



MONDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2010

7:00 P.M. - REGULAR ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MEETING

Council Chambers, Los Altos City Hall
One North San Antonio Road, Los Altos, California

Any writings or documents provided to a majority of the Environmental Commission regarding any item on this agenda are available to the public on the counter in the main lobby located at One North San Antonio Road, Los Altos CA 94022 during business hours.

ROLL CALL

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Members of the audience may bring to the Commission's attention any item that is not on the agenda. Please complete a "Request to Speak" form and submit it to the staff liaison. Speakers are generally given two or three minutes, at the discretion of the Chair. State law prohibits the Commission from acting on items that do not appear on the agenda.

CONSENT CALENDAR

These items will be considered by one motion unless any member of the Commission or audience wishes to remove an item for discussion. Any item removed from the Consent Calendar for discussion will be handled at the discretion of the Chair.

1. Commission Minutes
Approval of minutes – Regular Meeting of January 11, 2010.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

2. Earth Day Project
 - a. Acterra presentation on Redwood Grove Rehabilitation project
 - b. Explore opportunity for partnership with Acterra for Earth Day Project
 - c. Discuss ideas for April 22, Earth Day to educate or achieve waste source reduction for Los Altos

3. GreenTown Los Altos Sustainable Events Program
Report from GreenTown Los Altos representative on their sustainable events program and progress on working with special events and community organizations
4. Community Greenhouse Gas Inventory
Report by Environmental Commission subcommittee on progress of the study
5. Formation of Environmental Commission Speakers Presentation
Discussion of next steps for Council approval
6. Waste Management Services Contract Request for Proposal (RFP)
Update on RFP process and timelines
7. Development of Environmental Element to the General Plan
Update by staff
8. Items for Information
 - a. *Town Crier* article on energy grant program and water conservation
 - b. Update on Environmental Commission website hits
 - c. Council approved Resolutions Supporting the CalFIRST Grant Program
9. 2009-2010 Environmental Commission Goals and Work Plan
Review of 2010 goals and work plan

COMMISSION REPORTS AND DIRECTIONS ON FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

ADJOURNMENT

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, the City will make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to this meeting. If you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the Economic Development Coordinator 72 hours prior to the meeting at (650) 947-2620. A sound enhancement system is available in the City Council Chambers. You may check out headsets, which boost the public address signal during the meeting. Please ask for assistance at the City Clerk's desk PRIOR to the start of the meeting or during a break in the meeting.

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION
OF THE CITY OF LOS ALTOS, HELD ON MONDAY, JANUARY 11, 2010, AT 7:00 P.M.
AT LOS ALTOS CITY HALL, ONE NORTH SAN ANTONIO ROAD, LOS ALTOS,
CALIFORNIA**

ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Anderson, DeMichiel, Chien-Hale, Rosewater, Labetich, Keller, Bray
ABSENT: None

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

CONSENT CALENDAR

1. Commission Minutes
MOTION BY VICE CHAIR ROSEWATER, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER LABETICH to approve the minutes of the meeting of December 14, 2009. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

2. GreenTown Los Altos Sustainable Events Program
Item continued to February 8, 2010.
6. Waste Management Services Contract Request for Proposal (RFP)
Chair Anderson provided an update on the progress of the Selection Committee. Interviews with individual vendors will be held next week.
3. GreenTown Los Altos Downtown Visioning Report
Forest Linebarger, GreenTown Los Altos representative, presented and commissioners discussed the GreenTown Los Altos Downtown Vision.
4. Community Greenhouse Gas Inventory Subcommittee
Commissioner Bray presented an update on progress of the community greenhouse gas inventory for 2005 - 2008.
5. Formation of Environmental Commission Speakers Bureau
Vice Chair Rosewater presented and Commissioners discussed the Subcommittee's presentation. MOTION BY VICE CHAIR ROSEWATER, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER BRAY to approve the Environmental Commission Speakers Presentation as presented and request staff liaison to request City Clerk to review and suggest next steps to formalize presentation, AMENDED BY COMMISSIONER DeMICHEL to clarify Commission is not soliciting opportunities to present and will only present when approached by community groups. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

