

January 21, 2025

Honorable Mayor and City Council
City of Long Beach
California

RECOMMENDATION:

Recommendation to adopt a resolution authorizing the City Manager, or designee, to submit three grant applications with the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy (RMC) for \$453,000 for the Drake Chavez Connection Project, \$4,000,000 for the Willow Springs Trailhead Project, and \$4,993,650 for the San Gabriel River Trail West Side Enhancement – Phase 2 Project; if awarded, accept grant funds in an amount not to exceed \$9,446,650; and execute all documents necessary to accept and expend the grant funds, including any subsequent amendments. (Districts 1,3,4,5)

DISCUSSION

City Council approval is requested to submit three grant applications to the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy (RMC) for the Drake Chavez Connection Project, Willow Springs Trailhead Project, and the San Gabriel River Trail West Side Enhancement – Phase 2 Project (“the Projects”). Additionally, if awarded, City Council approval is requested to accept an amount up to \$9,446,650 in State General Fund funding and execute all documents necessary to accept and expend the funds and administer the Projects.

The California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68) authorizes \$4 billion in general obligation bonds to finance a drought, water, parks, climate, coastal protection, and Outdoor access for all programs. Under Proposition 68, \$37,500,000 was specifically allocated for the Lower Los Angeles River revitalization. These funds are aimed at improving the river’s infrastructure and surrounding areas to create more sustainable and accessible spaces for the community. The RMC has an open call for projects and grant applications that are specific to the Lower LA River corridor. Under the Proposition 68 grant solicitation, the City of Long Beach (City) submitted the grant applications for the Drake Chavez Connection Project on December 12, 2024, and the Willow Springs Trailhead Project application will be submitted shortly. The requested resolution is required as part of these project grant applications.

Drake Chavez Connection Project

Through the Proposition 68 grant solicitation, the City is submitting a grant application to request \$453,000 for the Drake Chavez Connection Project (“the Drake Chavez Project”). The Drake Chavez Project, located at 970 W. Chester Place, is intended to connect Cesar Chavez Park, located on the West end of Downtown, with Drake Park, located in the Willmore City Historic District, creating a regional scale park within Downtown Long Beach. The site was formerly used

as a bus maintenance depot. If awarded, the Proposition 68 grant funds for the Drake Chavez Project will be used for the planning and design phase, which would consist of potential re-purposing of some of the existing buildings, design of a new 5.81 acres of park that will include active and passive recreational uses, native landscaping, habitat restoration, site amenities and ADA parking. The Drake Chavez Project will enhance community connectivity, safety, and green spaces and align with the RMC's Climate Resilience Grant Program goals and objectives.

Willow Springs Trailhead Project

Through the Proposition 68 grant solicitation, the City is submitting a grant application to request \$4,000,000 for the implementation phase of the Willow Springs Trailhead Project ("the Willow Springs Project"). The Willow Springs Project will create a large outdoor education trailhead at the park entrance on California Avenue. The trailhead will feature the following elements: a shaded outdoor plaza reminiscent of the scale and architecture of the 1906 Train Depot that will serve as a gathering area, interpretive elements that provide the history and stories of the former building, drought-tolerant native landscaping, wayfinding & interpretive signage with information on local habitat, history of the site, and an introduction to the trail network, ADA improvements and parking. The Willow Springs Project will result in opportunities for environmental education, habitat restoration, encouraging outdoor exploration, and communicating the history of the land, establishing the City's second environmental education site unique to Long Beach's park system.

San Gabriel River Trail West Side Enhancement – Phase 2 Project

As part of the California Budget Act of 2021, the RMC was appropriated \$11.1 million over three years through the Climate Resilience package in the State's budget. The funding is intended to support investments that address the climate risks within RMC's jurisdictions by investing in multi-benefit and nature-based solutions that accelerate innovative climate management and help meet the State's 2030 Green House Gases (GHG) reduction goals. The RMC has an open call for Climate Resilience Grant Program applications for projects that support or promote climate resilience, wildfire prevention, community access, and natural resource protection.

