

Background:

The Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District (“the District”) administers a Matching Grant Program that makes grants available to cities, the County, other public agencies and non-profit organizations for urban open space projects that provide open space preservation, community recreation or public access opportunities. Since 1994, this program has provided nearly \$29 million in funding to our city, county, and non-profit partners, allowing our partners to leverage that funding to develop recreation, access, restoration, and open space projects throughout Sonoma County communities.

The District has allocated \$2 million for implementation of the 09/10 Matching Grant Program in its FY 10/11 budget that will be presented to its Board in June of 2010. The District received eight applications by the October 30, 2009 deadline; however, two applications were withdrawn by project applicants due to lack of project readiness. Staff reviewed the six remaining applications, summarized in the table below, and evaluated each based on the program’s approved criteria and guidelines.

As part of the application evaluation process, District staff met twice with the Urban Open Space Subcommittee of the Citizens Advisory Committee. (The Urban Open Space Subcommittee includes a member of the Open Space Authority.) Members of the subcommittee reviewed the projects and provided input on preliminary staff recommendations.

Based on the funding available in the program, the competitive nature of the program, and the program criteria, District staff, in conjunction with the Urban Open Space Subcommittee, is making the following funding recommendations for the 2009/2010 Matching Grant Program. The Citizens Advisory Committee concurred with these recommendations, including an additional recommendation by the subcommittee, at its March 25, 2010 meeting (see paragraph below “Additional Recommendation by Advisory Committee”):

Project	Applicant	Partner	Type	Acres	District	Request	Recommendation
Roseland Creek Community Park and Trail (Phase 1b)	City of Santa Rosa		<u>Acquisition</u> of oak woodland and future City park	10.97	5	\$2,260,000	\$1,406,000
Giorgi Park, Phase 2	City of Healdsburg		<u>Acquisition</u> of lands to expand existing City park	4.86	4	\$525,000	\$270,000
Meadowlark Field	Laguna de Santa Rosa Foundation	City of Sebastopol	<u>Restoration</u> of habitat along the Laguna	28	5	\$203,643	\$203,643
Sonoma Garden Park	Sonoma Ecology Center	City of Sonoma	<u>Development</u> of existing garden park facility	6	1	\$119,763	\$119,763
Paula Lane Open Space Preserve	City of Petaluma	Paula Lane Action Network	<u>Acquisition</u> of land for open space preserve	11.22	2	\$400,000 - \$1,000,000	Not recommended
Asti Road Park	City of Cloverdale		<u>Acquisition</u> of land for City park	7.76	4	\$3,000,000	Not recommended

Background: (continued)

Recommended for Funding

Project: Roseland Creek Community Park and Trail, Phase 1b

Applicant: City of Santa Rosa

Location: Southwest Santa Rosa between Burbank and McMinn Avenues, south of Sebastopol Avenue

Funding Recommendation: \$1,406,000

Match: \$2,319,500

Scope: This is the second phase of the City's property acquisition for development of a community park along Burbank Avenue in Southwest Santa Rosa. This phase includes acquisition of 11 acres that contain juvenile oak woodland and grassland vegetation to be used for an open space/ecological preserve with trails, certain recreational elements, oak woodland habitat enhancement, interpretation and environmental educational opportunities.

Background: As part of the 2008 Matching Grant Program, the District granted \$2,420,000 toward the acquisition of Phase 1a, now held by the City. Phase 1a included acquisition of approximately six acres adjacent to Phase 1b that includes a portion of Roseland Creek. The City has begun a community planning process to develop a master plan for the full park. The focus of the recommendation is on natural resource protection. The District intends to work with the City on the design of the project to ensure that natural resource protection take precedence over active recreational uses while still allowing sufficient flexibility for the City to create a park that meets the community's needs and desires.

Project: Giorgi Park Project, Phase 2

Applicant: City of Healdsburg

Location: In Healdsburg northeast of the downtown area, abutting Reed Court to the North, University Avenue to the West and Piper Street to the South.

Funding Recommendation: \$270,000

Match: \$600,000 expended to acquire 536 University Avenue

Scope: Reimbursement for acquisition of land at 536 University Avenue to expand an existing City park (Phase 2).

Background: As part of the 2008 Matching Grant Program, the District allocated \$500,000 for reimbursement of acquisition of land at 540 University Avenue (Phase 1) to expand the existing City park. Reimbursement of acquisition costs incurred by the City for purchase of 536 University Avenue will assist the City in developing Phase 2 of its park expansion and renovation project, including resurfacing existing tennis courts, bocce ball and petanque courts, building an amphitheatre, picnic areas and trail improvements that provide connectivity within the park and between the surrounding neighborhoods, specifically linking Piper Street to Reed Court.

