07

One of the things I'm concerned about in separating health and environment since health and quality of life is so incredibly integrated and attached to all the environmental factors, everything from soil erosion to the quality of water. I fear that there are those that might approach the environment as being wouldn't that be nice if we could, and not understand that there are some very direct health implications and consequences.

**Jesse Ben Ron** 1:19:16

I think what we're going to do is create a survey based on the recommendations, whether people like to three or four per category, and even the suggestion of the breakdown.

**Jesse Ben Ron** 1:21:58

Oh, well, we thought the second so we can have the group? Gotcha. We'll vote via the poll. So I just want to make sure just for a process standpoint, let me get

**Ish Herrera** 1:22:06

Is there a motion to give direction to the project team here to issue a poll to offer considerations on amplifying the amount of strategy selected per category? And also to consider separating health in an environment?

**Ish Herrera** 1:23:04

Is there any opposition that would like to come off mute and express their opposition?

**Andrew Gonzalez** 1:23:11

I'm opposed to both items.

**Cesar Covarrubias** 1:25:34

I understand why we're trying to vote in trying to separate these two equities, partly the issue of environment and other, but as we're moving forward with implementation, it'll be important that we see these connections between all of these topics and strategies as to how we can implement this more comprehensively.

**Jesse Ben Ron** 1:28:37

We'll get the poll about process, and we would just move the full conversation to the next scheduled meeting, so I don't think we have to create a second one or a study session, because I think the discussion should be with everyone present, so the second poll will not be released until after that conversation and after there's a motion to release the final poll.