



Staff Report

File #: 23-453

Version: 1

Date: 12/4/2023

Item #: 3.3b.

TO: Mayor and City Council

THROUGH: Keith Stahley, City Manager

FROM: Brian D. Martin, PE, Public Works Director

SUBJECT:

NOAA Grant Application Cooperative Agreement

Ward(s): All Wards

Councilor(s): All Councilors

Neighborhood(s): All Neighborhoods

Result Area(s): Safe, Reliable and Efficient Infrastructure.

SUMMARY:

As part of the application process for the 2023 NOAA Transformational Habitat and Coastal Resilience Grant, the City of Salem, and the Santiam Water Control District (District) have entered into a Cooperative Agreement. This agreement addresses roles and responsibilities for the proposed grant-funded projects, which involve major capital improvements to Upper Bennett Dam and Lower Bennet Dam's fish ladder. In order for the City to submit the grant application prior to the November 17 deadline, the City Manager has already executed the Cooperative Agreement. City Council is being asked to ratify the City Manager's execution of the agreement.

ISSUE:

Shall City Council ratify the City Manager's execution of the attached NOAA Grant Application Cooperative Agreement?

RECOMMENDATION:

Ratify the City Manager's execution of the attached NOAA Grant Application Cooperative Agreement.

FACTS AND FINDINGS:

The City is applying for the 2023 NOAA Transformational Habitat and Coastal Resilience Grant.

1. The proposed grant-funded project will help (1) sustain productive fisheries through benefiting two ESA Listed Species that are under NOAA jurisdiction; (2) enhance community resilience in the face of climate change; (3) foster regional habitat restoration in the North Santiam River watershed; and (4) provide a benefit to tribal, indigenous, and underserved communities. The long-term goal is to resolve flows, fish passage, sediment, and woody debris transport issues caused by a series of antiquated dams, while ensuring resiliency of essential water infrastructure that serves a broad and diverse community.
2. If NOAA awards the grant to the City, the funds will be used to reconstruct Upper Bennett Dam and to make improvements to the fish ladder at Lower Bennett Dam. At this point, the cost estimates for these two projects have a large range of uncertainty that will be refined through project design.
3. The City and Santiam Water Control District (District) are shared owners of the infrastructure referred to as the Bennett Dam Complex, which consists of Upper Bennett Dam and Lower Bennett Dam. The terms of this shared ownership are contained in an agreement executed in 1966.
4. The attached Cooperative Agreement (Attachment 1) addresses the need to update the 1966 agreement which assigns interests, costs, and obligations for the Bennett Dam Complex. Additionally, should work at the Upper Bennett dam exhaust the NOAA grant funds, the City commits to identifying additional funding resources to complete the work at the Lower Bennett Dam fish ladder.
5. The Cooperative Agreement was requested by the District's Board of Directors and the District has provided a commitment letter as part of the grant application package. (See Attachment 2.) The letter confirms the District's commitment to the project and obligates the District to nearly \$200,000 of in-kind and cash matching services. This letter is a critical component of the City's application package and significantly enhances our competitiveness for the grant.
6. The Cooperative Agreement was signed on November 17, 2023, the commitment letter was received soon thereafter, and the completed grant application was submitted before the deadline at the end of the day.

BACKGROUND:

The City of Salem and the Santiam Water Control District are joint owners of the Upper Bennett and Lower Bennett dams. The City has applied for the 2023 NOAA Transformational Habitat and Coastal Resilience Grant to make major capital improvements to the Upper Bennett Dam and to the fish ladder of Lower Bennett Dam. The City and the District have entered into a Cooperative Agreement that establishes roles and responsibilities for the project should the City receive NOAA grant funds.

Robert D. Chandler, PhD, PE
Assistant Public Works Director

Attachments:

1. NOAA Grant Application Cooperative Agreement
2. Commitment Letter