County of San Mateo

Inter-Departmental Correspondence

Department: PUBLIC WORKS
File #: 26-660

Board Meeting Date: 8/11/2026

Special Notice / Hearing: None
Vote Required: Majority

To: Honorable Board of Supervisors

From: Tory A. Newman, Director of Public Works

Subject: California State Coastal Conservancy Grant Agreement for the Half Moon Bay Landfill Clean Closure Climate Resilience and Restoration Project

RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt a resolution authorizing:

A) The Director of Public Works, or designee, to execute a grant agreement with the California State Coastal Conservancy for the Half Moon Bay Landfill Clean Closure Climate Resilience and Restoration Project in the amount of $1,000,000; and

B) The Director of Public Works, or designee, to execute grant agreement amendments, payment requests, and all other documents necessary to administer the Half Moon Bay Landfill Clean Closure Climate Resilience and Restoration Project

BACKGROUND:

The Half Moon Bay Landfill (Landfill), which is now closed but maintained by the County, is experiencing ongoing coastal erosion that threatens landfill infrastructure, including the drainage system, revetment, and adjacent California Coastal Trail. Continued erosion, sea level rise, and coastal scouring increase the risk of exposing historic landfill waste to the coastal environment if long-term corrective actions are not identified and implemented, as identified in the San Mateo County Sea Level Rise Vulnerability Assessment (2018) and City of Half Moon Bay Climate Adaptation Plan (2025). Recent atmospheric river storms and high-wave events damaged portions of the existing revetment, demonstrating the increasing vulnerability of the site and the need for long-term planning.

A long-term solution is needed to protect public infrastructure, reduce environmental risk, and improve the site's resilience to future coastal hazards. The proposed planning effort will evaluate clean closure alternatives, including partial or complete removal and relocation of landfill materials, environmental remediation, habitat restoration, stormwater management improvements, and shoreline resilience strategies. The resulting planning documents will position the County to pursue future implementation funding.

To support this effort, the Department of Public Works (Department), in collaboration with the Sustainability Department, San Mateo Resource Conservation District, and the City of Half Moon Bay, applied for and was selected for $1,000,000 in grant funding from the California State Coastal Conservancy. Acceptance of this grant allows the County to leverage $1,000,000 in State funding to advance a project that otherwise could not be completed using available Waste Management Activities Trust Funds.

DISCUSSION:
Staff anticipates that on September 17, 2026, the California State Coastal Conservancy will approve a $1,000,000 grant to support planning, technical studies, environmental review, stakeholder engagement, and conceptual design for the Half Moon Bay Landfill Clean Closure Climate Resilience and Restoration Project (Project).

The Project will evaluate long-term alternatives to address coastal erosion and climate-related risks at the closed Landfill. Planning activities include review of existing studies and site investigations, site characterization and environmental analyses, evaluation of landfill clean closure and restoration alternatives, conceptual design development, tribal engagement, stakeholder coordination, and community outreach. The planning effort will also identify opportunities to restore coastal bluff, coastal prairie, wetland, and riparian habitats while improving resilience to coastal erosion, flooding, and sea level rise. Completion of this planning effort will position the County to pursue future State and federal funding opportunities for implementation of the selected clean closure and coastal resilience alternative.

The Project will be implemented in collaboration with local agencies, tribal representatives, community organizations, technical experts, and regulatory agencies. The resulting planning documents will establish a science-based framework for future implementation actions that reduce environmental risk, improve coastal resilience, restore habitat, protect public infrastructure, and maintain public access along this important section of the San Mateo County coastline. The grant funds planning activities only and does not authorize future design and construction activities.

The Department recommends acceptance of the grant funding and authorization for the Director of Public Works, or designee, to execute the grant agreement with the California State Coastal Conservancy as well as any grant agreement amendments, payment requests, and all other related documents necessary to administer and implement the Project.

The County Attorney has reviewed and approved the resolution as to form.

COMMUNITY IMPACT:
This Project will help protect coastal resources, public infrastructure, recreational access, and nearby communities by developing a long-term strategy to address erosion risks at the closed Half Moon Bay Landfill. The Project also supports the County's climate resilience goals by evaluating opportunities to restore habitat, improve shoreline resilience, and reduce future environmental risks.

FISCAL IMPACT:
The total estimate cost for the Project is $1,216,500. The Project is proposed to be financed as follows:

California State Conservancy Grant	$1,000,000
Sustainability Department	$41,000
Capital Projects Budget	$175,500
Total Estimated Cost	$1,216,500

The California State Coastal Conservancy grant award will provide $1,000,000 for the Project. The grant requires County match of $216,500. The Sustainability Department is anticipated to contribute $41,000, with the remaining amount of $175,500 being reallocated within the Capital Improvement Plan from other project savings toward the Capital Project Budget for this Project.

Funding for this Project will primarily be from the California State Conservancy Grant. The Project will initially be financed by the Capital Projects Budget as the California Conservancy funds are received on a reimbursable basis.