



# CITY COUNCIL STAFF REPORT



August 13, 2024

## ITEM TITLE

Grant Acceptance: Accept Grant Funding Through the USDA Forest Service for the Urban Forest Tree Inventory and Forest Management Plan Project, Approve Subaward Agreement with GreenLatinos, and Amend the Fiscal Year 2024-25 Budget

**Report Number:** 24-0206

**Location:** No specific geographic location

**Department:** Public Works

**G.C. § 84308:** No

**Environmental Notice:** The Project qualifies for a Categorical Exemption pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act State Guidelines Section 15306 Class 6 (Information Collection) and Section 15301 Class 1 (Existing Facilities). Under the National Environmental Policy Act, the activity is exempt pursuant to Title 7, Part 650.6(a) of the Code of Federal Regulations and the Department of Agriculture Environmental Guidelines.

## Recommended Action

Adopt a resolution: A) accepting \$500,000 in Inflation Reduction Grant funding through the United States Department of Agriculture, Forest Service Urban & Community Forestry (USDA Forest Service); B) approving a Subaward Agreement with GreenLatinos; (C) designating the City's agent; and D) amending the fiscal year 2024-25 budget and appropriating funds therefor. **(4/5 Vote Required)**

## SUMMARY

The City has been awarded an Inflation Reduction Act Grant in the amount of \$500,000 for the Chula Vista Urban Forest Tree Inventory and Forest Management Plan Project. The grant funds were awarded through a national pass-through partner, GreenLatinos. GreenLatinos applied for a match waiver with the USDA, and the City must demonstrate that the grant funds will be used to benefit disadvantaged communities. The City will need to supplement the grant award with funding to complete the project. The fiscal year 2024-25 budget already includes a portion of these needed funds. Staff is requesting the remaining \$206,030 be appropriated in the current fiscal year. This action will accept the grant funds, designate the City's agents to provide all necessary assurances and approve a subaward agreement with the national pass-through partner (GreenLatinos), and make necessary budget adjustments to the fiscal year 2024-25 Budget.

## **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 15306 Class 6 (Information Collection) and Section 15301 Class 1 (Existing Facilities) because the proposed action 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. Under NEPA, the activity is exempt pursuant to Title 7, Part 650.6(a) of the Code of Federal Regulations and the Department of Agriculture Environmental Guidelines.

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

Not applicable.

## **DISCUSSION**

The City aims to advance the development of a comprehensive tree inventory system and forest management plan. Currently, only 39,000 of the estimated 86,000 trees in the public urban forest have been inventoried. Improving the City's tree inventory will assist in the efficient planning, assessment, maintenance, and management of its urban forest. The project is centered on implementing strategies that maximize the environmental benefits from trees. A thorough inventory will optimize outreach and provide vital information to sustain a healthy, equitable, and resilient urban forest, while mitigating the risks associated with tree failure and wildland-urban interface fires.

In May 2023, the City applied for an Inflation Reduction Act Grant from the United States Department of Agriculture, Forest Service Urban & Community Forestry (USDA Forest Service) for the Chula Vista Urban Forest Tree Inventory and Forest Management Plan project. This project will provide the baseline information necessary for the long-term management critical to ensuring the sustainability of this vital community resource.

In September 2023, the City received notification from the USDA Forest Service that the City had been awarded the Inflation Reduction Act grant in the amount of \$500,000. All work associated with this grant must be completed as of November 30, 2027. The grant funds were awarded through a national pass-through partner of the USDA Forest Service, GreenLatinos, and the City is the subrecipient. Payment of the grant funds is on a reimbursement basis.

Due to the estimated volume of trees Citywide, the grant funds are not sufficient to complete the project and funds are needed to supplement the grant award. Within the adopted fiscal year 2024-25 budget, the City has already appropriated a portion of these needed funds. Staff is requesting the remaining \$206,030 be appropriated in the current fiscal year. This remaining amount will be funded through the City's Special Tax Districts, as a portion of the City's trees are under the maintenance responsibility of these districts.

Tonight's requested action would do the following:

- Accept the \$500,000 in grant funds and approve a Subaward Agreement with GreenLatinos as a national pass-through agency,

- Designate the City’s agents to provide all necessary assurances and agreements that are required to receive the funds,
- Amend the fiscal year 2024-25 Federal Grants Fund to reflect the grant award, and
- Appropriate the remaining \$206,030 as a transfer from various Special Tax District Funds to the Federal Grants Fund.

**DECISION-MAKER CONFLICT**

Staff has reviewed the decision contemplated by this action and has determined that it is not site-specific and consequently, the real property holdings of City Council members do not create a disqualifying real property-related financial 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 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 \$500,000 in grant funding from the USDA the City’s Urban Forest Tree Inventory and Forest Management Plan project. The adopted fiscal year 2024-25 budget already included a portion of the funding to complete the entire inventory and forest management plan. Staff is requesting that the remaining \$206,030 be appropriated as a transfer from various Special Tax District Funds to the Federal Grants Fund. This appropriation is covered through the reserves of each Special Tax District, which have sufficient fund balance to absorb this impact. There is no additional impact to the General Fund.

Additionally, the adopted fiscal year 2024-25 budget included a higher grant amount than actually awarded. Staff is requesting adjustments to amend the Federal Grants Fund to reflect the award amount of \$500,000.

The following table details the requested appropriations by Department/Fund:

<b>Fund</b>	<b>Transfers Out</b>	<b>Transfers In</b>	<b>Federal Grant Project Revenue</b>	<b>Net Impact</b>
Federal Grants Fund	\$ -	\$206,030	(\$206,030)	\$ -
Various Special Tax District Funds (Funds 342- 346, 348, 349, 353, 358, 359, 364, 367, 371, 376, 378, 379, 380, 381, 382, 387, and 388)	\$206,030	\$ -	\$ -	(\$206,030)
<b>OTHER FUND TOTALS</b>	<b>\$ 206,030</b>	<b>\$206,030</b>	<b>(\$206,030)</b>	<b>(\$206,030)</b>

With the approval of the recommended budget changes the project will be funded as follows:

<b>Description</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Project Cost	\$874,030
Funding Sources:	
Federal Grant	\$500,000
General Fund	\$168,000
Special Tax Districts	\$206,030
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>\$874,030</b>

### **ONGOING FISCAL IMPACT**

The grant may cross between three fiscal years as the project period is through November 30, 2027. The full grant amount and project funds are included within tonight’s recommended actions. No additional fiscal impact is anticipated as part of the inventory project. The findings and recommendations from the report will be considered as part of future budget development processes.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Subaward Agreement with GreenLatinos

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