

COASTAL CONSERVANCY

Staff Recommendation

March 25, 2021

BAYSHORE BIKEWAY – BARRIO LOGAN SEGMENT CONSTRUCTION

Project No. 11-007-02

Project Manager: Sam Jenniches

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Authorization to disburse up to \$350,000 to the San Diego Association of Governments to construct the Barrio Logan segment of the Bayshore Bikeway in San Diego County.

LOCATION: Barrio Logan community, City of San Diego, San Diego County

PROGRAM CATEGORY: Integrated Coastal and Marine Resource Protection

EXHIBITS

Exhibit 1: [Project Maps](#)

Exhibit 2: [Project Images](#)

Exhibit 3: [Project Letters](#)

RESOLUTION AND FINDINGS:

Staff recommends that the State Coastal Conservancy adopt the following resolution pursuant to Sections 3 and 5.5 of the Public Resources Code:

"The State Coastal Conservancy hereby authorizes the disbursement of an amount not to exceed three hundred and fifty thousand dollars (\$350,000) to the San Diego Association of Governments ("the grantee") to construct the Barrio Logan segment of the Bayshore Bikeway in San Diego County."

Prior to commencement of the project, the grantee shall submit for the review and written approval of the Executive Officer of the Conservancy (Executive Officer) the following:

1. A detailed work program, schedule, and budget.
2. Names and qualifications of any contractors to be retained in carrying out the project.
3. A plan for acknowledgement of Conservancy funding Proposition 1 as the source of that funding.

4. Evidence that all permits and approvals required to implement the project have been obtained.
5. Evidence that the grantee has entered into agreements sufficient to enable the grantee to implement, operate, and maintain the project.”

Findings:

Based on the accompanying staff report and attached exhibits, the State Coastal Conservancy hereby finds that:

1. The proposed authorization is consistent with Chapter 3 of Division 21 of the Public Resources Code regarding addressing the impacts and potential impacts of climate change on resources within its jurisdiction (Section 31113) and Chapter 5.5 regarding reducing contamination of waters within the coastal zone (Section 31220).
2. The proposed project is consistent with the current Conservancy Project Selection Criteria and Guidelines.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

PROJECT SUMMARY:

Staff recommends the Conservancy authorize disbursement of up to \$350,000 to the San Diego Association of Governments to construct the Barrio Logan segment of the Bayshore Bikeway in San Diego County.

The Bayshore Bikeway is a proposed 24-mile bikeway around San Diego Bay that also serves as the California Coastal Trail (CCT) through the southern portion of San Diego County.

Approximately 16 miles of the bikeway has been constructed as a Class I bikeway separated from motor vehicle traffic. Construction of the Barrio Logan segment (“Project”) will complete another 2.5 miles of Class I bikeway, one of the last major gaps in the bikeway.

The proposed Barrio Logan segment will complete a key link in the region’s bicycle transportation network, making the working waterfront more accessible by biking and walking. It is part of the San Diego County regional plan to create an interconnected network of low-stress bikeways that will attract people of all ages and abilities to walk or ride bikes for some of their transportation needs. It will provide a low-cost transportation alternative for people traveling in the corridor, an alternative that is non-polluting and that supports a healthier, more active lifestyle. This will encourage less motor vehicle traffic and its related air pollution, noise, and parking impacts.

The bikeway also will provide Barrio Logan residents with an opportunity for physical activity for its own sake, providing access to San Diego Bay along the downtown waterfront promenade and the Embarcadero to the north, and to parks, beaches, and trails to the south. The project will allow Barrio Logan residents to use the Bayshore Bikeway to connect to the planned Chollas Creek Bike Path, the Sweetwater River Bike Path, and the trail system in the Otay River Valley Regional Park. It also will provide access to the San Diego Bay National Wildlife and marinas and parks around the Bay.

Construction of the Barrio Logan segment of the Bayshore Bikeway is being coordinated by SANDAG and is fully funded. The Bikeway segment will be a Class 1 bike path constructed within the public right of way of Harbor Drive, between Park Boulevard to the north, and 32nd Street to the south. At Park Boulevard, Harbor Drive transitions from downtown San Diego, with its hotels and visitor amenities including Petco Park and the Convention Center, to the more industrialized working waterfront, including the gateway to the Tenth Avenue Marine terminal, a 96-acre complex that serves inbound cargos such as perishables and refrigerated commodities, fertilizer, cement, and breakbulk commodities (too large for a shipping container or cargo bin). This segment of the proposed Bayshore Bikeway features limited planted areas and shade trees. The Conservancy's funds will go toward enhancing this 2.5 mile segment of the Bayshore Bikeway with urban greening components that will capture stormwater, provide shade, and reduce the urban heat island effect.

