

LOWER BIJOU PARK CREEK WATERSHED IMPROVEMENT PLANNING GRANT

Recommended Action: Adopt Resolution 16-09-05 (Attachment 1) authorizing up to \$397,900 for a planning grant to the City of South Lake Tahoe for the Lower Bijou Park Creek Watershed Improvement Project (Project).

Location: The Project is located in the City of South Lake Tahoe, generally bounded by U.S. Highway 50 to the north, Ski Run Boulevard to the east, Ham Lane to the west, and Alder Avenue to the south, as shown on the attached map (Attachment 2).

Fiscal Summary: Staff recommends up to \$397,900 in Proposition 50 funding for the award at this time.

Overview

Description of Recommended Action

Staff recommends the Board authorize up to \$397,900 for a planning grant to the City of South Lake Tahoe (City) for the Project. The City will use the recommended funding for Project design and permitting, surveys and studies, pre-acquisition activities, and environmental documentation.

The Project area extends through a commercial and residential area of the City and includes a combination of private property, City road right-of-way, and Conservancy parcels. Currently, runoff from the area and a historical creek are comingled and discharge directly to Lake Tahoe through underground drainage infrastructure.

The Project area presents opportunities to restore and enhance stream environment zone (SEZ) while improving water quality within a highly impacted and developed area. The City will explore restoration of SEZ through removal of asphalt and development and by daylighting Bijou Park Creek (Creek). The City will also consider water quality basins and other improvements to treat storm water runoff, improve lake clarity, and assist with aquatic invasive species control efforts. Other potential Project

benefits include flood alleviation, wildlife habitat enhancement, and public education. The City anticipates investigating key acquisitions to achieve Project benefits.

The recommended planning grant will allow the City to develop and refine the Project design concurrently with upstream restoration planning efforts. The City anticipates completing planning grant activities by mid-2018. The City may use the results of this planning process to apply for future rounds of competitive Proposition 1 and/or other funding.

Conservancy staff will enter into a project planning grant agreement with the City. The grant agreement requires a Conservancy-approved work plan including a more detailed budget and descriptions of specific needs, products, and delivery dates.

History

The Bijou Park Creek Watershed extends from Heavenly Mountain Resort to Lake Tahoe at the Ski Run Marina. As this area was settled, most of the lower watershed, including meadows and marshes, was paved and developed. Much of the SEZ in the lower watershed was lost to development, and opportunities to restore SEZ and improve water quality are currently limited.

The Project area includes a hotel (Knights Inn - formerly Super 8), commercial developments, and residential areas, some of which are constructed on filled SEZ that once included meadow and riparian habitat. In the late 1980's, the Conservancy purchased several parcels to the south of the hotel as part of the Environmentally Sensitive Lands Program. The City may consider improvements on these Conservancy parcels.

In the early 2000s, the City evaluated impacts and opportunities in three watersheds, including the Bijou Park Creek Watershed. The East Pioneer Hydrology Study produced from this earlier effort identified the Project area as a high priority for restoration and water quality improvements. In addition, Pollutant Load Reduction Model results indicate that this is a high pollutant load catchment (115-209 pounds of fine sediment particles per acre per year). The City will build upon these past analyses to develop the Project.

In June of 2016, the State Water Resources Control Board recommended a \$498,935 Proposition 1 planning grant to the City to consider and design improvements just upstream from the Project. Planning the two projects concurrently, using a watershed

approach, will result in planning efficiencies and complementary improvements and benefits.

Financing

Staff is recommending award of up to \$397,900 for a planning grant of Proposition 50 funds to support this important Project development process. The City has already provided over \$78,000 in planning funds for initial surveys and environmental studies for the Project.

Proposed Grant Budget

Pre-Acquisition	\$35,000
Studies and Surveys	\$28,000
Planning and Design	\$224,200
Environmental Documentation and Application	\$77,700
Project Administration and Management	\$33,000
Total	\$397,900

Authority

Consistency with the Conservancy's Enabling Legislation

Implementation of this Project is consistent with the Conservancy's enabling legislation. Specifically, Government Code section 66907.7 authorizes the Conservancy to award grants to local public agencies for purposes consistent with its mission.