6. Waste Management services Contract Request for Proposal (RFP)
Report by Chair Anderson that Selection Committee met, name of new consultant and that vendors will be interviewed. Public will give comments on February 23, 2010 at Council meeting.
7. Earth Day Project
Commissioners discussed possible Earth Day projects. Arnold Ambiel offered public comments, suggesting a partnership with Acterra for their Redwood Grove Rehabilitation. Commissioner Chien-Hale to speak with Acterra about having Acterra come and present on their work. Vice-Chair Rosewater will contact Greentown Los Altos to inquire about their Earth Day projects. Item continued to February 8, 2010.
8. California First Program for Residential Energy Efficiency Retrofits
Staff gave an update on the program, participation of the City of Los Altos and residents.
9. Items for Information
Staff report on:
 - a. Complete schedule for Environmental Commissioners to attend City Council meetings in 2010, including Joint Meeting of Council and Environmental Commission on Oct. 19, 2010 at 5:00 p.m.
 - b. *Town Crier* article on Green House Gas Emissions
 - c. Update on Environmental Commission website hits.
 - d. Election of Environmental Commission Chair on March 8, 2010.
 - e. Meeting with Mayor and Commission Chairs on March 13, 2010 at 8:00 a.m.
10. 2009-2010 Environmental Commission Goals and Work Plan
Commissioners reviewed 2010 goals, work plan and matrix of environmental topics

COMMISSION REPORTS AND DIRECTION ON FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Anderson adjourned the meeting at 9:07 p.m.

J. Logan, Assistant City Manager and STAFF LIAISON



Hem 3

April 9, 2009

Stephen Anderson
Chairman
Los Altos Environmental Commission
One North San Antonio Road
Los Altos, CA 94022

Dear Commissioner Anderson -

Kacey Fitzpatrick
Executive Director

Advisory Board

Paul Blumenstein
President

Peter Dalton
Treasurer

Steve Anderson

Mary Clark Bartlett

Meredith Eggers

Jim Geers

Crysta Krames

Clari Nolet

Curt Riffle

Leadership Team

Don Bray

Peg Champion

Linda Gass

Karen Janowski

Forrest Linebarger

Patty Rosewater

Marc Sidel

Margie Suozzo

At the March 9, 2009 Environmental Commission meeting, GreenTown Los Altos proposed a code change modification to the municipal code to ensure that event planners provided a waste management plan. The primary goal of this request was to provide the City a tool for ensuring that Los Altos event planners considered waste reduction strategies and provided recycling, and eventually composting, at their events.

Since then, on April 3, GreenTown Los Altos met with a business group facilitated by Nancy Dunaway of the Los Altos Village Association, that included members of the Los Altos Village Association, the Chamber of Commerce, Rotary Club and planners of other Los Altos events, such as the Festival of Lights Parade, the Pet Parade and the Community Picnic. Each organization responsible for event planning expressed an interest in working with GreenTown Los Altos to "green" its event, but collectively this group was not supportive of GreenTown's request for a municipal code change.

As a consequence, GreenTown would like to withdraw its request for a municipal code change at this time in favor of working with the business community to green individual events. GreenTown is currently working with the Rotary Club and their Fine Art in the Park event planners to reduce and divert waste from that particular event. Following that event, most likely in a June meeting, we will be sharing lessons learned with this same group of businesses and will provide a report on this subject to the Environmental Commission.

We are still requesting that the Environmental Commission take the following actions outlined in our letter presented at the 3/9/09 Environmental Commission meeting:

1. Recommend that the City Council request that recycling and composting services for *permitted* special events be included in the upcoming Request for Proposal for the new waste contract.
2. Provide a guide to event planners on purchasing and waste management practices that support maximal waste reduction, recycling and composting. Make this guide available on the Los Altos Environmental Commission website. (GreenTown Los Altos volunteers can provide this guide for the Commission's use.)

Thank you for considering these ways to help Los Altos reduce and divert waste.

