



**AG + OPEN SPACE**  
SONOMA COUNTY

**2022 MATCHING GRANT PROGRAM ROUND 2**

**AD HOC COMMITTEE  
MATCHING GRANT PROGRAM  
APPLICATION EVALUATION Meeting**

**MAY 30, 2023  
9:00 – 11:00 AM**

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**AGENDA**

- 1) Call to Order
- 2) General Announcements not Requiring Deliberation or Decision
- 3) Public Comment  
The Brown Act requires that time be set aside for public comment on items not agendized.
- 4) 2022 Matching Grant Program Round 2 Initial Staff Funding Recommendations **Attachment A**



## M E M O R A N D U M

**Date:** May 24, 2023

**To:** Ad Hoc Matching Grant Program Application Evaluation Subcommittee

**From:** Pamela Swan, Grants Coordinator

**Subject:** 2022 Round 2 Matching Grant Program Funding Recommendations

## 2022 Round 2 Matching Grant Program Funding Recommendations

### Background

Through the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District's (Ag + Open Space) Expenditure Plan, Sonoma County voters authorized Ag + Open Space to provide funding to public agencies and nonprofits for the protection of community open spaces for local agriculture, recreation and public access, and natural resource restoration through a competitive Matching Grant Program (MGP).

Since 1994, Ag + Open Space has accepted over 60 projects into the MGP in each of the county's nine incorporated cities and numerous unincorporated areas, awarding over \$40 million to community-based organizations, Cities, County departments, and other public agencies. Generally located in areas lacking open space, MGP funding has enabled the development and implementation of diverse and innovative projects that reflect the needs of Sonoma County's unique and diverse communities. Matching Grant Projects include: Andy's Unity Park, Bayer Neighborhood Park and Gardens, Cloverdale River Park, Creekside Park, Falletti Ranch, Petaluma Marsh Enhancement, Prince Memorial Greenway, Sonoma Garden Park, Sebastopol Skategarden Park and Garden, Steamer Landing Park, and Windsor Town Green.

As a condition of funding, Ag + Open Space, and thereby Sonoma County residents, achieve permanent protection of lands through a conservation easement, or in some cases long term access via a trail easement. As the majority of MGP projects include a public recreation component, Ag + Open Space may also receive a recreation conservation covenant which enables and permanently protects public recreational uses.

### 2022 Matching Grant Program Funding Cycle

In early 2022, Ag + Open Space opened the MGP funding cycle with a \$4 million budget. Two applications (see Table below) were received. Our Board of Directors awarded full funding totaling \$1,950,000 to the two projects, leaving \$2,050,000 remaining.

Project	Applicant	Project Type	Evaluation Score	Funding
Lower Colgan Creek	City of Santa Rosa	Acquisition	78	\$1,500,000
Putnam Park Extension	Earth Island Institute	Improvement	74	\$450,000
<b>TOTAL</b>				<b>\$1,950,000</b>

### Round 2 Funding Cycle

In light of the MGP's 2022 funding cycle's remaining \$2,050,000 funds, and the opportunity to advance additional community open spaces, the Board directed staff to open a second application period from December 13, 2023 to March 10, 2023. Ag + Open Space received six eligible applications at the close of the second application period.

#### Matching Grant Program Savings

In addition to the remaining \$2,050,000 in funding, staff was able to identify \$900,000 in savings from projects previously accepted into the MGP. The Sonoma County Community Development Commission (CDC) was accepted into the MGP in 2014 for the Roseland Village Public Space Project (now known as Tierra de Rosas Plaza) for \$500,000 to fund improvement components of the project. This project experienced significant delays resulting in expiration of the MGP award term. Likewise, the SMART Payran to Southpoint project was a trails project awarded \$400,000 in 2014, and has since submitted withdrawal of its project. These projects' savings of \$900,000 are now available to be considered in the recommendations outlined below. Therefore, the 2022 MGP Round 2 has a total budget of **\$2,950,000**.

#### Application Review and Evaluation

Projects are considered individually to determine how well they fulfill the MGP's goals and criteria. During the application review process, an inter-disciplinary committee of Ag + Open Space staff reviewed and evaluated applications using the evaluation matrix. The staff team conducted site visits, met three times to discuss projects, and developed preliminary funding recommendations.

The evaluation matrix utilizes applicant responses to score each project in the following categories: Program Intent, Benefits, Need, and Readiness. An Other Considerations category is also analyzed as a part of the evaluation process, though they are not given a numerical score. These Other Considerations include diversity, equity, and inclusion; community and geographic diversity; projects in fire and flood impacted areas; community support; and past MGP project performance. Through the evaluation process, staff may prioritize projects that align with MGP Guidelines and protect new lands to increase the amount of urban open space, as well as those that provide new opportunities for recreation, connections within and between communities and other protected lands, and habitat restoration. The maximum score is 100.

The 2022 MGP Round 2 application evaluations have been compiled and the scores and preliminary funding recommendations are now available to the Ad Hoc Matching Grant Program Subcommittee (comprised of representatives from the Advisory Committee and Fiscal Oversight Commission) for their review. Following review and discussion, the Ad Hoc are tasked with supporting the staff recommendations or making their own recommendations.

Upon Ad Hoc Subcommittee review, the 2022 MGP Round 2 funding recommendations will be considered by the full Advisory Committee and Fiscal Oversight Commission before proceeding to the Board of Directors. Approval of the funding recommendations by the Board of Directors will signify acceptance of the projects into the Matching Grant Program and project implementation will occur in accordance with the Program Guidelines. Funding disbursement for projects is contingent upon future approvals by both the Fiscal Oversight Commission (for acquisition projects) and the Board of Directors, including execution of a Matching Grant Agreement, Conservation Easement, and in some cases a Recreation Covenant.

