



Visalia City Council

Visalia City Council
707 W. Acequia
Visalia, CA 93291

Staff Report

File #: 23-0205

Agenda Date: 6/19/2023

Agenda #: 6.

Agenda Item Wording:

Accept and authorize the appropriation of \$2,000,000 from the Sustainable Groundwater Management Grant Program for the Cameron Creek Linear Recharge Project and appropriate \$60,000 for staff indirect costs from the Ground Water Recharge Fund (224).

Deadline for Action: None

Submitting Department: Administration - CIP Engineering

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Department Recommendation:

Staff recommends that the City Council accept and authorize the appropriation of \$2,000,000 from the Sustainable Groundwater Management Grant Program for the Cameron Creek Linear Recharge (Check Structures) Project and appropriate \$60,000 for staff indirect costs from the Ground Water Recharge Fund (224).

Background Discussion:

On February 7, 2022, the City Council adopted Resolution 2022-06 authorizing the Greater Kaweah Groundwater Sustainability Agency to submit an application for a grant on behalf of the City of Visalia for the Cameron Creek Check Structure project. The Department of Water Resources (DWR) administers the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) grant program, with funds authorized under the California Budget Act of 2021 and Proposition 68, for projects that address groundwater investments and drought to achieve regional sustainability, for investments in groundwater recharge projects and other conjunctive use projects.

The eligible applicants for the SGMA grant program were Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs), member agencies of GSAs, and entities that represent GSAs.

In the Kaweah subbasin, there are three GSAs: the Greater Kaweah GSA, the Mid-Kaweah GSA, and the East Kaweah GSA. City of Visalia is a member agency of the Mid-Kaweah GSA along with the Tulare Irrigation District (TID) and the City of Tulare. The SGMA Grant Program did not allow individual GSA members to submit grant applications. Therefore, the Greater Kaweah GSA was designated as the lead agency to submit applications on behalf of other GSAs and GSA member agencies, including City of Visalia.

Under authorization from Council Resolution 2022-06, the City of Visalia, through Greater Kaweah

GSA, submitted grant applications for three projects: Cameron Creek Check Structures Project, Northern Cameron Basin Project, and Southern Cameron Basin Project. Out of the three submitted, Cameron Creek Check Structures project was awarded a grant by DWR in the amount of \$2,000,000, while the other two projects were not selected for the grant

Project Description and Scope:

The project goal is to increase groundwater recharge through linear water pools that will infiltrate over time to recharge the groundwater. The goal will be achieved through the construction of check structure facilities within Cameron Creek. The check structures will be equipped with automatic gates capable of passing high flows while maintaining high water levels in the channel making Cameron creek a linear recharge basin. The project location falls just outside the eastern boundary of City of Visalia. The section of the Cameron Creek to be utilized starts near the intersection of Road 148 (Tower Road) and Walnut Avenue, with the end location near Lovers Lane and Caldwell Avenue intersection

Project Roles:

Due to the state mandated regional approach to groundwater recharge, this project involves multiple agencies and requires substantial inter-agency coordination with partner agencies from the Greater Kaweah GSA, the Mid-Kaweah GSA, and the State DWR. The project roles among agencies were assigned and negotiated after the finalization of the grant agreement, which itself faced delays due to re-organization of agency roles at the GSA level. For the Mid-Kaweah GSA, that City of Visalia is part of, TID initially lead the project discussions with Greater Kaweah GSA and the State. Through subsequent project coordination among the City, TID and KDWCD, the City of Visalia was asked for assistance to lead the project.

City CIP Engineering staff will oversee the entire project and serve in a project management role ensuring all tasks are completed to acceptable standards, conduct administration, design engineering, permitting, environmental review, and construction. The City will coordinate this project with partner GSA agencies (TID and KDWCD). The City will also work in conjunction with Greater Kaweah GSA (grantee) for grant administration functions.

TID will assume the responsibility for post-construction operation and maintenance of the check structures. The City's Water Resource Division will lead the discussion with TID to form an agreement for the post-construction operation and maintenance.

Fiscal Impact:

The grant agreement between the Department of Water Resources and the Greater Kaweah Groundwater Authority has been executed. The amount awarded specifically for the Cameron Recharge Linear Project is \$2,000,000. Staff recommends the appropriation of \$2,000,000 in grant funds to allow staff to begin project eligible activities.

This grant program will not reimburse for indirect costs that include but are not limited to staff indirect expenses, central services costs, costs of operating and maintaining facilities, and general overhead or markup. Therefore, staff recommends the appropriation of \$60,000 from the Ground Water Recharge Fund (224) to cover indirect costs associated with the project that are not eligible for grant reimbursement. Fund 224 was established to improve groundwater levels and increase the supply of water to the City. Typically, this fund should be spent within the City limits, however through linear

recharge, this project will accomplish that goal of the fund by increasing the water supply to the City east of the city limits. Therefore, Fund 224 is an appropriate fund to utilize for covering indirect costs.

The City's cost share for the post-construction operation and maintenance will be negotiated as part of the agreement with TID. City's Water Resources Division will lead that future negotiation with TID and it will be in place prior to the completion of construction.

The allocated breakdown of the project budget is as follows:

Budget Category	Amount
Environmental/ Engineering/ Design	\$205,000
Implementation/ Construction	\$1,795,000
Total Grant Budget:	\$2,000,000
Indirect Costs (Fund 224)	\$60,000
Total Project Budget:	\$2,060,000

Staff will return to the City Council at a future date to request authorization to execute an agreement with an engineering firm to provide environmental, engineering, and design services along with a project update.

Prior Council Action:

February 7, 2022

The City Council adopted Resolution 2022-06 authorizing the Greater Kaweah Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GKGSA) to submit a grant application on behalf of the City of Visalia to the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) for the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) Call for Projects.

Recommended Motion (and Alternative Motions if expected):

I move to accept and authorize the appropriation of \$2,000,000 from the Sustainable Groundwater Management Grant Program for the Cameron Creek Linear Recharge Project and appropriate \$60,000 for staff indirect costs from Fund 224.

Environmental Assessment Status:

To be determined during preliminary engineering phase.

CEQA Review:

To be determined during preliminary engineering phase.

Attachments:

1. Project Location Exhibit
2. Resolution 2022-06