Sincerely,
Karen Janowski
Margie Suozzo

GreenTown Los Altos

*A non-profit environmental
organization serving Los Altos
and Los Altos Hills, California*

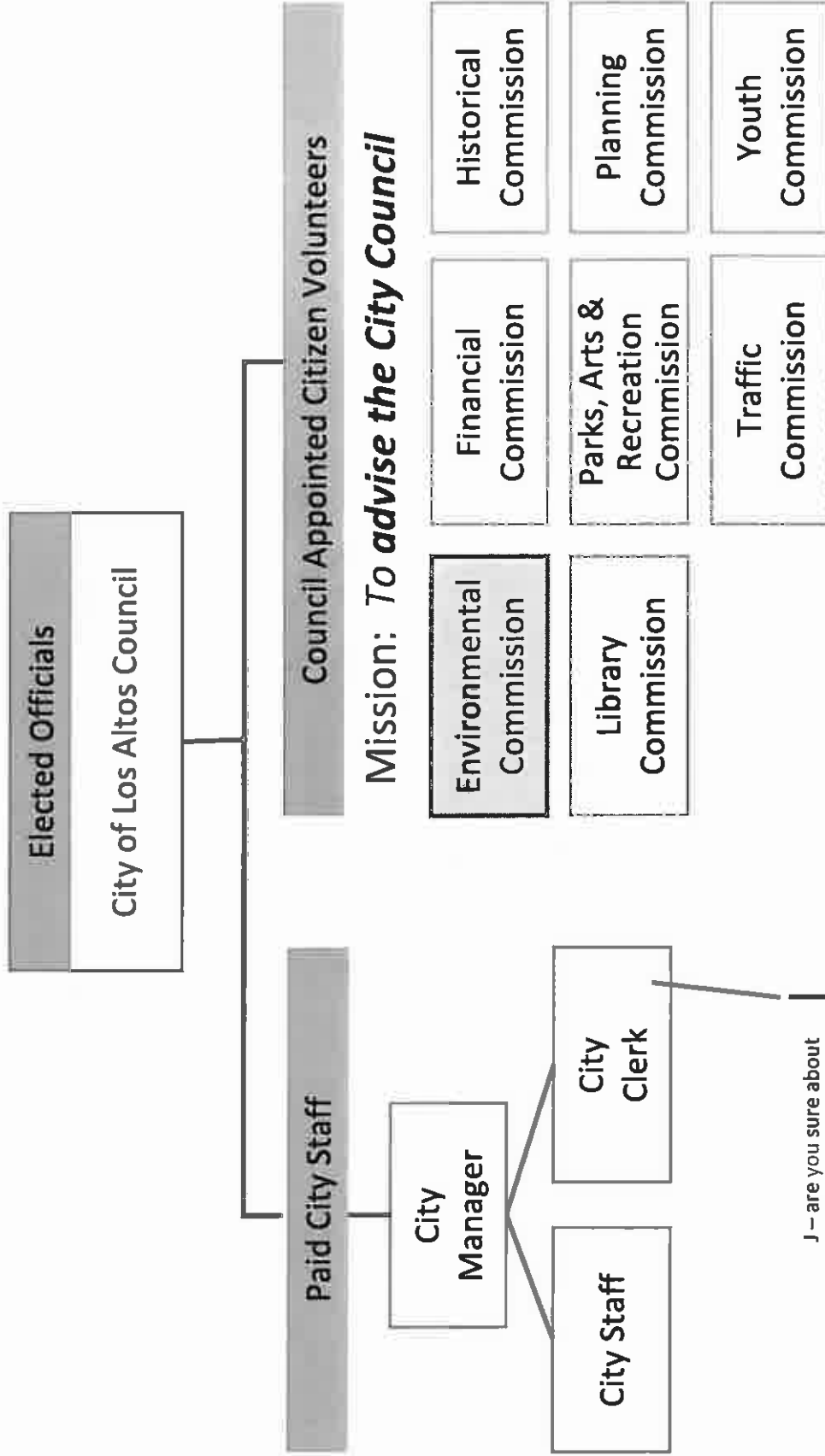


City of Los Altos Environmental Commission

Item 5

January 2010

City of Los Altos Governance Structure



J - are you sure about this? I thought she reported to the City Council for separation of duties issues