The Bayshore Bikeway has been a regional vision since its original planning efforts were concluded in 1976. The plan was updated by SANDAG in 2006, and in 2011, the Conservancy authorized \$2.5 million for the final design and construction of approximately 1.8 miles of Bayshore Bikeway and CCT.

The proposed project will include urban greening components that will benefit Bikeway users as well as reduce the impact of both dry weather and wet weather runoff into Chollas Creek and San Diego Bay. Both bodies of water are impacted by dissolved metals, trash and other pollutants and contaminants. Street trees will be incorporated into the Bikeway segment wherever possible, and medians will be landscaped with drought tolerant plants. Street trees, installed in Filterra[®] Bioretention units, will capture storm water where pollutants will be removed before water reaches storm drains. Additional landscaping in medians will create bio-swales that also capture storm water. The new planting will be monitored and adaptively managed to establishment using grant funds for a six-month period. Following establishment, the City of San Diego in partnership with the Urban Corps of San Diego County will assume long term maintenance, funded by the Barrio Logan Maintenance Assessment District.

Site Description: The Barrio Logan segment of the Bayshore Bikeway will be constructed within the public right of way of Harbor Drive between Park Boulevard and 32nd Street. At its northern end, it will connect to a bayfront promenade and Embarcadero Park. The southern end of the project will connect to an existing section of the Bayshore Bikeway/California Coastal Trail at the entrance to Naval Base San Diego and to the planned Chollas Creek Bike Trail. The bay side of Harbor Drive includes the naval base and maritime industrial uses. The upland side is primarily a freight and light rail corridor that also includes linear employee parking areas. Beyond the rail corridor is a combination of residential, industrial and commercial uses in the community of Barrio Logan.

The Barrio Logan community consists of approximately 1,000 acres and houses about 4,200 people, 71 percent of whom are Hispanic. The median household income is \$26,669 (2015\$). The community contains 7.5 acres of parkland and 366 feet of access to San Diego Bay. The proximity residential development to industrial activity to results in air pollution and noise impacts to area residents.

Grant Applicant Qualifications: The San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) is comprised of the 18 cities of San Diego County and county government. SANDAG operates with an annual budget exceeding 1 billion dollars. As part of SANDAG’s Biking and Walking program, the Bayshore Bikeway Working Group was established to promote and implement improvements to the 26-mile bikeway around San Diego Bay. It consists of an elected official from the Cities of Chula Vista, Coronado, Imperial Beach, National City, and San Diego, and from the County of San Diego. Working Group members on the committee include the Metropolitan Transit System, the Port District, and a representative of the region's bicycling community. The Working Group has coordinated the construction of over 16 miles of the Bikeway to date.

CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY’S PROJECT SELECTION CRITERIA & GUIDELINES:

The proposed project is consistent with the Conservancy’s Project Selection Criteria and Guidelines, last updated on October 2, 2014, in the following respects:

Required Criteria

1. **Promotion of the Conservancy’s statutory programs and purposes:** See the “Consistency with Conservancy’s Enabling Legislation” section above.
2. **Consistency with purposes of the funding source:** See the “Project Financing” section above.
3. **Promotion and implementation of state plans and policies:** The proposed project is consistent with the following state plans and policies promoting global climate change resilience and adaptation in watershed management:
 - a. The proposed project will implement the *California Water Action Plan* (Governor’s Office of Planning and Research, 2016) by enhancing water storage through storm water capture and improve water management by partnering with the City and leading integrated water management efforts at the local level.
 - b. The proposed project will implement the *California @ 50 Million: The Environmental Goals and Policy Report* (Governor’s Office of Planning and Research, 2016) by developing mechanisms to reduce storm water run-off and enhance groundwater recharge, promote climate change resilience, and develop healthy, equitable, and sustainable communities.
 - c. The proposed project will implement the *Safeguarding California Plan - 2018 Update* (CA Natural Resources Agency, January 2018) by prioritizing natural infrastructure solutions that build climate resilience.
 - d. The proposed project is consistent with *Completing the California Coastal Trail* (Coastal Conservancy, 2003) because it will construct a 2.5 mile segment of the California Coastal Trail.
4. **Support of the public:** The proposed project is a project of SANDAG’s Bayshore Bikeway working group and as such is supported by the members of that working group; the cities of

San Diego, National City, Imperial Beach, and Coronado, the County of San Diego, the San Diego Unified Port District and the San Diego Bike Coalition.