Project: Middle Reach Restoration Project: Meadowlark Field

Applicants: Laguna de Santa Rosa Foundation and City of Sebastopol

Location: East side of Laguna de Santa Rosa at Highway 12

Funding Recommendation: \$203,643

Match: \$231,090

Scope: A component of the larger Middle Reach Restoration Project to restore 1.8 miles of the Laguna. The project will provide for completion of restoration of Meadowlark Field by planting 3,000 plants this winter over 28 acres, installing drip irrigation and monitoring the field for three years.

Background: (continued)

Background: Restoration of the 55-acre Meadowlark Field included 11 acres planted in Spring 2008 and five acres planted in January 2010. This project will provide for planting in 28 of the remaining acres. The project would result in a conservation easement over the entire Meadowlark Field, owned by the City of Sebastopol. The District's Laguna Trails project links to existing trails on Meadowlark Field.

Project: Sonoma Garden Park Community Access Project

Applicants: Sonoma Ecology Center (SEC) and City of Sonoma

Location: 19996 Seventh Street East, approximately 1.6 miles southeast of the downtown plaza

Funding Recommendation: \$119,763

Match: \$119,763

Scope: Improvements to existing garden to increase public access for recreational, educational, restoration and agricultural purposes. Development includes ADA-accessible pathways, parking lot improvements, fencing and entrance gate, community garden plot enhancement, shade structures, greenhouse, picnic tables, and improvements to water access.

Background: The former owner left the property to the City of Sonoma to be used as a park. The City has leased the property to SEC since 1993 and oversees development and maintenance of the property. SEC currently has a 10-year lease with the City, with an option to renew for an additional 10 years in 2016.

Not Recommended for Funding

Project: Paula Lane Open Space Preserve

Applicants: City of Petaluma and Paula Lane Action Network (PLAN)

Location: 431 Paula Lane, on the west side of Petaluma

Funding Request: \$400,000 to \$1 million

Match: \$880,150 (\$1,880,150 was submitted as the match in 2008. Assuming a \$1,000,000 match for the 2008 grant, \$880,150 would remain for the 2009 match.)

Scope: Supplement to \$1 million funding allocated for project as part of 2008 Matching Grant Program. Project is an open space preserve with passive use public access, habitat preservation, community garden and educational programs.

Rationale: The project-readiness is unclear. The previously-allocated \$1 million has not yet been expended. Due to the fact that the appraisal is still underway and the fair market value is yet to be determined, the additional funding amount needed, if any, to acquire the property is unknown.

Project: Asti Road Park: Russian River/SMART Trail Connection Project

Applicant: City of Cloverdale

Location: Corner of Asti Road and Lake Street, northeast Cloverdale, 0.5 mile from downtown

Funding Request: \$3,000,000

Match: \$3,101,500

Scope: Acquisition of approximately 7.76 acres of relatively undeveloped land for recreation and open space, including sports fields, dog park, community garden, picnic areas, and a trail connection to the Cloverdale River Trail.

Background: City applied for Matching Grant funds in 2008; however, the application was determined to be incomplete. District previously assisted City/Regional Parks (\$71,500 through Matching Grant Program and

Background: (continued)

fee purchase and transfer) in securing lands that now comprise the Cloverdale River Park (owned and managed by Regional Parks), which will be part of the future Cloverdale River Trail (as identified in the 2009 General Plan and in the Sonoma County Transportation Authority Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan).

Rationale: The City's request exceeds the District's annual funding cap on the program. Further, if the recommendation for this project were the full \$2 million available in the program, it would not be sufficient for successful completion of the project. The City indicated that partial funding was not a viable option because the project would not happen if the full \$3 million was not approved and secured for payment over time. (Note: The current program does not provide for multi-year awards.)

Additional Recommendation by Advisory Committee

The Advisory Committee would like to make the following additional recommendation regarding the Paula Lane Open Space Preserve project as part of the 2009/2010 Matching Grant Program:

Pending the completed and approved Paula Lane property appraisal, if the amount of money needed to complete the property acquisition is small, the Subcommittee requests that the District consider contributing an additional sum to the project in an amount not to exceed \$100,000.

Next Steps

Each project selected by the Board for inclusion in the 2009/2010 Matching Grant Program will be moved forward for development of an appropriate Matching Grant Agreement and Conservation easement, in accordance with the District's Matching Grant Guidelines. Once the Matching Grant Agreement and Conservation Easement are finalized, each project will be brought forward for final approval of funding.

