



**TOWN OF LOS GATOS
COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT**

MEETING DATE: 06/15/2021

ITEM NO: 17

DATE: June 7, 2021
TO: Mayor and Town Council
FROM: Laurel Prevetti, Town Manager
SUBJECT: Roadside Fire Fuel Reduction (Project 812-0130):
a. Authorize a FY 2021/22 Expenditure Budget Adjustments in the Capital in the Amount of \$75,000 for the Roadside Fire Fuel Reduction Project (411-812-0130); and
b. Authorize the Town Manager to Apply for FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, Asking for Funds for Roadside Vegetation Management

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Town Council authorize the following actions for Los Gatos Roadside Vegetation Management:

- a. Authorize a FY 2021/22 Expenditure Budget Adjustment in the amount of \$75,000 for the Roadside Fire Fuel Reduction Project (411-812-0130); and
- b. Authorize the Town Manager to apply for a FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency's) Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) (DR-4458), requesting funds for roadside vegetation management.

BACKGROUND:

The combination of increasing development in or near wildlands, the accumulation of wildland fuels, a drying and warming climate, longer fire seasons, and rugged terrain has resulted in significant wildfire risk to communities located in or near the wildland urban interface (WUI). The WUI area is best described as a wildland-urban intermix with homes scattered amongst wildland fuels. The Town's WUI planning area includes primarily Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone areas, as defined by CalFire and the Town of Los Gatos Fire Prevention and Protection Ordinance (CalFire 2008; Town of Los Gatos 2019; 2016, Amended 2020).

PREPARED BY: Hannah Tarling
Emergency Services Coordinator

Reviewed by: Town Manager, Assistant Town Manager, Town Attorney, Finance Director, and Parks and Public Works Director

BACKGROUND (continued):

Considering the high risk of wildfire to Town residents, property and economy, Town staff propose applying for the FEMA HMPG with a project titled, Los Gatos Hazardous Fuels Reduction Plan. This plan would remove hazardous vegetation and create defensible space around approximately 24.4 miles of Town-owned hillside roadways that have been identified by the Town and its residents as roadways of high concern and are further identified in the Town's Roadside Vegetation Management Plan.

At the end of 2020, the Town addressed approximately 6.5 miles of WUI roadway. Significant amounts of WUI roadway remain for future phases of the project.

DISCUSSION:

On May 6, 2021, Town staff submitted a Notice of Interest (NOI) to the California Office of Emergency Services (CalOES) for a wildfire mitigation grant, in the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program for disaster DR-4558. CalOES approved the NOI, allowing the Town to apply to the grant program. The Los Gatos Hazardous Fuels Reduction project has an estimated total cost of \$2,300,000, requiring a 25% local cost share of \$575,000. While the Town Council has budgeted for \$500,000 for vegetation management, staff is recommending an additional \$75,000 allocation to move forward with the Town's full application amount to reduce hazardous fuels in the high-risk wildland urban interface. If the Town is awarded this grant, the project work must be completed within 36 months.

CONCLUSION:

Approval of the recommendation would allow staff to apply for the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (DR-4558).

COORDINATION:

This project has been coordinated with Parks and Public Works Department and the Town Manager's Office.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Staff is recommending an FY 2021/22 expenditure budget adjustment in the amount of \$75,000 for the Roadside Fire Fuel Reduction Project (411-812-0120) to allow for a 25% local cost share for costs and other expenditures related to the project.

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FISCAL IMPACT (continued):

The additional funding is available from the identified 50% of Measure G and property sale proceeds dedicated by Town Council for capital projects. This project will require project management and coordination by staff. Staff costs are tracked for all projects. Tracking of staff costs allows for accountability in the costs of projects, recovery of costs from grant funded projects, and identification of future staffing needs.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT:

This is a project as defined under CEQA and an environmental analysis has been completed. The project is Statutorily Exempt (Section 15301(c) Existing Streets). A notice of exemption has been filed.