



*City of Arts & Innovation*

# City Council Memorandum

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**TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL      DATE: NOVEMBER 7, 2023**

**FROM: PARKS, RECREATION AND COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT      WARD: 1**

**SUBJECT: ACCEPT A GRANT AWARD IN THE AMOUNT OF \$1,275,200 FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 2022/23 WILDFIRE PREVENTION GRANT PROGRAM FROM THE CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION AND AUTHORIZE A PURCHASE ORDER IN THE AMOUNT OF \$223,886.87 FOR THE ACQUISITION OF A JOHN DEERE 333G TRACK LOADER WITH JOHN DEERE GRAPPLE BUCKET AND FECON BULLHOG AND STUMP GRINDER ATTACHMENT THROUGH A SOURCWELL COOPERATIVE PURCHASING AGREEMENT- SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATION**

**ISSUES:**

Accept a grant award from the California Department of Forestry and Fire Prevention for the Santa Ana River Fire Prevention Project Phase 1 Fire Prevention foliage and brush remediation project for the Boy Scout Camp area of Fairmount Park ("Project") in the amount of \$1,275,200 and authorize a Grant funded purchase order of \$223,886.87 for the purchase of a John Deere 333G Track Loader with John Deere Grapple Bucket and Fecon Bullhog Mulching and Stump Grinder attachments through cooperative purchasing agreement with Sourcewell to facilitate completion of the Project

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

That the City Council:

1. Accept a grant award from the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection in the amount of \$1,275,200 to complete foliage and brush remediation project for the Boy Scout Camp area of Fairmount Park;
2. With at least five affirmative votes, and upon execution of grant agreement, authorize the Chief Financial Officer or designee, to record an increase in revenue in the amount of \$1,275,200, or the amount of the grant award, and appropriate an equal amount in expenditures in the Grants & Restricted Programs Fund, PRCS - Santa Ana River Fire Prevention Program & the Fire - Santa Ana River Fire Prevention Program revenue and expenditure accounts; and

3. Authorize a Grant funded purchase order for a John Deere 333G Track Loader with a John Deere Grapple Bucket, Fecon Bullhog Mulching Attachment and Stump grinder in the amount of \$223,886.87 to facilitate completion of the Project.

## **LEGISLATIVE HISTORY**

On January 9, 2023, the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CalFire) announced the availability of the 2022-23 Urban and Community Forestry Program Grant, which provides funding for wildfire prevention projects and activities in and near wildfire-threatened communities that focus on increasing the protection of people, structures, and communities. Funded activities include Hazardous Fuels Reduction, Wildfire Prevention Planning, and Wildfire Prevention Education, emphasizing public health and safety while reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) Wildfire Prevention Grants Program is funded by the State of California General Fund and with Cap-and-Trade auction proceeds appropriated by the California Legislature to agencies that administer California Climate Investments. CAL FIRE's Fire Prevention Grants Program funds local projects and activities that address wildfire risk, reduce the potential of fires, and increase community resiliency.

## **BACKGROUND:**

On March 7, 2023, City Council adopted a resolution authorizing the submission of an application for the 2022/2023 Wildfire Prevention Grant Program administered through the California Department of Forestry and authorizing the execution of all required documents by the City manager or designee. Upon a grant award the Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department (PRCSD) was to return to accept grant funds and appropriate funding into Project accounts.

On July 26, 2023, PRCSD was notified by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection of an award of \$1,275,200 in Urban and Community Forestry Program Grant funds. A Standard Agreement with the State is currently being prepared.

## **DISCUSSION:**

### **Fire Prevention**

To reduce fire hazards, PSCSD is partnering with the City Fire Marshall to complete fire prevention work in the 86-acre "Boy Scout Camp" site at Fairmount Park with Cal Fire Grant funding. This effort falls under the larger multi-agency Santa Ana River Riparian Restoration Recreation and Protection Project. The project includes the removal of 40 acres of understory invasive fire fuels and other targeted invasive species, including but not limited to 600 palm trees over 4" diameter, 350 Eucalyptus trees over 3" diameter, Giant Arundo, Castor Bean, Salt Cedar, and Blue Gum Eucalyptus. These plants produce a great quantity of highly flammable biomass. Invasive plants inhibit the growth of native plants and trees that are critical habitat for native wildlife and could lead to a reduction in biodiversity if left uncontrolled.

It is important to reduce this fire danger because this area is within the fire impact range of 6,014 habitable structures located at the Mt. Rubidoux Historic District, Downtown Neighborhood, and

Northside Neighborhood. Approximately 19,244 people live and work in these areas that are endangered by heightened wildfire risk in the Project area. Of the many structures in this 1-mile zone, 571 structures are registered historic sites. The 1-mile radius also includes 36 City Facility structures. See the primary project site map presented in Attachment 2. If there is remaining grant funding after this initial scope of work is completed, staff will identify additional areas along the span of the Santa Ana River under the municipal span of influence for abatement efforts.

### Education

The PRCSD staff and representatives from the City Fire Marshall will conduct education regarding AB2911, AB642, and AB374 via three educational strategies. First, using published educational documents created by the State, the City will implement a social media campaign in which we will utilize all the social media platforms for both the City of Riverside and the Riverside Fire Department. The goal for outreach will be for at least 75% of the people living within the new Fire Hazard Severity Zones (FHSZ) to be “reached” through the social media campaign. Town hall meetings will be held in communities that reside within a Fire Hazard Severity Zone. The goal will be that by December 2024, two town hall meetings will be completed in every community within a medium, high, or very high FHSZ. The third and final educational strategy will be to conduct door-to-door distribution of printed educational material to every parcel located within subdivisions of limited egress. The goal will be that by December 2024, printed material will be delivered to 75% of homes and businesses around the Project area site.

