

56-ACRE MASTER PLAN GRANT

Recommended Action: Adopt Resolution 20-06-07 (Attachment 1) authorizing a grant to the City of South Lake Tahoe (City) for up to \$425,000 to develop the 56-Acre Master Plan (Master Plan).

Executive Summary: The City seeks a grant from the California Tahoe Conservancy (Conservancy) to develop a Master Plan for the 56-Acre site. The 56-Acre site is in the center of the City and serves as a focal point for recreation and civic activities. It includes Lakeview Commons at El Dorado Beach, Campground by the Lake, a recreation center and ice arena, as well as a library and senior facilities. The Master Plan will provide a comprehensive strategy to guide the City's proposed improvements at the 56-Acre site. The Master Plan will align with regional transportation and nearby public access sites, and may include a new government center, a new recreation center, an outdoor music amphitheater, and Lakeview Commons Phase 2, along with other new or renovated facilities. The City will lead a public process to develop the Master Plan, while focusing on environmental sustainability, cultural preservation, recreational and civic needs, and world-class facilities and public open space. The Master Plan will build on the conceptual planning work that the Conservancy funded in 2006, and will include the necessary environmental analysis so that the City can quickly implement site improvements. Funding the City's development of the Master Plan supports the Conservancy's Strategic Plan Goals 2 and 3 (restore forest and watershed resilience and provide public access for all) and will advance the Bijou/Al Tahoe Community Plan and the City's General Plan. The City plans to complete the Master Plan, including all outreach, conceptual designs, and environmental review, by the end of 2021.

Location: The 56-Acre site is in the center of the City (Attachment 2). It is bounded by the shores of Lake Tahoe to the north, U.S. Highway 50 to the west, and Rufus Allen Boulevard to the east.

Fiscal Summary: Staff request authorization to award up to \$425,000 in Proposition 68 funding to support the Master Plan.

Overview

History

The 56-Acre site is the physical and social center of the City. The site is located where U.S. Highway 50 meets the shores of Lake Tahoe, and contains some of the largest remaining public open space within the City limits. The 56-Acre site currently includes a recreation center, swim complex, ice arena, library, senior center, campground, museum, highway frontage, and the scenic Lakeview Commons park and boat ramp at El Dorado Beach. The City and El Dorado County jointly own the site and have an agreement under which the City is responsible for managing most of the facilities and services. The City and El Dorado County constructed many of these facilities in the 1970s and 1980s, and in 2001, the City built an indoor ice arena. For quite some time, the City has been interested in developing and improving more facilities to fulfill the full potential of the 56-Acre site.

In 2006, the Conservancy funded a 56-Acre concept planning process. The first project resulting from this effort was the lakefront project known as Lakeview Commons at El Dorado Beach. The Conservancy awarded the City a \$6 million grant to complete Phase 1 in 2013, which provides a state-of-the-art lakeside gathering place for music, festivals, outdoor events, and water recreation activities.

The City now wishes to complete a Master Plan and pursue additional improvements at the 56-Acre site. These could include a new recreation and swim complex, Lakeview Commons Phase 2 (extending the lakefront park farther to the east), and several other new features, relocations, and enhancements. In April 2019, the City Council directed staff to work with El Dorado County to develop the Master Plan. The City Council and the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors is discussing a new agreement for the development, operation, and maintenance of recreation and government facilities at the 56-Acre site.

Detailed Description of Recommended Action

1. Major Elements and/or Steps of the Recommended Action

Conservancy staff recommends that the Board authorize a grant for up to \$425,000 to develop the Master Plan, which includes conceptual designs, environmental review, and public outreach. The City will contract for the architectural and planning services to create the Master Plan. The City will work with partners and the public to evaluate property history, existing conditions, potential site improvements, opportunities and constraints for the site, and revenue and partnering options.

The City will develop a robust, community-centered public process to inform the Master Plan. The City will solicit input from local stakeholder groups, the public, and public agency partners such as El Dorado County, the Conservancy, and the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency. The City will use materials from the earlier conceptual planning process as a foundation for the Master Plan.

