



Office of the City Manager

CONSENT CALENDAR
December 2, 2025

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
From: Paul Buddenhagen, City Manager
Submitted by: Scott Ferris, Director, Parks Recreation and Waterfront
Subject: Grant Application: Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation (EEM) Tree Planting Proposal

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a Resolution authorizing the City Manager to submit an Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation (EEM) grant application to plant urban forest trees in the amount up to \$750,000; to accept the grant; to execute any resultant revenue agreements and amendments; and authorizing the implementation of the project and appropriation of funding for related expenses, subject to securing the grant.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

The maximum grant award is \$750,000 and the proposed project period is two years. The grant will cover costs to plant trees such as project planning and coordination up to 25% of the award, site preparation to create planting locations, materials, project-length labor, equipment rental, and contractor costs. The proposed cost match is \$333,000 over two years and is made up of volunteer time as well as existing Forestry staff to administer the project and water trees that have been planted with grant funds. While local match is not required, the use of in-kind match will make the grant application more competitive. The grant funding cycle runs through March 1, 2030. Revenue from this grant will be deposited into the One-Time Grants Fund (Fund 336).

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

This program, as provided for by California Streets and Highways Code Section 164.56 (Article XIX, Section 1, of the State Constitution), authorizes the legislature to allocate up to \$7 million each fiscal year from the Highway Users Tax Account (Motor Vehicle Revenues, Section 2100). EEM projects must contribute to the mitigation of the environmental effects of transportation facilities. The California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA) prescribes procedures and criteria to evaluate grant project proposals and submits a list of projects recommended for funding to the California Transportation Commission (CTC).

In April of 2025, the CNRA announced the current round of EEM grant funding. This application window for project proposals closed in July of 2025. After reviewing the

entire applicant pool from throughout the state during the summer of 2025, the CNRA selected the project proposals that met their selection requirements to make a field visit of their project. After the field visit, the State would invite the most competitive projects to submit additional documents to complete the grant application. The City provided a field visit on October 20th and was invited to submit a final application in November 2025. Final awards are expected early in 2026, with an estimated project start time in June of 2026.

BACKGROUND

The EEM grant program involves tree planting and other activities that mitigate the negative environmental effects of a local Related Transportation Facility (RTF). The I-80 Widening Project of 1994 has been designated as the RTF for this area and still requires mitigation of increased traffic. This project proposes to plant 1,000 new site-specific trees throughout streets and parks in West Berkeley primarily at the following locations: 1) West side of Aquatic Park; 2) San Pablo Park; 3) Berkeley Waterfront; 4) Cedar Rose Park; and 5) Berkeley neighborhoods west of Shattuck Ave.

The Parks, Recreation & Waterfront Department has received EEM grants to plant trees throughout Berkeley for over two decades. This project would allow the City to continue its current tree planting efforts.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE IMPACTS

One of the City's Climate Action Plan goals is to maintain the urban forest's present canopy coverage and to provide significant environmental benefits in the form of carbon dioxide absorption and oxygen production, as well as storm water retention and climate control. This project will use the natural systems of trees to achieve these goals. Trees also cool down temperatures, beautify neighborhoods, add habitat, and provide health benefits to residents and visitors.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

This grant will allow the City to expand the urban forest into historically underserved neighborhoods of West Berkeley.

ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS CONSIDERED

None

CONTACT PERSONS

Scott Ferris, Director, Parks Recreation & Waterfront, 981-6700
Thomas Dodge, Senior Forestry Supervisor, 981-6687

Attachments:
1: Resolution

RESOLUTION NO: XXXXXXXX

APPROVING THE APPLICATION FOR GRANT FUNDS FOR THE ENVIRONMENTAL ENHANCEMENT AND MITIGATION (EEM) PROGRAM IN THE AMOUNT OF UP TO \$750,000

WHEREAS, the Legislature and Governor of the State of California have enacted Section 164.56 of the California Streets and Highways Code, which is intended to provide grant funds to local, state, and federal agencies and nonprofit entities for projects to enhance and mitigate the environmental impacts of modified or new public transportation facilities; and

WHEREAS, the California Natural Resources Agency has been delegated the responsibility for the administration of this grant program, establishing necessary procedures and criteria, and is required to submit to the California Transportation Commission a list of recommended projects from which the grant recipients will be selected; and

WHEREAS, said procedures established by the California Natural Resources Agency require a resolution certifying the approval of application(s) by the Applicant's governing board before submission of said application(s) to the State; and WHEREAS, the Applicant, if selected, will enter into an agreement with the State of California to carry out the project.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Berkeley that the City of Berkeley:

1. Approves the filing of an application for the Berkeley Urban Tree Planting Project; and
2. Certifies that Applicant understands the assurances and certification in the application; and
3. Certifies that Applicant or title holder will have sufficient funds to operate and maintain the project(s) consistent with the land tenure requirements; or will secure the resources to do so; and
4. Certifies that it will comply with all provisions of Section 1771.5 of the California Labor Code; and
5. If applicable, certifies that the project will comply with any laws and regulations including, but not limited to, the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), legal requirements for building codes, health and safety codes, and disabled access laws, and that prior to commencement of construction all applicable permits will have been obtained; and
6. Certifies that Applicant will work towards the State Planning Priorities intended to promote equity, strengthen the economy, protect the environment, and promote public health and safety as included in Government Code Section 65041.1; and
7. Appoints the City Manager, or designee, as agent to conduct all negotiations, execute and submit all documents including, but not limited to, applications, agreements, payment requests and so on, which may be necessary for the completion of the aforementioned project(s).

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City of Berkeley authorizes the implementation of the project and appropriation of funding for related expenses, subject to securing the grant.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a record signature copy of said agreements and any amendments to be on file in the City of Berkeley's Office of the City Clerk.

