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REPORT TO THE CITY COUNCIL

February 28, 2019

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SUBJECT

RESOLUTION - Authorizing the Application for Funding from the Urban Forestry Grant Program Entitled "Urban and Community Forestry Program" as provided through the California Proposition 68 Bond Fund (citywide)

RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends that the City Council adopt a resolution authorizing the submission of an application for grant funds from the Urban Forestry Grant Program as provided through the California Proposition 68 Bond Fund and authorize the conduction of all negotiations related to the grant by the Public Works Director, or designee.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Department of Public Works requests approval to submit a grant proposal to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (Cal Fire) Urban and Community Forestry (U&CF) Program for funding to prepare an Urban Forest Management Plan (UFMP), plant 68 trees and provide tree care education in partnership with Tree Fresno. Cal Fire administers grant funds made available as part of Proposition 68. The UFMP will analyze data collected as part of the citywide Urban Forest Tree Inventory and make recommendations for restoration, maintenance and expansion of the urban forest over the next 40 years. The application process occurs in two stages. The initial concept proposal was due on November 29, 2018. The full application for invited applicants will be due in early 2019 and requires an adopted resolution as part of the application submission.

BACKGROUND

The CAL FIRE Urban & Community Forestry Program works to optimize the benefits of trees and related vegetation through multiple-objective projects as specified in the California Urban Forestry Act of 1978. Proposition 68, or the *California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection and Outdoor Access for All Act* of 2018 was passed on June 5, 2018. It provided a general obligation bond to fund a variety of investments related to urban greening, water, parks, forestry and other environmental needs. Current Urban and Community Forestry (UCF) efforts meet many of the benefits prioritized under Proposition 68 and at least \$13.5 million dollars of Prop 68 funding will be available for award through the UCF program in fiscal year 2018/2019.

In May 2017 the City was awarded grant funding to complete a citywide tree inventory and planting project. The tree inventory is currently underway and at its completion will result in a geo-based record detailing the location, species and general condition of all City-owned trees within the City's 112 square mile boundary. It is estimated that the City is responsible for the care of approximately 300,000 trees. The exact number of trees will be confirmed at the completion of the inventory. In order to fully analyze the significant amount of data collected as part of the inventory, it was recommended that the City of Fresno prepare an Urban Forest Management Plan.

Grant funding will enable the City to undergo a planning process which will include a thorough analysis of tree health, identify deferred maintenance, make recommendations on the prioritization of resources, discuss opportunities for urban forest restoration and expansion, and provide data needed to apply for future grant funding opportunities. The planning process will include community engagement and key stakeholders to ensure that the plan represents community needs. The completed Urban Forest Management Plan will provide baseline metrics and insights to allow the Department of Public Works to develop proactive short- and long-term forest care goals.

The program provides preference for projects that include a tree planting component and tree care education and requires that the plan include a tree canopy cover goal. Tree planting was included in the proposal. A total of 68 trees are proposed for planting in the Huntington Boulevard Greenway from SR-41 to First Street and in the McKenzie Avenue Greenway from Barton to Jackson and Maple to Sierra Vista. Residents and Council District representatives will be consulted early in the planting process to ensure community input is incorporated. A tree canopy cover goal will be included in the plan.

The total amount of funding requested for the plan, planting and education is estimated at just over

\$300,000. Matching funds of 25% are required, though reductions can be made for disadvantaged communities. Due to the City of Fresno's disadvantaged status, a request to reduce matching requirements from 25% down to 10% will be included in the grant proposal.

ENVIRONMENTAL FINDINGS

Should this grant proposal receive funding, CEQA requirements will be completed by CalFire.

LOCAL PREFERENCE

Local preference is not applicable because this project does not include a bid or award of a construction or services contract.

FISCAL IMPACT

A local match of 10% to 25% will be required. Matching funds can include in-kind sources. If the grant is awarded, funding will be identified through future fiscal year operational budgets from Community Sanitation funds, Measure "C" Flexible program funds, and Special Landscape Districts as appropriate for the project.

Attachment:
Resolution