Environmental Commission is not a Community Volunteer Group

	Environmental Commission	Community Volunteer / Non-Profit Groups
Mission	<p>The mission of the Los Altos Environmental Commission is to advise the City Council on issues related to environmental sustainability, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Evaluation and recommendation of policies and programs to make Los Altos an environmentally sustainable place to live and work. (2) Provide public information and education regarding environmentally sustainable lifestyles 	To engage citizens in specific programs / actions.
Primary Function	<p>"Commissioners are appointed by Council to research topics in the areas assigned to their commission by Council, to ensure that they understand all aspects of these topics, and to present balanced recommendations that represent their carefully considered judgment of what is best for the community as a whole over the long run. Hence they are not advocacy groups." *</p>	Decide policy / strategy. Develop and manage resulting programs.
Governance	<p>Subject to all Brown Act provisions: (1) Publicly Noticed monthly meetings. (2) Agenda items only, (3) Informal discussion between > 3 members prohibited. All actions must be approved by City Council</p>	Governance structure determined by Board. No legislative limit on number of meetings; topics discussed, or informal meetings.
Budget	Budget authorized by City Council	Funds generally from private sources; spending decisions authorized by Executive Director or Board.
Staffing	<p>"Commissions work closely with the staff liaisons; however, they do not have the authority to supervise or direct the work of staff. Special assignments to staff are made through the City Manager." * The Chair of a Commission may appoint special subcommittees, consisting of less than a quorum of the body, to work on specific tasks. *</p>	Strong volunteer base.

* Source: Commission Handbook

2008/2009 Results

- Waste Management: 2009/2010 recommendations incorporated into Request for Proposal (RFP)
- Hazardous Waste: Los Altos Hazardous Waste Disposal Directory created and published
- Housing Element: updated to incorporate water and energy conservation goals
- Plastic Bag Ban Education Program: input to City Council
- Water conservation – Resolution and public education
- Municipal Greenhouse Gas (GHG) inventory completed
- Environmental Website enhancements (www.losaltosenvironment.org)

J – anything we can say
about what the input was?

Waste Management Highlights

Waste Request for Proposal (RFP) recommendations to City Council

Los Altos should adopt the following waste management goals:

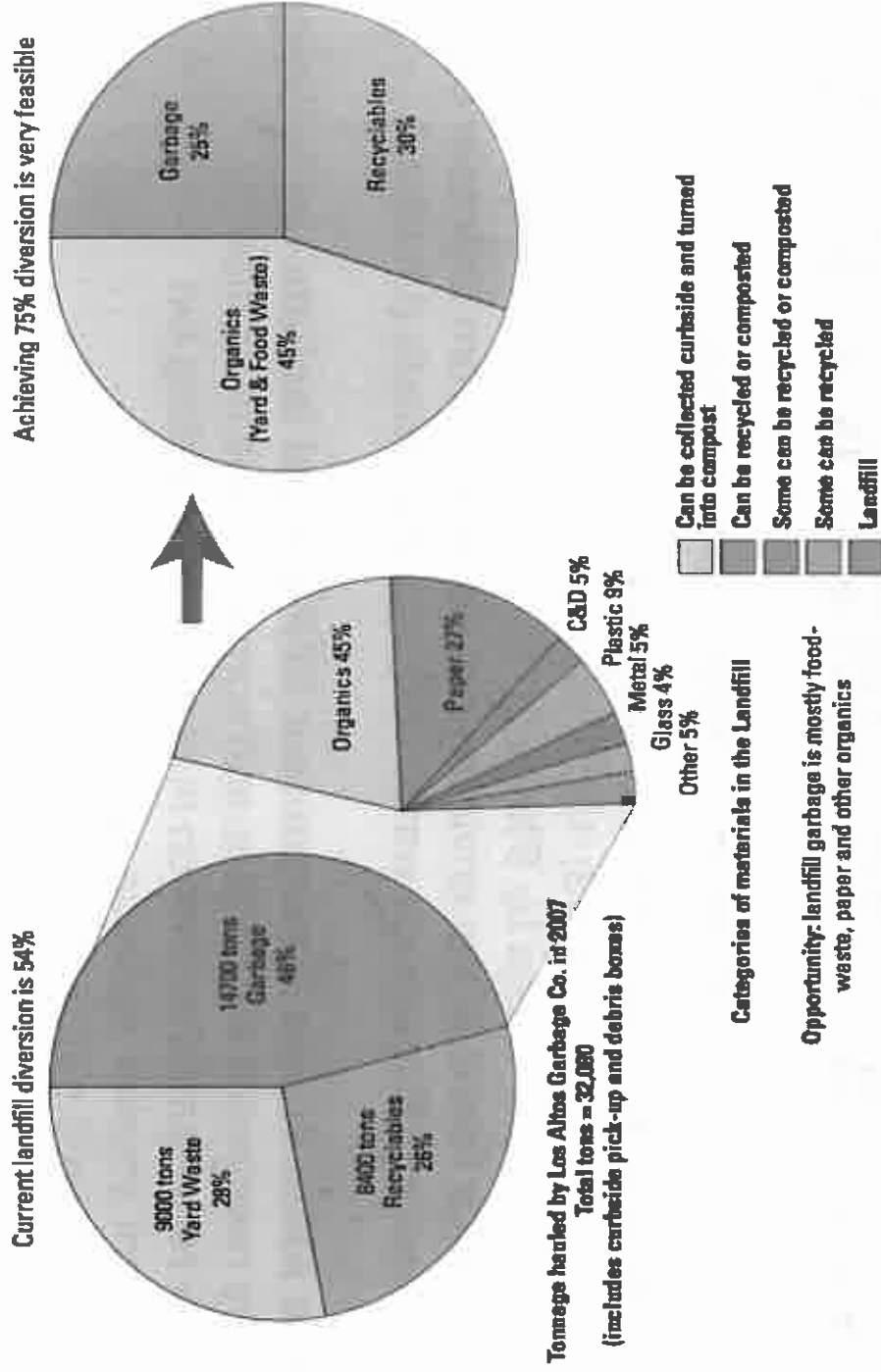
- 75% diversion by 2013; 100% diversion 2020
- Reduce total waste by 5% by 2013
- Reduce toxins in the environment generated from improper disposal of household hazardous waste and universal waste (U-waste)

The Los Altos Waste Management RFP should include the following:

1. Weekly residential foodwaste and compostables collection
2. Weekly recyclables collection in standardized rolling bin
3. Implement smaller garbage can size options
4. Make side-yard garbage pick-up an optional service
5. Curbside collection of household hazardous wastes
6. Collect commercial food waste & compostables
7. Standardize commercial and multi-tenant recycling pickup
8. Public education and outreach program (in waste contract)
9. Bins for recycling/compostables in commercial & public spaces
10. Structure contract with incentives for landfill diversion

Input from GreenTown Los Altos – Dec 2008

Recycling organics – food mainly – could keep almost half of our garbage out of the landfill.



Hazardous Waste Disposal

Most hazardous materials can be recycled within 10 minutes of Los Altos, with many downtown vendors providing recycling drop-off services.

Hazardous Waste Item (More listings)	Local Drop off Locations Note: All Los Altos vendors listed on the Santa Clara County website are listed here. If there were no Los Altos options, the next closest vendor was selected. If you would like to participate, click here for the county website and contact information.	County HHW Facility (1) :
Antifreeze	a) Palo Alto Recycling Center, 2380 Embarcadero, PA b) For more listings	Yes
Batteries – household (not automotive)	c) Los Altos Hardware, 441 1 st Street, LA d) Radio Shack, 1350 Grant Rd, MV e) For more listings	Yes
Batteries - Automotive	f) Kragen Auto Parts, 2620 California Street, MV; 1915 W El Camino Real, MV g) Palo Alto Recycling Center, 2380 Embarcadero, PA h) For more listings	Yes
Cell Phones	i) For More Listings j) also watch for free e-waste collection events throughout the year	---

