



## CITY OF GLENDALE, CALIFORNIA REPORT TO THE CITY COUNCIL

### AGENDA ITEM

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Report: Acceptance of grant funds for hazardous brush clearance from the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CalFire)

1. Resolution authorizing the acceptance of \$184,150 in California Climate Investments Program funds from the CalFire's Fire Prevention Program for the Fire Reduction and Brush Abatement Program, and authorizing the City Manager to execute the agreements, amendments, payment requests and any other necessary documentation for the acceptance of the funds.
2. Resolution appropriating \$184,150.00 from CalFire, California Climate Investments Program fund, and an additional \$29,850 in matching funds from the Fire Department's existing General Fund balance.

### COUNCIL ACTION

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**Item Type:** Consent Calendar

**Approved for** October 18, 2022 **calendar**

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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The Glendale Fire Department Vegetation Management Program within the Fire Prevention Bureau manages the removal of hazardous vegetation on City owned property within 100 feet of residential structures.

This grant funding of \$184,150 from the CalFire California Climate Investment Program Fund and \$29,850 in matching funds for a total of \$214,000 will allow the City to conduct additional brush clearance on City owned property. The affected area consists of approximately 120 acres of hazardous vegetation between homes and the wildland urban interface at the base of the Verdugo Mountains.

## **COUNCIL PRIORITIES**

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Safe and Healthy Community: Removing hazardous vegetation that present a potential fire hazard near a structure will allow the City to be more prepared to prevent a destructive wildfire.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

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Staff respectfully recommends that the City Council:

1. Approve a resolution accepting \$184,150 in California Climate Investments Program funds from the CalFire's Fire Prevention Program for the Fire Reduction and Brush Abatement Program, and authorizing the City Manager to execute the agreements, amendments, payment requests and any other necessary documentation for the acceptance of the funds.
2. Approve a resolution appropriating \$184,150.00 from CalFire, California Climate Investments Program fund, and an additional \$29,850 in matching funds from the Fire Department's existing General Fund balance.

## **BACKGROUND**

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CalFire's California Climate Investments Wildfire Prevention Grants Program provides funding for fire prevention projects and activities in and near fire threatened communities that focus on increasing the protection of people, structures, and communities. Funded activities include hazardous fuels reduction, wildfire prevention planning, and wildfire prevention education with an emphasis on improving public health and safety while reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

The Glendale Fire Department applied for a grant focusing on hazardous fuels reduction for approximately 120 acres of brush area between homes and the wildland urban interface at the base of the Verdugo Mountains. This area is of importance because of the close proximity of the homes in this community to the hazardous fuels. Mitigation efforts associated with the scope of this grant will also remove the hazardous vegetation that, if ignited, could threaten the City's Brand Library, historic structures, and radio and communication towers at the top of the Verdugo Mountains.

The project influence zone encompasses portions of 6 communities in the City of Glendale, including Grandview, El Miradero, Glenwood, Verdugo Viejo, Brockmont, and Verdugo Woodlands communities.

## **ANALYSIS**

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The grant provides funds for a fire reduction/brush abatement project to reduce hazardous fuels on City owned property within the Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone of the City of Glendale. Through the use of mechanical and natural means, the hazardous vegetation will be removed near fire threatened communities and will focus on increasing the protection of people, structures and communities.

The proposed project is a three tiered approach to reduce the threat of wildfires and thus improve public safety. The first tier will include the use of professional, contracted crews

with hand tools to physically remove hazardous vegetation and later mulch the vegetation to use as ground cover. The second tier will be to purchase a chipper that can be used over many years to assist the community with removal of hazardous vegetation from around their homes and chip the vegetation into mulch, which could then be repurposed as mulch. The third tier will consist of the use of goats to naturally remove vegetation in areas that are too difficult for the crews to reach.