Consistency with the Conservancy's Strategic Plan

The recommended action is consistent with Strategic Plan because it facilitates investment in high priority conservation Environmental Improvement Program (EIP) projects and programs (Strategy II), specifically one with potential SEZ restoration and stormwater treatment benefits.

Consistency with the Conservancy's Program Guidelines

The recommended action is consistent with the Conservancy's Planning Grant Guidelines and the SEZ and Watershed Restoration Program. The recommended grant would support planning, design, and environmental review that will lead to implementation of an EIP project. The recommended grant is consistent with the SEZ

and Watershed Restoration Program because it will facilitate improvements to SEZs, water quality, and wildlife habitat.

Consistency with External Authorities

The recommended action is consistent with the EIP because it completes the planning for EIP Project #01.01.01.0086. The proposed Project may result in the enhancement and restoration of wildlife habitat in the form of SEZ, and improved water quality by reducing and treating stormwater. The Project may include accomplishments in the following EIP priority areas: treat stormwater to improve Lake clarity and restore key Lake Tahoe watersheds.

Compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

Pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15000 et seq.), certain classes of activities are statutorily exempt from CEQA or are exempt because they have been determined by the Secretary for Natural Resources to have no significant effect on the environment. Staff has evaluated this planning Project, and has found it to be exempt under CEQA. This Project qualifies for a statutory exemption under State CEQA Guidelines section 15262 (feasibility and planning studies). A Notice of Exemption (NOE) has been prepared for the Project (Attachment 3). If the Board approves the planning grant, staff will file the NOE with the State Clearinghouse pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines, section 15062.

List of Attachments:

Attachment 1 – Resolution 16-09-05
Attachment 2 – Project Location Map
Attachment 3 – Notice of Exemption

Conservancy Staff Contact:

Penny Stewart

penny.stewart@tahoe.ca.gov

ATTACHMENT 1

California Tahoe Conservancy
Resolution
16-09-05
Adopted: September 15, 2016

LOWER BIJOU PARK CREEK WATERSHED PLANNING GRANT

Staff recommends that the California Tahoe Conservancy adopt the following resolution pursuant to Government Code section 66907.7:

"The California Tahoe Conservancy hereby authorizes the award of a planning grant in the amount up to \$397,900 to the City of South Lake Tahoe for the Lower Bijou Park Creek Watershed Improvement Project and authorizes staff to take all other necessary steps consistent with the accompanying staff recommendation."

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the resolution duly and regularly adopted by the California Tahoe Conservancy at a meeting thereof held on the 15th day of September, 2016.