See <http://www.losaltosenvironment.org/> for complete listing

Current Environmental Commission

Commission Members

- Steve Anderson – Chair
 - Patty Rosewater – Vice Chair
 - Don Bray
 - Elizabeth Chien-Hale
 - Linda DeMichiel
 - Chris Keller
 - Ron Labetich
-

Staff Liaison: J. Logan, Assistant
City Manager

2009/2010 Work Plan

- Los Altos Waste Contract
 - RFP Priorities
 - Smooth Transition
 - Community Education
- Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Inventories
 - Municipal
 - Community
- Water Conservation
 - 2004 Baseline
 - Community Education

How can we best serve you?

- Do you have ideas / proposals** for considering the environment related to preserving the environment for Los Altos?
- Come to our regular monthly meeting, utilize opportunity for public comment
 - Send an e-mail to environmental@losaltosca.gov
- Education / Outreach
- Policy
- Legislation
- Web site content
-

- Do you need information** regarding environmental programs in Los Altos?
- Visit our web site regularly at <http://www.losaltosenvironment.org>
 - Environmental Commission agendas and materials are posted at <http://www.ci.losaltos.ca.us/committees-commissions/environmental/meetings.html>

Are you interested in serving?

Commission Structure

- 7 members
- 4 year terms
- Meet 2nd Monday of each month for 2-3 hours
- < 10 hours per month including Commission meetings
- Opportunity to be appointed to subcommittee to work on assigned projects

Application Process

- Contact the City Clerk at 947-2720 or go directly to <http://www.losaltosca.gov/committees-commissions> to fill out Application, turn in to City Hall
- All candidates interview by City Council
- City Council selects Commissioners
- **Next Environmental Commission opening in 2011**



MONDAY

January 20, 2010

LA City Council OKs participation in energy grant program



Written by Jana Seshadri - Town Crier Staff Writer

WEDNESDAY, 20 JANUARY 2010

The Los Altos City Council Jan. 12 adopted two resolutions that enable Los Altos property owners to participate in the CaliforniaFIRST energy efficiency grant program, offered by the California Energy Commission. The program allows property owners to extend payment over 20 years for installation of renewable energy, energy efficient and water efficient projects on their properties.

"This is an entirely voluntary program," said James Walgren, Los Altos assistant city manager. "Residents can choose to participate or not."

Santa Clara County is one of 14 California counties that qualify for the program, he said. The benefit to participating property owners is that they can apply for loans for energy improvement projects and amortize the cost on their property tax bills over 20 years.

"It is a financing program for participating property owners," Walgren said.

Even after approving the resolutions, the city can withdraw from the pilot program at any time, he added.

Santa Clara County will submit a formal grant application to the energy commission sometime next month. Once the application is approved – and Walgren sees no reason for denial – the program will start to ramp up and notifications to communities will begin. It should be available to property owners sometime in the summer.

The grant will cover costs associated with participating in this pilot program, funded by American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (Stimulus fund) funds.

“There will be no cost to the city,” Walgren said.

Contact Jana Seshadri at janas@latc.com.

No Comments

There are no comments up to now.



AGENDA REPORT

DATE: January 12, 2010
TO: City Council
FROM: James Walgren, Assistant City Manager
SUBJECT: CALIFORNIAFIRST GRANT PROGRAM

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt the following resolutions authorizing participation with the CaliforniaFIRST energy efficiency grant program:

- A. Resolution No. 2010-03 authorizing the City of Los Altos to participate in the CaliforniaFIRST grant program, and related actions; and
- B. Resolution No. 2010-04 authorizing the County of Sacramento to apply for funding on behalf of the City of Los Altos.

