



Legislation Details (With Text)

File #: ID18-0428 **Version:** 1 **Name:**
Type: Action Item **Status:** Passed
File created: 3/20/2018 **In control:** City Council
On agenda: 4/5/2018 **Final action:** 4/5/2018
Title: RESOLUTION - Authorize the submittal of a grant application for Climate Investments Urban Greening Program and acceptance of grant funds in the amount of up to \$2,000,000. (District 3)
Sponsors: Parks, After School, Recreation and Community Serv
Indexes:
Code sections:
Attachments: 1. California Climate Investments Urban Greening Program

Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result
4/5/2018	1	City Council	adopted	Pass

REPORT TO THE CITY COUNCIL

April 5, 2018

FROM: PARVIN NELOMS JR., Director
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SUBJECT

RESOLUTION - Authorize the submittal of a grant application for Climate Investments Urban Greening Program and acceptance of grant funds in the amount of up to \$2,000,000. (District 3)

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the approval of the attached resolution authorizing the submittal of a grant application to the State of California Natural Resources Agency Urban Greening Program that will be used to partially fund the construction of a new park to be located at the Jensen, Church, South MLK Jr. Boulevard and Knight quadrant; also known as the MLK Activity Center and authorize the Parks, After School, Recreation and Community Services Department (PARCS) Director, or designated representative, to execute all necessary documents.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PARCS proposes to submit a grant application to the State of California Natural Resources Agency Urban Greening Program that will be used to partially fund a new park located at the Jensen, Church, South MLK Jr. Boulevard and Knight quadrant. The proposed park will include playground equipment, restroom facility, landscaping and irrigation, trees, safety lighting, site furnishings, and a Class 1 path to encourage bicycling and walking.

The park was included in the City's recently approved \$70 million Transformative Climate Communities (TCC) Grant application. The Urban Greening grant application will be used to help fund the City's contribution toward this project, which is estimated to cost approximately \$9 million.

BACKGROUND

On September 14, 2016, Senate Bill (SB) 859 created the California Natural Resources Agency's Urban Greening Program funded by the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (GGRF) to support the development of green infrastructure that reduce Green House Gas (GHG) emissions, and authorized the appropriation of \$26 million for urban greening projects that reduce GHG emissions and provide multiple benefits. A minimum of 75 percent of the awarded funds are targeted to benefit disadvantaged and low-income communities.

On January 29, 2018, the Strategic Growth Council approved funds as part of the TCC Implementation and Planning Grant for the acquisition of approximately 9.63 acres of vacant undeveloped land for the future development of a park at the Jensen, Church, South MLK Jr. Boulevard and Knight area quadrant. This area, commonly referred to as the MLK Activity Center, was identified as magnet core area in the adopted Southwest Fresno Specific Plan as it is envisioned to contain a number of high intensity uses such as green space, housing, retail, and educational facility all located within close proximity of each other. As part of the TCC process, a series of community meetings were held from March 12th through the 21st to gather feedback from area residents. In addition to the park, these residents are participating in developing plans for the entire MLK Activity Center site. The community's input will be incorporated into the Urban Greening Grant application.

The proposed new park site may include the following amenities that are considered eligible for grant funding and will be included in the application:

- Playground Equipment - A new playground for 0 to 5 year old children, and one for 5 to 12 year old children;
- Restroom - A new public restroom will be constructed with an automatic locking system;
- Class 1 Path - The path would connect residential, business and school facilities to the park site;
- Landscaping - Planting up to 200 or more new trees that will provide multiple benefits;
- Designed features - To include Net-Zero Water through conservation, water reuse, and rain water harvesting;
- Irrigation - Smart irrigation system will be installed to save water and improve cost savings. Long-term plans would include recycled water for landscaping;
- Lighting - Safety lighting will be installed along the path and at the park;
- Site Furnishings - Benches, picnic tables, BBQ pits and trash cans will be installed.

Adoption of the attached resolution is required for all grant application submittals and subsequent participation in the program. Upon adoption of the resolution, staff will submit the application requesting \$2,000,000 in Urban Greening funds. The application filing deadline is April 11, 2018. The Urban Greening grant will be used to help fund the City's contribution toward this project, which is half or approximately \$4.5 million of the estimated \$9 million dollar project. The Administration will be recommending that the balance of the City's contribution will be derived from future Community Development Block Grant funds.

Upon award of the application, a Memorandum of Unrecorded Grant Agreement (MOUGA) must be filed with the County Recorder's Office prior to any reimbursement of funds. The MOUGA includes a notice that the park property may not be sold or transferred without written approval from the State of California.

ENVIRONMENTAL FINDINGS

Submittal of application does not constitute a project for purposes of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines §15378. Upon approval of the grant funds, staff will conduct the CEQA analysis, and return to Council with the environmental determination and construction contracts.

FISCAL IMPACT

Applying for State grant funds does not impact the City's General Fund, and there is no match requirement to qualify for this grant. The Urban Greening grant will be used to help fund the City's contribution toward this project, which is half or approximately \$4.5 million of the estimated \$9 million dollar project. The Administration will be recommending that the balance of the City's contribution will come from future Community Development Block Grant funds. The ongoing cost of maintaining the park, as well as other improvements (e.g., streets, street lights, landscape buffers) will be funded through the creation of a Community Facilities District.

Attachment: Urban Greening Program Resolution