The San Gabriel River Trail is a Class I multi-use path that runs north-south from the City of Azusa to the City of Seal Beach on the east side of the river, serving as a regional amenity and point of connection to the San Gabriel River, its tributaries and the ocean. There is a separate, non-continuous path on the west side of the San Gabriel River that crosses several roads and bridges that are used informally by cyclists and walkers, requiring them to go out of their way to the nearest street crossing to continue the path. The path is heavily utilized, and it is a priority to provide a safer environment and keep the area free of debris. On May 18, 2021, City Council approved plans to advance a riverfront path project along the western bank of the San Gabriel River. On January 23, 2024, City Council approved the request to submit a grant application and accept a grant award in the amount of up to \$3,100,000 in RMC grant funding for the first phase of the San Gabriel River Trail West Side Enhancement Project to jump-start improvements and analyze the feasibility of the west side of the San Gabriel River from Marina Drive to Carson Street.

Through the RMC Climate Resilience Grant Program, the City submitted a grant application on

December 12, 2024, requesting \$4,993,650 for the San Gabriel River Trail West Side Enhancement - Phase 2 Project ("the San Gabriel River Phase 2 Project"). If awarded, grant funding will be used to develop the implementation strategy, design and construct capital improvements on the West Side of the San Gabriel River between Marina Drive to Carson Street (where feasible) to enhance connectivity, safety, and green spaces for the benefit of the community, and align with the RMC's Climate Resilience Grant Program goals and objectives. The requested resolution is a required component of the San Gabriel River Phase 2 Project grant application.

This matter was reviewed by Deputy City Attorney Erin Weesner-McKinley and by Budget Management Officer Nader Kaamoush on January 6, 2025.

TIMING CONSIDERATIONS

City Council action is requested on January 21, 2024, to ensure a Resolution authorizing the submittal of the application is prepared, as required in the application package.

FISCAL IMPACT

The submittal of the three grant applications with the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy (RMC) can result in the City receiving grant funding in an amount not to exceed \$9,446,650. There is no grant match required for the grant funds. If awarded, staff will return to City Council to request appropriation in the Capital Projects Fund Group in the Public Works Department.

The total cost of the Drake Chavez Connection Project is currently forecasted at \$2,444,000 which includes design, an estimated construction cost, construction management, labor compliance, and project oversight. The Project is supported by \$1,000,000 of Park Impact Fees and a \$991,100 Port of Long Beach Grant which are currently appropriated in the Capital Projects Fund Group in the Public Works Department. If awarded, the RMC grant of \$453,000 will fully fund the estimated project cost.

The total cost of the Willow Springs Trailhead Project is currently forecasted at \$6,132,544 which includes design, an estimated construction cost, construction management, labor compliance, and project oversight. The Project is supported by \$1,000,000 in Construction and Demolition (C&D) funds which are currently appropriated in the Capital Projects Fund Group in the Public Works Department. Through the RMC grant solicitation, the City submitted a grant application requesting \$4,000,000 for the Willow Springs Trailhead Project.

The total cost of the San Gabriel River Trail Phase 2 Project is currently forecasted at \$8,093,650 which includes design, an estimated construction cost, construction management, labor compliance, and project oversight. The Project is supported by \$3,100,000 RMC grant funds which are currently appropriated in the Capital Projects Fund Group in the Public Works Department.

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This recommendation has no staffing impact beyond the normal budgeted scope of duties and is consistent with existing City Council priorities. If the City is awarded the grant funds, it is anticipated that there will be a positive impact on local jobs because the projects will require construction activities, which will be in accordance with the City's Project Labor Agreements.

SUGGESTED ACTION:

Approve recommendation.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Eric Lopez', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Eric Lopez
Public Works

APPROVED:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Thomas B. Modica', with a stylized flourish at the end.

THOMAS B. MODICA
CITY MANAGER