



CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

AGENDA DATE: August 11, 2015

TO: Mayor and Councilmembers

FROM: Jill E. Zachary, Acting Parks and Recreation Director

SUBJECT: Authorization To Submit A Recreational Trails Program Grant Application For The Douglas Family Preserve Trails Restoration Project

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council adopt, by reading of title only, A Resolution of the Council of the City of Santa Barbara Approving the Application for Grant Funds for up to \$300,000 from the Recreational Trails Program.

DISCUSSION:

The Douglas Family Preserve (Preserve) consists of approximately 70 acres of Open Space park land located near the intersection of Cliff Drive and Las Positas Road, in the western portion of Santa Barbara. The Preserve is located adjacent to the Shoreline Beach area, Arroyo Burro Creek and Arroyo Burro Beach County Park, and the Mesa neighborhood. The Preserve includes passive recreation uses including walking, jogging, bike riding, hang gliding, and off leash dog walking. The Preserve affords scenic vistas of the shoreline, Pacific Ocean, Elings Park and the Las Positas Valley, and the Santa Ynez Mountains. There are over three miles of trails through the Preserve's diverse native and exotic habitats. Trails consist of an outer Loop (Main) Trail, inner Middle Loop Trail, secondary trails and the Oak Grove Trail. Trails are primarily dirt trails, but also include remains of old asphalt road and narrow paths. There are also user created unauthorized paths in the Preserve.

Over the past several years, the well-used trails have compacted, eroded, and widened. The Douglas Family Preserve Trails Restoration Project (Project) will rehabilitate and renovate existing trails, decommission and reroute user created trails, and provide universal access to at least 1/3 of the three miles of trail system in the Preserve. The Project will reduce trail erosion, improve park safety and access, foster the restoration of native habitats, and help prevent further cliff erosion. The Project trail improvements were identified in the Douglas Family Preserve Management Plan and Off-Leash Dog Park Locations Draft Environmental Impact Report (2003) and are in compliance with the Final Douglas Family Preserve Management Plan (2008).

RECREATION TRAILS PROGRAM

The Recreational Trails Program is a state-administered local assistance program of the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). Within the State of California, the Department of Parks and Recreation is authorized to administer the program. The California Department of Parks and Recreation seeks grant applications for projects to develop and maintain recreational trails, with 70% of the funds available to non-motorized projects. The FHWA recently released \$11 Million to the Recreational Trails Program. This release of funds is outside of the normal FHWA grant timeline so applications are fast-tracked.

Due September 15, 2015, the Recreation Trails Program grant application requires a Council resolution authorizing the grant application and designating the Parks and Recreation Director as the City's agent to conduct all contract negotiations.

BUDGET/FINANCIAL INFORMATION:

The total cost of the Project is estimated to be \$300,000. Staff proposes to request up to \$250,000 in grant funding through the Recreational Trails Program. The grant guidelines require at least a 12 percent match. Matching funds for the Project would include the 2016 Parks and Recreation Community Foundation disbursement of \$30,000 from the Douglas Family Preserve Endowment Fund. Additional matching funds would be provided in the form of "in-kind" staff support to manage and implement the Project.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT:

The Project will reduce trail erosion, improve park safety and access, foster the restoration of native habitats, and help prevent further cliff erosion.

PREPARED BY: Kathy Frye, Natural Areas Planner

SUBMITTED BY: Jill E. Zachary, Acting Parks and Recreation Director

APPROVED BY: City Administrator's Office