



Agenda Report

MEETING DATE: Tuesday, December 13, 2022

TO: City Council

FROM: PUBLIC WORKS & UTILITIES DIRECTOR DI RENZO
JACKIE McCLOUD, ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY MANAGER

THROUGH: CITY MANAGER MENDEZ

SUBJECT: AWARD OF \$543,080.00 CONTRACT TO WATSONVILLE
WETLANDS WATCH FOR OCEAN PROTECTION COUNCIL GRANT
IMPLEMENTATION

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Adopt a resolution appropriating grant funds from 0720-596-7361-11101 and awarding a contract for an amount not-to-exceed \$543,080 to Watsonville Wetlands Watch for the Ocean Protection Council Middle Struve Slough Water Quality and Habitat Enhancement Project implementation.

BACKGROUND:

The City of Watsonville was awarded \$1,192,523 by the Ocean Protection Council Proposition 1 grant funds for the Middle Struve Slough Water Quality and Habitat Enhancement Project. City staff applied for the grant in partnership with Watsonville Wetlands Watch (WWW). The grant funds will be used to implement a multi-benefit ecosystem and watershed restoration project that improves water quality, habitat, regional resilience to climate change and enhance public access.

DISCUSSION:

The City in partnership with WWW applied for an Ocean Protection Council Proposition 1 Coastal Environmental Justice Grant. The City and WWW went through a competitive process to receive grant funds and was one of six awarded projects in this funding cycle.

This project is a multi-benefit ecosystem and watershed restoration project that improves water quality, native habitat, and regional resilience to climate change. The proposed project will implement watershed restoration and habitat protection measures that will address habitat loss and environmental degradation within the Watsonville Slough System through the enhancement of an 1,800 foot linear wetland and riparian corridor and restoration and enhancement of approximately 5 acres of wetland, grassland, woodland and riparian habitat. Proposed activity will also provide many additional co-benefits, such as flood attenuation, increased resiliency to climate change, and atmospheric greenhouse gas capture, improved

access to nature, parks, and trails for residents, and provide extensive environmental education, nature experiences, and green jobs training.

The project is designed to address wetland and water quality impairments. In order to address water quality impairment, this project will construct two sediment capture and treatment basins at culvert outfalls which currently deliver untreated urban run-off to the downstream wetlands. The proposed sediment capture and treatment basins are designed to remove the fine and large particulates and the pollutants of concern, such as E. coli and fecal coliform bacteria that are known to adhere to the sediment. Removal of sediments will be the proxy for the removal of the pollutants of concern listed on the 303(d) list of impaired waterbodies.

Implementation of this project will have direct benefits to the community and address the need for high quality environmental benefits and access to nature. The project proposes to construct a new boardwalk through the restored and enhanced wetland area, providing an immersive experience for Watsonville residents and trail users to learn about the importance of good water quality and restored habitat areas. It will also provide extensive environmental education and paid green jobs training experiences for Watsonville youth, as described in the project's community engagement plan.

Project Partnership WWW is a local non-profit that is committed to protection, enhancement and restoration of the Watsonville Slough system. The organization also leads a robust community engagement program with local youth through the Climate Corps Leadership Institute. The City's Environmental Sustainability Division partnered with WWW to apply for the Ocean Protection Council Proposition 1 Grant opportunity given their local expertise and leadership in Watsonville. The project as proposed could not be implemented without WWW knowledge of environmental permitting in the wetlands, community engagement and volunteer days for habitat restoration, and ultimately monitoring the water quality through the volunteer led citizen-based science monitoring in the wetlands.

Through the Ocean Protection Council Proposition 1 grant, WWW will provide the following support for the Middle Struve Slough project: project management and support for grant administration, support for finalizing the construction designs and securing environmental permits to enable construction, oversight and implementation of habitat restoration activities and water quality treatment features, community engagement, and environmental monitoring and reporting.

STRATEGIC PLAN:

This project supports Strategic Plan Priority:

- 3 - Infrastructure & Environment
- 5 - Community Engagement & Well-Being

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

This contract will be appropriated and funded from account 0720-596-7361-11101 which is the grant account for the Ocean Protection Council grant. The City will be reimbursed 100% from the Ocean Protection Council.

ALTERNATIVE ACTION:

The City Council could choose to have staff prepare a Request for Proposals for this project's implementation and go through a competitive process. However, WWW brings a local expertise and knowledge that does not exist in other non-profits or firms.

ATTACHMENTS AND/OR REFERENCES (If any):

1. Executed Ocean Protection Council Grant Agreement P01-4-04