

City of Sacramento

Legislation Text

File #: 2019-01114, **Version:** 1

Title:

Morrison Creek Project; Memorandum of Understanding and Urban Streams Restoration Program Grant Application

File ID: 2019-01114

Location: District 6

Recommendation:

Adopt a Resolution approving a) execution of a Memorandum of Understanding with the Sacramento Community Land Trust, Inc. for Morrison Creek; and b) an application for an Urban Streams Restoration Program grant for Morrison Creek.

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Presenter: None

Attachments:

- 1-Description/Analysis
- 2-Memorandum of Understanding
- 3-Resolution

Description/Analysis

Issue Detail: The California Department of Water Resources (DWR) is administering a competitive grant program funded through Propositions 84 and 68 (Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Bond Act, and California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection and Outdoor Access for All Act, respectively). The grant program, titled Urban Streams Restoration Program (USRP), provides local assistance grants to fund projects and provide technical assistance to restore streams impacted by urban development to a more natural state. The USRP goals include:

1. Protecting, enhancing and restoring the natural, ecological value of streams.
2. Preventing future property damage caused by flooding and bank erosion.
3. Promoting community involvement, education, and riverine stewardship.

A major objective of the USRP is to bring people together around projects that foster community relationships while ensuring the community's interests are incorporated into the project's planning, design, and outcomes. USRP project applications may be awarded a maximum of \$1 million per grant. The grant solicitation requires a partnership of two applicants (sponsor and co-sponsor): one local public agency, and a certified 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization or local community group. The USRP recognizes partnerships when there is a signed memorandum of understanding between authorities representing the partners included in the application. The solicitation also requires a minimum 20% funding match from non-State sources, unless the grant benefits a disadvantaged community. The grant program requires public outreach and education components designed to encourage community participation in the planning process, public support for long-term management, and to increase the public's understanding of the project's benefits to the environment and the sustainability of California's water resources.

The City intends to apply for a grant to support an engineering evaluation, develop a trail plan, explore funding opportunities, and identify phasing options for a 1.2-mile trail along Morrison Creek between Power Inn Road and 63rd Street. The trail would provide connectivity between schools, a neighborhood park, community center, and community-serving organizations. The trail is listed in the City's bicycle master plan. The project also focuses on potential alterations to the north end of George Sim Park, in an effort to provide a recreational trail area and increased flood flow conveyance. Improvements would be made along the creek to provide continued access for waterflow monitoring and maintenance by the Department of Utilities.

The Morrison Creek project was initiated by community advocates and residents surrounding the creek with technical assistance support by DWR. This effort developed goals to enhance connectivity, increase community leadership opportunities, provide alternative transportation routes, and develop community stewardship of Morrison Creek. The community's year-long process resulted in identified goals and a strategy to collaborate with the City on a grant application for USRP to move the project forward. Given the considerable interest and support from the community for the project, staff across multiple City Departments have engaged the community in planning meetings to determine the scope of the grant project.

Staff requests Council approval of a Memorandum of Understanding with the Sacramento Community Land Trust, Inc. (SCLT) to submit a joint USRP grant application. The community identified SCLT as their representative nonprofit partner. The resolution authorizes City staff to respond to the DWR's USRP notice of funding availability by filing a grant application in partnership with SCLT to seek funding for the Morrison Creek project. If a grant is awarded, staff would return to

Council to approve the grant agreement and establish a capital improvement project. The grant will allow the City to continue its partnership with the community and SCLT to conduct public outreach and education and ensure a community-driven planning process for the Morrison Creek trail.

Policy Considerations: Funding for this project would enhance recreational opportunities, meet ADA requirements, restore natural resources, and increase conservation efforts. This is consistent with the City's General Plan goals in the areas of Land Use, Recreation, and Environmental Resources.

Economic Impacts: Not applicable.

Environmental Considerations: This report concerns fiscal activities that do not constitute a "project" as defined by the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines Section 15378(b). Environmental review of the Morrison Creek project will occur before construction is authorized.

Sustainability: The project has been reviewed for consistency with the goals, policies, and targets of the City's Sustainability Master Plan (SMP) and the 2035 General Plan. The Project will advance the goals, policies, and targets of these plans by improving the health of residents through access to a diverse mix of wellness and recreation activities.

Commission/Committee Action: Not applicable.

Rationale for Recommendation: The purpose of the agreement is to collaborate on a project that will engage the community to evaluate and create a trail plan for a corridor of Morrison Creek. Key elements of this effort include:

- Engage and ensure diverse representation of the community in planning efforts
- Assessment of feasibility and potential technical impacts within the Morrison Creek corridor
- Leverage public communication and stakeholder engagement that builds on existing efforts of community residents and partners

The recommended project meets all grant criteria and maximizes competitiveness based on the following criteria:

- Serves a critically underserved community, as defined by DWR's Disadvantaged Communities Mapping Tool.
- Meets the grant goals to protect the natural and ecological value of streams and promotes community involvement, education, and riverine stewardship.

Financial Considerations: The total amount available under the grant application is an amount not to exceed \$1,000,000. If approved, the grant would provide State funds for the planned engineering evaluation and trail plan. No matching funds are required, as the project serves a disadvantaged

community. While a local match is not required under the USRP, certain project elements are not eligible for funding. If awarded the grant, project management and certain overhead costs will need to be supplemented with City funds. Should a grant be awarded to the City, final acceptance of grant funds will be evaluated at the time of Council approval of the grant agreement to allow for an appropriation of supplemental funds to complete the project scope and establish the capital improvement project.

Local Business Enterprise (LBE): Not applicable; no goods or services are being purchased with this action.