



# Memorandum

**TO:** HONORABLE MAYOR AND  
CITY COUNCIL

**FROM:** Kerrie Romanow

**SUBJECT:** SEE BELOW

**DATE:** October 24, 2011

Approved

Date

10/28/11

**COUNCIL DISTRICT:** 5 and 8  
**SNI AREA:** EAST VALLEY/680  
COMMUNITIES  
and K.O.N.A.

**SUBJECT: APPLICATION TO THE PROPOSITION 84 URBAN GREENING GRANT PROGRAM FOR A STORMWATER-GREEN STREETS PROJECT**

## RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a resolution authorizing the City Manager to submit a grant application to the California Strategic Growth Council for the Proposition 84 Urban Greening Grant Program for the following project to retrofit a City street to integrate stormwater treatment: *Green Streets, Greener Neighborhood - Ocala West* for a grant amount of \$2,475,000.

## OUTCOME

Approval of this recommendation would allow the City to submit a grant application to the California Strategic Growth Council by the November 17, 2011, deadline. If the grant is awarded and a grant agreement is executed, this project will fund integration and installation of landscape stormwater treatment measures as part of a green street storm sewer retrofit project. This project will result in a reduction in stormwater pollutants entering local creeks and waterways and will support compliance with the City's Stormwater Permit.

## BACKGROUND

In 2006, California voters passed Proposition 84 authorizing the Legislature to appropriate \$70,000,000 for urban greening projects that reduce energy consumption, conserve water, improve air and water quality, and provide other community benefits. The California Strategic

Growth Council (SGC) provides Proposition 84 funding through the Urban Greening for Sustainable Communities Program to fund greening projects designed to address the built-out nature of California's urban areas by incrementally creating more viable and sustainable communities. SGC, through the California Natural Resources Agency, is seeking grant proposals for urban greening projects that will lead to significant environmental results concerning one or more of the following priorities:

- Decrease air and water pollution;
- Reduce consumption of natural resources and energy;
- Increase adaptability to climate change;
- Invest in existing communities;
- Protect, preserve and enhance environmental and recreational resources; and
- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

The SGC is encouraging projects that involve interagency collaboration; use existing public lands and facilitate use of public resources and investments, including schools; and promote healthy communities.

The City's Stormwater Permit includes requirements for constructing green street pilot projects (two pilot projects are required in each of the four counties covered by the permit with a total of ten required region-wide) and conducting public education to increase awareness of the storm sewer system. The term, "green street," refers to specific stormwater management techniques that include the use of tree-wells or landscape areas to capture and treat runoff. Alternatively, permeable concrete or pavers can be used to reduce the volume of runoff. These techniques are appropriate for streets, sidewalks, and parking lots and contribute to the stormwater management approach known as Low Impact Development. The proposed project could fulfill one of the required green street pilot projects for permittees in Santa Clara County, and would provide the community an opportunity to gain a greater understanding of the connection between the storm drain system and local waterways.

## **ANALYSIS**

For this round of funding, the SGC is implementing a two-step grant application process. In June 2011, the City submitted several "concept proposals" for funding through the Urban Greening Grant Program. The City was invited to submit a full application for one of those projects. Staff is seeking Council authorization to apply for funding to construct a green street storm sewer retrofit project, *Green Streets, Greener Neighborhood – Ocala West (Project)*. If awarded, the grant funds would be used to design and construct a street retrofit project that integrates green infrastructure and traffic calming principles, and improves neighborhood mobility. Additionally, grant funds would support community engagement through "greening" of Meyer Elementary School. The total cost for the Project is estimated to be \$2,876,000 with a requested grant in the amount of \$2,475,000. The remaining \$401,000 would be provided through other funding sources including the City, other grants, and volunteer efforts, as described below. There is no specified minimum level of matching funds required for this funding

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program, but applicants are encouraged to leverage all resources, including local and other sources of funds, and this is taken into consideration during the selection process.

The Project is an innovative collaboration between the City of San José, Alum Rock School District, and Our City Forest. The project centers on Hillview Park in east San José and extends on Ocala Ave for approximately 0.6 miles from Meyer Elementary School at Daytona Drive east to Capitol Expressway. The project is located adjacent to both the K.O.N.A. and East Valley/680 Communities Strong Neighborhood areas.

The Project's proposed environmental enhancements include a new 2,200 foot-long permeable sidewalk which will replace a heavily-used dirt pathway to provide the neighborhood with a safer route to nearby parks, trails, and public transit. Additionally, the project will create new rain gardens that treat street runoff through biofiltration, and install new pervious median strips that will replace conventional street hardscape. Consistent with the City's Safe Routes to School plan for Meyer Elementary School, landscaped curb bulb-outs that will treat stormwater will also calm traffic, shorten crosswalk spans, and improve visibility at intersections. Both the KONA and the East Valley/680 Communities have identified the need for sidewalks and traffic calming measures to provide residents safe access along the south side of Ocala Avenue within their neighborhood improvement plans. The proposed permeable sidewalk, along with additional rain gardens and street narrowing, will result not only in reduced impervious surfaces and treatment for stormwater runoff but also safely connect school children, pedestrians, and cyclists with nearby trails, parks, and public transit.

