



COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

Legislation Text

File #: 20-1092, Version: 1

To: Board of Supervisors

From: Public Works

Agenda Section: Consent

SUBJECT:

Annie & Mary Trail Projects

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Authorize Public Works to submit an application to the Active Transportation Program for the Annie & Mary Trail Phase 2 Project (Blue Lake to Glendale); and
2. Approve, and authorize the Chair to sign, the attached support letter for the City of Arcata's grant application to the Active Transportation Program for the Arcata Annie & Mary Trail Connectivity Project.

SOURCE OF FUNDING:

State Active Transportation Program
Forest Resources and Recreation Fund (1710)

DISCUSSION:

The Annie & Mary Trail is envisioned as a network of trails connecting Arcata and Blue Lake along the Mad River corridor and utilizing portions of the former Arcata & Mad River Railroad right-of-way. Community members initiated planning efforts in 1997 and a feasibility study was developed by Redwood Community Action Agency ("RCAA") in 2003. The Friends of the Annie & Mary Rail-Trail have raised funds and advocated for trail development for nearly twenty (20) years. The trail is identified as a regional priority in the Regional Transportation Plan prepared by the Humboldt County Association of Governments and as a component of the Highway 299 Transportation Concept Report prepared by the California Department of Transportation ("Caltrans"). Annie & Mary Trail projects currently in development are shown on Map 1 in Attachment 1.

The City of Blue Lake is currently constructing Phase 1 of the Annie & Mary Trail. The Phase 1 project extends approximately one-half mile along South Railroad Avenue from H Street/Hatchery Road to Chartin Road within Blue Lake city limits. Construction will be completed by Oct. 2020.

In 2018, Humboldt County Public Works developed preliminary design plans for Phase 2 of the Annie

& Mary Trail (Attachment 2). The Phase 2 project would begin at Chartin Road and continue westward along the former railroad grade for approximately 0.35 miles before extending parallel to Highway 299 for approximately 1.3 miles and terminating at Glendale Drive in Glendale. Since 2018, Public Works has been collaborating with Caltrans and RCAA to refine the design plans, perform community outreach, and pursue funding.

Public Works proposes to submit an application to the Active Transportation Program (“ATP”) for funds to complete the Annie & Mary Trail Phase 2 Project. Applications for ATP Cycle 5 are due by Sept. 15, 2020. Funding is needed for environmental review, permitting, right-of-way acquisition, final design, and construction. The portion of the trail proposed for the former railroad grade is located on property owned by the North Coast Railroad Authority (“NCRA”). The majority of the project would be situated within Caltrans right-of-way. Portions of the project may require acquisition of easements. Public Works would enter into a cooperative agreement with Caltrans for project implementation and would transfer funds for Caltrans to design and construct the portion of the project within Caltrans right-of-way. Caltrans has agreed to maintain the portion of the trail within Caltrans right-of-way. Public Works would be responsible for maintaining the portions of the trail, approximately 0.4 miles, situated outside the Caltrans right-of-way. Public Works would collaborate with City of Blue Lake, Friends of the Annie & Mary Rail-Trail, and the Volunteer Trail Stewards on trail maintenance. Support letters from Caltrans, NCRA, and the Blue Lake Rancheria are provided in Attachment 3. Funding decisions from the competitive ATP grant solicitation will be announced near the end of 2020. The design, right-of-way, and permitting phases would require approximately two (2) to three (3) years.

