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OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK
OAKLAND

**REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY
OF THE CITY OF OAKLAND
AGENDA REPORT**

2010 MAY 27 AM 10:20

TO: Office of the Agency Administrator
ATTN: Dan Lindheim
FROM: Community and Economic Development Agency
DATE: June 8, 2010

RE: **Agency Resolution Authorizing A Grant Not To Exceed \$40,000 To The West Oakland Reforestation Project For The Creation Of A West Oakland Street Tree Master Plan**

SUMMARY

This Agency resolution authorizes a grant not to exceed \$40,000 from the West Oakland Redevelopment Operations Fund to the West Oakland Reforestation Project for the preparation of a Street Tree Master Plan for the West Oakland redevelopment project area.

FISCAL IMPACT

Funds for the grant will be allocated from the West Oakland Redevelopment Operations Fund (9590), West Oakland Redevelopment Project (S233510), Oakland Army Base Redevelopment Org. (88679) for projects and programs in the West Oakland redevelopment project area (project to be determined). An additional \$25,000 will be contributed by the Port of Oakland, bringing the total project budget to \$65,000.

The proposed action will have no negative impact on the General Fund.

BACKGROUND

The West Oakland Reforestation Project (WORP) is a grassroots community initiative with the primary goal of increasing the number of trees in West Oakland. WORP is in the process of establishing non-profit 501(c)3 status, and expects final IRS approval shortly.

WORP represents residents and business owners who live and work in West Oakland. Members also include representatives from the West Oakland Project Area Committee (WOPAC), the Port of Oakland, West Oakland Neighbors, Inc., West Oakland Commerce Association (WOCA), Oak Center Neighborhood Association, West Oakland Community Advisory Group (WOCAG), Oakland Point Neighborhood Association, Office of Public Works (OPW) Tree Services Division and the Cal Fire.

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Each of these groups has its own unique mission. However, they share a desire to see a stronger and larger urban forest in West Oakland. The Port of Oakland has provided in-kind support to WORP in the form of professional services, including project management, project purpose and need, project vision statement, urban design, project administration and community relations. In the last 5 years, WORP has planted over 780 trees along streets in West Oakland.

In February 2006, the WOPAC recommended approval of a \$40,000 grant to WORP for the creation of a West Oakland Street Tree Master Plan. The Plan's study area roughly follows, and is completely contained within the boundaries of the West Oakland redevelopment project area.

Creation of the plan depended on data collected through a City-wide sidewalk survey of existing street trees and tree wells, which was still under development at the time of the grant's approval. The WOPAC agreed to set the grant funding aside until the sidewalk survey was complete. Now that important piece of information is available to the public, and WORP is ready to move forward in hiring a landscape architecture firm.

The Port of Oakland will contribute \$25,000 in additional funds for the preparation of the West Oakland Street Tree Master Plan, bringing the total budget for the plan to \$65,000.

KEY ISSUES AND IMPACTS

Street trees and landscaping add to the health and aesthetics of urban neighborhoods. Individuals and community organizations consistently seek the means to soften West Oakland's hard edges through tree-planting projects. (Nearly 40% of funding sought through this year's West Oakland Neighborhood Projects Initiatives (NPI) program is for tree planting and other landscaping projects). Currently, the process is ad hoc, with property owners encouraged to work with the City's Trees Division when choosing and planting street trees, but there is no overall plan that takes into account the horticultural and aesthetic "big picture". A Street Tree Master Plan offers an efficient tool to guide upcoming streetscape designs that are anticipated within the West Oakland redevelopment project area, and can harmonize the efforts of community-based planting projects.

With City budget constraints as they are, funding is not available for the maintenance of new street trees. With that in mind, OPW's Trees Services Division will train WORP volunteers to prune the trees that are planted through their efforts, and will obtain written commitments from abutting property owners to water the trees, remove weeds and keep mulch of wood chips around the trees for the first three years after their planting. Volunteers will monitor on a monthly basis how well new trees are being watered, and will remind property owners and community volunteers to water more frequently if necessary.

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PROJECT DESCRIPTION

As proposed, WORP will hire a landscape architecture firm that will consult closely with OPW's Trees Services Division in the development of the West Oakland Street Tree Master Plan. Only trees on the City's approved-trees list will be included in the plan's recommendations, unless otherwise approved by authorized City staff.

Using existing data and field research, the consultant will create large-format drawings of the project area that show existing and proposed tree locations; a key that identifies existing and proposed tree species; elevations and photographs. The result will be a practical document with the user in mind. According to WORP, the plan will be updated as empty tree wells are planted.

Once the Plan is complete and approved by City staff, the Office of Public Works will present it to the City Council for adoption. The benefit to the Agency is that the Plan will offer a tangible guide to manage sometimes competing efforts by the community to plant trees, and will help to coordinate the larger goal of "reforesting West Oakland".

SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES

Economic: A Street Tree Master Plan for West Oakland will create an efficient reference piece as other landscape and streetscape designs are developed throughout the project area. In addition, encouraging the reforestation of West Oakland adds a welcoming element to the urban landscape that is attractive to businesses considering locating in the area.

Environmental: Street trees offer shade and protection to residents and animals alike. They purify the air and buffer noise from industrial and highway nuisances.

Social Equity: The Street Tree Master Plan will offer a roadmap for the beautification of all neighborhoods in the West Oakland redevelopment project area.

DISABILITY AND SENIOR CITIZEN ACCESS

The West Oakland Street Tree Master Plan will not have an impact on disabled or senior citizens' access.

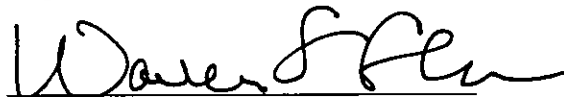
RECOMMENDATION AND RATIONALE

Staff recommends approval of an Agency resolution authorizing a grant not to exceed \$40,000 to the West Oakland Reforestation Project for the completion of a West Oakland Street Tree Master Plan. Such a plan will create an efficient model on which to base future streetscape and landscape designs, and it is supported by the Office of Public Works Trees Services Division. The Agency contribution will leverage an additional \$25,000 contribution by the Port of Oakland for the benefit of the West Oakland community.


ACTION REQUESTED OF THE CITY COUNCIL

Staff requests approval of the Agency resolution authorizing a grant not to exceed \$40,000 to the West Oakland Reforestation Project for the creation of a West Oakland Street Tree Master Plan.

Respectfully submitted,

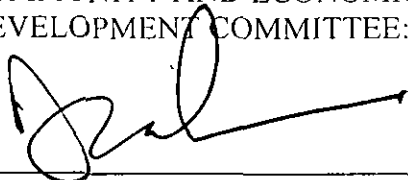


Walter S. Cohen, Director
Community and Economic Development Agency

Reviewed by: 
Gregory Hunter, Deputy Director
Economic Development and Redevelopment

Prepared by:
Janice Lang, Project Manager
Redevelopment Division

APPROVED AND FORWARDED TO THE
COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE:

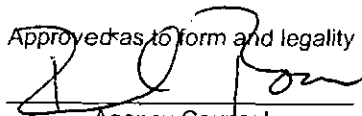


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Approved as to form and legality

Agency Counsel

REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY OF THE CITY OF OAKLAND

Resolution No. _____ C.M.S.

AGENCY RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A GRANT NOT TO EXCEED \$40,000 TO THE WEST OAKLAND REFORESTATION PROJECT FOR THE CREATION OF A WEST OAKLAND STREET TREE MASTER PLAN

WHEREAS, the West Oakland Redevelopment Project Area has many neighborhoods that are lacking trees and other greenery to soften its blighted appearance; and

WHEREAS, the West Oakland Reforestation Project (WORP) is a grassroots organization dedicated to increasing the number of trees in West Oakland; and

WHEREAS, the West Oakland Project Area Committee (WOPAC) has recommended a \$40,000 grant of redevelopment funds to WORP for the creation of a West Oakland Street Tree Master Plan; and

WHEREAS, planning and encouraging the planting of street trees in West Oakland will assist in the elimination of blight, add environmental benefits to the community, and create a more attractive place to live and do business; and

WHEREAS, such a plan is consistent with, and will further the purposes of the West Oakland Redevelopment Plan and its Five Year Implementation Plan, and

WHEREAS, the Office of Public Works' Street Trees Division is supportive of such a plan; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED: That the Agency hereby authorizes a grant not to exceed \$40,000 to the West Oakland Reforestation Project for the creation of a West Oakland Street Tree Master Plan; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED: That the Agency hereby allocates \$40,000 from the West Oakland Redevelopment Operations Fund (#9590), West Oakland Redevelopment Project (#S233510), Oakland Army Base Redevelopment Org. (#88679) for projects and programs in the West Oakland redevelopment project area (project to be determined) for the purpose of funding such a grant; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED: That the Agency authorizes the Agency Administrator or his designee to make the grant, negotiate and execute grant agreements, and take other actions with respect to the grant and project consistent with this Resolution and its basic purposes.

IN AGENCY, OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA, _____

PASSED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES - DE LA FUENTE, KAPLAN, KERNIGHAN, NADEL, QUAN, BROOKS, REID, AND
CHAIRPERSON BRUNNER

NOES -

ABSENT -

ABSTENTION -

ATTEST:

LATONDA SIMMONS
Secretary of the Redevelopment Agency
of the City of Oakland, California