

“Placerville, a Unique Historical Past Forging into a Golden Future”



City Manager’s Report
July 11, 2017, City Council Meeting
Prepared by: M. Cleve Morris, City Manager
Item #: 12.4

Subject: Adopt a Resolution Approving the Placerville Trail Improvement Program dated July 2017 and Authorizing Expenditures in the amount of \$9,442.00 for the El Dorado Trail Improvement Program.

Background:

The El Dorado Trail runs from East to West through the City of Placerville. Most of the Trail System is a Class I Trail through the City except for the portion running through Historic Downtown Placerville. The trail is a significant amenity for the City which provides great benefits in terms of exercise, recreation, commuting and other uses. Citizens and visitors alike enjoy the benefits of the trail.

Over the past couple of years, the trail has experienced an increase in criminal activity. This activity has produced increased complaints and concerns from trail users, many stating that they no longer feel safe using the trail. The City of Placerville maintains the trail system from Forni Road through the City to Jaquier Road. Sections of the trail extending beyond these areas are maintained by El Dorado County. For the past few months we have been exploring options to improve the trail. The attached Improvement plan is a result of our discussions with staff, trail users and other agencies such as the California Department of Transportation.

Discussion:

Staff has met with Vice Mayor Thomas and Councilmember Acuna to work on improving the trail. In addition, trail enthusiasts have assisted in providing information and completing projects on the trail. One such project was led by Jackie Neau who led a group of volunteers in one area of concern, to clear brush and raise the tree canopy to increase visibility and discourage illegal activity. Parks staff has also taken on projects to assist in clearing undergrowth to improve security.

The attached document was a collaborative effort of the Community Services Department, Police Department, Volunteers, CalTrans, Councilmember Acuna and Vice-Mayor Thomas. The document is self-explanatory in its goals to implement projects that will assist in improving security on the trail and discouraging illegal activity. In addition, the projects will improve the aesthetics of the trail, making it more inviting for all trail users.

On Wednesday, June 28, 2017, Staff met with CalTrans officials to discuss their participation in the project. There are some areas adjacent to the trail that are in CalTrans right-of-way where

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significant undergrowth and low tree canopy has become a problem. CalTrans was very good to work with and agreed to improve those areas identified as problems. That work by CalTrans has already started and been completed in many areas. CalTrans agreed to work with staff to keep the areas maintained. We greatly appreciate their cooperation and quick response to this project.

Two areas that will be a main focus at this time are security and maintenance. The Police Department has put together a program to assist in providing a safe environment for trail users. The project will consist of an initial six month program followed by regular trail patrols. The estimated cost for this project is \$9,442. In reviewing the current year budget, we feel this cost can be absorbed due to current vacancies in the department.

The second project will consist of increased trail maintenance, specifically addressing clearing of undergrowth and raising of tree canopy to reduce secluded areas that may be used for criminal activity. A specific cost for this project has not yet been identified. However, staff will use existing maintenance funds over the next six months and reevaluate at Mid-Year to determine if additional funding is necessary.

In addition to these projects staff will continue to improve the trail. Other projects include new signage, Adopt-a-Trail Program, Eyes on the Trail program, and other efforts to help with security and assist with trail maintenance.

Staff is requesting Council to adopt the attached resolution approving the trail improvement program and authorizing the expenditure of funds for the Police program and the Trail Maintenance Program in the Community Services Department.

Options:

1. Adopt a resolution approving the program and funding as outlined.
2. Adopt a resolution with modifications to the outlined program.
3. Do not adopt the resolution at this time and continue the current efforts to maintain the trail.

Cost:

The projected cost of the proposed trail patrol program is \$9,442 based on 336 hours of additional Reserve Officer work hours. The cost for the trail maintenance program has not been established at this time. However staff will work within the established budget limits and come back to Council if necessary at mid-year

Budget Impact:

The adopted Fiscal Year 2017/2018 Operating Budget assumes three part-time Reserve Officer positions at sixteen hours per month for a total of 576 hours (3 Reserve Officers x 16 hours x 12 months). The proposed trail patrol program would add 336 hours of Reserve Officer work hours at a cost of \$9,442 which is in excess of what was assumed in the adopted Operating Budget.

There are currently two full-time Police Officer positions that are currently vacant. Staff anticipates the budget savings from these two position vacancies would offset the cost of the proposed \$9,442 trail patrol program.

Recommendation:

Adopt a Resolution Approving the Placerville Trail Improvement Program dated July 2017 and Authorizing Expenditures in the amount of \$9,442.00 for the El Dorado Trail Improvement Program.



M. Cleve Morris, City Manager



**Steve Youel,
Director of Community Services**



James Ortega, Chief of Police