



# CITY COUNCIL STAFF REPORT



December 7, 2021

## ITEM TITLE

Grant Acceptance and Appropriation: Accept Hazard Mitigation Grant Funding Through the Federal Emergency Management Agency for the Chula Vista Wildland Urban Interface Vegetation Management Mitigation Project

**Report Number:** 21-0229

**Location:** Barons Canyon, Bonita Long Canyon, Church Canyon, Goats Hill, Independence Canyon, and Lynwood Hills

**Department:** Public Works & Fire

**Environmental Notice:** The Project qualifies for a Categorical Exemption pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act State Guidelines Section 15301 Class 1 (Existing Facilities) and Section 15304 Class 4 (Minor Alterations to Land).

## Recommended Action

Adopt a resolution accepting \$2,377,205 in Hazard Mitigation Grant funding through the Federal Emergency Management Agency, designating the City's agents, amending the Fiscal Year 2021/22 CIP Program Budget by establishing a new CIP Project, and appropriating funds for that purpose. **(4/5 Vote Required)**

## SUMMARY

The City has been awarded a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Hazard Mitigation Grant in the amount of \$2,377,205 for brush clearance around several canyons within the City to reduce the risk of damage to property from a wildfire. The grant fund requires a minimum City match of \$792,402 of which staff is requesting \$400,000 be appropriated in the current fiscal year. Along with the \$400,000 City match, staff is requesting that \$1,200,000 of the grant funds also be appropriated within the current fiscal year with the remaining funds to be included in next years budget. This action is to accept the grant, establish a new capital improvement project, appropriate funds and designate the City's agents to provide all necessary assurances and agreements to the State of California Governor's Office of Emergency Services that administers the grant.

## ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The Director of Development Services has reviewed the proposed project for compliance with the California

Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and has determined that the project qualifies for a Categorical Exemption pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15301 Class 1 (Existing Facilities) and Section 15304 Class 4 (Minor Alterations to Land) because the proposed project would not result in a significant effect on the environment, create a cumulative impact, damage a scenic highway, or cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource. Thus, no further environmental review is required.

## **BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION**

Not applicable.

## **DISCUSSION**

The City has identified wildfire/structural fire as the greatest natural hazard to Chula Vista residents. Six canyons have been identified as high priority areas for brush clearance. These canyons include: Barons Canyon, Bonita Long Canyon, Church Canyon, Goats Hill, Independence Canyon, and Lynwood Hills. Approximately 944 homes border these canyon areas.

In 2018, the City applied for a Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for brush removal to create a 60-foot defensible space for the Fire Department around the above-named canyons.

On September 10, 2021, the City received notification from the State of California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) that the City has been awarded the FEMA HMGP grant in the amount of \$2,377,205. All work associated with this grant must be completed as of April 1, 2023. The State is the grantee, and the City is the subgrantee.

Payment of the grant funds from the State are on a reimbursement basis and the grant requires a minimum City match of \$792,402. Staff is requesting \$400,000 of said matching funds be appropriated in the Fiscal Year 2021/2022 Non-Departmental budget.

Tonight's requested action would accept the grant funds and designate the City's agents to provide all necessary assurances and agreements that are required by the State to receive the funds. The action would:

- Amend the Fiscal Year 2021/2022 CIP Program Budget by establishing a new CIP Project, CTY0234 "Chula Vista Wildland Urban Interface Vegetation Management Mitigation",
- Appropriate \$400,000 of the \$792,402 City match as a transfer from the General Fund to the Federal Grants fund,
- Appropriate \$1,200,000 of the grant funds to the Federal Grants fund.

Due to the time constraints of the grant and scheduling work around bird nesting season – the work will be done in two phases. Phase one of the brush removal work would begin immediately upon acceptance of this grant as the bird nesting season in the canyons runs from March until September giving us a short window in the current year to perform this work. Due to the immediate need City staff will utilize existing environmental and brush clearance on-call contractors to perform the brush removal services.

Phase two of the brush clearance work will be scheduled to begin in September 2022 and end by February 2023. Appropriations for phase two of this project, including the City match, will be considered as part of the fiscal year 2022/23 budget process.

## DECISION-MAKER CONFLICT

Staff has reviewed the property holdings of the City Council members and has found that Mayor Salas has property holdings within 1,000 feet of the boundaries of the property which is the subject of this action. However, the decision solely concerns repairs, replacement or maintenance of existing streets, water, sewer, storm drainage or similar facilities, and the member's property will not be affected disproportionately to other properties receiving the same services. Consequently, pursuant to California Code of Regulations Title 2, sections 18700 and 18702.2(d)(1)), this item does not present a real property-related conflict of interest under the Political Reform Act (Cal. Gov't Code § 87100, et seq.).

Staff is not independently aware, and has not been informed by any City Council member, of any other fact that may constitute a basis for a decision-maker conflict of interest in this matter.

## CURRENT-YEAR FISCAL IMPACT

Approval of the resolution will result in the acceptance of \$2,377,205 in grant funding from FEMA for high priority brush clearance within the City. The City also has a minimum match requirement of \$792,402.

Since the grant crosses between two fiscal years, \$1,200,000 in grant funding and \$400,000 in General Fund City match monies will be appropriated to Fiscal Year 2021/2022 budget with the remainder to be included in the proposed fiscal year 2022/2023 budget. The \$400,000 City match may be a negative impact to the General Fund. Staff will monitor revenue trends to identify offsetting revenues as part of the quarterly fiscal updates. The following table details the requested appropriations by Department/Fund:

Department	Transfers Out	Non- CIP Expenses	Revenue	Net Impact
Non-Departmental	\$400,000	\$ -	\$ -	(\$400,000)
<b>GENERAL FUND TOTALS</b>	<b>\$400,000</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>(\$400,000)</b>
Fund	Transfers Out	Non-CIP Expenses	Revenue	Net Impact
Federal Grants Fund	\$ -	\$1,600,000	\$1,600,000	\$ -
<b>OTHER FUND TOTALS</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$1,600,000</b>	<b>\$1,600,000</b>	<b>\$ -</b>

The \$1,600,000 will be appropriated to a newly established CIP Project, CTY0234 (Chula Vista Wildland Urban Interface Vegetation Management).

## ONGOING FISCAL IMPACT

As previously stated, the grant crosses between two fiscal years. The remaining \$1,177,205 in grant funding and \$392,402 in City match will be included in the proposed fiscal year 2022/2023 budget.

## ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – Grant Approval Package

*Staff Contact(s):*

*Marlon King, Emergency Services Manager*

*Sam Oludunfe, Open Space Manager*

*Tessa Nguyen, Senior Management Analyst*