## **2022 Round 2 MGP Application Summaries and Recommendations**

*Projects are listed in scoring order using the evaluation matrix.*

### **1. BOUNTY COMMUNITY FARM**

**Average Matrix Score: 90**

**APPLICANT:** Petaluma Peoples Services Center (PPSC)  
**TYPE:** Acquisition & Improvement (Combination)  
**LOCATION:** Petaluma  
**SUP. DISTRICT:** 2  
**ACREAGE:** 2.7  
**MGP REQUEST:** **\$2,040,000**  
**MATCH:** \$6,804,320

SECURE: \$3,335,000

ANTICIPATED: \$3,514,320

**TOTAL MGP PROJECT COST: \$8,842,320**

**PROPOSED PROJECT:** Acquisition of and improvements to Petaluma Bounty Farm, a 2.7 acre community based food security, sustainable education farm that has been in operation for 15 years at the current urban Petaluma site, which is now up for sale by the owners. Stated objectives of this project include:

1. Preserve urban farmland for public use and provide sustainable and ecological stewardship
2. Increase access to affordable, locally-grown, healthy fruits and vegetables for the area's surrounding low-income, vulnerable population
3. Provide hands-on educational and experiential opportunities for children and adults in sustainable practices and ecological farmland management
4. Provide a community setting to provide education and outreach in topics such as climate resiliency and preparedness, sustainable gardening, water conservation, composting and waste reduction, and nature-related citizen-science projects to the broader Sonoma County community

#### **BACKGROUND:**

The project will protect Petaluma's first urban farm, less than a mile from downtown Petaluma. In an area changing rapidly, this project connects the public to their food source right out of their front door. With comprehensive programming in experiential farm education, nutrition incentives and access to local food, weekly volunteer opportunities, and ecological farming practices, the Bounty Community Farm is a model of community food security and resiliency. Not proceeding with this acquisition would risk the loss of Bounty Farm, resulting in the loss of this important community resource and conversion of agriculture to another use.

#### **PROJECT ATTRIBUTES:**

- **Program Intent:**
  - New Open Space: Acquisition of new protected public open space for urban agriculture in the underserved Petaluma McDowell/Payran Corridor.
  - Link: Preserving Bounty Farm links the community to the SMART pedestrian and bike trail.
  - New, outdoor, nature-based recreation: Protection of outdoor gathering space, including an outdoor ag classroom, school field trips and community workshops, and weekly volunteer events.
  - Protection: Public access to waterways with the site's strategic aquifer recharge role and protection of the watershed.
  - Protection of farmland: Preservation of Petaluma's first urban farm, bolstering a local food source in proximity to five affordable housing projects.

- **Need:**

Project addresses identified high priority needs as identified in the Sonoma County Strategic Plan, Petaluma General Plan, and Sonoma Co Climate Resilient Strategy, including:

  - Preservation of urban farmland for public use as a food source, educational resource, and green space.
  - Increase access to affordable, locally-grown, healthy fruits and vegetables for the area's low-income, vulnerable population.
  - Address the climate emergency, both directly through carbon sequestration and contributions to community climate resilience, and indirectly through education and outreach.
  - Provides hands-on educational and experiential opportunities for children and adults in sustainable practices and ecological farmland management.
- **Benefits:**
  - Human: Access to locally grown agricultural products, especially for those on limited incomes. A greater understanding of agriculture, the land, and those who steward it through volunteer opportunities, service-learning experiences, internships. Improved individual and community health through increased food access and nutrition.
  - Nature: The farm uses sustainable practices that protect and promote native pollinators and beneficial predators including insects, amphibians, and birds. The continued use of sustainable farming practices improves soil quality to promote a healthy soil biome and habitat.
- **Readiness**
  - Schedule:
    - Begin full appraisal and pursue acquisition upon MGP acceptance
    - Planning/Design: review by other agencies and CEQA compliance will be spearheaded by Rebuilding Together Petaluma in partnership with Bounty
    - With over 45 years
  - Experience:
    - With over 45 years of successful grant management of public and private grants, PPSC has the fiscal experience to manage the financial components of the this project. With a budget of \$6 million annually, it also has the required cash flow to handle the process.
    - Bounty Farm has over 15 years of expertise operating Bounty Community Farm.
    - Rebuilding Together Petaluma has been rehabilitating homes and community centers throughout the community for over 25 years.
  - Match: Proposing match greater than 1:1 at \$6,804,320
  - Partial funding: Scaling funding of this community-based project request is not recommended given the risk to the project acquisition but would be accepted if required.

#### **OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:**

- Diversity, Equity & Inclusion: Bounty prioritizes bilingual staff to address access and reinforce language justice, early/preferential access to CalFresh/EBT customers, and hosts Petaluma First Day Labor Center
- Community Support: Letters of support from = Old Elm 4C's Preschool, Boys and Girls Club, Kaiser Permanente, St Joseph Health, School Garden Network
- Agency/Geographic Diversity: Petaluma's First Urban Farm, one mile to nearest open space
- Fire/Flood Impacted Area: Mitigate flood risk via discharge site for water overflow in under resourced community. In McDowell/Payran Corridor, historical flood area.

**RECOMMENDATION: This project is recommended for full funding up to the requested \$2,040,000.**

## 2. SONOMA SCHELLVILLE TRAIL

**Average Matrix Score: 86**

<b>APPLICANT:</b>	Sonoma County Regional Parks
<b>TYPE:</b>	Acquisition & Improvement (Combination)
<b>LOCATION:</b>	Sonoma Schellville Corridor
<b>SUP. DISTRICT:</b>	1
<b>ACREAGE:</b>	~20.54
<b>MGP REQUEST:</b>	<b>\$1,000,000</b>
<b>MATCH:</b>	\$2,492,052
<b>SECURE:</b>	\$32,000 Project Admin; SoCo Regional Parks \$550,000 Implementation; So Co Transp Authority \$411,206 Implementation; Schell Investments/Carneros \$380,100 Implementation; So Co Regional Parks \$295,000 Implementation (SCTA M, Parks M, Volunteers, SCRPF) \$ 101,000 Implementation; Parking Area land &Construction \$20,000 Implementation; So Co Resiliency \$45,000 Implementation; Misc
<b>ANTICIPATED:</b>	\$600,000 Implementation; CA State Coastal Conservancy \$340,346 Implementation; SoCo Regional Parks (5)

**TOTAL MGP PROJECT COST: \$3,492,052**

**PROPOSED PROJECT:** With this acquisition and improvement project application, Regional Parks proposes to develop the 4-mile off-road Sonoma Schellville Trail. The Sonoma Schellville Trail is significant for Sonoma County and the region, and will connect to Sonoma's City Trail, which links to the planned Sonoma Valley Trail, with countywide connections between cities of Sonoma and Santa Rosa, and to the planned 500-mile San Francisco Bay Trail connecting 47 cities across nine counties. This acquisition builds on previously completed efforts. As of today, Regional Parks has acquired rights to four segments between Sonoma and Schellville but needs this railroad property to complete the trail connection.

The Sonoma Schellville Trail will be a Class I bike path along 8th Street East between the intersection of Napa Street East south to Highways 12 and 121. The 8th Street East Corridor has dozens of places of employment, residences, and destinations, and this strategic trail will enable pedestrians and bicyclists to travel safely along the 8th Street East corridor. This project has strong local and regional support and was included in the 2004 Traffic Relief Act for Sonoma County, known as Sonoma County Transportation Authority's Measure M.

**BACKGROUND:** Since the mid-1980's, Regional Parks has been negotiating for the possible acquisition of the railroad right of way adjacent to 8<sup>th</sup> Street East between the intersection of Napa Street East south to Highways 12 and 121 in Schellville. An agreement was reached on March 3, 2023, and a Purchase and Sale Agreement is being signed. Regional Parks has secured \$850,000 and anticipates an additional \$1,015,000 this coming fiscal year, and are requesting \$1 million in Matching Grant funding to complete this pivotal acquisition. The acquisition closing date is March 29, 2024, and securing funding is a pressing need. Not proceeding with purchasing this four-mile strip risks others acquiring the land, splitting up the corridor. If this property is not acquired now, the window of opportunity to acquire the railroad corridor closes.

### **PROJECT ATTRIBUTES:**

- **Program Intent:**
  - New open space: This project acquires new land for recreation and for the creation of the regional Sonoma Schellville Trail.

- Link: The Sonoma Schellville Trail will connect to more urban areas with the Sonoma City Trail, leading to Depot Park, Arnold Field, Field of Dreams Park, Sonoma State Historic Park, Olsen Park, and Maxwell Farms Regional Park. The Sonoma Schellville Trail will also ultimately connect with the San Francisco Bay Trail.
- New, outdoor, nature-based recreation: The installation of boundary signs, identification and information signs, vehicle barriers, debris clean up, and pre- and post-closing Community Outreach are recreation-supporting site improvements.
- Restoration: Acquisition allows for removal of hazardous eucalyptus trees on existing railroad right of way.
- **Need:**
  - Implementing the Sonoma Schellville Trail is a long-identified community need and a priority trail.
  - Bicyclists and pedestrians are at increased risk of injury because of traffic crashes. A goal of the Sonoma County Vision Zero Action Plan is to build and maintain safe streets for all and this project is aligned with that goal.
  - This is project number 83 in the adopted 2010 Sonoma County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan and is designated as a high priority project. Sonoma County General Plan 2020, specifically:
    - Supports the establishment of a countywide park and trail system that meets future recreation needs of the County's residents while protecting agricultural uses. The emphasis of the trail system should be near urban areas and on public lands.
    - Provides for adequate parklands and trails primarily in locations that are convenient to urban areas to meet the outdoor recreation needs of the population, while not negatively impacting agricultural uses.
    - Designates plan for trails includes Sonoma Trail as following the Northwestern Railroad from the City of Sonoma to Highway 121/12.
    - Establishes a Bikeways Network that provides safe and convenient recreation opportunities for all bicyclists and enhances Sonoma County's reputation as a world-class bicycling destination.
- **Benefits:**
  - Human: This acquisition project will make providing an off-road trail possible, serving non-motorized transportation and recreation needs, and improving health.
  - There is already high use by cyclists and low use by walkers on 8th Street East. With a new trail separated from the road, use numbers are anticipated to significantly increase. With future connection to the San Francisco Bay Trail, use numbers will increase as this becomes a regional attraction.
  - Nature: This acquisition project will protect existing habitat from other, potentially more dense forms of development. The future trail project creates the opportunity to add shade trees along the trail. There is also the opportunity for runoff slowing, groundwater recharge in infiltration bio-swales, and riparian enhancement along Schell Creek at the southern end of the corridor.
  - The entire corridor is in Highly Visible Landscapes, according to the Vital Lands Initiative. Roughly half of the corridor is along grasslands and a portion is along croplands. The southern end of the acquisition area is in the Schell Creek riparian corridor and a priority greenbelt area.
- **Readiness:**
  - Schedule: Project admin – 2024-on; Acquisition/Construction – 2023-2024; Operations & Maintenance – ongoing.
    - As noted above, an agreement was reached on March 3, 2023, and a Purchase and Sale Agreement is being signed. Regional Parks has secured \$850,000 and anticipates an additional \$1,015,000 this coming fiscal year, and are requesting \$1 million in Matching Grant funding to complete this pivotal acquisition. The acquisition closing date is March 29, 2024.
  - Planning and Design:
    - The level 1 environmental site assessment is underway and will determine existing conditions and if additional studies and remedies are needed.
    - This project includes community engagement as the transition from private to public land is underway. This outreach will inform the next steps in the trail planning and design process.
  - Experience: Regional Parks has extensive experience building trail and managing parks.



- Match: Proposing greater than 1:1 match of \$2,492,052. Of that \$1,557,306 (62%) is secure, and the remaining 38% is pending.
- Partial funding is feasible. A recently negotiated purchase agreement with Union Pacific Railroad Company sets the land cost at \$2,635,346. Applicant notes that MGP funding is key addition to the \$1.2 million already identified for this project.

#### **OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:**

- Diversity, Equity & Inclusion: Regional Parks works to ensure all people have access to parks and are involved in the development and use of park services.
- Community Support: Letters from SF Bay Trail, SMART, SoCo Transportation Authority, City of Sonoma, So Co Public Infrastructure, So Co Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee, Vision Zero, SoCo Bicycle Coalition, SR Cycling Club, Redwood Trails Alliance, SoCo Regional Parks Foundation
- Geographic: First know MGP application to serve the Schellville area
- MGP Performance: Regional Parks has been accepted into the MGP for 9 projects, 5 of which are complete, and 4 in process.

