



County of San Mateo

Inter-Departmental Correspondence

Department: PARKS

File #: 19-590

Board Meeting Date: 6/25/2019

Special Notice / Hearing: None
Vote Required: Majority

To: Honorable Board of Supervisors

From: Peggy Jensen, Interim Parks Director

Subject: Ohlone-Portolà Heritage Trail Feasibility Study

RECOMMENDATION:

Accept the Ohlone-Portolà Heritage Trail Feasibility Study.

BACKGROUND:

To celebrate the 250th anniversary of Gaspar de Portolà's expedition and the first European sighting of the San Francisco Bay, the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors sought to create a trail system that would traverse the expedition's route. Early in the planning process, it was determined that the effort should also incorporate the 10,000-year history of the Ramaytush Ohlone Native Americans; the natives who inhabited what is now San Mateo County.

To guide decision making, a committee was formed. The committee included all organizations, agencies, and individuals that will be directly involved in the development of the trail system. The committee created a vision statement for the "Ohlone-Portolà Heritage Trail" ("Heritage Trail") expressing: "The Ohlone-Portolà Heritage Trail in San Mateo County honors the region's California [Native Americans] and commemorates the Portolà expedition on an interpretive, multi-use recreational and automobile route that takes us back in time to understand and appreciate the native Ohlone history and culture and to follow the footsteps of the first European explorers to see the San Francisco Bay".

To support the development of the Heritage Trail Feasibility Study ("Feasibility Study"), which is attached as Exhibit A, and implement an associated public outreach campaign, Supervisors Horsley and Groom secured \$150,000 in Measure K funding.

DISCUSSION:

The Feasibility Study was developed through a collaborative process. The process included six subcommittees that were comprised of members from public agencies, non-profits, tribes, historical associations, and individuals with an attentiveness to the history of San Mateo County. There were also a series of 4 community meetings held to solicit public input. Finally, a Statement of Historical Significance was developed with assistance from Mitch Postel, President of the San Mateo County

Historical Association and Jonathan Cordero, representative of the Ramaytush Ohlone.

In total, the trail will span approximately 90 miles. It will traverse the route used by the expedition from Año Nuevo north to Pacifica and then to the discovery sight at Sweeney Ridge. The trail will then continue south to the Crystal Springs Regional Trail at San Bruno Avenue and to the Town of Woodside and City of Menlo Park. Half of the trail exists in the form of the California Coastal Trail and Crystal Springs Regional Trail. The remaining segments will need to be developed. Approximately 95 percent of the proposed trail is on public lands.

Priority project recommendations to address existing trail gaps are included in the Feasibility Study. Proposed interpretive sign locations and general interpretive themes are also included. A logo for the trail, funded by the San Mateo County Parks Foundation, has been developed for future branding and wayfinding, and is attached as Exhibit B.

A calendar of events and activities celebrating the 250th anniversary of the Portolà Expedition and the Ramaytush Ohlone history has been developed, and is provided as Exhibit C. A travelling exhibit regarding Ohlone history in San Mateo County and the history of the Portolà expedition and its impact on the future development of California will also be part of the San Mateo County Fair and other local community events.

A two-part documentary film about the Heritage Trail and Sanchez Adobe will be shown at the new Sanchez Adobe Interpretive Center. The San Mateo County Historical Association is also in the process of nominating the Heritage Trail to the State Office of Historic Preservation for designation as a State Historic Trail. Updates regarding this effort will be provided to your Board as progress is made.

County Counsel has reviewed and approved the Feasibility Study.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Sufficient appropriations for the Feasibility Study are included in the Department's FY 2018-19 budget.