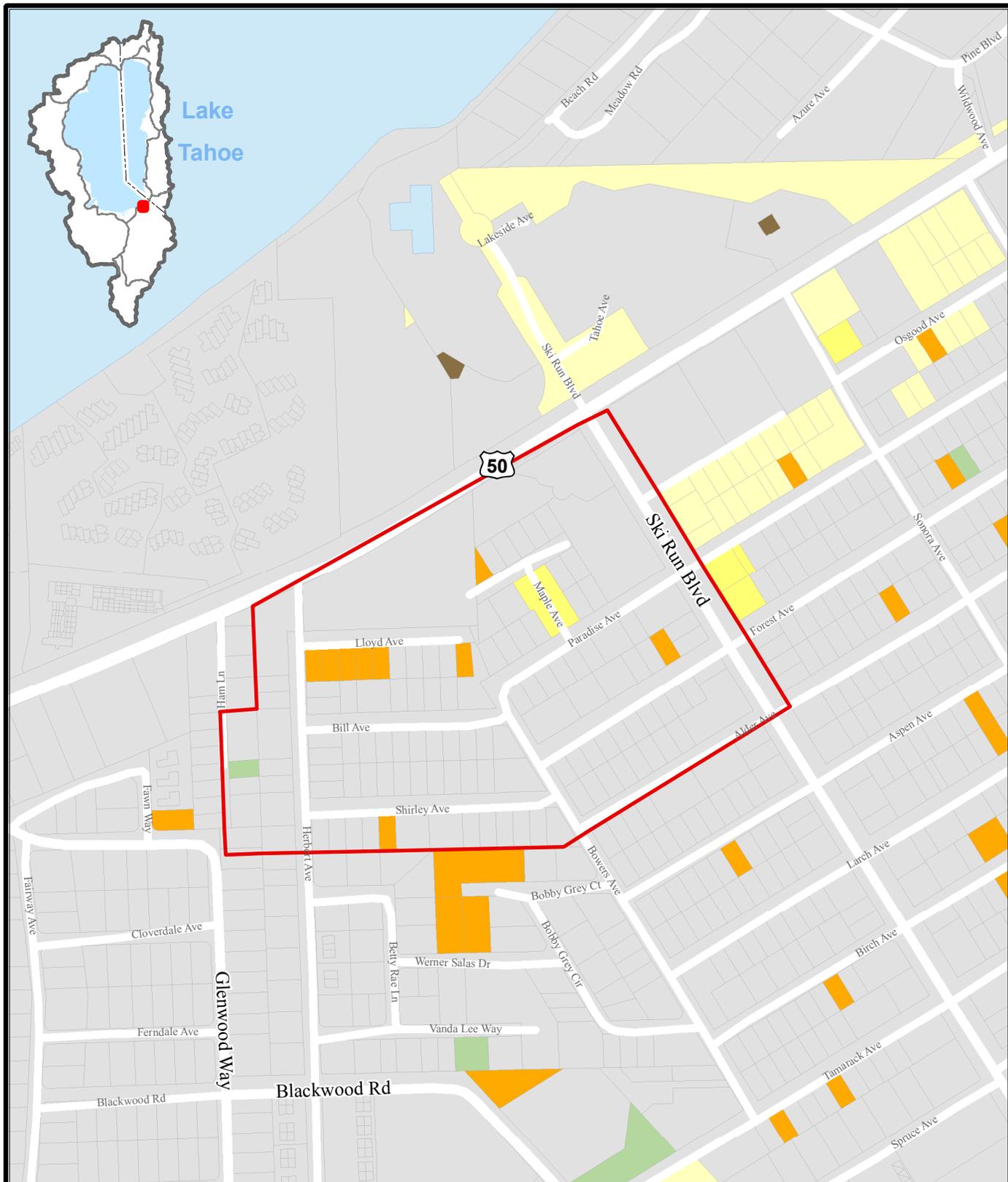
In WITNESS THEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 15th day of September, 2016.

Patrick Wright
Executive Director

ATTACHMENT 2

Project Site

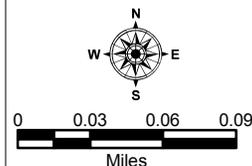
Lower Bijou Park Creek Watershed Improvement



Proposed Items
 Project Location

Ownership

- City of South Lake Tahoe
- CA Tahoe Conservancy
- Private
- South Tahoe Public Utility District
- South Tahoe Redevelopment Agency
- US Forest Service



Sources:
TRPA, CTC

California Tahoe Conservancy



September 2016

*Map for reference purposes only.

ATTACHMENT 3

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

To: Office of Planning and Research
1400 10th Street, Room 121
Sacramento, CA 95814

From: California Tahoe Conservancy
1061 Third Street
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150

Project Title:

Lower Bijou Park Creek Watershed Improvement Project Planning Grant Authorization

Project Location – Specific:

This project is located within the Bijou Park Creek watershed, in the City of South Lake Tahoe, generally bounded by U.S. Highway 50 to the north, Ski Run Boulevard to the east, Ham Lane to the west, and Alder Avenue to the south, as shown on the attached map (Exhibit 1).

Project Location – City:

South Lake Tahoe, CA

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

Authorization of a grant for project planning, pre-acquisition activities, and environmental analysis for a watershed project to restore stream environment zones, improve water quality, and improve wildlife habitat.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project:

California Tahoe Conservancy (Conservancy Board meeting of September 15, 2016, Agenda Item 7.d)

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project:

City of South Lake Tahoe

Exempt Status:

- Ministerial (Sec. 15073)
- Declared Emergency (Sec. 15071 (a))
- Emergency Project (Sec. 15071 (b) and (c))
- Statutory Exemption, section 15262 (planning and feasibility studies)

Reasons Why Project is Exempt:

Action involves planning and feasibility studies for a watershed restoration project.

