

**City of Culver City, California
Agenda Item Report**

Meeting Date: <u> 04/05/10 </u>		Item Number: C-4
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM: Adoption of Resolutions Authorizing the City Manager to Submit Grant Applications through the Strategic Growth Council's Urban Greening Project and Planning Grant Programs for Planting Trees in Commercial Corridors and Creating a Community Green Space Plan.		
Contact Person/Dept.: Helen Kerstein/PW; Patrick Reynolds/Parks		Phone Number: (310) 253-5618; (310) 253-6471
Fiscal Impact: Yes ☐ No ☒		General Fund: Yes ☐ No ☒
Public Hearing: ☐	Action Item: ☐	Attachments: ☒
Commission Action Required: Yes ☐ No ☒		Date: _____
Public Notification: (E-mail) Agenda and Meetings – City Council (03/31/2010); (E-mail) North East Trees (03/25/10)		
Department Approval: Charles D. Herbertson (03/26/10)		City Attorney Approval: Carol Schwab (by H. Baker) (03/29/10)
Chief Financial Officer Approval: Mark Scott (by M. Noller) (03/30/10)		City Manager Approval: Mark Scott (04/01/10)
<u>RECOMMENDATION:</u> Staff recommends that the City Council adopt resolutions authorizing the City Manager to submit grant applications for the Strategic Growth Council's Urban Greening Project and Planning Grant Programs for planting trees in commercial corridors and creating a Community Green Space Plan. <u>BACKGROUND:</u> In 2006, California voters passed the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Bond Act (Proposition 84). This proposition authorized, among other things, the Legislature to appropriate funding for urban greening and environmentally-sustainable planning. Two years later, the Governor signed SB 732, which created a Strategic Growth Council (SGC) made up of a cross-disciplinary group of Agency secretaries as well as a member of the public. The SGC was charged with creating grant programs to award the Proposition 84 funds. In order to fulfill its charge, the SGC created an Urban Greening Grant Program and a Sustainable Communities Grant Program. The Urban Greening Grant Program includes roughly \$21 million per year for three years--\$15.2 million for projects to add green spaces to urban communities (Urban Greening Project Grant) and \$5.8 million for creating plans for urban green spaces (Urban Greening Planning Grant). The Sustainable Communities Grant Program includes roughly \$20 million per year		

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for local and regional agencies to create plans to meet the state's greenhouse reduction goals.

The Sustainable Communities Grant Program guidelines have not yet been finalized. However, once they are finalized, staff anticipates returning to the City Council for approval to submit an application for that grant.

DISCUSSION:

Staff recommends submitting an application for a tree planting project along some of the City's commercial corridors for the Urban Greening Project Grant program and for creating a Community Green Space Plan for the Urban Greening Planning Grant program. Staff also recommends submitting a letter of support for a collaborative grant application for green improvements along Jefferson Boulevard for the Urban Greening Project Grant program.

Commercial Corridor Tree Planting Project

Street trees serve not only aesthetic, but also environmental and practical purposes. For example, experts note that street trees can lower temperatures near the road, reduce the impact of carbon emissions, create safer walking environments, increase business at local stores, and reduce the need for drainage.

With these benefits in mind, the City has already started planning the installation of trees on portions of Sepulveda Boulevard and Washington Boulevard as part of other projects to improve commercial streetscapes. The proposed grant could help fund these already proposed trees and also help pay for trees along the remaining stretches of these commercial corridors and near the soon-to-be completed Expo Light Rail Station. These proposed trees will help fill gaps in current tree plantings with canopy shade trees that will help make these major arterials more appealing and environmentally-sustainable.

Community Green Space Plan

The City's parks are a tremendous community resource. However, they contain only limited passive recreation facilities such as trails, bicycle paths, and wildlife viewing areas.

The proposed grant will fund the creation of a plan for increasing passive recreation opportunities. This plan, which will be heavily informed by community input, will take into account factors including: wildlife needs, trail connectivity, community gathering spaces, and educational opportunities.

Jefferson Boulevard Project

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The portion of Jefferson Boulevard between Duquesne Avenue and Rodeo Road is often viewed as uninviting to pedestrians and bicyclists. The road is heavily used by visitors to the nearby Baldwin Hills Scenic Overlook and Culver City Park, but lacks continuous sidewalks and other amenities for non-motorized travelers.

The proposed grant would add streetscape improvements, including landscaping and paths, to this stretch of Jefferson Boulevard, which extends through both the City of Los Angeles and the City of Culver City. The proposed grant is being submitted by North East Trees, a non-profit organization working to promote urban forestry. Staff is recommending that the City submit a letter of support for this inter-jurisdictional application.

FISCAL ANALYSIS:

There is no fiscal impact associated with the submittal of the grant applications. If the grants are received, no matching funds will be required. Staff resources will be dedicated to manage the projects and some funding will be required in future years to maintain the projects. Staff is looking into the feasibility of creating a tree sponsorship or other program to help defray these maintenance costs.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Resolution for the Urban Greening Project Grant
2. Resolution for the Urban Greening Planning Grant

MOTION:

That the City Council:

1. Adopt Resolutions authorizing the City Manager to submit grant applications through the Strategic Growth Council's Urban Greening Project and Planning Grant Programs for the Commercial Corridor Tree Planting Project and the creation of a Community Green Space Plan; and,
2. Authorize the City Manager to prepare and submit a letter of support for North East Tree's Jefferson Boulevard Project grant application through the Strategic Growth Council's Urban Greening Project Grant Program.