



COUNTY OF NEVADA COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

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NEVADA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS BOARD AGENDA MEMO

MEETING DATE: May 28, 2024

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Trisha Tillotson, Community Development Agency Director

SUBJECT: Resolution to adopt the Nevada County Recreation and Resiliency Master Plan and authorize the Community Development Agency Director or designee to incorporate any minor changes before publishing the final version.

RECOMMENDATION: Adopt the attached Resolution.

FUNDING: No additional funding requested. Funding for the development of the Nevada County Recreation and Resiliency Master Plan was approved by the Board of Supervisors for up to \$450,000 from a combination of \$250,000 in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding and a grant award of \$200,000 from the Sierra Nevada Conservancy. Proposed FY24-25 budget has \$200,000 from ARPA and \$125,000 from General Fund to support implementation of projects in this plan. The department is also actively seeking grant funds.

BACKGROUND: The County's role in Parks and Recreation has traditionally been to support independent Recreation and Park Districts (districts) formed by local constituents and independent recreation providers through the AB1600 program, to pass-through State Per Capita grant funds to qualifying projects and to apply for other grants. These independent districts, along with the cities of Grass Valley and Nevada City, then assume responsibility for providing park and recreation facilities and services within their boundaries. The County does not own and operate park and recreation facilities outside of the Grass Valley Veteran's Hall and Tobiassen Park.

Past recreation planning efforts have been completed through the General Plan process and updates, individual park district plans, the Western Nevada County Non-Motorized Trails Master Plan, the Park and Recreation Facilities Fee Nexus Study, the Nevada County Active Transportation Plan, the South Yuba River Comprehensive Management Plan, and various other documents.

In 2020 and 2021, Nevada County experienced a dramatic increase in people accessing open spaces. Following the 2021 Board workshop, two ad hoc committees (Open Spaces and Trails; Organized Recreation) were created to focus on recreation needs, priorities, and opportunities. The work of the ad hoc committees, including clarifying the health and safety, economic, and resource conservation priorities, guided staff to propose that the Board of Supervisors adopt Recreation as an objective for 2022 and to create a Recreation and Resiliency Master Plan (RRMP or Master

Plan) which would be the first comprehensive standalone plan in Nevada County's history. This Master Plan would support Goal 5.1 in the Nevada County 1995 General Plan.

On February 8, 2022, the Board of Supervisors adopted recreation as a Board Objective to "promote sustainable recreation in partnership with community providers and other jurisdictions to enhance recreational access, support public health and safety, realize economic opportunities, and preserve natural resource assets." The development of the RRMP was identified as a priority initiative.

Thereafter, the Board of Supervisors approved up to \$450,000 for developing the RRMP through a combination of \$250,000 in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding and grant funding. On September 27, 2022, the Board of Supervisors accepted \$200,000 from the Sierra Nevada Conservancy Vibrant Recreation & Tourism grant program and approved a contract for consulting services to prepare the RRMP from Design Workshop, Inc. in the total amount of \$442,970 with a contingency of \$7,030 for a term of September 27, 2022 to June 30, 2024. The RRMP scope would identify and advance key goals and objectives to address challenges and opportunities for Nevada County's open space, trails, and other recreational interfaces, and prioritize solutions that promote community health and safety, economic development, creative placemaking, landscape restoration, environmental sustainability, climate change adaptation, and resilience. In addition, the RRMP would offer strategies for implementing project recommendations and describe a long-term vision for facilitating the management of open space and recreation resources as well as the County's role.

To date, Design Workshop, Inc. has worked with Community Development Agency Staff to develop the final RRMP through comprehensive analysis, mapping, benchmarking studies, project and funding evaluation and extensive outreach and engagement activities for collecting input from the public and a diverse range of agency and community stakeholders including public land managers, special districts, and organized and outdoor recreation providers. Subcontractors for the project have included Dudek, Sierra Business Council, Quantified Ventures, and Steve Randall.

The RRMP is a planning study that provides an overall vision and recommendations for the recreation system in Nevada County. It includes a series of projects and recommendations for possible future actions which the County has not approved, adopted, or funded. The RRMP does not have a legally binding effect on later activities. As such, the statutory exemption pursuant to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Section 15262 Feasibility and Planning Studies is applicable. The exemption states that a project involving only feasibility or planning studies for possible future actions which the agency has not approved or funded does not require preparation of an Environmental Improvement Report (EIR) or Negative Declaration but does require consideration of environmental factors.

Consistent with this exemption, the Master Plan provides data and recommendations for future policy decisions but does not commit the County to later activities or any specific project. Future work to implement projects which have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment will require environmental permitting and compliance with the CEQA. Should funding be pursued and obtained for projects, site specific environmental review would be required to develop detailed designs which would at that time require complete environmental review pursuant to CEQA. The Master Plan makes recommendations for revisions to policies in the County General Plan. These recommendations are not binding on the County. At the time updates to the County General Plan do occur, those revisions would require environmental review pursuant to CEQA. Plans involving federal lands or federal funding would also require National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) review.

It is recommended that the Board of Supervisors approve the resolution to adopt the Nevada County Recreation and Resiliency Master Plan and authorize the Nevada County Community Development Agency Director or designee to incorporate any minor changes before publishing the final version.

Item Initiated: Erika Seward, CDA Senior Administrative Analyst / RRMP Project Manager

Approved: Trisha Tillotson, Community Development Agency Director

Submittal Date: May 28, 2024