

Agenda Report

TO: CITY COUNCIL

Date: November 8, 1999

FROM: CITY MANAGER

SUBJECT: APPLICATION FOR ENVIRONMENTAL ENHANCEMENT AND MITIGATION GRANT (EEM) FOR NATURAL AREA RESTORATION, PARK AND STREET TREE PLANTING – 2000/2001 GRANT CYCLE.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the City Council adopt a resolution approving the grant application request for \$250,000 for the FY2000/2001 Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Grant for funding Street Tree Planting at various locations and Restoration in the Arroyo Seco.

BACKGROUND:

The State Legislature passed Assembly Bill 471 in 1989 establishing the Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Program (EEM). The program offers competitive grants to state, local and federal agencies and non-profit organizations to mitigate the environmental impact of modified or new public transportation facilities. Projects eligible for funding include highway landscape and urban forestry, resource lands, and roadside recreation. Program administration is performed by the Resources Agency of California who distributes grant awards for a total of \$10 million dollars per year. Individual grants are generally limited to \$250,000.

Pasadena has applied for and been awarded EEM grants for the 1993/94, 1994/95 and 1996/97 grant cycles. The money was successfully used for both reforestation projects in the Arroyo Seco and street tree plantings. The current grant application will assist Parks and Natural Resources to continue regenerating Pasadena's Urban Forest as trees are lost to disease, vandalism and other natural causes.

The California Resources agency favors projects that are already designed and have already started the environmental approval process. Application submittals are due on November 15, 1999.

The proposed project for this grant cycle is planting 300 street trees citywide to replace those that have been lost due to adverse environmental conditions, disease, age and weather. The grant will provide \$180,000 in funding for the cost of trees, stakes, ties and mulch, and the labor to plant street trees. The grant can be used to plant in the neighborhood revitalization zones as done in the past.

Pasadena has close to 700 vacancies in need of replanting. The combination of the Trees for the Millennium Grant and the EEM Grant 2000/01 will help to fill a portion of the vacancies to regenerate Pasadena's Urban Forest. Parks and Natural Resources is responsible for maintaining trees planted through the EEM grant with city funds. The Trees for the Millennium grant provides funding for one year of early critical tree maintenance which is not provided for in the EEM grant. Staff is hopeful that Governor Davis will choose to keep this popular cost-share program to fund future year's small tree maintenance.

The remaining funding of \$70,000 will provide an opportunity for ongoing restoration and reforestation in the Arroyo Seco within Brookside Park, including brush clearing, planting of native shrubs and trees, mulching, and a temporary irrigation system. Reforestation and fire safety is a vital element of the master plan for the Arroyo Seco. The reforestation process includes the removal of dead brush and the reduction of grasses which hinder the growth of newly planted seedlings. The replanting will encourage a flourishing ecosystem for both wildlife and recreational users in the Arroyo Seco.

Parks and Natural Resources will be responsible for the administration of the grant, if awarded. The proposed project is consistent with the Council adopted Master Street Tree Plan and follows the intent of the General Plan to provide a more livable environment for Pasadena residents. Increasing tree cover in neighborhoods will have an added benefit of reducing cooling costs.

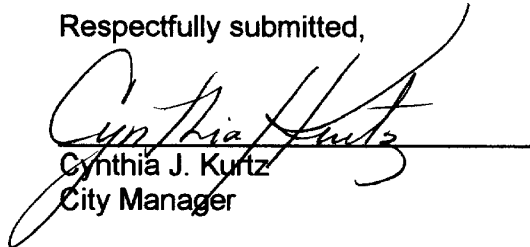
To be eligible for funding, projects must offset vehicular emissions of carbon dioxide related to a transportation facility. Each tree planted, upon maturity, removes 4.97 pounds of carbon dioxide per year. Each EEM project must relate to the environmental impact of an existing transportation facility or the construction of a new facility. The mitigation or enhancement must be in addition to the mitigation already required as a part of the transportation facility. Pasadena has several new transportation facilities that will allow us to qualify for this grant.

Existing groups working in partnership with Parks and Natural Resources would perform a portion of the necessary tree maintenance. The Pasadena Beautiful Foundation has a SOS (Save Our Street Trees) program that supports operations by providing volunteers to plant and maintain city street trees.

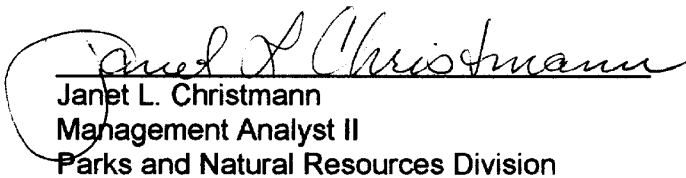
FISCAL IMPACT:

The EEM grant application will provide the City of Pasadena the opportunity to obtain funding to plant 300 street trees citywide and to continue restoration and reforestation in the Arroyo Seco. This would offset planned expenditures by \$250,000.

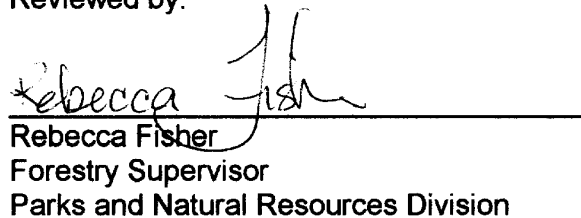
Respectfully submitted,


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