

# Agenda Report

August 16, 2010

**TO:** CITY COUNCIL

**THROUGH:** ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE (August 4, 2010.)

**FROM:** HOUSING DEPARTMENT

**SUBJECT:** APPROVAL TO SUBMIT A GRANT APPLICATION IN THE AMOUNT OF \$485,000 TO THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA STRATEGIC GROWTH COUNCIL FOR THE NORTHWEST PASADENA COMMUNITY PLANNING PROJECT UNDER THE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES PLANNING GRANTS AND INCENTIVE PROGRAM

**RECOMMENDATION:**

It is recommended that the City Council adopt a resolution authorizing the submission of a grant application in an amount not to exceed \$485,000 to the State of California Strategic Growth Council to fund the development of a comprehensive community plan for strategic improvements within the northwest area of Pasadena.

**ADVISORY BODY RECOMMENDATION:**

The Fair Oaks Project Area Committee unanimously approved the staff recommendation at its regular meeting of July 27, 2010.

The Community Development Committee and the Northwest Commission will consider the staff recommendation at their respective regular meetings scheduled for August 12, 2010.

**BACKGROUND:**

The State of California Strategic Growth Council (SGC) issued a Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) for the Sustainable Communities Planning Grants and Incentive Program ("Program") on July 5, 2010. The Program was

authorized and funded with the passage of Proposition 84, the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2006. The state has appropriated \$90 million for planning grants and planning incentives to help local governments meet the challenges of adopting plans and integrating strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and energy consumption, conserve water, improve air and water quality, strengthen the economy, and provide other community benefits. Under a separate staff recommendation, the Planning Department will seek City Council approval to submit a \$1,000,000 grant application under the Program to fund the development and implementation of a Climate Action Plan which will provide a roadmap for the City of Pasadena to achieve a measurable reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. The Program application submission deadline is August 31, 2010.

**NORTHWEST PASADENA COMMUNITY PLANNING PROJECT:**

Under this staff recommendation, the City, through the Housing Department, will utilize the grant funds to undertake a comprehensive community planning project for the northwest area of Pasadena -- the "Northwest Pasadena Community Planning Project". The geographic focus of the Project will be an area encompassing 14 square blocks bounded by Mountain St. to the north, Los Robles Ave. to the east, Orange Grove Blvd. to the south and Fair Oaks Ave. to the west (please see attached Project Area Map). The area is comprised of residential streets as well as the main retail corridors of Orange Grove Blvd. and Fair Oaks Ave. The area is populated with approximately 18,143 residents and suffers from street crime and blight. The median household income within a one-half mile radius of the planning area is \$33,860. This is significantly lower than the City-wide median household income of \$66,879.

The Project will substantially involve neighborhood stakeholders in the process of selecting and developing a series of transformative improvements in this heavily-impacted neighborhood. The planned improvements will be geared towards reducing greenhouse gas emissions, energy consumption, and water and air pollution. Broad-based strategies will be developed to leverage other revitalization efforts and funding programs, encourage future development projects, attract new affordable housing and businesses, and improve the quality of life.

As proposed, the City will enter into a sub-recipient grant agreement with the Los Angeles Neighborhood Initiative (LANI) to undertake the Project. LANI is an independent non-profit organization with 16 years of experience in community-outreach, planning and construction projects. LANI has successfully completed projects in challenged communities across Los Angeles County including transportation enhancements (crosswalks, pedestrian lighting, secure bus shelters, landscaped medians street pole banners), urban greening, business

and residential façade improvements, and community planning projects. LANI's approach is based on a high level of community decision-making and participation.

LANI will be responsible for conducting community outreach; contracting and overseeing a qualified, professional design team; managing the project; and preparing the plan document. In coordination with City staff, LANI will also convene a Project Steering Committee (PSC) made up of neighborhood stakeholders that will have hands-on participation in the selection of preferred improvements, development, planning and subsequent design and construction phases. The PSC will represent the broad spectrum of the community and will be comprised of local residents, business owners, property owners, church and neighborhood association members, as well as other stakeholders that have a vested interest in improving the neighborhood.

Additionally, to ensure the feasibility and constructability of all community-preferred improvements, a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) will be formed, comprised of representatives from City departments and agencies that have jurisdiction over the various proposed elements including, but not limited to, the Housing, Planning, Human Services & Recreation, Water & Power, Police, Public Works, and Health departments. All members of the project team will meet regularly over the duration of the project to provide input and feedback. City department representatives will be involved throughout the process to ensure the feasibility of the final plan elements.

At the culmination of the planning process, a comprehensive plan document will be produced featuring in-depth descriptions of the identified improvements including detailed drawings, cost estimates, project phasing and maintenance plans. The document will be a valuable tool in securing implementation funding and moving the project into the construction phase.

**COUNCIL POLICY CONSIDERATION:**

Approval of the subject recommendation advances the following City Council goals and City policies:

- Support and promote the quality of life and the local economy -- City Council three-year goal (2009-2012)
- Increase conservation and sustainability -- City Council three-year goal (2009-2012)

- Maintain fiscal responsibility and stability -- City Council three-year goal (2009-2012)


**FISCAL IMPACT:**

Approval of the subject recommendation may result in the State awarding the City up to \$485,000 in grant funds. This new revenue source would be used by the Housing Department to contract with LANI. LANI will then conduct community outreach, contract a qualified, professional design team, and manage the project. City staff will be involved throughout the process to ensure the feasibility of the final plan elements. Grant funds will be paid to the City on a reimbursable basis. Match funding is not required.

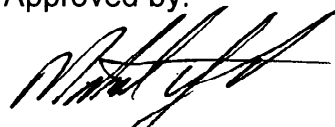
Respectfully submitted,

  
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