

Legislation Text

File #: #17-0313, Version: 1

PREPARED BY: AMANDA BOOTH

DATE OF MEETING: 08/07/17

SUBJECT:

LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR \$1.3 MILLION IN GRANT FUNDS FROM THE CALIFORNIA STATE COSTAL CONSERVANCY UNDER THE WATER QUALITY, SUPPLY, AND INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2014 (PROPOSITION 1), FOR THE WILDCAT CREEK RESTORATION & GREENWAY TRAIL PROJECT BETWEEN CHURCH LANE AND VALE ROAD

CITY MANAGER RECOMMENDATION

Approve by Minute Order

COMPLIANCE STATEMENTS

“Wildcat Creek Restoration Evaluation behind Plaza San Pablo” is an adopted policy item under the Capital Improvement Projects section of the FY 2015-17 City Council Priority Workplan, effective October 1, 2016.

CEQA Compliance Statement

Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15061 (b)(3), the adoption of the minute order authorizing Public Works to submit a grant application is exempt from CEQA requirements. Under Guidelines section 15378, “project” does not include the creation of government funding mechanisms or other government fiscal activities, which do not involve any commitment to any specific project which may result in a potentially significant physical impact on the environment. However, the proposed project completed CEQA review in 2013 and it was determined to be categorically exempt in accordance with Sections 15304 and 15333 of the CEQA Guidelines, on the basis that this project involves minor alterations to land and small habitat restoration.

BACKGROUND

On February 6, 2017 the City Council approved (Resolution 2017-018) a grant application to the Coastal Conservancy for the Wildcat Creek Restoration and Greenway Trail Project.

The State Coastal Conservancy staff is recommending the project receive \$1.3 million dollars in funding to Chairman Douglas Bosco, who will make the final determination in this process. State Coastal Conservancy staff suggested getting letters of support from the San Pablo City Council, the local state assembly member and the local state senator. Therefore, City staff worked to get letters of support from Assembly Member Tony Thurmond and State Senator Nancy Skinner (attached). Staff is seeking a letter of support from the City Council of the City of San Pablo to send to Chairman Bosco.

Project Information

The City of San Pablo’s proposed submission for the State Coastal Conservancy’s Proposition 1 Grant program was the Wildcat Creek Restoration and Greenway Trail project located at the former

Circle-S trailer park, now known as Plaza San Pablo. The proposed project will restore 2,200 linear feet of Wildcat Creek and include a 2,100 linear foot greenway-trail with a class I bike/pedestrian path, landscaping and pedestrian amenities.

Currently that section of Wildcat Creek is severely altered with banks that are near vertical, lacks floodplain access, and maintains a locked-in meander pattern. In addition, there are numerous examples of failing concrete slabs and rock gabions that were used to protect creek banks against erosion. In many areas, obscured sightlines leave the creek vulnerable to illegal dumping. Moreover, invasive plant species such as ivy, blackberry, and eucalyptus dominate both banks.

The proposed project will address several creek issues:

- Establish an active channel width to depth ratio to help transport sediment effectively throughout the reach without excessive sediment deposition.
- Develop in stream habitat/complexity to increase the creek's viable fish habitat.
- Develop a floodplain bench/terrace to allow the channel to accommodate larger flow volumes (reducing downstream flood risks) within its banks.
- Change the slope of the right bank from 1:1 (vertical: horizontal) slope to a 2:1 slope. This grading will greatly stabilize the right bank, which is overly steep in many areas.
- Establish new vegetation of over 2,000 native riparian trees and shrubs to further reduce bank erosion while providing terrestrial and avian habitat.

In addition to the creek restoration, increased awareness and engagement with the bicycle and pedestrian community will help shift the public's perception of the creek as a hot spot for illicit activities to being recognized as a viable public corridor. The path will be a crucial link in the future Wildcat Creek Regional Trail, connecting the San Francisco Bay and Wildcat Canyon Regional Park Ridge Trails.

The estimated cost of the Project is \$3.5 million and the original grant application requested \$3.4 million through the State Coastal Conservancy's Proposition 1 Grant Program and provided a \$100,000 match to fund the greenway trail along the creek. However due to funding constraints, the State Coastal Conservancy has proposed to provide \$1.3 million in funding for the project.

To fund the shortfall staff have submitted multiple grant applications to various grant sources to ensure this project is fully funded. The table below provides information about the variously secured funding sources for this project.

Grant Agency	Total Grant Request	Expected Funding	San Pablo Match	Total
Measure J: Pedestrian, Bicycle & Trail Facilities	\$1,280,000	\$1,280,000	\$170,000	\$1,450,000
State Coastal Conservancy	\$3,304,744	\$1,300,000	\$0	\$1,300,000
California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA)	\$2,017,004	\$680,000	\$137,522	\$817,522

Total		\$3,260,000	\$307,522	\$3,567,522
--------------	--	--------------------	------------------	--------------------

At this time, staff is seeking Council approval of a letter of support to send to the State Coastal Conservancy's Proposition 1 Grant for \$1.3 million for the restoration of Wildcat Creek and Greenway Trail between Church Lane and Vale Road.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact at this time as this item is to request approval for a letter of support for the \$1.3 million from the State Coastal Conservancy's Proposition 1 Grant for the restoration of Wildcat Creek and Greenway Trail between Church Land and Vale Road.

If grant funding is approved staff will return to City Council for acceptance of the grant(s) and to allocate the required match funding.