



CITY OF LONG BEACH

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS, RECREATION & MARINE

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January 24, 2006

HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

City of Long Beach

California

RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt the attached Resolution authorizing the City Manager to apply for California Cultural and Historical Endowment (CCHE) grant funds, in the amount of \$982,892, for construction of a Visitor Education Center at Rancho Los Cerritos Historic Site, and to execute any documents necessary for the implementation and administration of the project. (District 8)

DISCUSSION

The Department of Parks, Recreation and Marine proposes to apply for \$982,892 in CCHE grant funds for the Cultural and Historical Endowment under the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Act of 2002, for construction of a Visitor Education Center at Rancho Los Cerritos Historic Site. The Visitor Education Center is expected to cost \$1,965,384, and the grant requires a one to one match. If the City's application is approved, the Rancho Los Cerritos Foundation will formalize an agreement with the City Council to provide matching funds up to \$700,000 and apply \$196,578 of an existing design contract towards the match, as permitted by the application guidelines; the remaining \$100,000 needed will come from existing funds in the Rancho Los Cerritos Capital Improvement Project account.

The architectural firm, Heritage Architecture and Planning, is currently designing the Visitor Education Center for Rancho Los Cerritos in accordance with the Rancho Los Cerritos Master Plan, which was approved in concept by the City Council in November 2002. Designs will be completed in April 2006. The Visitor Education Center, representative of the Cota adobe built on Rancho lands in the 1830s, will enable the museum to expand and diversify its audience as it implements an exciting and unique "Visitors from the Past" interpretive tour program. Guided tours will begin in the new center, and will involve costumed living history characters who share specific stories of the Rancho and its history based upon their own lives and the site's main themes and educational objectives. The Visitor Education Center will be a multi-use structure and include technology for both a fast-paced, educational, and entertaining video on the

history of the site, plus interpretive exhibits. Gallery space will also be used to highlight the museum's collections and explore historical issues of contemporary interest. These varied interpretive methods will provide guests with a clear understanding of the Rancho's place within the context of Long Beach, early California and United States history. The Visitor Education Center will also house a changing area for costumed interpreters and include a small museum gift shop and office space for the volunteer coordinator and receptionist.

The Visitor Education Center is a priority project within the Rancho Los Cerritos Master Plan, which also includes construction of a caretaker residence to improve site security and open up more of the historic ranch house for interpretation; development of a barn complex to provide classroom space and house collections, the research library, and staff offices; entryway upgrades to improve access and aesthetics; and landscaping improvements. The Rancho Los Cerritos Foundation is committed to raising funds from foundations, corporations, and private donors for this new construction and educational enhancements. To date, the Foundation has received sufficient donations, grants, and pledges for the Visitor Education Center to provide a significant portion of the required match for this grant.

The CCHE received \$122 million under the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Act of 2002 for cultural and historical projects. The Rancho Los Cerritos Visitor Education Center is consistent with the Endowment's priorities, which include funding capital assets that preserve, interpret, and enhance understanding and appreciation of the significant elements that add to the State's cultural, social and economic evolution. The CCHE will award \$43 million during this funding cycle, which is the second of three. The City of Long Beach, as a public agency, is allowed to submit one grant per cycle. With matching funds identified through the Rancho Los Cerritos Foundation and Capital Improvement Project budget, timing is ideal for the City's application.

This item was reviewed by Senior Deputy City Attorney Donna Gwin, on January 11, 2006, and Budget Management Officer David Wodynski on January 13, 2006.

TIMING CONSIDERATIONS

City Council action on January 24, 2006 is critical, as the completed application for CCHE must be submitted by January 31, 2006.

FISCAL IMPACT

The CCHE grant requires a one to one match. The cost of the Visitor Education Center is estimated at \$1,965,784. If the \$982,892 in grant funds are received, the Rancho Los Cerritos Foundation will enter into a formal agreement with the City to transfer up to \$700,000 of foundation-raised, non-City funding to a dedicated account for this project.

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\$196,578 in currently committed funds for architectural designs will also be used as a partial match. The remaining balance of \$100,000 would be funded by County Bond funds currently budgeted in the Capital Projects Fund (CP) in the Department of Public Works (PW). There will be no impact to the General Fund for this project.

If the grant is awarded, the Department will request City Council approval to accept and appropriate the funds and to enter into a formal agreement with the Rancho Los Cerritos Foundation.

SUGGESTED ACTION:

Approve recommendation.

Respectfully submitted,



PHIL T. HESTER
DIRECTOR OF PARKS, RECREATION AND MARINE

APPROVED:



GERALD R. MILLER
CITY MANAGER

PTH:EC
CCHEApplication.CouncilLtr.1-24-06

Attached: Resolution