

Agenda Report

TO: CITY COUNCIL

Date: June 4, 2001

FROM: CITY MANAGER

SUBJECT: Application for the Urban Streams Restoration Program Grant For Restoration of the Arroyo Seco Stream Between Devil's Gate Dam and Washington Boulevard.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the City Council adopt a resolution approving the grant application request for \$999,670 for the Urban Streams Restoration Program Grant for Restoration of the Arroyo Seco Stream at the south and north ends of the Central Arroyo Seco.

RECOMMENDATION FROM RECREATION AND PARKS COMMISSION:

While the Recreation and Parks Commission have not taken formal action on this grant submittal, a letter of support from the Commission was included in the grant submittal package.

BACKGROUND:

The California Department of Water Resources is soliciting grant applications for local stream restoration projects. This program supports actions that prevent property damage by floods and bank erosion, and restores the natural value of streams. Grants can fund projects such as a work day for volunteers to clean up streams in their neighborhood, or projects as complex as completely restoring streams to an original, natural state. The Urban Streams Grant Program (USRP) received a total of \$25 million with the passage of the Water Bond Act of 2000 (Proposition 13). The grant cap has been raised to \$1 million per project to provide funds for larger, more complex stream restoration and flood management work. Projects submitted will be considered in two separate rounds of funding. The Department has \$2 million available for grants in fiscal year 2000-01 and anticipates having \$7 million available for grants in fiscal year 2001-02. The Department will select and announce the list of eligible grantees in July, 2001 and will begin writing contracts shortly thereafter to transfer grant money.

The project proposed for this grant cycle is the Restoration of the Arroyo Seco Stream section in the Central Arroyo Seco at two locations: a) north of Brookside Golf Course,

between Devil's Gate Dam and Washington Boulevard, and b) under the 134 freeway and Colorado Street bridge. The purpose of the project is to restore these portions of the Arroyo Seco Stream, a major tributary of the Los Angeles River and one of Southern California's greatest natural treasures. This project does not preclude the master plan process currently underway for the Central Arroyo Seco since the USRP grant involves the maintenance and restoration of an existing park feature.

The implementation of this proposal would remove approximately 300 lineal feet of concrete slabs and other debris that now clutter the area and impact the hydrology; repair the scouring effect that powerful releases of water from the dam have caused by stabilizing the stream banks with vegetation and various sized boulders; improve the riparian and streamzone habitat quality by planting appropriate species and removing exotic species; and repair the trails that parallel the stream, allowing the community enhanced access to the stream and linking this natural area with Hahamongna Watershed Park immediately above Devil's Gate Dam and the lower reaches of the Arroyo Seco, south of the Colorado Street bridge.

These trails also link the project area with Brookside Golf Course and the Rose Bowl immediately south of the area. This project is consistent with the Cultural and Recreational Element of the General Plan by encouraging the optimum use of existing recreational facilities. Further, this project is consistent with the Land Use Element of the General Plan by providing adequate recreational opportunities to all residents of the City. To further clarify, this improvement would provide recreational access to pedestrians and equestrians and improve streamzone habitat.

The City and the Arroyo Seco Foundation would collaborate with the Pasadena Unified School District to further educate area youth on the Arroyo Seco watershed. Students would do "hands-on" projects and contribute to the completion of the overall grant project. If awarded this grant, project costs must stay within the awarded amount or the City will be required to provide additional funding to complete the project.

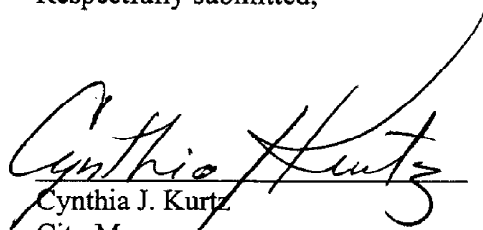
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT:

The Arroyo Stream Restoration Project proposed for funding would be environmentally beneficial and categorically exempt from California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under sections 15301(h & i) Existing Facilities – "maintenance of existing landscaping, native growth, and water supply reservoirs (excluding the use of economic poisons, as defined in Division 7, Chapter 2, California Agricultural Code)"; and "maintenance of fish screens, fish ladders, wildlife habitat areas, artificial wildlife waterway devices, streamflows, springs and waterholes, and stream channels (clearing of debris) to protect fish and wildlife resources." A categorical exemption will be filed on the project once there is an indication of funding and after the restoration plan has been finalized.

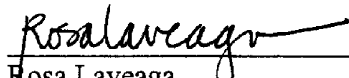
FISCAL IMPACT:

Successful award of the Urban Streams Restoration Program grant application for the restoration of the Arroyo Seco Stream between Devil's Gate Dam and Washington Boulevard, and under the 134 freeway and Colorado Street bridge could potentially bring a maximum of \$999,670 to the City of Pasadena. It is estimated that \$79,000 in In-Kind services will be provided toward this project (see Attachment A-Project Estimate).

Respectfully submitted,



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