5. **Location:** The proposed project would be located within the coastal zone of the City of San Diego, in the Barrio Logan Harbor 101 Community Plan Area, and within the Unified Port of San Diego’s “Port Master Plan” planning area.
6. **Need:** The proposed project is dependent on Conservancy funds for the Urban Greening components of the project. Without this funding, the project would still be implemented, but without the greening components.
7. **Greater-than-local interest:** The proposed project will construct a segment of the Bayshore Bikeway, a part of the statewide CCT. The Bikeway and the CCT are regional, state, national and international destination amenities of the San Diego Region.
8. **Sea level rise vulnerability:** The project will be constructed adjacent to Harbor Drive, the existing elevations of which vary from approximately nine feet elevation at Park Blvd to about 25 feet elevation south of Cesar Chavez Parkway and back down to about 11 feet at Chollas Creek Bridge. The Mean High High Water (MHHW) for San Diego Bay is 5.62 feet. For a projected 1.33-foot rise in 2050, the MHHW would be 6.95’ feet. For a projected 4.58-foot rise in 2100, the MHHW would be 10.20 feet. Therefore, the bikeway would not be affected in 2050, but the rise in 2100 could inundate the project near Harbor Drive and Park Boulevard intersection.

Additional Criteria

9. **Leverage:** See the “Project Financing” section above.
10. **Readiness:** The grantee is ready to commence work on the project in the first quarter of 2021
11. **Realization of prior Conservancy goals:** See “Project History” above.
12. **Cooperation:** SANDAG’s Bayshore Bikeway working group is by its nature a cooperative effort to complete the Bayshore Bikeway.
13. **Vulnerability from climate change impacts other than sea level rise:** The proposed project will include urban greening components as part of a bikeway that will build resiliency to changing climate and reduce urban heat island effect.
14. **Minimization of greenhouse gas emissions:** The proposed project would add carbon sequestering planting to an active transportation bikeway project, reducing greenhouse gas emissions in multiple ways.

PROJECT FINANCING

Coastal Conservancy	\$350,000
TransNet Local Transportation Sales Tax, San Diego County	\$9,099,600

State of California Active Transportation Program	\$4,944,000
Project Total	\$14,393,600

The anticipated source of funding for the proposed project is the fiscal year 2018 appropriation from the Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2014 (Proposition 1, Water Code § 79700 et seq). Funds appropriated to the Conservancy derive from Chapter 6 of the Act (commencing with § 79730) and may be used “for multi-benefit water quality, water supply, and watershed protection and restoration projects for the watersheds of the state” (Section 79731). More specifically, the proposed project will help achieve three of the thirteen Chapter 6 purposes outlined in Section 79732(a), including:

- “Implement watershed adaptation projects in order to reduce the impacts of climate change on communities and ecosystems” by implementing green infrastructure elements to reduce impacts of climate change in the watershed (subsection (a)(2));
- “Protect and restore rural and urban watershed health to improve watershed storage capacity, forest health, protection of life and property, storm water resource management, and greenhouse gas reduction” by planning and designing green infrastructure elements aimed to capture storm water in a more natural and efficient manner (subsection (a)(9)); and
- “Reduce pollution or contamination of rivers, lakes, streams, or coastal waters, prevent and remediate mercury contamination from legacy mines, and protect or restore natural system functions that contribute to water supply, water quality, or flood management” by naturally cleaning storm water and recharging the groundwater via soil infiltration (subsection (a)(11)).

The proposed project was reviewed and subsequently recommended for funding through a competitive grant process under the Conservancy’s Proposition 1 Grant Program Guidelines adopted in June 2015 (“Prop 1 Guidelines”). (See § 79706(a)). The proposed Project meets each of the evaluation criteria in the Prop 1 Guidelines as described in further detail in the following sections of this staff recommendation: “Project Financing” and “Project Summary” (sections above) and “Consistency with Conservancy’s Project Selection Criteria & Guidelines” (section below).

San Diego County has committed \$9,099,600 of TransNet funds towards the implementation of this section of the Bayshore Bikeway. In 1987, San Diego County residents approved the 20-year TransNet program, a sales tax to fund a variety of transportation projects throughout San Diego County. This program, which became operative in 1988 and was to expire in 2008, is one of the largest transportation improvement programs in California. In November 2004, San Diego County voters approved an extension ordinance and expenditure plan (Proposition A) that extends the TransNet program to 2048. Funds are expected to be generated among highway, transit, and local road projects to reduce traffic congestion in San Diego County.

The County has also secured a grant from the California Active Transportation Program (ATP) in the amount of \$4,944,000. The ATP is a statewide grant program that encourages bicycling and

walking, especially for children traveling to school and for residents of disadvantaged communities.

CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY’S ENABLING LEGISLATION:

The proposed project will be undertaken pursuant to Chapter 3 of the Conservancy’s enabling legislation (Public Resource Code Section 31113), and Chapter 5.5, integrated coastal and marine resources protection (Public Resources Code Sections 31220).