Contact Person

Penny Stewart

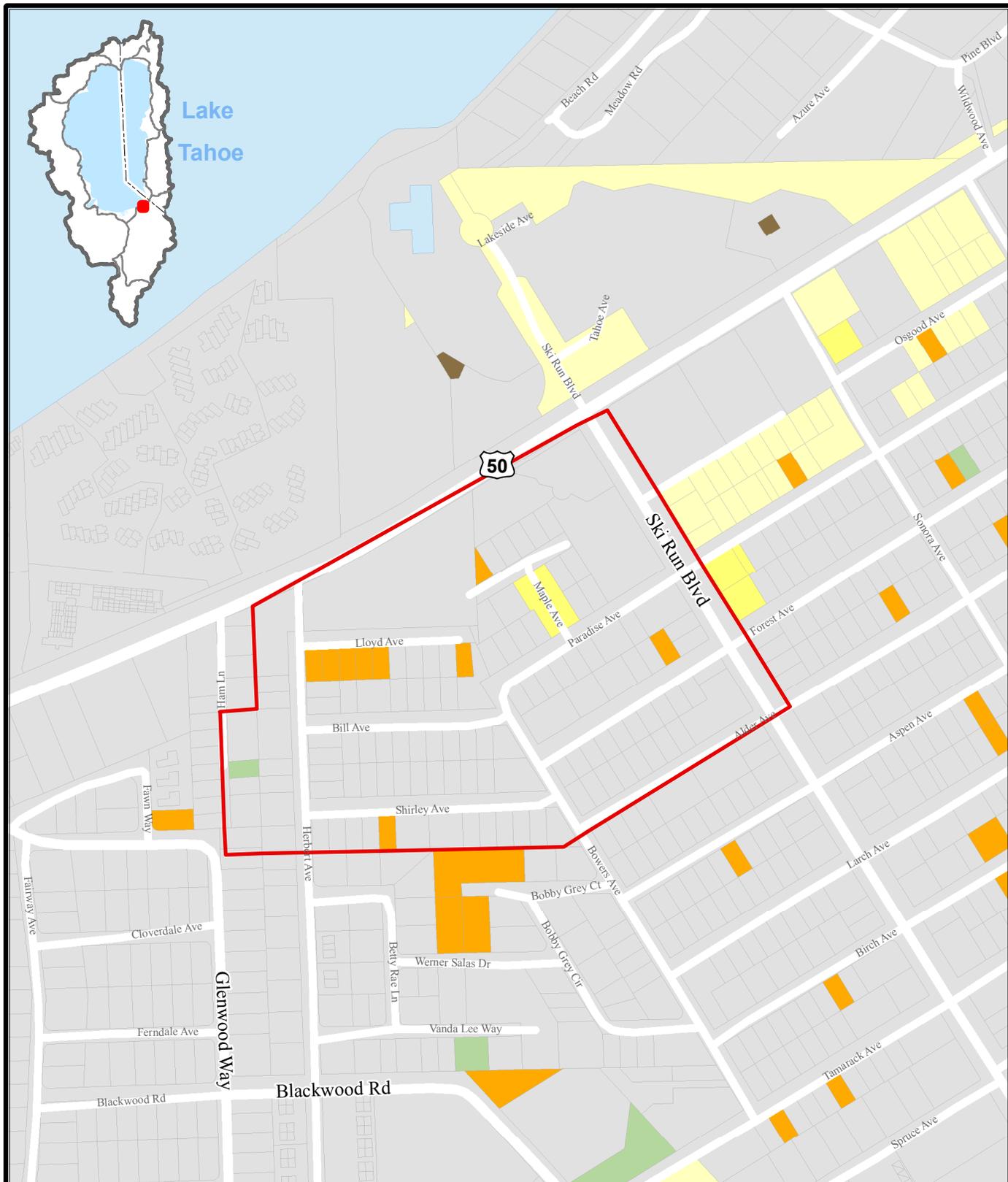
Area Code Telephone

(530) 543-6013

Date Received for Filing:

Patrick Wright
Executive Director

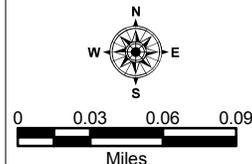
EXHIBIT 1 Project Site Lower Bijou Park Creek Watershed Improvement



Proposed Items
 Project Location

Ownership

- City of South Lake Tahoe
- CA Tahoe Conservancy
- Private
- South Tahoe Public Utility District
- South Tahoe Redevelopment Agency
- US Forest Service



Sources:
TRPA, CTC

**California
Tahoe Conservancy**



September 2016

*Map for reference purposes only.