



COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

For the meeting of: 6/16/2020

File #: 20-663

To: Board of Supervisors

From: Public Works

Agenda Section: Consent

SUBJECT:

Resolution Authorizing Acceptance of Grant Funds from the Ocean Protection Council for the Natural Shoreline Infrastructure Project

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Adopt the attached resolution authorizing acceptance of grant funds from the Ocean Protection Council for the Natural Shoreline Infrastructure Project; and
2. Approve, and authorize the Public Works Director, or a designee thereof, to execute, the attached first amendment to the consultant services agreement with GHD, Inc. regarding the provision of planning, engineering and environmental services to assist with preparation of the sea level rise adaptation plan for Humboldt Bay transportation infrastructure.

SOURCE OF FUNDING:

California Department of Transportation Adaptation Planning Grant; City of Eureka; Humboldt County Association of Governments; Road Fund (1200); National Fish and Wildlife Foundation; Ocean Protection Council

DISCUSSION:

On February 5, 2019 (Item C-27), the Board of Supervisors approved a consultant services agreement with GHD, Inc. regarding the provision of planning, engineering and environmental services to assist with preparation of a sea level rise adaptation plan for transportation infrastructure in the Eureka Slough portion of Humboldt Bay (“Sea Level Rise Adaptation Planning Project”). The Sea Level Rise Adaptation Planning Project was initiated with grant funds from the California Department of Transportation and cost-share provided by the City of Eureka, the Humboldt County Association of Governments and the County of Humboldt. Completion of the Sea Level Rise Adaptation Planning Project is currently anticipated to occur in December 2020. Further information regarding the Sea Level Rise Adaptation Planning Project is available online at <https://humboldt.gov/2487/Sea-Level-Rise>.

One potential strategy for adapting to sea level rise within Humboldt Bay involves protecting and/or expanding salt marsh to take advantage of the natural properties of salt marsh for dissipating wave

energy. This approach could help reduce erosion and wave overtopping of shoreline structures such as levees and railroad embankments while conserving and enhancing a valuable habitat type. In July 2019, Public Works submitted an application to the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation for a grant of One Hundred and Twenty-five Thousand Dollars (\$125,000) to perform site characterization and prepare preliminary design for a natural shoreline infrastructure project along the Brainard-to-Bracut segment of the Eureka-Arcata Highway 101 and railroad corridor (“Natural Shoreline Infrastructure Project”). The Ocean Protection Council of the California Natural Resources Agency is offering to provide a funding match of One Hundred and Twenty-five Thousand Dollars (\$125,000) for the Natural Shoreline Infrastructure Project. Adoption of the attached resolution will allow the County of Humboldt to accept the grant funding made available by the Ocean Protection Council.

The segment of the Eureka-Arcata Highway 101 and railroad corridor between Brainard and Bracut is especially vulnerable to wave overtopping and flood hazards and is a favorable candidate site for investigating the feasibility of a nature-based adaptation measure. This segment is a portion of the project area for the future Humboldt Bay Trail South Project, which is being developed by the Humboldt County Department of Public Works (“Public Works”), and is within the planning area for the Sea Level Rise Adaptation Planning Project. One of the challenges of natural shoreline infrastructure projects is the need to understand site-specific physical processes. Other challenges include the need to achieve an overall net ecological benefit to the affected intertidal habitats, the need to develop site-specific designs with interdisciplinary teams and aligning the innovative approach with existing permitting paradigms. The Natural Shoreline Infrastructure Project was developed specifically to address these challenges. Completion of the Natural Shoreline Infrastructure Project is currently anticipated to occur in September 2021. However, the Natural Shoreline Infrastructure Project is currently limited to a feasibility and planning study for possible future actions which have not been approved, adopted or funded.

The attached first amendment to the consultant services agreement with GHD, Inc. will integrate the Sea Level Rise Adaptation Planning Project and the Natural Shoreline Infrastructure Project for purposes of efficiency and cost-effectiveness. Public Works was authorized by the Board on February 5, 2019, to execute amendments to the consultant services agreement with GHD, Inc. that do not cumulatively exceed Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000). Since the proposed amendment exceeds this threshold, Public Works recommends that the Board authorize the Public Works Director to execute the amendment.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

The grant funds from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and Ocean Protection Council would pay for staff time to work on the Natural Shoreline Infrastructure Project. The budget includes Twenty-Seven Thousand Four Hundred Five Dollars (\$27,405) for staff time and Two Hundred and Twenty-Two Thousand Five Hundred Ninety-Five Dollars (\$222,595) for professional consulting assistance. Funding for the Natural Shoreline Infrastructure Project has been incorporated into the proposed fiscal year 2020-21 budget. As a result, approval of the recommend actions will not impact the Humboldt County General Fund.

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK:

The recommended actions support the Board of Supervisors' Strategic Framework by providing for and maintaining infrastructure.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

California Department of Transportation; City of Eureka; Humboldt County Association of Governments; National Fish and Wildlife Foundation; Ocean Protection Council

ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Board could choose not to adopt the attached resolution authorizing acceptance of the grant funds from the Ocean Protection Council for the Natural Shoreline Infrastructure Project. This alternative is not recommended because it would foreclose an opportunity to pursue an innovative, multi-objective project for flood risk reduction and habitat enhancement along the Eureka-Arcata Highway 101 and railroad corridor, which is highly vulnerable to flood hazards.

The Board could also choose not to approve the attached first amendment to the consultant services agreement with GHD, Inc. regarding implementation of the Sea Level Rise Adaptation Planning Project, and instead direct Public Works to issue a new Request for Proposals for professional assistance to perform the supplemental work needed to complete the Natural Shoreline Infrastructure Project. This alternative is not recommended since GHD and its subconsultants are knowledgeable about the project area through their work on the Sea Level Rise Adaptation Planning Project and Humboldt Bay Trail South Project, and preparing and circulating a Request for Proposals would increase administrative costs by approximately Two Thousand Dollars (\$2,000.00) and delay the Natural Shoreline Infrastructure Project by three (3) to four (4) months.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Consultant Services Agreement with GHD, Inc. Regarding the Provision of Planning, Engineering and Environmental Services to Assist with Preparation of the Sea Level Rise Adaptation Plan for Humboldt Bay Transportation Infrastructure (Phase 1)
2. Application to the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation for the Natural Shoreline Infrastructure in Humboldt Bay for Intertidal Coastal Marsh Restoration and Transportation Corridor Protection
3. Resolution Authorizing Acceptance of Grant Funds from the Ocean Protection Council for the Natural Shoreline Infrastructure Project
4. First Amendment to the Consultant Services Agreement with GHD, Inc. Regarding the Provision of Planning, Engineering and Environmental Services to Assist with Preparation of the Sea Level Rise Adaptation Plan for Humboldt Bay Transportation Infrastructure (Phase 1)

PREVIOUS ACTION/REFERRAL:

Board Order No.: C-27

Meeting of: February 5, 2019

File No.: 19-139