**RECOMMENDATION: This project is recommended for 50% funding up to \$500,000 for acquisition. Funding consideration included limited overall MGP Round 2 budget.**

### **3. COLGAN CREEK NEIGHBORHOOD PARK PHASE V**

**Average Matrix Score: 83**

**APPLICANT:** City of Santa Rosa  
**TYPE:** Improvement  
**LOCATION:** Southwest Santa Rosa  
**SUP. DISTRICT:** 3  
**ACREAGE:** 3.8  
**MGP REQUEST:** **\$1,000,000**  
**MATCH:** \$2,500,000

**SECURE:** \$108,000 – Project Administration (City Dev Fees)  
 \$307,500 – Planning, Design, Env. Compliance, Permitting (City Dev Fees)  
 \$1,084,500 – Implementation (City Dev Fee)

**ANTICIPATED:** \$650,000 – Operations & Maintenance (City General Fund)

**TOTAL MGP PROJECT COST: \$3,150,000 (for Phase V)**

**PROPOSED PROJECT:** The Lower Colgan Creek Neighborhood Park is planned for development on a Southwest Santa Rosa site alongside the final phase of the Lower Colgan Creek restoration and multi-use pathway project. This Matching Grant Program Improvement project will create a significant park space centrally located along the overall restored reach of the creek, and in direct vicinity of existing and planned residential developments with easy bicycle and pedestrian access for the neighborhood. The park will include a variety of both active and passive recreational opportunities for area residents with potential amenities including play areas for children of various ages, picnic areas, bicycle and pedestrian pathways, and areas for various sporting activities such as small side soccer, pickleball, basketball, and volleyball, as well as the potential for a small on-site parking facility. The specific mix of amenities and actual design for the park will be determined through public participation and a master planning process.

The Matching Grant Program Improvement project is to design the overall park, with community input, and develop the site with an all ages play area, picnic areas, pathways, furnishings, open turf areas and landscape planting. A second and final phase (not in this proposal request), will include additional recreation features north of



the creek, and development of amenities in the area south of the creek connected by the pedestrian footbridge planned for installation with the creek project. The full buildout of the park with additional active recreation features and the area to the south of the creek is estimated up to an additional \$2,300,000 in construction costs.

**BACKGROUND:** The Colgan Creek Project has received four previous MGP awards for phases I-IV, totaling \$4,454,650. Most recently, Colgan Creek Phase IV, an acquisition grant request, was accepted into the 2022 MGP Round 1 with a \$1,500,000 funding recommendation in December 2022. This current 2022 MGP Round 2 Colgan Creek Phase V application is the successor Improvement request to the recent Round 1 award.

All stages of the Colgan Creek Restoration Project are in good standing, and the City of Santa Rosa is currently implementing Phases III and IV of this project. In 2014, the City was accepted into the MGP for Phase II of the Lower Colgan Creek Restoration Project. The funding was directed toward creek restoration and included restoring the creek to a more natural meander, installing a series of pools and riffles, removing invasive species, revegetating the area with native plants, and creating a creekside public pathway.

#### **PROJECT ATTRIBUTES:**

- **Program intent:**

- Link: Lower Colgan Creek Neighborhood Park will have pathways through the park connecting the greater southwest Santa Rosa community to the current dirt trail on the northern bank of Colgan Creek, as well as the paved trail on the southside of the creek. With the development of Phases I and II of the Lower Colgan Creek Restoration Project Trail, these trails will connect to Regional Parks' Colgan Creek Trail.
- Protection/Construction of public access to waterways: trails will connect park users to a restored section of Colgan Creek containing native species that provide habitat for native wildlife. Providing safe access to Colgan Creek is an important way to connect and educate the community about Santa Rosa's waterways.
- Implementation of Restoration Techniques: Using complimentary native species and restoration will increase the land area that will be restored to more natural and native habitats.
- New, Outdoor, nature-based recreation: Creation of a new 3.8 acre park with recreation and education opportunities in area underserved by parks and open spaces. In combination, park and restoration projects will create a continuous public open space in southwest Santa Rosa totaling 23 acres, with a direct connection to an additional 14 acres of the Colgan Creek Trail owned and operated by Sonoma County Regional Parks to the west.
- Protection: The parkland will provide and protect green space for a community that is currently underserved.
- Construction of Outdoor Public Community Gathering Space: This Matching Grant allows the city to pursue a master planning process with the community to identify desired park amenities. Due to a lack of community green space and parkland in Southwest Santa Rosa, it is likely that the community will use Lower Colgan Creek Park as a community gathering space.
- Construction of amenities to provide nature based educational opportunities: the park can serve as a natural staging area for local elementary and nearby Elsie Allen High School students to engage in educational activities related to creek ecology.

- **Need:**

- The lack of easily accessible recreational opportunities in southwest Santa Rosa is exacerbated by the high number of residents who live in multi-family complexes with limited outdoor space. The City's General Plan maintains a park standard of 3.5 acres of city parkland per 1,000 residents for new development. The existing park acreage represents only 50% of the needed parkland in the southwest quadrant of Santa Rosa, making it the most underserved quadrant of the city.
- The area is lacking in off-street pathways, sidewalks, and bicycle lanes for residents to walk and bicycle to school, shopping and to participate in recreation and leisure activities. This lack of facilities is indicated by Zillow's Walk Score of 32, Transit Score of 21 and Bike Score of 33 for this neighborhood.
- As this area of the city develops with medium to high density residential development it is of critical importance to provide habitat for the flora and fauna that inhabit this area.

- **Benefits:**

- Human: Lower Colgan Creek Park will provide recreational amenities that are lacking, including creek access, trails, picnic areas, and play areas.
- Design and development of Lower Colgan Creek Neighborhood Park will have tremendous public health benefits allowing the city to provide a free, safe, and publicly accessible place for children, youth, and adults to visit and play, while connecting the neighborhood to local and regional trail systems.
- Santa Rosa Recreation and Parks will partner with the city's Creek Stewardship Program to continue providing interactive place-based curriculum for elementary and high school students whose schools are in the watershed. Development of the park site will include interpretive signage educating the public about the creek restoration program, stream ecology and native flora and fauna.
- The project will provide paved pathways through the park from neighborhood sidewalks to the City's portion of the Colgan Creek Trail, which will connect to Regional Park's 1.2-mile paved portion of the trail. This connection will provide a safer route for walking or biking to Elsie Allen High School and Bellevue Elementary School as well as the businesses along Dutton and Bellevue Avenues
- The reduction in flooding for local businesses and residences as a result of the restoration of the creek and the buffer provided by the park site is a direct financial benefit of the project.
- Nature: Biodiversity will be enhanced through removal of invasive plant species and replacement with native species and in support of the restoration goals of the adjacent creek restoration project. The park will also promote infiltration by treating all storm water by integrating low impact development and reduce flood threat by increasing capacity of the stream channel from 25-100 year flood capacity.