#### Project Outcomes:

- Reduce the risk of structure ignition during a wildfire by removing or reducing hazardous vegetation on City owned properties that is within 100 feet of a structure.
- Cut tall grass and weeds, thin dense brush and trees, trim off lower branches on large trees, and remove all dead vegetation.
- Reduce hazardous vegetation in the cities more rural areas through the use of goats.
- Reduce Greenhouse gases by eliminating woody vegetation and cover soil with mulch.
- Educate the community thorough public outreach.

Grant Component:	Grant Funds:	Matching Funds:
• Fuel Reduction/Abatement	\$119,000	\$21,000
• Goats	\$20,400	\$3,600
• CEQA	\$15,000	\$0
• Wood Chipper	\$29,750	\$5,250

The wood chipper will be used initially during the first tier of the fuel reduction and abatement process, allowing the chipped vegetation to be applied to the project area in order to help prevent erosion and reduce greenhouse gases. Long term plans for the wood chipper include the Fire Department partnering with the Public Works Department's Forestry section and the Community Services and Parks Department for shared use, storage and maintenance of the wood chipper. The new wood chipper would be included into the normal rotation with Public Works' two wood chippers currently in use. This third wood chipper would ensure their chipping operations can be maintained without interruption when a wood chipper is taken out of service for maintenance or repair, and ensure a wood chipper is available for emergencies and community wood chipping/brush clearance events the Fire Department will be hosting during the year.

#### **STAKEHOLDERS/OUTREACH**

The stakeholders include the owners of the properties located within the communities of Grandview, El Miradero, Glenwood, Verdugo Viejo, Brockmont, and Verdugo Woodlands. Information on the grant funds can be included in the annual brush clearance letter the Glendale Fire Department mails to the property owners at the beginning of the brush clearance season (May).

#### **FISCAL IMPACT**

The Fuel Reduction and Abatement Project will cost \$214,000. The Fire Department budget will absorb the matching funds requirement of \$29,850 for this grant during the current fiscal year by requesting to transfer existing General Fund budget to the Fire Grant Fund. However, the grant award amount of \$184,150 was not approved as a part of the FY 2022-23 budget, therefore staff is requesting an appropriation of \$184,150 from State Grant revenue. The appropriation requests are outlined below:

<b>Requesting Appropriation</b>			
<b>Amount</b>	<b>From (Account String)</b>	<b>To (Account String)</b>	<b>Funding Source</b>
\$24,600	GL: 43110-1010-GFD-4003	GL: 43110-2650-GFD-0020- PL: GFD00934BN	Transfer from General Fund
\$5,250	GL: 43110-1010-GFD-4003	GL: 45150-2650-GFD-0020- PL: GFD00934BN	Transfer from General Fund
\$154,400	GL: 32610-2650-GFD-0020- PL: GFD00934AG	GL: 43110-2650-GFD-0020- PL: GFD00934AG	State Grant
\$29,750	GL: 32610-2650-GFD-0020- PL: GFD00934AG	GL: 45150-2650-GFD-0020- PL: GFD00934AG	State Grant

## **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW (CEQA/NEPA)**

CEQA exempts specific actions necessary to prevent or mitigate an emergency. Pub Res C §21080(b)(4); 14 Cal Code Regs §15269(c), which includes a sudden, unexpected occurrence, involving a clear and imminent danger, demanding immediate action to prevent or mitigate loss of, or damage to, life, health, property, or essential public services. Here, the grant provides funds for a fire reduction/brush abatement project to reduce hazardous fuels on City owned property within the Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone of the City of Glendale.

## **CAMPAIGN DISCLOSURE**

This item is exempt from campaign disclosure requirements.

## **ALTERNATIVES**

Alternative 1: Approve the resolution accepting the grant funds and the resolution of appropriation for the acceptance of the grant.

Alternative 2: Decline to approve the resolutions and forfeit the grant funding.

Alternative 3: City Council may consider any other alternative not proposed by staff.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION**

### **Prepared by:**

Foster McLean, Fire Marshal

**Approved by:**

Roubik R. Golanian, P.E., City Manager

**EXHIBITS/ATTACHMENTS**

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None.