



CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

AGENDA DATE: July 28, 2015

TO: Mayor and Councilmembers

FROM: Creeks Division, Parks and Recreation Department

SUBJECT: Resolution Approving A Grant Application For The Las Positas Creek 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 the California River Parkways Grant Program.

DISCUSSION:

Las Positas Creek is one of the major tributary creeks to Arroyo Burro. It is 1.3 miles long and flows from the municipal golf course, under Earl Warren Showgrounds and Highway 101, then on the west side of Las Positas Road, where it eventually flows into Arroyo Burro near the intersection of Las Positas Road and Veronica Springs Road. Las Positas Creek is heavily modified by urban development. In the 1960s, approximately 20 percent of the creek was converted to a concrete drainage channel.

The Las Positas Creek Restoration Project ("Project") is focused on improving water quality and habitat throughout the lower half of the creek, including the reach that is currently a concrete drainage channel. Removing the concrete, restoring a more natural stream bed, and establishing willows, oaks, and other riparian vegetation are primary Project goals. Reducing flooding in the area is also a major Project objective. Currently, 42 homes along Las Positas Place and Veronica Place are in the FEMA 100-year floodplain, with 18 of those homes sited in the regulatory floodway. Preliminary engineering analysis indicates the Project would decrease flood potential by widening the creek to accommodate larger creek flows.

The Project is included in the City's Fiscal Year 2016-2021 Capital Improvement Plan. It is also identified as a priority area for restoration in the City's General Plan. To begin Project implementation, the Creeks Division developed conceptual designs, conducted public outreach, and is actively pursuing grant funding opportunities. The California River Parkways Grant Program seeks applications for projects that restore creek habitat, decrease flood risk, and provide educational opportunities along creeks.

Applications are due on September 1, 2015, and staff requests authorization to submit a grant application for \$500,000, the maximum amount allowed under the grant guidelines, for use in Project construction.

BUDGET/FINANCIAL INFORMATION:

The total Project cost, including design and construction, is estimated to be \$2.8 million. The Creeks Division's Capital Program for Fiscal Years 2015, 2016, and 2017 proposes a total of \$1,505,747 to partially fund Project design and construction. The Creeks Division also has a \$1 million grant pending through the California Department of Water Resources' Urban Streams Restoration Program. Additional grant applications will be submitted as they become available.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT:

This project will restore native plants, improve water quality, and reduce flooding in Las Positas Creek, thereby improving water quality downstream in the Arroyo Burro Estuary, and the coastal ocean at Arroyo Burro Beach.

PREPARED BY: George Thomson, Creeks Planner

SUBMITTED BY: Nancy Rapp, Parks and Recreation Director

APPROVED BY: City Administrator's Office