- **Readiness:**

- This neighborhood park has been prioritized for the area since the City's 2020 General Plan and adopted in 2002 by the City Council. Now that the city has completed acquisition of the final parcel needed for the park and restoration project, the design and implantation can move forward.
- Schedule: Upon acceptance into the Matching Grant Program the city anticipates putting out a request for proposals for the outreach and master planning program. Based on the approved master plan, design development will proceed, followed by construction drawings and specifications to successfully bid and construct the proposed park improvements.
  - Project Administration: Project scoping, Outreach & Master Planning 7/2023- 9/2024, construction 2023-25
  - Planning/Design: Design and Construction Plans 10/24-11/25
  - Construction: 4/26-11/26
- Experience: City Parks Department operates and maintains over 100 parks in the city and has over 20 staff assigned to each quadrant of the city.
- Match: Proposing 1:1+ match, 70% of match is secure.
- Partial funding is feasible as Improvement project is scalable. City states cost estimate represent minimum funding level needed to move forward.

**OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:**

- Diversity, Equity & Inclusion: The project occurs in census tract 6097153200, which is categorized as an SB 535 Disadvantaged Community according to CalEnviroScreen 3.0 data and is underserved in terms of parkland.
- Community Support: Letters of support from Sonoma Water, Damon Connolly 12<sup>th</sup> District CA Assemblymember, Mike McGuire, CA State Senator
- MGP Performance: The Colgan Creek Restoration Project received a 2022 MGP Round 1 grant award of \$1,500,000 for acquisition funding for the parcel of land needed to complete both the re-alignment/restoration of Colgan Creek, and the completion of the neighborhood park which this application seeks funding. This Round 2 grant request is to begin the community park improvements. Current Colgan Creek MGP project status includes restoration and acquisition. The City has had 10 projects accepted into the MGP, including 7 that have been completed and 3 that are in progress.

**RECOMMENDATION:** This project is not recommended for funding as it was awarded significant funding in 2022 MGP Round 1, and there is limited funding in Round 2.

#### 4. GEYSERVILLE COMMUNITY PLAZA

**APPLICANT:** Sonoma County Public Infrastructure  
**TYPE:** Improvement  
**LOCATION:** Geyserville  
**SUP. DISTRICT:** 5  
**ACREAGE:** 1.17 acres  
**MGP REQUEST:** **\$1,000,000**  
**MATCH:** \$1,000,000

**ANTICIPATED:** \$110,000 – Project Admin (State Coastal Conservancy)  
\$160,000 – Planning/Design/Env. compliance/permitting (State Coastal Conservancy)  
\$730,000 – Implementation/Construction (State Coastal Conservancy)  
\$940,000 – O&M (PRPF volunteer, PRPF donations)

**TOTAL MGP PROJECT COST: \$2,000,000**

**PROPOSED PROJECT:** The Geyserville Community Plaza project will provide the unincorporated town of Geyserville with a much needed and requested outdoor recreation area for its residents, as well as a venue for community-based events including the Fall Colors Festival and Geyserville Tractor Parade. It will connect the business section of town with SMART and the Great Redwood Trail, providing a visual entrance to the town commerce. The unimproved area is designated as a Valley Oak Habitat Combining District, containing a grove of large native oak trees, which will be protected from development by using the space as an open space recreation area.

**BACKGROUND:** Launched by the Geyserville Alexander Valley Municipal Advisory Committee (GAVMAC), the Geyserville Community Plaza project is a result of the lack of a public park in the town and surrounding area. The site is located on Geyserville Avenue and is presently owned by Sonoma County Public Infrastructure. In 2009, the site was partially developed. The upper half became a Park and Ride commute facility and a small, paved area. The lower half of the site is undeveloped.

##### **PROJECT ATTRIBUTES:**

- **Program Intent:**
  - Link: This project will link Geyserville with the Great Redwood Trail and construct amenities in and around the current Park and Ride facility.
  - Restoration: A portion of the currently unimproved area is largely in a natural condition, hosting a grove of native Valley Oak trees (*Quercus Lobata*). These will be preserved and stewarded as part of the project, which will restore habitat currently used by birds and other wildlife.
  - Protection of native plant and/or animal species: See above.
  - Construction of an outdoor public community gathering space: This project will provide the first public outdoor gathering space for the residents of Geyserville.
  - Development of new, outdoor, nature-based, recreational opportunities: This project will develop a new recreation opportunity where none currently exists.
  - Construction of amenities for public education about the natural world and/or local agriculture: The Plaza will host events including the Alexander Valley's agricultural, Hispanic and Tribal heritage.
- **Need:**
  - The need for this project was determined by community surveys and discussions. In 2019, the Geyserville Planning Committee conducted a community survey that revealed the top two community improvements residents would like to see: a public park and public bathrooms. After finding a location for this project in 2022, the GAVMAC surveyed the community again to determine how the space would best be used.
  - This plaza will provide the first public park for Geyserville, and the only public outdoor recreational space within four miles. The Geyserville Community Plaza will provide a permanent location for family and

community recreation, gathering and celebrations, including the Geyserville May Day Celebration, Fall Colors and the Annual Tractor Parade.

○ **Benefits:**

- Human: This plaza will offer residents safe outdoor recreational space and become an access point and way-station along the Great Redwood Trail, once it becomes operational.
- The Community Plaza will benefit Geyserville residents and visitors by providing active park facilities, an attractive amenity to the downtown, and a gathering place for community and visitor events.
- The walking path will welcome users of SMART and the Great Redwood Trail to town, as well as provide a recreational walking path with pet facilities for residents.
- The oak shaded open space, along with a stage and facilities will provide the town with a location to host its traditional festivals.
- Nature: The plaza plan will keep the beautiful large oak shade trees and incorporate other native plants to the landscape. A swale and permeable materials will allow water that collects to percolate and recharge our water basin and reduce flood risk.

