



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Grant Program Provides Funding for Additional Park Acreage

Board approves additional \$1.4 million for Roseland Creek Community Park & Trail Project

SANTA ROSA, Calif. – Today, the District Board of Directors approved a \$1.4 million grant to the City of Santa Rosa for the acquisition of nearly 11 acres located at 1360 Burbank and 1027 McMinn Avenues, for a proposed park and trail project located in southwest Santa Rosa. The Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District recommended the project for funding in 2008 and 2009 as part of its Matching Grant Program, for a total contribution of \$3.82 million.

The property, currently owned by Exchange Bank, represents the second phase of the City's planned 20-acre Roseland Creek Community Park and Trail which envisions a portion of the park as an open space preserve that includes public trails, recreational and educational resources including a nature education facility, interpretive facilities and a restored stretch of Roseland Creek. The first phase of the park and trail, 5.96 acres along Burbank Avenue just one property south, was acquired by the City last year, with a grant through the Matching Grant Program. The City is working to secure funding for the final phase of acquisition, at which time it will proceed with park development.

"Despite our weakened economy, we are able to move forward with a tremendous community resource," said Efred Carrillo, Fifth District Supervisor and District Board Chair. "This is a great day for the Roseland neighborhood as this project will complete the dreams of so many who have worked so hard and so long to realize this moment."

The project was one of four that was accepted into the District's 2009-2010 Matching Grant Program, which combined total nearly 50 acres and approximately \$2 million in grant funding.

As its program match, the City will provide more than \$2 million, including a \$1,780,000 donation by Exchange Bank which represents more than half of the appraised value of the property. Additionally, the community has offered to provide professional in-kind services toward ongoing park maintenance, restoration and enhancement of the creek. The Matching Grant Program requires a 1:1 contribution match from applicants, which can include direct contributions and in-kind services and materials, with no more than 50 percent of the match identified for operations and maintenance.

“We are committed to our residents and their quality of life,” said Marc Richardson, City of Santa Rosa Director of Recreation, Parks and Community Services. “By partnering with the District and Exchange Bank, we can meet the needs of our community and continue to invest in our future.”

The site is identified as a potential park in the City’s general plan and comprises a reach of Roseland Creek, grasslands, and oak savanna. The proposed park is within a one-mile radius of four elementary schools, two middle schools, and two high schools of the Roseland School District, and is expected to support a variety of community activities, including environmental education and after-school programs. This is one of three projects in southwest Santa Rosa that the District has accepted into its Matching Grant Program. The other two projects include the Bayer Neighborhood Park and Garden and the Colgan Creek Park and Preserve.

“This is truly a great thing for the community and a blessing for the future of nature in Roseland,” said Duane De Witt, a member of the Roseland neighborhood Community Builders group. “Decades of determination played a key role in today’s decision and this park will be something that generations of Sonoma County residents will be able to share and enjoy.”

Since 1994, the District’s Matching Grant Program has provided nearly \$29 million in funding to cities, the County, and non-profit organizations for land acquisition and restoration and development projects within and near incorporated areas of the County. In the last six months, three recent grant recipients have been able to leverage the District’s funding for more than \$5 million in additional grants. The next cycle is anticipated for late fall.

“This project is a shining example of the strength of public-private partnerships and what a community can do to realize a long-time vision,” said Bill Keene, General Manager of the District. “We soon will be able to connect the neighborhood with the natural resources in their backyard.”

About the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District

The Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District permanently protects the diverse **agricultural, natural resource** and **scenic open space** lands of Sonoma County for future generations. Since 1990, the District has protected more than 83,000 acres. Agricultural and open space lands have been protected through a 1/4-cent sales tax approved by voters in 1990 and reauthorized in 2006. For more information, please visit www.sonomaopenspace.org

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