TO: HONORABLE CITY COUNCIL

FROM: CITY MANAGER DEPARTMENT: COMMUNITY SERVICES

DATE: MAY 13, 2002 CMR:237:02

SUBJECT: ADOPTION OF A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO APPLY FOR A GRANT AND EXECUTE AN AGREEMENT WITH THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA FOR A ROBERTI-Z’BERG-HARRIS URBAN OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION GRANT FOR IMPROVEMENTS TO PARKING LOTS AT THE BAYLANDS

RECOMMENDATION
Staff recommends that Council approve the attached resolution to:
1. Authorize the submittal of a grant application under the Safe Neighborhoods, Clean Water, Clean Air and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2000, and approve the terms and conditions of the grant agreement.
2. Authorize the City Manager or his designee, as the person responsible for the administration of the grant, including certifications and any amendments, on behalf of the City.

BACKGROUND
In March 2000, California voters approved Proposition 12, the Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Act. This act is intended to revive state stewardship of natural resources by investing in neighborhood and state parks, clean water protection, coastal beaches and scenic areas. This program is administered by the California Department of Parks and Recreation.

Funding from the Bond Act has been allocated into eight separate programs in order to ensure that the demands of various constituents and environmental needs were met. The City is now seeking grant funds from the Roberti-Z’Berg-Harris Urban Open Space and Recreation Block Grant Program whose purpose is to fund high priority projects that satisfy the most urgent parks and recreational needs in California, with emphasis on unmet needs in the most heavily populated and most economically disadvantaged areas within each jurisdiction. The funds are allocated on a population-based formula to cities, counties and open space or recreational districts. Grants from this program are intended
to supplement, and not supplant, local expenditures for park and recreation facilities. The City will be required to match the $179,066 grant with $76,743 (30 percent of total project cost) in local funding.

**DISCUSSION**

The Baylands Nature Preserve provides a vast array of recreational opportunities for residents of Palo Alto and surrounding communities. Windsurfing, hiking, biking, nature watching, and kayaking attract more than 100,000 visitors to the Baylands each year. Special events such as fireworks over the Bay or Earth Day festivals draw as many as 1,000 visitors at a time. Visitor surveys indicate that nearly 20 percent of Preserve users are East Palo Alto residents who come to Palo Alto because of limited recreation facilities in their community.

As part of the Adamson Infrastructure Management Study that was conducted in 1997, consultants recommended that the repair and maintenance of parking lots at the Baylands Nature Preserve be a high priority for infrastructure funding. Citing the volume of park visitors, current condition of deteriorating parking lot surfaces, and the urgent need for proper containment of run-off water in an environmentally sensitive area, the Adamson report recommended that immediate action be taken to improve these visitor facilities.

The 1990 Baylands Master Plan recommended public parking in the harbor area of the Baylands be provided in five primary parking lots: Byxbee Park Hills, Duck Pond, Harbor Entrance, Lucy Evans Baylands Nature Interpretive Center, and Sailing Station. Renovation of the two parking lots at the Duck Pond was completed this year as Phase I of Capital Improvement Program project 10003, Baylands Parking Improvements. The harbor entrance parking lot was resurfaced in Fiscal Year 2000-2001 by the Public Works Department. The resurfacing of the gravel parking lots at the Byxbee Park Hills and Sailing Station is planned as Phase II. Resurfacing of the Evans Nature Center parking lot and widening of Harbor Road between the entrance to the harbor area of the Preserve and the Nature Center in order to accommodate Class II bicycle lanes is planned as Phase III for fiscal year 2004-2005.

The 2001-06 Capital Improvement Program budget recommends $610,000 for the design and construction of Phase II work. Design work has been completed for all of the Baylands projects. Based on these finalized designs, the engineer’s construction estimate for these projects is $760,000. Funds from the proposed grant would provide the necessary funds to construct the projects as planned.
**RESOURCE IMPACT**

Work covered by the grant application has been included in the work program for Community Services project management staff. Approval of the grant will not affect other scheduled park or community facility projects or their completion timelines. Preliminary design work has been completed, bids have been solicited for Phase II work and staff has projections for costs and resource impacts.

The funded improvements will decrease operational costs needed for annual grading and surface repair of the lots.

The grant application requires the City to certify there are sufficient funds to operate and maintain the projects. Staff plans to use funds allocated in the 2002/03 Capital Improvement Project Infrastructure Reserve Fund as part of the Baylands Parking Lot project (CIP 10003) to provide the necessary $76,743 matching funding. Funds for the on-going maintenance of the lots is currently provided in the Community Services operating budget.

**POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

These recommendations are consistent with existing City policy.

**ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

The application for a grant is not considered an action subject to the California Environmental Quality Act; therefore, no environmental assessment is needed at this time. Environmental review will be conducted prior to any actual construction.

**ATTACHMENTS**