○ **Readiness**

- Schedule: Project admin – 2023-24; planning/design/env compliance/permitting – 2023-24; implementation/construction – 2023-2024
- Planning/Design:
  - Initial funding for park design and engineering has been provided from Tribal Mitigation Funds, as directed by the GAVMAC. Plaza construction costs will be funded through grants. Matching grant funds are being sought.
  - Significant public outreach conducted. The GAVMAC has collected community input over the past two years via internet survey in English and Spanish, community presentations, and related meetings.
  - The Master Plan incorporates the established native shade trees and compliments them with other native plantings. The plan is to keep the design theme natural.
- Experience: Sonoma County Public Infrastructure has completed hundreds of improvement projects and has an experienced team of professionals.
- Match: Proposing a 1:1 match of \$1,000,000, none of which is secured. The anticipated match grant funds have already been applied for, and if awarded would be received in June 2023.
- Partial funding: Partial funding is an option, application listed priorities in application including the completion of project design, demolition, and site preparation as the highest needs.

**OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:**

- Diversity, Equity & Inclusion: The Geyserville Community Plaza will benefit a diverse population of ethnicity, age, and social economic status, including the area's 39% Latino population.
- Community Support: Letters of Support from Geyserville Community Foundation, Senator Mike McGuire, Geyserville Chamber of Commerce.
- Performance on Previous and/or Current MGP Projects: While Sonoma County Public Infrastructure does not have direct MGP experience, the agency has completed hundreds of improvement projects and has an experienced team of professionals.
- Geographic: This MGP application is the first from the Geyserville area.
- Fire/Flood Impacted Area: The community of Geyserville has been highly affected by fire, including the recent 2017 Pocket, 2018 Kincade and 2020 Walbridge fires as well as many flood events.

**RECOMMENDATION: This project is recommended for \$400,000 for completion of design and planning (25%) and demolition and site preparation (75%), as described in the Project Timeline/Worksheet.**

## 5. TIERRA DE ROSAS PUBLIC PLAZA

Average Matrix Score: 69

**APPLICANT:** Sonoma County Community Development Commission  
**TYPE:** Improvement  
**LOCATION:** Santa Rosa  
**SUP. DISTRICT:** 3  
**ACREAGE:** 1 acre  
**MGP REQUEST:** **\$2,000,000**  
**MATCH:** \$1,922,390

**SECURE:** \$593,162 – Implement/Construction/Acq (Redev Tax Inc Rev)

**ANTICIPATED:** \$9,035 – Planning/Design  
\$370,193 – Implementation/Construction/Acq (TBD)  
\$950,000 – Operations & Maint (TBD)

**TOTAL MGP PROJECT COST: \$3,922,390**

**PROPOSED PROJECT:** Construction of the one-acre Tierra de Rosas Public Plaza will bring to fruition a long-term project that will restore a blighted and largely vacant strip mall in a predominantly low-income, Latino community, transforming it to provide residents with open green space along with seating areas where they can gather, hold community events, and enjoy the outdoors. When the Commission’s larger Tierra de Rosas development is complete, the Plaza will serve as a central element of this mixed used development including residential and commercial uses, and connect with the Joe Rodota Trail, a popular paved walking and biking path that runs along the northern boundary of the property and extends west to Sebastopol.

**BACKGROUND:** The public plaza is a central component of the larger Tierra de Rosas Infrastructure Improvements project, which will include the development of affordable housing, a community/civic center, and a Mercado food hall. The total Tierra de Rosas cost is estimated at \$40,468,163 (including Plaza cost).

The Commission is now in the process of remediating environmental contamination conditions on the property and demolishing the existing, derelict buildings. The Commission has also developed the popular “Mitote Food Court” as an interim use on the property while completing the predevelopment work and obtaining the financing needed to move forward with construction of infrastructure improvements to support the planned mixed-used development of the property. The improved property will be subdivided, and the resultant parcels will be transferred to developers who will create a mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented development on the 7.4 acres now owned by the Commission.

### PROJECT ATTRIBUTES:

- **Program Intent:**
  - **Link:** The Public Plaza will connect Sebastopol Road to the Joe Rodota Trail, which runs along the northern property boundary. The trail is an 8.5-mile-long paved, off-road trail linking Santa Rosa and Sebastopol. This accessible trail runs parallel to Highway 12 and is a popular route for cyclists and pedestrians. Its rural sections offer views of farmland, the Laguna de Santa Rosa, and surrounding mountains.
  - **Construction of an outdoor public community gathering space in a natural setting:** The Tierra de Rosas Public Plaza will create a one-acre, outdoor public gathering space comprised mainly of lawn area and trees, along with seating areas, a bocce court, a play area, and gardens. The Plaza will provide a dedicated, aesthetically landscaped space for socializing and community events in an area where none currently exists.

- **Need:**
  - In an area identified in City plans as having a deficiency of community parks, the Plaza will provide a dedicated outdoor public gathering and recreation space along the Sebastopol Road corridor of Roseland.
  - Tierra de Rosas Plaza will complete remediation of environmental contamination on the property, which was caused by the previous gas station and dry-cleaning businesses that operated on the site for many years. Soil and water contamination have been removed and on-going monitoring wells are in place. Elimination of these types of contamination represent a significant need because they are critical to ensuring the public health and safety.
- **Benefits:**
  - Human: The Tierra de Rosas Public Plaza project will add landscaping to a currently blighted paved parking lot area, improving air quality and creating shade.
  - The property will be redeveloped pursuant to a pedestrian-oriented / walkable communities design and will be linked to the Joe Rodota Trail, which runs along the length of the northern boundary of the property. The Public Plaza will comprise an aesthetically pleasing and inviting public gathering place that provides access to nature in an otherwise car oriented and commercial environment.
  - The Plaza will create opportunities for neighborhood-serving commerce such as a pop-up farmer's market and be available for events such as festivals and concerts. These types of events will draw consumers to the Mercado Food Hall planned for the development, as well as to existing retail in the surrounding area.
  - Several schools are located within walking distance presenting opportunity for outdoor assemblies, the trail system, and park amenities.
  - Replacing the current impervious parking lot surfaces with a permeable surface will reduce runoff to creeks and increase groundwater supply. Landscaping with grasses, trees, and native or adapted plant species, will create nesting and feeding habitat for insects and birds. The Plaza will reduce the heat island effect by reducing black asphalt, and by increasing shade cover with trees and other shade structures.
- **Readiness**
  - Schedule: Admin – 2023-2030; planning – 2023; Implementation/Construction – 2024-2025; Operation & Maintenance – 2025
    - Planning/Design:
      - The project now known as the “Tierra de Rosas” mixed-used development, including its Public Plaza component, has been in the planning phase for over 15 years. The project’s lengthy process to date is the result of both the complexity of the project and external circumstances that affected the Commission’s ability to proceed in a timely way.
      - The Roseland community has been deeply involved in the conceptual design of the public plaza. Initial efforts resulted in the creation of the Sebastopol Road Urban Vision Plan (UVP). The County Board of Supervisors and Santa Rosa City Council adopted the UVP in 2007.
      - The Commission is now completing the predevelopment work and obtaining the financing needed to move forward with construction of infrastructure improvements.
      - MidPen, the housing partner, prepared the Public Improvement Plans, which were submitted to the City in September 2019. The Commission and MidPen are working to provide all remaining information required by the City, after which the Public Improvements Plan will be approved and MidPen and the Commission can proceed with finalizing the final map and constructing the improvements, including the Plaza.
  - Experience: The Sonoma County Community Development Commission’s Asset Management and Construction Services staff oversee all properties owned or leased by the agency and have extensive experience with residential properties and their grounds.
  - Match: Applicant is proposing 1: .9 match, with 31% Secured
  - Partial funding: Partial funding is an option, as the development is scalable. Receipt of less than the \$2 million in MGP funding would not prevent the project from proceeding, but may increase the length of time needed to complete the financing package before construction.



**OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:**

- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion: The project will help address equity issues by providing this Public Plaza amenity in an underserved and predominantly low-income, Latino community in Santa Rosa.
- Community Support: Letters of support from Los Cien, RED Housing Fund, Sonoma Co Dept of Health Services, Sonoma County Economic Development Board
- Performance on previous and/or current MGP projects: The Community Development Commission received a \$500,000 MGP award for the Public Plaza project in 2014. Due to complications, the funds weren't used and the award expired in October 2022. Despite delays, the Commission remains committed to completing the Public Plaza to provide the Roseland community with this, vibrant community gathering space.

**RECOMMENDATION:** This project is recommended for **\$800,000 for Implementation/Construction as described in Project Timeline/Workplan.**

**6. MARK WEST COMMUNITY PARK**

**Average Matrix Score: 66**

**APPLICANT:** Sonoma Land Trust  
**TYPE:** Acquisition (Only)  
**LOCATION:** Mark West  
**ACREAGE:** 1 Acre  
**MGP REQUEST:** **\$1,169,500**  
**MATCH:** \$ 650,000

**SECURE:** \$250,000 – Acquisition (Mark West MAC)  
\$100,000 – Acquisition (District 4 Infrastructure)  
\$19,500 - Acquisition (Sonoma Land Trust)  
**ANTICIPATED:** \$280,500 – Acquisition (Sonoma Land Trust)

**TOTAL MGP PROJECT COST: \$1,819,500**

**PROPOSED PROJECT:** The proposed project is an acquisition by the Sonoma Land Trust (SLT) of a one-acre property in the Mark West area of unincorporated Sonoma County with the purpose to create a new community park, playground, gardens and gathering place. The project meets the intention of the MGP by purchasing new land for public access to expand open space and outdoor recreational and educational amenities. It is a unique, time sensitive opportunity in the Mark West area that has significant support from the Mark West community. The project provides the community, which was greatly impacted by the 2017 Tubbs Fire, with a much-needed community park and playground, achieving physical, mental, and environmental health benefits for the community.

**BACKGROUND:** SLT is taking the lead on the acquisition and upon closing will transfer the property to the Mark West Area Community Fund (a newly formed 501 (c)(3)), which will assume management and stewardship. Other partners include Mark West Municipal Advisory Council (MWMAC) and the Mark West Area Chamber of Commerce.

**PROJECT ATTRIBUTES:**

- **Program Intent:**
    - New Open Space: Once acquired, property will be protected for a new open space park use. While the project is acquisition only, once acquired the applicant states the park will\*:
      - Construct an outdoor public community gathering space in a natural setting
      - Develop a new outdoor nature-based recreation opportunities
      - Implement restoration techniques to restore/enhance native habitats
      - Construct amenities to provide opportunity for public education about the natural world.
- (\*Note: This is an acquisition project only, therefore it cannot be scored on elements not in the funding request)



- **Need:**
  - There is no public open space within a half-mile of the proposed project. According to Trust for Public Land's ParkServe Tool, these neighborhoods are not within a 10-minute walking distance of a park, and they are listed as having a "low physical activity" rate.
  - The Mark West area has a high pollution and respiratory hazard rank, the highest land surface temperature rank, the second highest population density rank, a severe urban heat island effect, and the status of being in a heat risk priority zone.
  - The Mark West area was devastated by the 2017 wildfires, which leveled the project site and many homes. The neighborhood lacks a gathering space to reinforce community, healing and resiliency.
- **Benefits:**
  - Human: The proposed park plans to provide new public recreation and educational opportunities offering spaces for play and exercise and including a community garden for educational programming including learning ecology and skill-building workshops.\*
  - The project is located on a well-connected road, Old Redwood Highway, which is readily accessible by public transportation. As the park will be located within a half-mile and/or within a 10-minute walk of many Mark West residents, they will be encouraged to walk or ride their bikes to the park\*
  - The Mark West area has been recovering from the Tubbs Fire since it ravaged the community in late 2017—and this project is an opportunity to rebuild.
  - Nature: The park's green infrastructure will provide an increasingly important refuge during hot weather and combat the area's heat island effect by creating shade, lowering ambient temperature, and retaining moisture. It will also help prevent flooding during extreme weather events and sequester carbon above and below ground. The prevention of development on the property will avoid the greenhouse gas emissions that would result from energy use and vehicle use\*.

