



Legislation Text

File #: 17-0821, **Version:** 1

Recommendation to adopt resolution authorizing City Manager, or designee, to submit a grant application to the California Department of Parks and Recreation, Outdoor Environmental Education Facilities Grant Program; accept said grant, if awarded, in an amount up to \$500,000, for completion of the Willow Springs Outdoor Education Trailhead and Trail Network; and, execute all documents necessary to accept the funds and implement the project. (District 7)

On March 5, 2002, voters passed the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Act of 2002 (Proposition 40). The passage of Proposition 40 provided \$2.6 billion in funds for local assistance grants for projects intended to acquire and develop neighborhood, community, and regional parks and recreational areas for land, air, and water conservation programs, including acquisition for those purposes, and to acquire, restore, preserve, and interpret California's historical and cultural resources.

In February 2017, the California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) began soliciting applications for the Outdoor Environmental Education Facilities Grant Program (Grant), funded by Proposition 40. This competitive Grant provides assistance to local agencies and community-based organizations for the development of outdoor environmental education facilities and public outdoor structures and exhibits that facilitate focused learning in a natural outdoor setting with native vegetation, and inspire environmental stewardship and an appreciation of the natural world.

DPR has notified applicants that approximately \$10 million is available for one grant cycle. Grant awards are anticipated to be announced in March 2018.

The Department of Parks, Recreation and Marine is proposing to apply for up to \$500,000 in Grant funding through Proposition 40 for the Willow Springs Outdoor Education Trailhead and Trail Network (Project). This Project replaces the depot building, which was planned to serve as the California Avenue trailhead, but was destroyed by fire in September 2016. As a result of this loss, an alternative trailhead concept has been developed to provide connections to the various park amenities and future park development, while maintaining the original concept of communicating the history of the land and its various habitats, and encouraging outdoor exploration.

The Project includes the following three components:

Creation of an outdoor education trailhead at the park entrance on California Avenue;

Improvement of the existing trailhead at Longview Point; and,

The creation of a planned trail system that connects the Longview Point trailhead, the California Avenue trailhead, and the Willow Springs Wetlands to future projects planned for the

undeveloped northern section of the 48-acre Willow Springs Park site.

The California Avenue trailhead will be located at the site of the former depot building, and will feature a shade structure and interpretive signs in an outdoor gathering area that will provide an introduction to the trail network, history of the site, and the local habitat. The trail network will include additional wayfinding and interpretive signage, and several adventure play nodes with logs, boulders, and educational signage will be installed to keep youth engaged and encourage exploration and discovery. The mosaic watershed map imbedded in the paving of the plaza at the Longview Point trailhead will be upgraded with a durable, long-lasting surface.

This Project was determined to best fit the Grant program requirements and maximized competitiveness because it, 1) provides a location for outdoor environmental education; 2) provides educational opportunities for visitors; 3) is located in a park-deficient area and serves target populations needing access to open space; and, 4) will provide leverage with funding already appropriated by the City of Long Beach (City). In addition, the Project further develops the Willow Springs Master Plan, adopted by the City Council in January 2013, and ensures activation in, and access to, Willow Springs Park, a unique asset in Long Beach's park system.

This matter was reviewed by Deputy City Attorney Linda T. Vu on August 11, 2017 and by Budget Management Officer Rhutu Amin Gharib on August 23, 2017.

SUSTAINABILITY

The Project funding will support implementation of the Willow Springs Master Plan, increasing access to additional acres of open space that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve air quality. The trailhead and trail network will provide new passive walking trails that encourage healthy outdoor exercise, which help to decrease obesity and other adverse health impacts. This Project is consistent with the City's Livability Initiative and provides the community an opportunity to experience native habitat and open space.

City Council action is requested on September 19, 2017, to submit the Resolution to DPR within 60 days of the Grant deadline, which is September 1, 2017.

This is a one-cycle Grant program. If awarded, \$500,000 in Grant funds will offset direct Project costs. City staff time directly related to Project management will be charged directly to the Project; however, City administrative (indirect) costs are not eligible for reimbursement. The Grant does not require matching funds or in-kind services. To maximize competitiveness of the Grant application, the Grant funds are proposed to be leveraged with \$274,387 of construction and demolition funds appropriated in FY 17 to the Capital Projects Fund (CP) in the Parks, Recreation and Marine Department (PR) for future upgrades to Willow Springs Park, and an additional \$148,000 budgeted in the Capital Projects Fund (CP) in the Parks, Recreation and Marine Department (PR), as part of the FY 18 Capital Improvement Program. If awarded, an appropriation increase will be requested for the Grant funds prior to Project initiation. This recommendation will result in a positive impact on jobs, although the exact

number is unknown at this time.

Approve recommendation.

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MARIE KNIGHT
DIRECTOR OF PARKS, RECREATION AND MARINE

APPROVED:

PATRICK H. WEST
CITY MANAGER