The District anticipates administering the next Matching Grant Program cycle in Spring of 2011. In preparation for that cycle, staff will conduct an evaluation of the program, including review and possible revisions to the program guidelines and application documents.

Attachments:

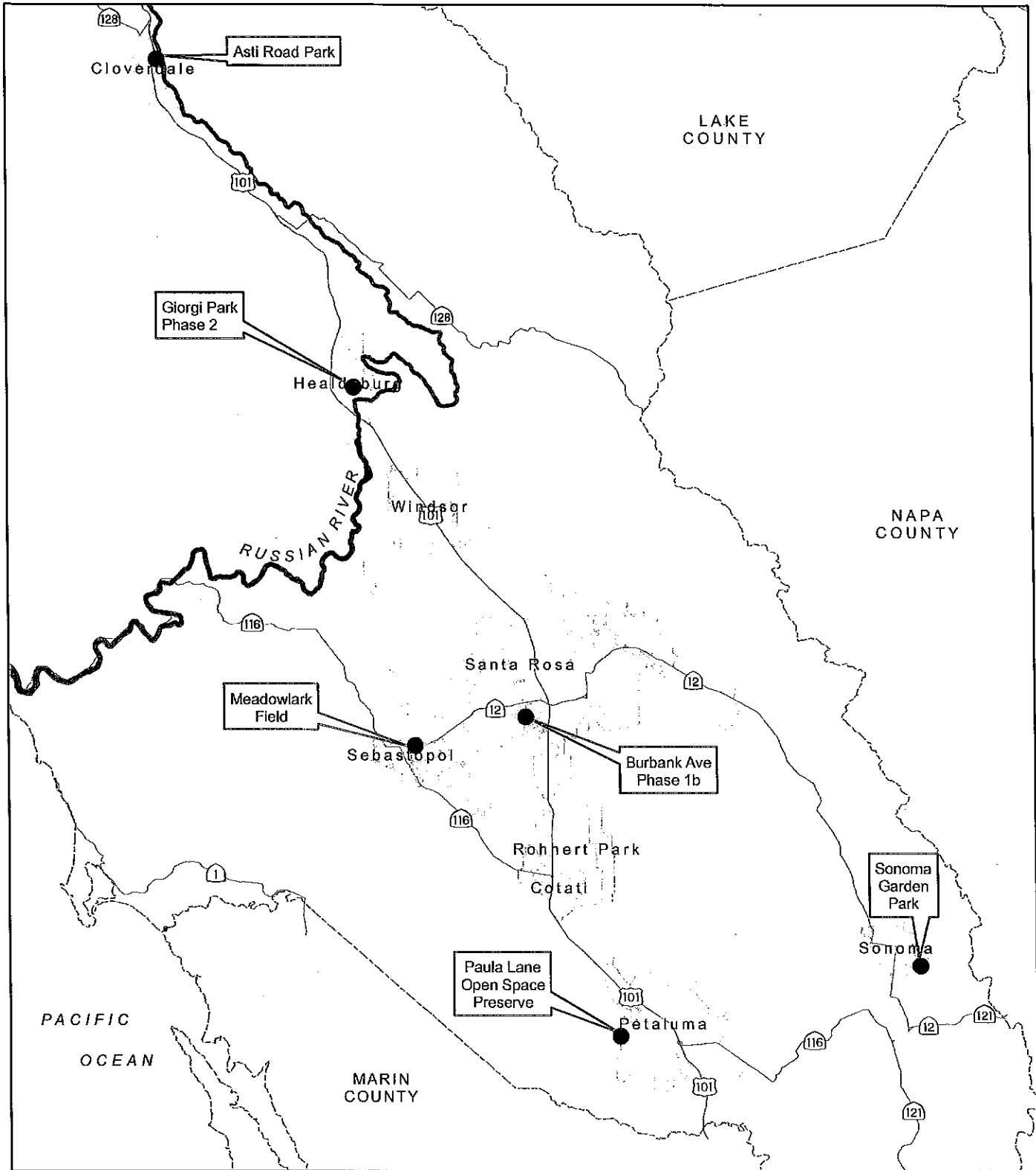
1. Location Map

On File With Clerk: None

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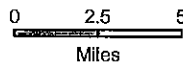
Board Action (If other than "Requested")

Vote:



Matching Grant 2009 Candidates
LOCATION MAP

● 2009-10 Matching Grant Applicants



SONOMA COUNTY
AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION
AND OPEN SPACE DISTRICT

Map Date: 3/15/2010
 Sources: Sonoma County GIS Group
 Note: This map is for illustrative purposes only. It is not intended to be a definitive property description.