



Legislation Text

File #: 23-0338, **Version:** 1

Recommendation to adopt resolution authorizing City Manager, or designee, to execute any documents necessary, including subsequent amendments, to enter into an agreement with the Los Angeles County Flood Control District, to accept and expend funding in the amount of \$1,200,000, for the Willow Springs Wetland Restoration and Expansion Project from the Safe, Clean Water Program's (Measure W) Regional Program Transfer Agreement No. 2022RPLLAR03;

Increase appropriations in the Capital Projects Fund Group in the Parks, Recreation and Marine Department by \$1,200,000, offset by grant revenue; and

Increase appropriations in the Capital Projects Fund Group in the Parks, Recreation and Marine Department by \$1,200,000, offset by a transfer of grant funds from the Capital Grants Fund. (District 5)

On November 6, 2018, Measure W was successfully passed by Los Angeles County voters, which created the Safe Clean Water Program (SCWP). The SCWP provides local, dedicated funding for stormwater and urban runoff programs and projects to increase local water supply, improve water quality, and protect public health. With the approval of the SCWP, the first annual parcel tax was collected through property tax bills in Fiscal Years 2019 and 2020. SCWP revenues will be allocated as follows:

- Fifty percent distributed among nine watershed areas, to be programmed by the respective Watershed Area Steering Committees (WASCs) to fund stormwater projects and programs at the regional watershed level
- Forty percent allocated directly to municipalities, proportional to the tax revenues collected within their boundaries, to fund local stormwater programs and projects
- Ten percent allocated to the Los Angeles County Flood Control District (LACFCD) for program administration, which includes technical assistance and staff support for the WASCs.

The City of Long Beach (City) is in the Lower Los Angeles River (LLAR) watershed area under the SCWP. The LLAR watershed area is estimated to receive up to \$12.82 million annually to fund regional projects and programs. Regional Program funds for the LLAR are programmed by the LLAR Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC), comprised of local stakeholders from agencies, municipalities, and community members from within the LLAR. The LLAR WASC meets regularly to develop 5-year funding plans (Stormwater Investment Plan) and recommendations to provide water quality, water supply, and community

enhancement benefits to the region.

In 2020, the Willow Springs Park Wetland Restoration Expansion Project (Project) was identified as a multi-benefit stormwater capture project and the City applied for SCWP Regional Program technical assistance funds to produce a Project Feasibility Study that explored the construction of an expanded wetlands system at Willow Springs Park, further implementing the Willow Springs Park Master Plan, which was adopted by the City Council in January 2013 and builds upon the Willow Springs Park Wetlands Restoration Project which was completed in 2017. Funding from the SCWP Technical Resources Program, in the amount of \$300,000, was approved by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors in October 2020. Through the Technical Assistance Program, the City received resources for the development of a Project Feasibility Study through support from County Technical Assistance consultants.

The Project Feasibility Study (Study) was completed in July 2021 and the City used the Study to apply for Measure W funds. Funding in the amount of \$1,200,000 for Project design was approved by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors in September 2022. Measure W funds will be used to produce design documents and complete CEQA environmental review for the Project identified in the Study, which includes the development of six additional acres of currently undeveloped parkland with a 1-acre wetland, approximately 8,000 linear feet of open space trails, over 200 trees and native plants, a pedestrian bridge, and educational signage. The Project will utilize nature-based solutions to capture and treat stormwater while providing additional recreational opportunities and access to open space in an area in need of park equity, and create a positive environment for biodiversity to thrive in. The funding will also support an inclusive multi-lingual community engagement process during Project design.

The Project is aligned with the Parks Make Long Beach: Parks, Recreation and Marine Strategic Plan, since it includes measures that support the City's ability to respond to climate change, reduce water consumption, complement environmental education through existing partnerships at the park, and add additional open space in a park deficient area of Long Beach.

This matter was reviewed by Deputy City Attorney Anita Lakhani on March 22, 2023 and by Budget Analysis Officer Greg Sorensen on March 23, 2023.

City Council action is requested on April 11, 2023, for the Transfer Agreement to be executed, and for the project design phase to be initiated.

The City will receive grant funds in an amount not to exceed \$1,200,000 to deliver a complete Willow Springs Wetland Restoration and Expansion Project design package, which will be used to pursue grant funding for the construction phase. No match or in-kind service mandate is required. The total cost to construct the Project is estimated at \$9,840,000 (in 2021 dollars), including \$1,200,000 for the design phase. Construction of the Project is currently

unfunded and future grant funding will be sought to complete the Project.

An appropriation increase, contingent upon an executed agreement with the Los Angeles County Flood Control District (LACFCD), is requested in the amount of \$2,400,00 in the Capital Projects Fund Group in the Parks, Recreation and Marine Department. Of this amount, \$1,200,000 will be offset with grant reimbursement revenues received from LACFCD. The remaining \$1,200,000 is a technical appropriation to allow for the transfer of LACFCD funds from the Capital Grants Fund, a fund within the Capital Projects Fund Group.

Projects will be appropriated on a contingent-basis only. Projects will only proceed at such time that grant agreements have been approved and executed between the City and LACFCD. Should grant agreements not be available by the close of Fiscal Year 2023, the department will return to the City Council with a request to reduce appropriations. The department will also return with an adjustment to appropriations if funding amounts in the executed grant agreements are different from those requested as contingent appropriations. This recommendation has no staffing impact beyond the normal budgeted scope of duties and is consistent with existing City Council priorities. This recommendation will potentially result in a positive impact on jobs.

Approve recommendation.

BRENT DENNIS
DIRECTOR
PARKS, RECREATION AND MARINE

APPROVED:

THOMAS B. MODICA
CITY MANAGER