



City of Stockton

Legislation Text

File #: 21-0626, **Version:** 1

AUTHORIZE SUBMITTAL OF GRANT APPLICATION FOR OUTDOOR EQUITY GRANT PROGRAM FOR WILLIAMS BROTHERHOOD PARK OUTDOOR RECREATIONAL PROGRAMMING

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the City Council approve a resolution to:

1. Authorize the City Manager to submit a grant application in the amount of up to \$700,000 to the California Department of Parks and Recreation Office of Grants and Local Services for the Outdoor Equity Grants Program at Williams Brotherhood Park.
2. If awarded, authorize the City Manager to accept the grant award, conduct all negotiations, sign and submit all documents including applications, agreements, amendments, and payment requests, and make all necessary appropriations in compliance with and for the purposes stated in the grant application.

It is also recommended that the City Manager be authorized to take appropriate and necessary actions to carry out the purpose and intent of this resolution.

Summary

The approval of Assembly Bill 209 in 2019 made funding available to the Outdoor Equity Grants Program (“OEP”). The OEP is a competitive grant program and requires a resolution to be adopted before submitting a grant application. The deadline for grant applications is October 8, 2021. The grants are intended to increase the ability of residents in low-income urban and rural communities to participate in outdoor experiences at state parks and other public lands. Significant community engagement is required to allow for the exchange of creative ideas and insight between the applicant, partners, and residents to define the vision and logistics for an Outdoor Program.

As a grant requirement, the applicant must designate a Community Home Base (“CHB”), or a central gathering place in an underserved community that needs access to outdoor programs. Staff evaluated several neighborhoods within the City as potential areas of focus and, after considering State criteria, availability of staff resources, and project readiness, identified the Williams Brotherhood Park community as the CHB in which the grant could have significant impact.

Staff recommends the submittal of a grant application in the amount of up to \$700,000 for the Outdoor Equity Grants Program. This grant does not have a local match requirement. Staff recommends the adoption of the proposed resolution.

DISCUSSION

Background

The concept for OEP began with findings in the 2015 Parks Forward Commission Report stating that the California Department of Parks and Recreation must expand access to parks for underserved communities and urban populations. The 2015 Parks Forward discussions became a catalyst for AB 209. Californians shared a similar vision in 2017 during thirty focus groups with over 500 participants for the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (“SCORP”). Throughout the state, from heavily urbanized to rural areas, Californians emphasized a desire for multi-generational programs that “bring families together,” that activate local parks, and that take residents with transportation challenges to natural areas outside their communities.

In 2019, the Outdoor Equity Grants Program was enacted when Governor Gavin Newsom signed Assembly Bill 209. On July 1, 2020, the California Legislature authorized funding for OEP.

After considering multiple Community Home Base eligible sites, staff identified the Williams Brotherhood Park as the most viable candidate for the OEP because of its disproportionately poor environmental, population, and health outcomes, its proximity to community assets including schools and on-site community-based organizations, and residents that have expressed a desire to collectively steward the park as a neighborhood resource. If awarded the OEP grant, activities will align with priorities identified in recent stakeholder engagement conducted by the Civic Spark fellow through Reinvent South Stockton Coalition. Other sites considered, such as the Kennedy School area in north Stockton, do not have the same level of current stakeholder engagement or number of active community organizations nearby to support the grant activities.

The City is being assisted in the grant application process by Public Health Advocates (PHA), who provided similar assistance for the Prop 68 grant application for Van Buskirk Park (application still under review). PHA’s prior experience and willingness to assist staff with the application process will allow the City to complete a quality application for submission by the October 8, 2021 deadline. Because of the assistance provided by PHA and the strong Community Home Base designation, staff considers this to be a competitive application.

Present Situation

The OEP is offering to award \$57,000,000 for grant applications received during the period. The maximum award per application is \$700,000 while the minimum application award is \$20,000. Staff will identify the grant request amount once the community engagement process is completed and the proposed outdoor equity program has been determined.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

OEP grant applicants may request no less than \$20,000 and no more than \$700,000. Agencies may only submit one grant application per Community Home Base designation. There is no matching funds requirement and there is no impact to the City’s General Fund or any other unrestricted fund as a result of the recommended action.