(\*Note: This is an acquisition project only, therefore it can't be scored on elements not in the funding request)
- **Readiness**
  - Acquisition: Sonoma Land Trust is authorized to sign a purchase contract with the property owner, with a scheduled close of October 1, 2023.
  - Planning/Design
    - The Project is an acquisition and does not require approvals or permits.
    - The next phase of park planning and securing permits for park operation will be undertaken by the Mark West Community Fund if the acquisition is successful.
  - Experience: SLT was established in 1976 and has protected over 58,000 acres of natural, recreational, scenic, and agricultural lands for the future of Sonoma County. It is a mature and financially strong land trust with the fiscal capacity to manage the operational costs of this acquisition. After acquisition by SLT, the long-term maintenance plan is that the new Mark West Area Community Fund will take over the operations and maintenance of the community park in a timeline established by the two agencies.
  - Match: Match is 1:1.7 (74%), Secured: 42%
    - Partial funding: Estimated sale is \$1.8 million scheduled for October 1, 2023. If partially funded, Sonoma Land Trust would need to raise the gap beyond the \$300,000 already committed.

#### **OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:**

- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: It is the intent of the Project to be inclusive of all people— including the young, elderly, disabled, and disadvantaged communities.
- Community Support: Support letters from Mark West Citizens Advisory Council, Mark West Chamber of Commerce, Mark West School District, Berry Brook Homeowners Assoc, and Sutter Health SR Regional Hospital.
- Performance on Previous and/or Current MGP Projects: None. See above for Open Space acquisition experience.
- Projects in Fire and Flood impacted Areas: A model Fire Impacted Area project as the site burned to the ground in the 2017 Tubbs Fire, along with much of the surrounding community.
- Geographic Diversity: This is the Mark West area's first MGP application.

**RECOMMENDATION: This project is recommended for full funding up to the requested \$1,169,500.**

## INITIAL STAFF FUNDING RECOMMENDATIONS

The 2022 Round 2 MGP cycle was highly competitive, with six eligible applicants requesting a total of \$8,209,500. This Round 2 funding request total exceeds the currently available Round 2 funding budget of \$2,950,000 (\$2,050,000 + \$900,000) by \$5,259,500.

The staff MGP subcommittee reviewed the 2022 MGP Round 2 projects and found that all applications scored above a threshold 65 score. Staff considered each application given the MGP guideline priorities and the limited total budget.

A table reflecting the Staff committee's initial funding recommendations for each project is below. The Ad Hoc Subcommittee may review these recommendations and either support them in full or make their own recommendations. Once determined, the Ad Hoc 2022 MGP funding recommendations will be considered by the full Advisory Committee and Fiscal Oversight Committees. Once reviewed by these two bodies, the 2022 MGP Round 2 recommendations will be presented to the Board for approval on August 22, 2023.

2022 MGP ROUND 2 STAFF INITIAL FUNDING RECOMMENDATIONS

PROJECT	APPLICANT	TYPE	TOTAL SCORE MAX = 100	REQUEST	INITIAL RECOMMENDATIONS	JUSTIFICATION
BOUNTY FARM	Petaluma Peoples Services	Acquisition & Improvement (Combination)	90	\$ 2,040,000	\$ 2,040,000	Recommending full funding. Acquisition not scaleable, property and 15-year urban ag/food security farm at risk if not fully funded. MGP prioritizes acquisition of new land to increase open space as a key consideration. Applicant Match 1:1+ 48%
SONOMA SCHELLVILLE TRAIL	Sonoma County Regional Parks	Acquisition/ Improvement (Combination)	86	\$ 1,000,000	\$ 500,000	Recommending 50% funding. \$500,000 to fund Acquisition, which is scalable, and will require applicant to secure outside additional funding. Project Improvement is included Match. Match 1:1+ 62% Secure. Recommendation reflects limited 2022 Round 2 MGP funds.
COLGAN CREEK NEIGHBORHOOD PARK PH 5	City of Santa Rosa Transportation & Public Works Dept -	Improvement	83	\$ 1,000,000	\$ -	Recommending no funding as Colgan Creek Ph 4 Project awarded 2022 MGP Rd 1 funding of \$1,500,000, and 2022 Round 2 funding is limited. Colgan Creek total funding to date is \$4,454,650 and project is currently implementing Phases 3 & 4. Staff recommends applying next funding cycle. Match 1:1+
GEYSERVILLE COMMUNITY PLAZA	Sonoma County Public Infrastructure	Improvement	69	\$ 1,000,000	\$ 400,000	Recommending 40% funding, \$400,000 for this first application and public park project in Geyserville. Project is scaleable, and funding would cover Project Admin and Planning (25%), and Implementation (75%). Applicant could reapply for additional improvements. Match Unsecured 1:1.
TIERRA DE ROSAS	Sonoma County Community Development Corporation	Improvement	69	\$ 2,000,000	\$ 800,000	Recommending 40% funding. \$800,000 for this long planned for community plaza in the underserved Roseland community. Project is scaleable and could use funding for Construction. Applicant could apply again for project improvement costs. Match 1:95, 30% secured.
MARK WEST COMMUNITY PARK	Sonoma Land Trust	Acquisition	66	\$ 1,169,500	\$ 1,169,500	Recommending full funding time sensitive acquisition project, a rare, available lot centrally located in the Mark West community. MGP prioritizes acquisition of new land to increase open space, area's new to the MGP program, and fire/flood impacted areas as key considerations. The first MGP application in Mark West, it and much of area were burned in 2017. Match 74% of Project Request, 31% secured.
TOTAL REQUESTED				\$ 8,209,500	\$ 4,909,500	
BUDGET RD 2 + SAVINGS				\$ 2,950,000	\$ 2,950,000	
Difference (Req-Budget)				\$ 5,259,500	\$ 1,959,500	
AWARDED 2022 RD 1				\$1,950,000	\$1,950,000	
ESTIMATED AWARD				\$10,159,500	\$ 6,859,500	
TOTAL 2022 (RD1 + RD2)						

Staff initial funding recommendations include funding five of the six applications for a total of **\$4,909,500**. If approved, these recommendations will help lead to the creation and permanent protection of three new community parks/plazas, a model urban farm, and trails in and near several Sonoma County cities and communities including Petaluma, Sonoma, Southwest Santa Rosa, Geyserville, Roseland, and for the first time in the Geyserville and the Mark West area.

If approved, staff funding recommendations would exceed the \$2,950,000 budget by \$1,959,500. This gap in funding would need to come from another source. Additionally, these funding recommendations in combination with funding awarded in Round 1 would result in a total 2022 MGP funding amount of **\$6,859,500**, the highest funding amount in MGP history.