In 2017, the City of Arcata received funding to plan the western portion of the Annie & Mary Trail, called the Arcata Annie & Mary Trail Connectivity Project. In 2018, the City of Arcata approached Public Works and the Humboldt Bay Municipal Water District (“Water District”) about extending the proposed project beyond city limits to continue to the Water District’s Mad River Park #1 located along West End Road, in order to enhance the benefits of the project by connecting to a recreational destination. The proposed trail alignment is shown on Map 3 in Attachment 1. Preliminary plans are provided in Attachment 4. Approximately 2.2 miles are situated within City of Arcata jurisdiction and approximately 1.1 miles are situated within the unincorporated area of Humboldt County. The City of Arcata intends to apply to ATP Cycle 5 for funds to complete the project. Portions of the project would be situated on property owned by NCRA and portions of the project may require acquisition of easements. The City of Arcata requests that the County of Humboldt accept maintenance responsibility for the portion of the project situated outside city limits within the unincorporated area. The proposed support letter in Attachment 5 provides conceptual approval of the preliminary design and agrees to accept maintenance responsibility for the segment within the unincorporated area.

In September 2018, Governor Brown signed Senate Bill SB 1029, known as the North Coast Railroad Authority Closure and Transition to Trails Act, to dissolve the NCRA and transfer the rights-of-way and other properties to a successor agency that would create a Great Redwood Trail for hiking, biking, and riding. This transition is currently being administered by a task force composed of California State Transportation Agency, Caltrans, Department of Finance, and Department of General Services. An assessment report regarding NCRA finances, right-of-way, and the condition of the railroad

infrastructure is expected to be released within one (1) to two (2) months. Establishment of a successor agency is expected by Jul. 1, 2021. Completion of the Arcata Annie & Mary Trail Connectivity Project and Annie & Mary Trail Phase 2 Project would advance the legislative intent of SB 1029 and the vision of the Great Redwood Trail.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

Funds to prepare the ATP grant application for the Annie & Mary Trail Phase 2 Project are incorporated into the approved Fiscal Year 2020-21 budget for 1710715 (Bicycles & Trailways Program). If this project is selected for funding, the grant would provide full funding for project development and construction. Similarly, the ATP grant would provide full funding for project development and construction if the Arcata Annie & Mary Trail Connectivity Project is selected.

The cost for annual maintenance of the proposed 0.35-mile trail from Chartin Road to Highway 299 and the propose 200 feet of trail within Glendale is approximately Two Thousand Dollars (\$2,000) to Four Thousand Dollars (\$4,000) per year. The cost for annual maintenance of the proposed 1.1-mile trail segment parallel to West End Road terminating at the Water District’s Mad River Park #1 is approximately Eight Thousand Dollars (\$8,000) to Ten Thousand Dollars (\$10,000) per year.

Annual funding for the Bicycles & Trailways Program is provided through state Transportation Development Act (“TDA”) allocations. Historically, this funding source has been used for maintenance of the Hammond Trail and planning for regional trail projects. This funding source will also be used for maintenance of the upcoming Humboldt Bay Trail South project following construction. Maintenance of the designated trail segments in the two (2) proposed Annie & Mary Trail projects would be funded through the TDA allocation and in conjunction with the City of Blue Lake, Friends of the Annie & Mary Rail Trail, and the Volunteer Trail Stewards program of the Humboldt Trails Council.

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK:

This action supports your Board’s Strategic Framework by providing for and maintaining infrastructure and creating opportunities for improved safety and health.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

City of Arcata, City of Blue Lake, Caltrans, Blue Lake Rancheria, NCRA

ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Board could choose to decline to support grant applications for the Annie & Mary Trail Phase 2 Project and/or the Arcata Annie & Mary Trail Connectivity Project. These alternatives are not recommended because the grant applications provide an opportunity to leverage state funding to provide transformational changes to the transportation infrastructure within the Humboldt Bay region for enhancing mobility, safety, and recreational opportunities.

ATTACHMENTS:

- 1 Maps
- 2 Annie & Mary Trail Phase 2 Project Preliminary Plans (January 2018)
- 3 Support Letters
- 4 Arcata Annie & Mary Trail Connectivity Project Preliminary Plans (December 2019)
- 5 Draft Support Letter to City of Arcata

PREVIOUS ACTION/REFERRAL:

Board Order No.: M-1

Meeting of: May 24, 2016

File No.: N/A