As part of the Master Plan, the City will analyze environmental impacts to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Completing the Master Plan and environmental review will allow the City to execute a new 50-year lease agreement with El Dorado County. The agreement will allow the City to lease the portion of the site owned by El Dorado County, and thereby to develop, operate, and maintain recreation and government facilities on the entire 56-Acre site. The Master Plan and corresponding environmental analysis will also position the City to quickly implement improvements and seek additional funding opportunities.

2. Overall Context and Benefits

The City envisions a locally and nationally renowned civic space for the enjoyment of residents and visitors alike, including facilities, programs, and services. It will focus on world-class recreational amenities, disadvantaged community access to the Lake and open space, and aesthetic improvements. Structural improvements may include a new recreation center, music venue or amphitheater, government center, expanded library, relocated and upgraded campground, Lakeview Commons Phase 2, and trails. Environmental improvements may include detention basins to protect water quality, tree thinning to enhance forest health and protect habitat, and traffic mitigation to reduce air and water quality impacts.

The City is currently designing a new recreation center using other funding to contract for necessary architecture and engineering services. The Master Planning process will identify the best location for the new recreation center within the 56-Acre site, while also considering other site improvements for the recreation center.

The City will also consider the regional context in the Master Plan process. The 56-Acre site is located within the Bijou/Al Tahoe Community Plan, which specifies that this area should provide family-oriented recreation and serve as a town center. Similarly, the City will coordinate the Master Planning process with other projects in the vicinity, including the El Dorado to Ski Run Bike Trail and Harrison Avenue Streetscape improvements, and the Conservancy-owned Alta Mira and Conolley Beach projects.

Developing the Master Plan promotes the Conservancy's Strategic Plan by advancing multiple-benefit projects and services that creatively combine water quality protection, forest health, recreation, people's health and well-being, and equitable community access. It also advances the Bijou/Al Tahoe Community Plan and the City General Plan by developing a new social and government center.

3. Schedule for the Recommended Action

Conservancy staff intends to execute the grant agreement to allow the City to start planning work in summer 2020. The City aims to complete the Master Plan and environmental analysis by the end of 2021.

Activity	Completion Date
Grant Agreement	Summer 2020
Public Engagement	Summer 2020 – Spring 2021
Master Plan Development	Summer 2020 – End of 2021
Master Plan Approval	End of 2021

Financing

The proposed funding source for the grant is Proposition 68. Staff recommends the grant budget shown below. Staff may adjust the budget between line items, but total grant expenditures will not exceed \$425,000. The City is providing funds to complete the Master Plan.

Grant Component	Amount
Conceptual Design	\$ 225,000
Environmental Analysis	\$ 175,000
Public Outreach	\$ 25,000
Total	\$ 425,000

Authority

Consistency with the Conservancy's Enabling Legislation

The recommended action 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 supports Goal 2, Strategy B (to advance multiple-benefit projects that creatively combine water quality protection and recreation) and Goal 3, Strategy B (to foster multiple-benefit projects that link people's health and well-being with equitable community access).

Consistency with the Conservancy's Program Guidelines

The recommended action is consistent with the Conservancy's Grant Program Guidelines.

Consistency with External Authorities

The recommended action is consistent with the Lake Tahoe Environmental Improvement Program (EIP) because it advances implementing EIP Project

#04.01.03.0174. The recommended action also supports the City General Plan and the Bijou/Al Tahoe Community Plan as well as important state mandates, such as Safeguarding California (the State's climate adaptation strategy). The recommended grant is also consistent with the Outdoor Access for All provisions of Proposition 68.

Compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act

Pursuant to the 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 of the California Natural Resources Agency to have no significant effect on the environment. One such statutory exemption is applicable to feasibility and planning studies pursuant to CEQA Guidelines, section 15262. Staff has evaluated the City's proposed planning activities under the Master Plan and found them to qualify for this exemption because the Master Plan is a planning document that will include conceptual designs and environmental analysis. Staff has prepared a notice of exemption (NOE) for the Project (Attachment 3). If the Board approves the grant, staff will file the NOE with the State Clearinghouse pursuant to CEQA Guidelines, section 15062.

List of Attachments

- Attachment 1 – [Resolution 20-06-07](#)
- Attachment 2 – [56-Acre Site Map](#)
- Attachment 3 – [Notice of Exemption](#)

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