

**EAST BAY REGIONAL PARK DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
AGENDA STAFF REPORT**

DATE	February 6, 2024
TITLE	Authorization of a Grant Application for the Department of Transportation’s Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity Grant Program for the Richmond Bay Trail Gap Closure Project in the Amount of \$6,400,000
DIVISION	Finance and Management Services
FROM	Katy Hornbeck, Grants Manager Ana M Alvarez, Deputy General Manager
APPROVED	Sabrina Landreth, General Manager 

RECOMMENDATION

The General Manager recommends that the Board of Directors authorize a grant application to the Department of Transportation’s Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Grant Program for the Richmond Bay Trail Gap Closure project in the amount of \$6,400,000.

BACKGROUND

Raise Program

The Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE), provides a unique opportunity for the Department of Transportation (DOT) to invest in road, transit and port projects that promise to achieve national objectives. Previously known as both Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) and the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery Discretionary Grant (TIGER), Congress has dedicated \$12.3 billion for 14 rounds of National Infrastructure Investments to fund projects that have a significant local and regional impact. It is a discretionary grant program for investments in surface transportation infrastructure that will have significant local or regional impact. The programs priorities are projects with beneficial long-term outcomes, job creation, economic stimulus, innovation and partnership. Additionally, competitive projects must reduce potential serious injuries/fatalities, elevate commute time for drivers, connect people to jobs, services, and education, and have regional connectivity.

The RAISE granting criteria established by Congress includes safety, state of good repair, economic competitiveness, environmental sustainability, and quality of life. For the RAISE grant project evaluation, the DOT staff shared there will be emphasis on how the project provides for racial equity and environmental sustainability. Through these lenses, the criteria elements Park District staff considered during project evaluation are:

- Safety – Does this project provide solutions to persistent safety issues and relate to the overall community health?
- State of Good Repair – Will the established project provide for long lasting infrastructure, accessible to the public?

- Economic Competitiveness – Will the project provide for lasting, equitable economic benefits for the public?
- Environmental Sustainability – Is this project providing for adaptation or mitigation of a changing climate?
- Quality of Life – Does this project serve the local community? Did the project process involve communities who have not historically been involved in project development?

Application History

The East Bay Regional Park District's regional trails are an integral part of the region's active transportation network. Many planned expansion and improvement projects qualify for RAISE funding. The Park District has applied to the RAISE program twice (Fiscal Year 2021 and Fiscal Year 2023). In each application round, the Park District's project list represented high priority projects in the Regional Trails network that closed gaps and connected with transportation hubs, jobs and housing centers.

In 2021, the Park District submitted a robust RAISE application requesting \$24.6 million for eight (8) proposed projects, but it was not selected for a grant award. Park District staff was able to receive feedback from the Department of Transportation which helped inform the project list submitted in the 2023 application package. The application submitted in 2023 reduced the number of proposed projects to four (4) for a total requested amount of \$18.94 million. The application was scored by reviewers as "Highly Rated" and advanced to the final review stage; however, was not selected for grant funding. Because the application had advanced to the highly rated list, but not selected, it was designated as a project of merit.

ANALYSIS

After review of available match funding, current project statuses and timelines, and how competitive each project would score against the grant criteria, Park District staff has determined to apply to DOT's RAISE program for one project: Richmond Bay Trail Gap Closure.

The Richmond Bay Trail Gap Closure project will construction of a .9-mile paved Class I multi-use extension of the San Francisco Bay Trail from Pinole Point Business Park in Richmond, CA to Point Wilson in Contra Costa County, CA providing a connection to previous TIGER II investments and the Hercules Intermodal Transit Station in partnership with the City of Richmond, Contra Costa County Public Works, and Contra Costa Transportation Authority.

Preliminary engineering and design for this .9-mile gap in the San Francisco Bay Trail from Point Pinole to Wilson Point is underway. A portion of the trail will be located in the outer 15 feet of the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) right-of-way (ROW) and is included in the 2016 amended and restated Memorandum of Understanding between the Park District and UPRR. Other portions of the trail are proposed within a 50-foot trail easement dedicated to the Park District by Pinole Point Properties and additional ROW will be needed from Contra Costa County to make this trail a reality.

This item was brought to the Board Executive Committee on January 17, 2024. The Executive Committee supported the application submission for this project.

FISCAL IMPACT

This action will authorize a grant application for \$6,400,000 for the construction of the Richmond Bay Trail Gap Closure project. The estimated total project cost is currently \$8 million. If awarded, grant funds will be budgeted into the existing project (#528300 – Develop Trail to Point Wilson). There is a 20% non-federal match requirement for the RAISE program. Park District staff continue to seek grant funding for this project to go towards the match requirement. There is approximately \$845,000 already appropriated into the project. This includes \$500,000 secured in grant funds from

the West Contra Costa Transportation Advisory Committee. Once the project is completed, it will increase the long-term operational cost of the Park District.

ATTACHMENTS

None.



**EAST BAY REGIONAL PARK DISTRICT
RESOLUTION NO. 2023- 02 -
FEBRUARY 6, 2024**

**AUTHORIZATION OF A GRANT APPLICATION FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF
TRANSPORTATION'S REBUILDING AMERICAN INFRASTRUCTURE WITH
SUSTAINABILITY AND EQUITY GRANT PROGRAM FOR THE RICHMOND BAY
TRAIL GAP CLOSURE PROJECT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$6,400,000**

WHEREAS, the U.S. Department of Transportation is accepting grant applications to the Rebuilding Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) discretionary grant program for capital investments in surface transportation infrastructure for regional trail projects with a significant impact on a region; and

WHEREAS, the East Bay Regional Park District (Park District) was successful in securing significant funds from the prior transportation grant program: Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery Discretionary Grant (TIGER); and

WHEREAS, the Park District has identified a project that will meet the grant program priorities, with beneficial long-term outcomes, job creation, economic stimulus, innovation and partnership; and

WHEREAS, the Park District will submit a grant application for \$6,400,000 for the Richmond Bay Trail Gap Closure project. This is a high priority project in the Regional Trails network that will close a critical gap and connect with transportation hubs, jobs and housing centers; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors of the East Bay Regional Park District hereby approves submission of a grant application to the U.S. Department of Transportation RAISE discretionary Grant Program for the Richmond Bay Trail Gap Closure project as presented to the Board on February 6, 2024; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the East Bay Regional Park District Board of Directors authorizes and directs the General Manager or Assistant General Manager of Finance and Management Services\CFO, on behalf of the Park District and in its name, to accept grant funds and execute and deliver such documents including, but not limited to applications, agreements, payment requests and amendments and to do such acts as may be deemed or appropriate to accomplish the intentions of this resolution; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Assistant General Manager of Finance and Management Services\CFO or Budget Manager is hereby authorized to amend the current year's budget, without further Board action, upon receipt of the executed grant contract from the Grants Manager. The budget amendment will include an increase in budgeted revenue and a corresponding increase in appropriation for the amount stipulated in the grant contract.

Moved by Director _____, and seconded by Director _____, and
adopted February 6, 2024, by the following vote:

FOR:

AGAINST:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT: