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# CITY OF POMONA COUNCIL REPORT

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October 4, 2021

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: James Makshanoff, City Manager

Submitted By: Rene Guerrero, Public Works Director

**SUBJECT: ADOPT A RESOLUTION AMENDING THE FY 2021-22 OPERATING BUDGET BY APPROPRIATING \$33,300 FROM THE PHILLIPS RANCH ASSESSMENT DISTRICT (ZONES A AND B) FUND RESERVES TO PAY FOR COUNTY-REQUIRED WEED ABATEMENT**

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**RECOMMENDATION:** It is recommended that the City Council adopt the following Resolution:

**RESOLUTION NO. 2021-132 – A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF POMONA, CALIFORNIA, AMENDING THE FY 2021-22 OPERATING BUDGET BY APPROPRIATING \$33,300 FROM THE PHILLIPS RANCH ASSESSMENT DISTRICT (ZONES A AND B) FUND RESERVES**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:** Approval of the Resolution (Attachment No. 1) will appropriate funds from the Phillips Ranch Assessment District (Zones A and B), hereafter referred to as “District” reserves, to allow for the payment of services required by the County of Los Angeles, Department of Agricultural Commissioner/Weights and Measures (County) in the District for the removal of vegetation and weeds to reduce the risk of wildfires.

**FISCAL IMPACT:** Staff budgeted \$40,000 in the weed abatement line item (256-4073-52920-00000) in the FY 2021-22 Adopted Budget. Currently, there is funding available to allow for this appropriation within the District’s fund reserves (Fund 256) to pay for the weed abatement. However, it is crucial to note that the FY 2021-22 expenditure budget also exceeds revenues by \$213,842. Expenditures have exceeded revenues for several years, and if an additional revenue source is not identified, the current \$425,405 fund balance will be depleted. If assessments do not increase, or if services are not reduced, budget prioritization will need to focus on the most basic health and safety concerns in the District, such as fire mitigation.

Therefore, it is necessary to appropriate funding to address this issue as it is a health and safety concern.

**PREVIOUS RELATED ACTION: N/A**

**DISCUSSION:** The fuel modification required by the County's Letter of Authorization (Attachment No. 2) addresses some of the most urgent fuel modification and weed abatement needs in Phillips Ranch, but does not address all of the fuel risk throughout the District. City Staff is always looking for solutions to address fuel modification concerns in the hillsides of Pomona that include Phillips Ranch. In addition to monitoring grant opportunities, staff has attempted to determine other ways to address fire risk. In order to economically and comprehensively address all of the weed abatement and fuel modification needs in Phillips Ranch, the City has released several Requests for Proposals (RFP) to hire a contractor to address all of the immediate needs and then provide ongoing maintenance.

For instance, on September 23, 2020, the City released RFP #2020-36, but received only one response. The City re-released the RFP on October 27, 2020 (RFP # 2020-43) and received three responses. However, the lowest bidder declined to accept the contract once they fully understood the entire scope of services required. The next highest bidder bid in excess of \$800,000 to address fuel modification needs, which is well outside the budgetary constraints of the District. Staff subsequently edited and simplified the scope, and released RFP # 2021-21 on August 2, 2021 for fuel modification in Phillips Ranch, but received no bids. The RFP was released again on September 2, 2021 and bids are due by October 7, 2021. Thinking outside the box, staff also released RFP #2020-42 on October 7, 2020 for goat grazing services. The City received two responses, with the lowest bidder at \$447,925, well outside of budgetary consideration.

In 2019, the City conducted a Proposition 218 process to consider an increase to the current assessment from \$272.89 to \$488.02 per year in order to pay for necessary landscape and lighting maintenance. This ballot measure was unsuccessful, so the annual assessment remains the same as it was since the early 1990s. This assessment funds landscaping and lighting maintenance, including fuel modification and open space maintenance. The cost of fuel modification and open space maintenance varies annually, and as the fiscal year continues, more may be needed. Staff regularly meets with the Phillips Ranch Oversight Committee to discuss the financial constraints of the District and the health and safety needs.

Prepared by:

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Shandy Dittman  
Senior Management Analyst

**ATTACHMENT(S):**

Attachment No. 1 – Resolution No. 2021-132

Attachment No. 2 – County Letter of Authorization