



Office of the Mayor

CONSENT CALENDAR

December 12, 2006

To: Members of the City Council

From: Mayor Tom Bates
Councilmember Darryl Moore
Councilmember Linda Maio

Subject: Partnering with Berkeley Partners for Parks and Rails to Trails for the Purpose of Grant Writing for the Santa Fe Right of Way

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a Resolution authorizing the City Manager to enter into a collaborative agreement with the Berkeley Community Gardening Collaborative (BCGC), Berkeley Partners for Parks (BPFP) and the Rails to Trails Conservancy (RTC) to seek out and write grants for planning the use of the remaining vacant parcels of the Santa Fe Right of Way (SFROW) for a variety of open space uses for consideration by the City Council; and refer \$5000 to the mid-year budget review process to support this effort.

BACKGROUND

The use of the SFROW has been the subject of ongoing discussion and study for over 30 years. Portions of the SFROW have been dispensed with in a piecemeal manner for varied uses including development of affordable housing, selling off to adjacent property owners, creation of parks (such as Strawberry Creek and Cedar Rose Parks), community orchards and gardens, and most recently a pedestrian / bikeway/greenway between Delaware Street and University Avenue. Nevertheless, there remain seven vacant blocks of the SFROW south of University Avenue (from Dwight Way to Oregon) and three blocks north of University between Delaware and Cedar Avenue that also remain vacant. The University of California has also had two graduate level studio courses study the planning of the remainder of the SFROW in 2003 and 2006.

BCGC has been actively working to establish community gardens in Berkeley and recently completed the community orchard project located by Derby Street and the SFROW. BPFP has been a strong community partner of the City of Berkeley and with other dedicated parks, community garden, and open space groups in Berkeley since 1993. RTC is a nationwide non-profit that specializes in the conversion of former railroad lines to bicycle/pedestrian trails and open space.

BCGC, BFPF, and RTC have been in conversation regarding the potential to work together on the future of the SFROW. Their role would be to seek out and apply for grant funding for the planning of various options for the remaining vacant parcels of the SFROW in consultation with the City of Berkeley subject to approval of the City Council. If these planning grant applications prove successful, the three organizations would then work more closely with City staff to move through our city processes and consider development grant applications. RTC has an excellent record with these types of projects and have successfully worked with the Cities of Richmond and San Francisco on similar projects in those cities.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

\$5000 if approved

CONTACT PERSONS:

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