

TO: James L. App, City Manager

FROM: Meg Williamson, Assistant City Manager
Ann Robb, Director of Library and Recreation Services

SUBJECT: Salinas River Corridor Plan Status Report

DATE: August 15, 2006

Needs: To provide the City Council with a status report on the Salinas River Corridor Plan (“Follow the River – Follow the Dream”).

Facts:

1. In January 2006, the City Council received a status report on the Design Workshop and planning efforts for the Salinas River Corridor Plan.
2. River corridor related projects (River Parkway Trail Project and Grant Applications for property acquisition along the river corridor) have been actively underway since the last status report
3. A scope of work to produce materials for a public workshop and to craft the River Corridor Concept Plan document has been developed that will allow the project to move forward for Council consideration in November 2006.
4. To facilitate the plan’s completion, the services of a Landscape Design Firm (Wallace Group) and a Project Facilitator (Sally Sheridan) are being pursued. Both parties have been involved with the project since its inception and have a high degree of familiarity and rapport with the project concept and community.
5. Steps identified for completion of the River Corridor Concept Plan include:
 - Development of a Primary Alternative – Consolidation of the Design Workshop Alternatives for presentation at public workshop (graphic illustration and text).
 - Public Workshop – Prepare materials for and conduct a Public Workshop to gather public input.
 - Development of Conceptual River Corridor Plan – Incorporate public input received and prepare a conceptual level document that is a combination of graphic illustrations and text representative of the community’s vision for the use and conservation of the river corridor.
6. A public workshop is tentatively scheduled for Thursday, October 5, 2006.

Analysis &

Conclusion: It is desirable to carry forward the community excitement, environmental awareness and partnerships that were formed through the October 2005 workshop effort - in the form of a River Corridor Master Concept Plan. The River Corridor Master Concept Plan will contain key policies to guide future preservation and development of the river; and contain implementation steps essential to improving the health of the river corridor over time, including conservation and water quality steps. The document is intended to serve as a foundation for a more detailed set of projects and/or River Management plan in the future. The retention of professional services will facilitate completion of the River Corridor plan. Council consideration of a concept level plan is anticipated November 2006.

Policy

Reference: General Plan (Adopted 2003); 2006 Economic Strategy

Fiscal Impact: The cost to complete the River Corridor Plan is estimated at \$29,000.

City Council had appropriated funds in December 2004 to use towards a combination of the "Follow the River - Follow the Dream" Design Workshop and partnering in the River Parkway Trail project. However, that funding has not been sufficient to take the project through to its completion as planned.

Recent dialogue/correspondence with the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) indicates that there may be an opportunity for the City to complete the River Corridor Plan through receipt of funding as a "Supplement Environmental Project" (SEP). This funding is estimated to be \$27,000, and is available based on levies paid by the City related to its NPDES Wastewater discharge permit.

The City has received staff approval for the proposed SEP. Formal approval by the RWQCB is anticipated at the September 7, 2006 RWQCB meeting as a consent item.

Once the City is notified of the confirmed approval of the River Corridor Plan as an SEP by the Regional Water Quality Control Board, a separate action will be prepared for Council to appropriate the funding from the Sewer Operations fund to the Salinas River project. Receipt of notification is anticipated in September 2007.

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