BACKGROUND

This staff report provides the background of a pilot program being developed to provide financing to property owners for renewable energy, energy efficiency, and water efficiency projects. At this time, staff is asking for Council's approval to participate in this program by adopting the attached resolutions. Previously, staff submitted two letters of support for the programs – these letters did not bind the City in any way to participate, but do now allow the City to participate. If these letters of support had not been submitted, Los Altos residents would not be eligible for the programs. Even after approving the resolution, the City can withdraw from the pilot program at any time by passing a resolution rescinding the authorization.

AB 811 was passed in July 2008 and allows local governments to form assessment districts that allow property owners to install renewable energy and energy efficiency improvements on their properties and pay for the cost of the projects over time. CaliforniaFIRST is a pilot program in development by California Communities, a JPA of local governments. California Communities will create an assessment district, authorized by AB 811, whereby commercial and residential owners can finance 100 percent of the upfront capital costs of renewable energy, energy efficiency, and water efficiency projects and repay the amount financed on their property tax bill over 20 years. Property owners select the type of projects they wish to install and program participation is voluntary. California Communities has selected Renewable Funding LLC and RBC Capital Markets to provide administration and financing for the program. Cities and counties must adopt a resolution to “opt in” to the CaliforniaFIRST program for their residents and businesses to have access to this financing.

There are costs associated with participating in this pilot program. A grant application is being submitted to the California Energy Commission to cover these costs. The funding for this grant is from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (Stimulus Bill) funds. The County of Sacramento is the lead agency in submitting this grant application and will include all counties and cities wishing to participate. Ecology Action and Renewable Funding are both partner grant writers.

For the grant application the participating counties have been grouped into five regions. Santa Clara County is in the North Bay Region along with San Mateo and San Francisco counties. The grant application will specify the total amount of the grant (approximately \$15 million), how it will be distributed to the various counties, and how the money is to be spent. Approximately \$5.5 million will be going to CaliforniaFIRST to pay for city/county costs to participate in the pilot program and to buy down interest rates for the loans to the property owners. Approximately \$1.5 million will be for grant/contract administration and steering committee costs. Finally, approximately \$8 million will go to the various counties for regional program coordination and marketing. Cities will have a representative on their county's steering committee to have a voice in the use of the funds for coordination and marketing.

The benefits to the property owner from this pilot program include:

- Only property owners who choose to participate in the program will have assessments imposed on their property.
- In today's economic environment, there may not be attractive private enterprise alternatives for property owners to finance renewable energy/energy efficiency/water efficiency improvements.
- Even if there were private enterprise alternatives, most private loans are due on sale of the benefited property, which makes it difficult for property owners to match the life of the repayment obligation with the useful life of the financed improvements. Under the CaliforniaFIRST program, the assessment obligation will transfer with the property upon sale.
- The property owner can choose to pay off the assessments at any time.
- By virtue of regional aggregation provided by the CaliforniaFIRST Program, small projects, both residential and commercial, can have access to the municipal bond market, which may produce a lower borrowing cost.

The benefits to the City include:

- As in conventional assessment financing, the City is not obligated to repay the bonds issued by California Communities or to pay the assessments levied on the participating properties.
- California Communities handles all assessment administration, bond issuance, and bond administration functions. A participating City can provide financing for these improvements to property owners through the CaliforniaFIRST Program, thereby meeting its political and environmental goals, while committing virtually no staff time to administer the program.

The attached resolutions will authorize California Communities to accept applications from owners of property within the City of Los Altos for municipal financing of renewable energy, energy efficiency, and water efficiency improvements through the CaliforniaFIRST Program, and conduct assessment proceedings and levy assessments against the property of participating owners within the City limits. It will also authorize miscellaneous related actions, make certain findings and determinations required by law, and authorize payment of a set-up fee to cover legal, procedural, and technology costs associated with the CaliforniaFIRST Program. California Communities will undertake a judicial validation proceeding as part of its initiation of the CaliforniaFIRST Program.

FISCAL IMPACT

Community Development staff anticipates minimal time devoted to this program beyond this start-up effort. The grant funds a full-time County of Santa Clara position to administer the program for County cities and to implement public outreach.

Attachments

1. Resolution No. 2010-03
2. Resolution No. 2010-04
3. Memorandum to City Managers dated November 14, 2009

