

REPORT TO THE CITY COUNCIL

City of Salinas, California

DATE: April 28, 2015

FROM: Gary Petersen, Public Works Director

BY: Michael Ricker, Environmental Resources Planner

SUBJECT: STATE GREENHOUSE GAS REDUCTION FUNDING; USDA FOREST SERVICE URBAN FORESTRY GRANT PROGRAM FUNDS

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the City Council adopt a resolution authorizing application for State Greenhouse Gas Reduction Funding and/or USDA Forest Service Urban Forestry Grant Program Funds.

DISCUSSION:

Last July, with the aid of a different California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (Cal-Fire) grant, the City completed preparation of a Tree Inventory of all of its publicly-owned trees. All 30,000 plus city-owned trees are now contained within a geo-spatial database (GIS). That is, every tree can now be located and is described via a mapping system that can be easily accessed electronically. A simplified version of this tool can be viewed by the public by going to: <http://salinas.mytreekeeper.com/>. A more robust version of this tool is now being used by the City's Public Works Parks Maintenance and Urban Forestry Unit. This is a first step towards pro-active forest management. A bigger, second step is the preparation of a Forest Management Plan. Having a Forest Management Plan will enable the City to more cost-effectively manage its forest resources.

Under the state's two-step process, City Environmental Resources staff prepared and submitted a grant application to Cal-Fire to prepare a Forest Management Plan. Over one-hundred and sixty applications were submitted in Round 1. Salinas was fortunate that it was one of the few jurisdictions to be asked back for Round 2. The City's Round 2 application would be for approximately \$170,000 to prepare a Forest Management Plan and to plant a limited number of trees—as a first step. The planting of trees has shown to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through the sequestration of CO₂. Grant funds are paid on a reimbursement basis. Cal-Fire requires that all applicants for Round 2 submit a resolution consistent with the one attached.

ISSUE:

Should the City Council adopt a resolution authorizing application for a California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Grant Program funds?

FISCAL IMPACT:

To prepare the grant application, the City will need to obtain the services of a certified arborist to assist with the grant application process. Fees for services have been projected to not exceed \$4,500. There are sufficient funds in the City's Public Works FY 14-15 budget to cover this cost. No additional fees are foreseen.

TIME CONSIDERATIONS:

To be eligible for this grant, the City must submit its grant application by the end of April 2015. Therefore, this item cannot be delayed. Failure to adopt the attached resolution by this meeting's date would result in the City forfeiting the opportunity to be awarded the \$170,000 in grant money.

ALTERNATIVES/IMPLICATIONS:

The Council may choose to deny applying for the grant. This alternative is not recommended as it would result in the City losing out on the opportunity to receive \$170,000 in grant money and in having a valuable tool to manage its urban forest.

CITY COUNCIL GOALS:

The proposal is consistent with one of the City Council 2013-2015 Five Strategic Goals and Objectives: Economic Diversity and Prosperity.

CONCLUSIONS:

At its April 28, 2014 meeting, the City Council is being asked to adopt a resolution approving the filing of an application for State Greenhouse Gas Reduction and/or USDA Forest Service Urban Forestry Grant Program funds and certifying that the City has or will have sufficient funds to operate and maintain the project; and, that funds under the jurisdiction of Salinas are available to begin the project and that the City will expend grant funds prior to December 31, 2019.

Distribution:
City Council
City Manager
City Attorney
Department Directors

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Resolution

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SALINAS APPROVING THE FILING OF AN APPLICATION FOR STATE GREENHOUSE GAS REDUCTION FUNDING AND/OR USDA FOREST SERVICE URBAN FORESTRY GRANT PROGRAM FUNDS AND CERTIFYING THAT THE CITY HAS OR WILL HAVE SUFFICIENT FUNDS TO OPERATE AND MAINTAIN THE PROJECT; AND, THAT FUNDS UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF SALINAS ARE AVAILABLE TO BEGIN THE PROJECT AND THAT THE CITY WILL EXPEND GRANT FUNDS PRIOR TO DECEMBER 31, 2019.

WHEREAS, the Governor of the State of California in cooperation with the California State Legislature has enacted State of California Greenhouse Gas Reduction Funding, both of which provide funds to the State of California and its political subdivisions for urban forestry programs; and

WHEREAS, the State Department of Forestry and Fire Protection has been delegated the responsibility for the administration of the program within the State, setting up necessary procedures governing application by local agencies and non-profit organizations under the program, and

WHEREAS, said procedures established by the State Department of Forestry and Fire Protection require the applicant to certify by resolution the approval of application before submission of said application to the State; and

WHEREAS, the applicant will enter into an agreement with the State of California to carry out an urban forestry project;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CONCIL OF SALINAS as follows:

1. The filing of an application for “State Greenhouse Gas Reduction Funding and/or USDA Forest Service” urban forestry grant program funds is hereby approved; and
2. The City Council hereby certifies that the City of Salinas has or will have sufficient funds to operate and maintain the project; and,
3. The City Council further certifies that funds under the jurisdiction of Salinas are available to begin the project; and
4. The City Council further certifies that the City of Salinas will expend grant funds prior to **December 31, 2019**.
5. The City Manager, or his designee, is hereby appointed as the agent of the City of Salinas to conduct all negotiations, execute and submit all documents including, but not limited to applications, agreements, amendments, payment requests and so on, which may be necessary for the completion of the aforementioned project.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this 28th day of April, 2015 by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT:

APPROVED:

Joe Gunter, Mayor

ATTEST:

Patricia M. Barajas, City Clerk