### Equipment Purchase

The PRCSD is also requesting to purchase equipment with the awarded grants funds through a Sourcewell Cooperative Agreement. Equipment to be purchased include:

- John Deere 333G Compact Track Loader;
- John Deere Grapple Bucket Attachment;
- Fecon Bull Hog Mulching Attachment; and
- Stump Grinder Attachment.

A Chipper will be purchased with grant funds at a later date via competitive bids.

City staff will utilize the equipment to meet the goals and objectives for Project invasive/non-native plant removal, including long term maintenance. This equipment purchase will be necessary throughout the project and crucial for the ongoing maintenance of the project area. All purchased equipment will be used directly for Project activities by City of Riverside staff.

Staff is requesting to purchase the equipment through the Sourcewell Staples Minnesota Cooperative pricing under RFP No. 011723 which was solicited on January 17, 2023. Eighteen proposals were received, and seventeen of the vendors were deemed responsive. Of the seventeen vendors evaluated, thirteen were awarded a contract, including John Deere. John Deere was awarded contract No. 011723-JDC for Heavy Construction Equipment with related Equipment and Accessories. After reviewing what all would be needed, it was determined that only John Deere provided a product that would be able to accomplish all of the work required. Pursuant to Purchasing Resolution No. 23914, Section 602 (f) which states “Competitive Procurement through the Informal Procurement and Formal Procurement process shall not be required in any of the following circumstances: When Cooperative Purchasing is available and undertaken or when Goods can be obtained through Federal, State and/or other public entity pricing contracts or price agreements.”

The Purchasing Manager concurs that the recommendation in this report follows Purchasing

Resolution 23914 Section 602 (f).

The Fire Chief concurs with this report.

### **STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:**

The work contributes to **Strategic Priority 1 -Arts, Culture and Recreation Goal 1.4** to prioritize safety at parks, trails, arts, cultural and recreational facilities and **Goal 1.3** to Improve parks, recreational amenities, open space, trail development, and fulfill critical lifecycle and facility maintenance needs.

The work also contributes to **Strategic Priority 4 - Environmental Stewardship Goal 4.5** to maintain and conserve 30% of Riverside's natural lands in green space including but not limited to agricultural lands and urban forests to protect and restore Riverside's rich biodiversity and accelerate the natural removal of carbon, furthering our community's climate resilience.

1. **Community Trust:** This project involves fire safety and prevention that will increase community safety and well-being and protects the public's interest and results in the greater public good.
2. **Equity:** Multiple opportunities and modes will be utilized for community outreach and available English and Spanish. Advertising options will be used to engage Riverside's diverse population. Staff will provide educational material via social media posts, printed materials, press releases and Town Hall Meetings for engagement and outreach in communities within a medium, high, or very high Fire Hazard Severity Zone. This project serves disadvantaged and severely disadvantaged households which are located within a half-mile of the project site.
3. **Fiscal Responsibility:** The project is grant-funded and does not require using the City's General Fund.
4. **Innovation:** This project is responding to health and wellness needs to provide safe open space areas for the community and residents surrounding this high-fire risk area. The project is part of a larger multi-agency collaborative effort to reduce fire fuel loads through removal of invasive vegetation in the Santa Ana River area. This project also aligns with the Riverside Gateway Project Master plans goals and objectives.
5. **Sustainability and Resiliency:** The project increases park and recreational resources to meet the needs of the present community without compromising the needs of the future by finding solutions that help Riverside adapt to climate change and resource depletion through actions such as reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, and long-term Carbon sequestration. This project preserves and beautifies natural parkland and reduces the risk of fire within the project area preserving the area for future use.

### **FISCAL IMPACT:**

The total fiscal impact of the action is \$1,275,200. Upon Council approval and grant award, an increase in revenue, in the amount of the grant award will be recorded, and an equal amount appropriated in the Grants & Restricted Programs Fund, PRCS - Santa Ana River Fire Prevention

Program & the Fire - Santa Ana River Fire Prevention Program revenue and expenditure accounts as indicated in the table below.

<b>Fund</b>	<b>Program</b>	<b>Account</b>	<b>Amount</b>
<i>Revenue</i>			
Grants & Restricted Programs	PRCS - Santa Ana River Fire Prevention	9350000-334300	\$1,164,200
	Fire - Santa Ana River Fire Prevention	9350010-334300	\$111,000
<b>Total Revenue</b>			<b>\$1,275,200</b>
<i>Expenditures</i>			
Grants & Restricted Programs	PRCS - Santa Ana River Fire Prevention	9350000-440220	\$1,164,200
	Fire - Santa Ana River Fire Prevention	9350010-440220	\$111,000
<b>Total Expenditures</b>			<b>\$1,275,200</b>

A portion of the grant award, in the amount of \$223,886.87 will be utilized to purchase equipment through a Sourcewell Cooperative Agreement. Funds for equipment purchases will come from the Grants & Restricted Programs Fund, PRCS - Santa Ana River Prevention Project Account number 9350000-440220 appropriated in this report.

As a result of this project annual ongoing maintenance costs are estimated to be \$51,000. These additional maintenance funds will be requested in future years budget to ensure that the project is maintained to meet City and the State of California’s Fire Prevention program, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and County of Riverside standards.

Prepared by: Pamela Galera, Parks, Recreation and Community Services Director  
 Certified as to availability of funds: Kristie Thomas, Assistant Chief Financial Officer/Financial Director  
 Approved by: Kris Martinez, Assistant City Manager  
 Approved as to form: Phaedra Norton, City Attorney

- Attachments:
1. Grant Resolution
  2. Project Area Map
  3. Notice of Award
  4. Presentation