

TO: JAMES L. APP, CITY MANAGER

FROM: ANN ROBB, LIBRARY & RECREATION SERVICES
MEG WILLIAMSON, ASSISTANT TO CITY MANAGER

SUBJECT: SALINAS RIVER CORRIDOR

DATE: AUGUST 16, 2005

Needs: To update Council on the status of Salinas River grant project and design workshop efforts.

Facts:

1. The General Plan established a need to “Create and adopt a Salinas River Corridor Plan to address such issues as recreation, conservation, use, public access, and educational outreach.”
2. In December, 2004, the City Council directed several actions for the planning and enhancement of the Salinas River corridor:
 - a) River Parkway Project: The Council partnered with the Upper Salinas Las Tablas Resource Conservation District (RCD) in the filing of a Corridor Enhancement Project grant. That grant application resulted in the RCD receiving approximately \$363,000 to enhance the natural resources along a portion of the Salinas River, including the development of a 1.5 mile walking trail on public land.
 - b) Follow the River – Follow the Dream; A Design Workshop: The Council directed staff to continue work with National Park Service to co-host a design workshop that will produce a broad overall direction for the river corridor. This planning and design effort is a first step toward longer term planning for the entire Salinas River corridor.
3. The River Parkway Project and the Follow the Dream Workshop are two separate, but connected, planning and design efforts. The River Parkway project is a subset of a larger river use and design effort, which takes advantage of available State funding for enhancement of public land. The Follow the River Workshop will be the larger contextual planning tool for future river use and management needs.
4. The status of the River Parkways project:
 - Grant Funded – Confirmation of the \$363,000 State Resources grant was received Spring 2005.
 - Design Group established – A working group to formulate project design includes representatives from City staff (Library and Recreation Services,

Public Works, Planning, and Police), Regional Conservation District (RCD), California Conservation Corps (CCC) and the Planning & Conservation Foundation.

- Parks and Recreation & REC, Inc. Presentation Meeting - Initial presentation about the project to Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee and REC Inc. was made July 12, 2005.
- Public Design Presentation set – A public presentation about the project is scheduled for Monday, August 22, 2005 from 5:30 – 7:00 PM at the Library/City Hall Conference Center. The workshop is hosted by Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee with presentation by the Regional Conservation District.
- Finalize environmental documents - Anticipated summer 2005 after aspects of the enhancement plan design are completed.
- Review by Planning Commission - Anticipated fall 2005 for review of proposed enhancement project elements and environmental documents.
- Review by City Council - Anticipated fall/winter 2005 for final acceptance of design.

5. The status of the Follow the River Follow the Dream Workshop:

- Vision Statement - The working vision carried forward from the 2003 vision process is, “to encourage our community to embrace the Salinas River as it travels through Paso Robles by creating a corridor that enhances appropriate social, economic and environmental opportunities that tie to our heritage and connect to our future.”
- Planning Committee established: A multi-agency and multi- interest represented core group (including ad hoc City Council members Meham and Picanco) has formed. The Committee’s mission is to organize and host a design workshop that brings together community members, Federal/State and Local agencies, professors and students from Cal Poly, artists, and other design professionals to create an illustrative vision and design concept for trail development, river enhancement, and interpretative signage for the Salinas River corridor.
- Community Open House – Thursday, September 22 date has been set to bring the public up to speed as well as gather input about desired outcomes of the Design Workshop. This will also be a chance to reconfirm the community input collected at the 2003 Vision Workshop. A major public outreach effort for this open house date will occur.

- Date selected for Design Workshop – A 3-day Design workshop has been scheduled for Thursday, September 29 through Saturday, October 1, 2005. The participants at this workshop will be stakeholders (resource agencies, property owners, community groups) and professional designers who will translate the community input into alternatives for public consideration on the final day, Saturday. The desired outcomes of the workshop are a multi-use corridor plan for the river, and branding ideas for the character of the future built environment on or around the river.

Analysis
and

Conclusion: These two river planning efforts are running concurrently and are complementary to one another. Both projects are gaining momentum and property owners and the community will be drawn in to the public process more and more in the coming weeks and months ahead.

Policy

Reference: General Plan (Adopted 2004)
City Council Goals for Fiscal Years 2004-2007 (Adopted 2/18/03)

Fiscal Impact: The Council's 2005/2006 FY budget has appropriate funds for both these river project and planning efforts.

Options:

- a. Receive and file status report
- b. Amend, reject, or modify the above option.