

TO: James L. App, City Manager

FROM: Ronald Whisenand, Community Development Director

SUBJECT: North County Salinas River Trail Plan Grant

DATE: February 15, 2011

NEEDS: For the City Council to support a grant application for the North County Salinas River - Anza Corridor Trail Plan and participate as a project partner.

FACTS:

1. The Salinas River Vision, "Follow-the-River, Follow-the-Dream" includes recognition of the National Parks Service – Historic Anza Trail segment that extends through the City of Paso Robles. See Attachment 1, Salinas River Vision Map.
2. The Salinas River Vision also identifies future trail linkages extending north and south of the City connecting to a future regional trail system along the Salinas River corridor. See Attachment 2, North County Salinas River Trail Corridor.
3. Caltrans has a Transportation Planning Grant opportunity available that could fund preparation of a river-themed, off-street multi-purpose regional trail plan along the Salinas River corridor.
4. Each jurisdiction and other affected public agencies between San Miguel to Santa Margarita, including SLO County, Atascadero, Templeton CSD, Caltrans, and the San Luis Obispo Council of Governments (SLOCOG) support the concept of a plan for a North County regional trail system along the Salinas River.
5. The SLOCOG 2010 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) identifies a North County segment of the Anza Trail along the Salinas River corridor.
6. As a regional transportation planning agency, SLOCOG is pursuing a Caltrans Transportation Planning Grant to prepare a river-themed multi-purpose Anza Trail System along the Salinas River corridor.
7. Paso Robles would be an integral part of the Plan and trail alignment. SLOCOG is requesting a Letter of Support from the City (and each affected jurisdiction) to partner in the grant application and future project.
8. The SLOCOG will be applying for \$175,000 to prepare this plan. SLOCOG will provide a matching grant from regional transportation planning funds for non-motorized transportation of \$100,000. No matching grant or other funds will be requested from partnering agencies for this grant.

**ANALYSIS &
CONCLUSIONS:**

The concept for a regional Salinas River corridor trail system grew out of the City's Salinas River Vision. The grand vision for this project is to create "destination" trail system that would draw National, State and local trail enthusiasts to enjoy a 40 mile trail system, nestled along the Salinas River corridor, connecting San Miguel to Santa Margarita. The trail would be designed for use by bicycle commuters between communities, and provide for recreational uses, including hiking, bird watching, horse riders, bicyclists, and others. As a destination trail that attracts a wide range of user groups there would be significant economic development opportunities to attract more tourism to our region.

One of the other intents is for the trail to become an officially designated National Historic Anza Trail. The Anza Trail designation would increase awareness of California's cultural heritage, draw historic trail enthusiasts, and provide cultural educational opportunities for local schools and other cultural organizations. Additionally, Anza Trail designation opens up the opportunity for other grants for trail enhancements such as trail improvements, interpretive signs, trail furniture such as shade structures and benches, viewing and information kiosks, as well as programmatic activities.

Given the natural surroundings of the trail alignment, construction of the trail will provide opportunities to clean polluted areas, provide environmental restoration and enhancements, improve watershed health and other eco-system benefits. The opportunity for stewardship programs and "outdoor classrooms" for hands-on learning could open up a range of opportunities to work with local youth, scouts, Cal Poly, seniors and others on projects that transcend borders and boundaries.

As a partner in this grant, and the future project, the City could help shape specific improvements, alignments, features, access, and management programs of the trail. The plan would include trail design concepts and standards that could be tailored for various trail segments in urban and rural areas, and different communities along the trail. Determining specific alignments of future trails along the Salinas River corridor and through the City is part of the project workscope. The City currently has 2.5 miles of trail from Larry Moore Park to the 13th Street Bridge. New trail opportunities would include use of the River Parkway property recently acquired, which could be a natural connection point to the trail system south. Determining other alignments through the City and a northern connection point would be part of the plan development process. The project includes developing an implementation plan that identifies locally acceptable strategies and options to address trail alignments and private property. As with other projects in the City, trail alignments that include private property would need to be based on the principle of working with willing property owners.

POLICY

REFERENCE: Salinas River Vision, Uptown/Town Center Specific Plan, 2006 Economic Strategy, 2003 General Plan

FISCAL

IMPACT: No direct fiscal impact. City staff resources (in-kind) participation on trail planning.

OPTIONS: The City Council is requested to take one of the actions listed below:

- a. Adopt the attached resolution directing the Mayor to sign a Letter of Support for SLOCOG to apply for the Caltrans Transportation Planning Grant, and participate as a project partner.
- b. Amend, modify or reject the foregoing option.

Staff Report prepared by: Susan DeCarli, AICP, Planning Manager

Attachments:

Attachment 1 – Salinas River Vision Map

Attachment 2 – North County Salinas River Corridor

Attachment 3 - Resolution

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NORTH COUNTY COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS



*"Follow the River ~
to Regional Opportunity and Benefit"*

PASO ROBLES

A river-themed connection provides a catalyst for economic development and collaborative programs between communities.

- Anza Trail Connection – Federal designation and recognition for historical route.
- Destination Recreation – Opportunity for "Green Tourism" for hiking, biking, birding and more.
- Ecosystem Education – Interconnected programs for watershed health & stewardship.
- Outdoor Classrooms – Hands on learning that transcend borders and boundaries.
- Grant Funding – Leverage capital for plans and projects through regional collaboration.
- Multipurpose Trail System – Safe and fully integrated off-highway trail system between communities.
- Regional River Restoration – Opportunity for organized networks of river minded volunteers for project installation and maintenance system support.

TEMPLETON

ATASCADERO



RESOLUTION NO. 11-xxx

**RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF EL PASO DE ROBLES
APPROVING SUPPORT FOR THE CALTRANS TRANSPORTATION
PLANNING GRANT APPLICATION FOR THE NORTH COUNTY
SALINAS RIVER ANZA TRAIL PLAN GRANT**

WHEREAS, the City supports development of a plan for a river-themed multi-purpose trail along the Salinas River corridor within the Historic Anza Trail alignment; and

WHEREAS, the San Luis Obispo Council of Governments (SLOCOG) is pursuing a Caltrans Transportation Planning Grant to prepare the North County Salinas River Anza Trail Plan; and

WHEREAS, SLOCOG will provide the necessary matching funds for this grant application; and

WHEREAS, a multi-purpose trail along the Salinas River in the Anza Trail alignment is consistent with the City's Salinas River Vision, Uptown/Town Center Master Plan, 2010 Circulation Element, 2009 Bicycle Master Plan, 2006 Economic Strategy, and the 2003 General Plan; and

WHEREAS, the City will benefit from future tourist-oriented economic development, recreational opportunities, alternative transportation commuter options, environmental restoration, cultural education opportunities, and other benefits from the North County Salinas River Anza Trail; and

WHEREAS, the City agrees to become a planning partner in the North County Salinas River Trail Plan.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City of El Paso de Robles:

1. Supports the filing of an application for the Caltrans Transportation Planning Grant.
2. The City Council directs the Mayor to sign a Letter of Support to SLOCOG to apply for this grant.
3. The City of El Paso de Robles agrees to participate as a project partner should SLOCOG receive this grant.

Approved and adopted the 15th day of February, 2011. I, the undersigned, hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution No. 11-xxx, was duly adopted by the City Council of the City of El Paso de Robles by the following roll call vote:

AYES:
NOES:
ABSENT:
ABSTAIN:

Duane Picanco, Mayor

ATTEST:

Caryn Jackson, Deputy City Clerk