

March 26, 2025



The Honorable Alex Padilla
United States Senate
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Adam Schiff
United States Senate
112 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable John Garamendi
United States House of Representatives
2004 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senator Padilla, Senator Schiff, and Congressional Representative Garamendi:

Deeply vested in the vision of serving as the economic development hub in the region, San Pablo Economic Development Corporation (San Pablo EDC) supports the City of San Pablo's request for FY25-26 federal funding.

These are not passion projects; these are vital community development on which many economic development plans hinge. As a majority minority disadvantaged community that resides in the fourth largest economy in the world, disparity is noticeable in San Pablo. While we are in a Green Empowerment Zone, attracting true investment means San Pablo needs to demonstrate safe, green-friendly infrastructure.

San Pablo is located in Contra Costa County and sits just a few miles northeast of San Francisco, yet is generations away in terms of historical inequities to wealth building. With nearly 90% of its population being minorities and people of color, just 40% of its residents are homeowners (versus the national average of 63%), more than 40% of its population are foreign-born, and reporting the lowest educational attainment in the county, San Pablo embodies the spirit of whom this grant is intended to serve.

San Pablo is just a representative snapshot of Contra Costa County and its 1,172,000 residents. Divided into West, Central and East, each region has its distinct challenges yet all share a lack of a cohesively equitable model that involves education, employment specialists and employers.

Equity is at the core of our mission which is to act as the catalyst to equitable economic opportunity, and we hope it is central to the decisions that you are making for very limited, very vital federal funds.

We have reviewed the five projects the City has submitted:

1. **San Pablo Avenue Bridge Replacement and Intersection Realignment Project:** for a multi-generational pedestrian- and bike-friendly public, this is an urgent project needed for safety reasons, from the shoring up of the creek to realignment of a tricky intersection.
2. **Citywide Zero-Emission Vehicle (ZEV) Charging Station Hub & ZEV Integration into City Fleet Inventory:** given the presence of a large refinery in our backyard, the more progress the City is able to make on the environmentally sustainable front the better. The health of our community is depending on this.
3. **Emergency Back-up Generators at City Facilities:** as a disinvested community, these are bare minimum investments federal dollars could support. Our community depends on city facilities, notably youth and seniors.
4. **Public Safety Camera Infrastructure Replacement and Expansion:** we are virtually surrounded by a city with high violent crime without priority toward safety infrastructure, so this has proven vital to attracting investment, solving crime and keeping residents safe.
5. **Regional Emergency Operations Center and Real-time Information Center Infrastructure to Support Cyber Crime Investigations:** the EOC is desperately needed. Given our demographic make-up, cybercrime is particularly devastating. San Pablo EDC would like to see the needed investment.

San Pablo EDC would argue that there is no economic development without meaningful investment in infrastructure and a community-driven police department. Industry does not make investment, people do not elect to live and consumers do not shop where they do not feel safe. These investments provide good jobs, make residents and visitors safer, and encourage economic development. A small city like San Pablo needs every advantage to attract investment.

San Pablo is the definition of a disinvested community and qualifies: (1) under New Markets Tax Credits (NMTCs); (2) as a majority minority census tract for equitable loan programs seeking to increase intergenerational wealth-building in historically vulnerable populations; (3) and is both Opportunity Zone and Green Empowerment Zone qualified.

San Pablo EDC is a 501(c)(3) serving Contra Costa, Northern Alameda and Solano Counties with workforce, business and first-time homebuyer education and services. Its equity-centric mission focuses on providing accessible opportunity for residents to meaningfully participate in the local economy. We are a proud partner of the City of San Pablo and support their community- and safety-centric federal funding request.

In community,



Leslay C. Choy

Executive Director, San Pablo EDC