



**TO: HONORABLE MAYOR & CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS**

**FROM: JOEL ROJAS, AICP, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR**

**DATE: JUNE 29, 2010**

**SUBJECT: STATE OF CALIFORNIA COASTAL CONSERVANCY – COASTAL ACCESS TRAILS GRANT**

**REVIEWED: CAROLYN LEHR, CITY MANAGER**

Project Manager: Ara Michael Mihranian, AICP, Principal Planner

**RECOMMENDATION**

Authorize City Staff, via minute order, to file as co-applicant with the Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy, a California Coastal Conservancy grant application for the construction of the City's segment of the California Coastal Access Trail.

**BACKGROUND**

Enacted in 1976, the State Coastal Conservancy Act calls for the California Coastal Conservancy to have a principal role in the implementation of a system of public accessways to and along the state's coastline, including development of the California Coastal Trail. The Coastal Conservancy pursues this mandate in part by awarding grants to public agencies and nonprofit organizations to acquire land, or any interest therein, or to develop, operate, or manage lands for public access purposes to and along the California coastline. The California Coastal Trail, once completed, will extend 1,200 miles from the Oregon to Mexico boundary lines, including a segment through the City of Rancho Palos Verdes.

According to the City's Conceptual Trails Plan and the Council adopted Vision Plan, the City's segment of the California Coastal Access trail extends the entire length of the City's coastline between the boundary lines of the City of Palos Verdes Estates and the City of Los Angeles. Specifically, the City's segment of the Coastal Access Trail traverses the public right-of-way (Palos Verdes Drive West and South), the City-owned Palos Verdes Nature Preserve, and private properties with trail access easements granted to the City (i.e. Terranea Resort and Spa and Trump National Golf Course). A good portion of the City's trail segment is unimproved or unconstructed, while none of the trails are identified with the State designated trail markers.

Identified as a high priority project for the public's benefit, the Council adopted Capital Improvement Program (CIP) appropriates general fund dollars, in the amount of \$425,000.00 each fiscal year, to construct the City's segment of the Coastal Access Trail for fiscal years 2011/2012 and 2012/2013 for a total cost of \$850,000.00.

The Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy (PVPLC) was recently approached by Coastal Conservancy Staff with an opportunity to fund the construction of the City's segment of the Coastal Access Trail through a State Grant. As the primary owners of the property in which the trail will be located, it was agreed that the City and the PVPLC would file the grant as co-applicants. However, the PVPLC, as managers of City-owned Preserve, will oversee the trail work on behalf of the City for the segments of the trail that traverse the Preserve and other segment areas agreed upon by both parties. The City Council is being asked, via minute order, to formally authorize City Staff and the PVPLC to file the grant application to the State by the July 1, 2010 deadline. It should be noted that the criteria for the grant does not require a matching fund.

## **DISCUSSION**

According to the City's Conceptual Trails Plan and Vision Plan, the City's segment of the California Coastal Access Trail extends along the City's coastline between the boundary lines of the City of Palos Verdes Estates and the City of Los Angeles. In order to complete the City's segment of the trail, City and PVPLC Staff have determined, based on its assessment of existing conditions, that the following improvements are needed:

- Installing pedestrian crossings at 4 locations along Palos Verdes Drive South and West as identified in the Council approved Vision Plan.
- Construction of a decomposed granite trail at the following general locations:
  - Between the City of Palos Verdes Estates Boundary Line and Calle Entradero in Ocean Front Estates
  - Between the Coast Guard Property (at the Lower Point Vicente Driveway Entrance) to the western driveway entrance at the Fishing Access parking lot at the Terranea Resort and Spa.
  - Between Seahill Drive and Seacove Drive
  - Between Gateway Park and the western edge of the Trump National Golf Course
- Enhancement of unimproved trails at the Abalone Cove Reserve;
- Replacement of the asphalt bluff top trail at Lower Point Vicente (seaward of the Point Vicente Interpretative Center) with a decomposed granite trail;
- Installation of trail markers along major entry points;
- Construction of an unpaved parking lot to accommodate 15-20 cars within the Gateway Park area limits (east of the existing chain link fence) for users of the Coastal Access Trail and the Portuguese Bend Reserve.

The improvements listed above for the City's segment of the California Coastal Access Trail are located entirely on City-owned property, the public right-of-way, or on trail access easements granted to the City. As such, as a co-applicant with the PVPLC, it has been determined that if awarded, the grant money should be issued to the City of Rancho Palos

Verdes to manage. However, as property managers of the Preserve, the PVPLC should oversee the trail construction and site improvements within the City-owned Preserve, and other areas agreed upon, as a sub-contractor to the City by providing monthly invoices. The City will reimburse the PVPLC with the grant money it receives.

Based on the above, Staff recommends that the Council authorize, via minute order, the submittal of the State grant application as a co-applicant with the PVPLC.

### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

#### **Environmental Assessment**

In accordance to CEQA, Staff has determined that the construction and identification of the Coastal Access Trail will not result in adverse impacts to the environment, specifically biological resources. Therefore, the restoration project is Categorically Exempt pursuant to Class 1, Existing Facilities, and Class 4, Minor Alterations to Land. In the event Staff identifies potential environmental impacts resulting from the implementation of the Coastal Access Trail, the appropriate environmental review will be completed.

### **FISCAL IMPACTS**

According to the Council adopted Capital Improvement Program (CIP), general fund dollars were appropriated to construct the City's segment of the Coastal Access Trail, in the amount of \$425,000.00 for fiscal years 2011/2012 and \$425,000.00 for fiscal years 2012/2013 for a total cost of \$850,000.00. If the State grant is awarded, the City would save a total \$850,000.00 from its General Fund. Moreover, since the grant criteria does not require a matching fund, the City would not have to expend any additional General Funds for this project with the exception of Staff time (Planning and Public Works Personnel) for administering the grant and overseeing the construction of the trail. Staff estimates this cost to be minimal at approximately 4 hours a month over a two year period.

### **ALTERNATIVES**

1. Direct City and PVPLC Staff not to file the State grant application for this year's grant cycle; or,