Our City Forest and the Alum Rock School District will plant and maintain approximately 20 native, drought-resistant trees at Meyer Elementary School along Ocala Avenue near Daytona Drive, thereby providing shade and cooling to pedestrians and students traveling to and from school. The school site will undergo further "greening" and be enhanced with additional landscaping and an improved school garden, providing an opportunity for neighborhood and student education and involvement through garden stewardship. The project will also consider opportunities to utilize Our City Forest's mission and community engagement experience to educate the community about the green infrastructure features and promote broader awareness of the multiple benefits of the proposed project elements.

Successful completion of this pilot project will demonstrate how a partnership between the City, school district, and local environmental organization to design, build, and maintain green infrastructure and promote sustainability can benefit the community. The pilot project will provide City staff with firsthand experience in the design and construction of a green street retrofit project. This institutional capacity building can lead to better integration of green infrastructure features with other City projects for multiple benefits.

This project is also being coordinated with the San José Cool Cities Pilot Project, a partnership between the City, Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory (LBL), the Global Cool Cities Alliance, and US EPA on heat islands and urban sustainability. City and LBL staff are in discussions to identify opportunities to leverage this project with the larger San José Cool Cities Pilot Project. Potential collaborations include LBL providing technical assistance to monitor and estimate cooling effects from the greening features constructed by the grant, or leveraging LBL's

cool materials and technology demonstration partners to convert playgrounds within the project area to cooler surfaces.

### **EVALUATION AND FOLLOW-UP**

The application package is due to the California Strategic Growth Council by November 17, 2011, with an anticipated award in spring 2012. If the grant application is successful, the grant agreement and associated budget actions will be brought forward for Council approval.

### **PUBLIC OUTREACH/INTEREST**

- Criteria 1:** Requires Council action on the use of public funds equal to \$1 million or greater. **(Required: Website Posting)**
- Criteria 2:** Adoption of a new or revised policy that may have implications for public health, safety, quality of life, or financial/economic vitality of the City. **(Required: E-mail and Website Posting)**
- Criteria 3:** Consideration of proposed changes to service delivery, programs, staffing that may have impacts to community services and have been identified by staff, Council or a Community group that requires special outreach. **(Required: E-mail, Website Posting, Community Meetings, Notice in appropriate newspapers)**

This memorandum, while not meeting any of the criteria above, will be posted on the City's website for the November 15, 2011 Council agenda.

### **COORDINATION**

This memorandum has been coordinated with the departments of Transportation and Public Works, and the City Attorney's Office. This project has also been coordinated with the Office of Economic Development.

### **COST IMPLICATIONS**

The chart below indicates what local funds have been identified for the Project. While this grant does not require a minimum local match, applicants are encouraged to leverage local and other funds and resources towards the projects. The details regarding the final grant and matching fund amounts will be brought forward for Council consideration at the time the grant is awarded and accepted.

Grant Amount	Other Funding Sources (\$401,000)	Anticipated Source of Other Funds
\$2,475,000	\$228,250	The City would commit \$228,250 to cover portions of project engineering, construction, and inspection services provided by PW and DOT not covered by the grant. This would be funded by the Storm Sewer Operating Fund (Fund 446), subject to Council approval.
	\$156,000	The City would commit \$156,000 worth of existing in-kind staffing resources for project management within ESD's Watershed Protection Division. This would be funded by the Storm Sewer Operating Fund (Fund 446) in ESD's Personal Services appropriation.
	\$5,500	The cost for an Electric Vehicle charging station to be installed along Ocala Ave and funded by a California Energy Commission grant to be secured by DOT.
	\$11,250	Our City Forest has committed to engaging volunteer hours worth at least \$11,200 to assist with tree and rain garden planting as part of the project.

If awarded and constructed, the City would also assume responsibility for ongoing maintenance of the constructed stormwater treatment and green infrastructure features installed along Ocala Avenue. Cost of maintenance of these features could be funded by the Storm Sewer Operating Fund (Fund 446) and are estimated to be less than \$8,000 annually. Alum Rock School District will be responsible for any improvements made on school district property. Additionally, the City will work with Our City Forest to engage community volunteers in conducting basic maintenance activities such as litter removal from the vegetated areas.

**CEQA**

Not a project, File No. PP10-068(a) Grant Application (where Council is not obligated to enter into an agreement at the time of application).

/s/  
 KERRIE ROMANOW  
 Acting Director, Environmental Services

For questions please contact Elaine Marshall, Environmental Services Program Manager, at (408) 793-5355.