



County of San Mateo

Inter-Departmental Correspondence

Department: PARKS

File #: 21-880

Board Meeting Date: 11/9/2021

Special Notice / Hearing: None
Vote Required: Majority

To: Honorable Board of Supervisors

From: Nicholas J. Calderon, Parks Director

Subject: Submission of an application to the California Department of Parks and Recreation's Outdoor Equity Grants Program seeking \$647,159.08 in grant funding for the development and implementation of interpretive programs primarily serving the residents of North Fair Oaks.

RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt a resolution authorizing the Parks Director, or the Parks Director's designee, to submit an application to the California Department of Parks and Recreation's Outdoor Equity Grants Program seeking grant funding in the amount of \$647,159.08 to hire staff to develop, organize, host, and lead interpretive programming primarily for residents of North Fair Oaks.

BACKGROUND:

The San Mateo County Parks Department ("Department") offers a variety of interpretive programs designed to connect the public with County parks and the natural world. These programs and events include, but are not limited to, Take A Hike, Junior Ranger, Movies in the Park, Nature Hikes, and Classroom Programs. The Department's Interpretive Program, acting in partnership with various organizations, is responsible for organizing, hosting, and leading these events.

The Department often seeks grants to help fund the expansion of desired programming. One such opportunity is the California Department of Parks and Recreation's Outdoor Equity Grants Program ("OEP"), which is designed to improve public agencies' ability to serve residents from underserved communities. OEP funds can be used for a variety of services, including hiring staff to develop, host, and lead programs for residents of communities that are classified by the state as underserved. Funds awarded through OEP must be used to serve the community designated in the application.

DISCUSSION:

In accordance with the OEP requirement that grant applicants provide an authorizing resolution from their governing body using the language in OEP's form of resolution (Exhibit A), the Department is seeking this Board's authority to submit a grant application for \$647,159.08 in grant funding to be used for the delivery of more robust services to the North Fair Oaks community. Although the

Department recognizes that there are other communities in the County that may be competitive for funding, the Department only has capacity to serve one community through this grant program, and since North Fair Oaks is located in Unincorporated San Mateo County and relies primarily on the County for services, it was prioritized.

As required by OEP, the Department conducted a series of Community Planning meetings in North Fair Oaks in September and October of 2021 to understand the need and interest for programming, field trips, and service learning and career pathway opportunities. If awarded funds, the Department would hire a term Community Program Specialist to develop, host, and lead desired events and programs for residents of North Fair Oaks for three years. These events and programs, which would be offered on a weekly basis, will be environmental and health focused and foster an increased understanding and appreciation for natural spaces. Examples of events and programs to be offered include guided nature hikes, horseback riding, camping, and community picnics. Free transportation will be provided for community members.

The Department would also use awarded funds to initiate a Service Learning and Career Pathway Program. The program would offer internship and mentorship programs to youth from North Fair Oaks. These programs will include paid, stipend, and volunteer opportunities for youth to participate in meaningful opportunities that can be used for future employment resumes or college admissions for natural resources or environmental justice professions.

The Department is partnering with the following organizations for this grant opportunity: San Mateo County Health System, San Mateo County Libraries System, CARON (San Mateo County Sheriff's Office), San Mateo County Parks Foundation, Friends of Huddart and Wunderlich, Friends of Edgewood, and Friends of Fitzgerald Marine Reserve.

FISCAL IMPACT:

State Parks' Outdoor Equity Grant Program does not require a local match. Grant funds are made available on a reimbursable basis, and therefore, the Department will need to provide initiation costs which will be reimbursed by the state. There is no Net County Cost associated with this grant application. The San Mateo County Parks Foundation funded a grant writer to assist with the drafting of the grant application.