Section 31113 permits the Conservancy to address the impacts and potential impacts of climate change on resources within its jurisdiction. Pursuant to this authorization, the proposed project will implement project components that will address the urban heat island effect and storm water capture.

Section 31220 permits the Conservancy to provide grants for coastal watershed and coastal and marine habitat water quality, sediment management, and living marine resources protection and restoration projects. As required by Section 31220, staff consulted with the State Water Resources Control Board, which confirmed that the Project is consistent with the Clean Beaches Initiative. Pursuant to Sections 31220(b)(1) and (7), the Conservancy is authorized to undertake a project or award a grant for a project that reduces contamination of waters within the coastal zone or marine waters and that reduces the impact of population and economic pressures on coastal and marine resources. The proposed project will help improve water quality of coastal waters and reduce the impacts of dense population adjacent San Diego Bay and along the San Diego coast. In addition, consistent with Section 31220(c) the proposed project includes preparation of a monitoring and evaluation component and is consistent with regional, local or State watershed management and water quality plans or programs, as described in the “Consistency with Local Watershed Management Plan/State Water Quality Control Plan” section, below.

CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY’S [2018-2022 STRATEGIC PLAN](#) GOAL(S) & OBJECTIVE(S):

Consistent with **Goal 1, Objective D** of the Conservancy’s 2018-2022 Strategic Plan, the proposed project will construct a new 2.5 mile segment of the California Coastal Trail.

Consistent with **Goal 6, Objective G** of the Conservancy’s 2018-2022 Strategic Plan, the proposed project will improve water quality to the benefit of coastal and ocean resources by diverting storm runoff into treatment swales and other infrastructure before it enters storm drains and adjacent resources.

Consistent with **Goal 8, Objective C** of the Conservancy’s 2018-2022 Strategic Plan, the proposed project will construct a project that will reduce the urban heat island effect and increase resilience to climate change effects.

Consistent with **Goal 16, Objective A** of the Conservancy’s 2018-2022 Strategic Plan, the proposed project is located in, and will directly benefit, a disadvantaged community in California.

CONSISTENCY WITH LOCAL COASTAL PROGRAM POLICIES:

The proposed project straddles two Local Coastal Program jurisdictions. The Unified Port of San Diego’s “Port Master Plan” has been certified by the Coastal Commission and serves as the local planning document for the Port’s jurisdictional lands. The Project will fall partially within and partially outside the jurisdiction of the Port Master Plan along Harbor Blvd. The remainder of the project will be located within the jurisdiction of the City of San Diego’s Barrio Logan/Harbor 101 Community Plan.

The proposed project is consistent with the goal of the Port Master Plan to “protect, preserve, and enhance natural resources, including natural plant and animal life in the bay as a desirable amenity, an ecological necessity, and a valuable and usable resource”, because the project focuses on capturing stormwater and reducing the introduction of pollutants to the bay.

The proposed project is consistent with the Goal 2 of the Barrio Logan/Harbor 101 Community Plan: “Develop and maintain a high-quality environment and take all action necessary to protect, rehabilitate and enhance the environmental quality of the community.” The project is designed to reduce pollution from non-point sources along Harbor Drive, intercepting dissolved metals and other pollutants before they enter Chollas Creek or San Diego Bay.

CONSISTENCY WITH LOCAL WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PLAN/STATE WATER QUALITY CONTROL PLAN:

The proposed project aligns with the San Diego Bay Watershed Management Area Water Quality Improvement Plan by meeting the Plan’s three major priorities: 1) Effectively prohibit non-storm water discharges to its MS4; 2) Reduce pollutants in storm water discharges from its MS4; and 3) Achieve the interim and final Water Quality Improvement Plan numeric goals. The proposed project aligns with water quality priorities by reducing pollution through storm water infiltration. The proposed project aligns with watershed control priorities by implementing green streets and, consequently, contributing to related community improvements such as pedestrian safety, traffic calming, street canopy, and urban heat island mitigation.

CEQA COMPLIANCE:

The proposed project is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act pursuant to 14 Cal. Code Regs. Sections 15301(c) and 15304(b) and (h). Section 15301(c) provides that minor alterations to existing facilities such as the addition of bicycle facilities to existing highways and streets, including but not limited to bicycle parking, bicycle-share facilities and bicycle lanes, transit improvements such as bus lanes, pedestrian crossings, street trees, and other similar alterations that do not create additional automobile lanes are exempt. Section 15304 (b), provides a categorical exemption for new gardening or landscaping, including the replacement of existing conventional landscaping with water efficient or fire-resistant landscaping as proposed in this project. Section 15304 (h) provides an exemption for the creation of bicycle lanes on existing rights-of-way. Upon approval of the project, Conservancy staff will file a Notice of Exemption.