COUNTY OF SONOMA

575 ADMINISTRATION
DRIVE, ROOM 102A
SANTA ROSA, CA 95403

SUMMARY REPORT

Agenda Date: 10/20/2020

To: Board of Supervisors
Department or Agency Name(s): County Administrator's Office, Permit Sonoma, Regional Parks
Staff Name and Phone Number: Gary Helfrich 565-2404
Vote Requirement: Informational Only
Supervisorial District(s): All Districts

Title:
Gleason Beach Realignment of Highway 1 Mitigation and Public Access Funding

Recommended Action:
Receive update on Gleason Beach Realignment of Highway 1 Mitigation Project including Coastal Commission Special Conditions of Approval Mitigation Fund for Project. (Informational Only)

Executive Summary:
The erosion of the coastal bluff at Gleason Beach has destroyed most of the homes west of Highway 1. A portion of the existing two-lane roadway continues to be undermined by coastal erosion and is vulnerable to future storms. To avoid a permanent closure of this important roadway, Caltrans is planning to realign 3,700 feet of Highway 1 approximately up to 400 feet inland of the existing roadway. The County has sought to negotiate with Caltrans and Coastal Commission to ensure that Highway 1 remains open, public access is developed at Scotty Creek, and a segment of the California Coastal Trail is constructed through the project limits after the highway is relocated, and as much blight as possible is removed from Gleason Beach as part of the project. The County plays a significant roll under the Coastal Commission's proposed conditions for the realignment project. These conditions contemplate the County creating a new park and using the $5 million proposed Gleason Beach and Bluff Clean up in lieu fee program fund to remove blight at Gleason Beach. Caltrans has included the attached Conceptual Public Access Plan and the Visual Hazards Cleanup Conceptual Plan with their Coastal Development Permit application package which is scheduled to be heard by the California Coastal Commission on November 6, 2020.

Discussion:
A project of this scope and complexity has required a significant amount of collaboration at local and state levels. Had Sonoma County maintained Local Coastal Plan (LCP) authority over the portion of the project within its jurisdiction, approval of the project would have involved a lengthy process of amending the LCP, certification of the amendment by the Coastal Commission, approval of the required Sonoma County Coastal Permit, which would be appealable to the Coastal Commission, and a separate Coastal Development Permit (CDP) approval by the Coastal Commission for that portion of the project within their original jurisdiction.

To address the roadway vulnerabilities and avoid losing California Transportation Commission (CTC) Highway 1 realignment project funding due to permitting delays, Caltrans requested that the Board of Supervisors agree to relinquish local LCP control and allow a consolidated permit to be processed by the California Coastal

Commission. On April 17, 2018 the Board approved Resolution 18-0133, approving consolidation of the permit and recognizing the project as "an exemplary model of interagency coordination and cooperation working under various State mandates to create a major transportation infrastructure project that effectively addresses climate change, sea level rise, and protection of coastal resources." The resolution also recognized the desire of the Board to maintain local involvement with project modification and mitigation measures related to hazard abatement, beach cleanup, public access, and development of the California Coastal Trail through the project.

On August 15, 2019, the CTC approved the programming of an additional $15,398,000 to the Highway 1 realignment project, which is anticipated to fully fund the mitigations associated with the project. These funds, along with the overall construction dollars, may be deprogrammed by the CTC unless Caltrans has a construction contract by December 2020 to enable the CTC to allocate funding no later than June 2021. Caltrans is targeting initiation of construction in Spring of 2021. The project has experienced significant delays due to challenges that Caltrans encountered acquiring right-of-way for the project, and purchasing land necessary for beach access and habitat restoration. At this time, Caltrans has acquired the necessary right-of-way to construct the Highway 1 realignment and beach access. Fee title to a portion of the existing beach access property (known as Scotty Creek Beach) was accepted by the Board of Supervisors on February 11, 2020. Caltrans is still in negotiations with one private landowner to acquire three remaining parcels located west of the Highway 1 realignment.

As development of the project continued in 2020, Coastal Commission and Sonoma County staff determined that the original debris removal plan, which would remove all debris at the same time, is likely to shorten the life of the proposed initial Coastal Trail alignment along the current Highway 1 right-of-way. Additionally, Coastal Commission staff determined that cleanup did not require public ownership of the residential parcels along the bluff and that clean up could proceed as an enforcement action with the parcels remaining in private ownership.

Throughout the project, additional delays have been created by changed circumstances caused by ongoing erosion and landslides which severely damaged Highway 1 in 2004, 2017, and 2019. The subsequent repair work required issuance of emergency Coastal Permits. Conditions of approval for these permits required complete removal of any structures installed as part of the emergency repairs if the road was eventually abandoned or relocated. Originally, Permit Sonoma anticipated that Caltrans would completely remove all of these structures upon completion of the new Highway 1 alignment, but Permit Sonoma and Caltrans determined that, as is the case for debris on the residential parcel, phased removal is a more desirable approach to extend the life of the initial alignment of the Coastal Trail within the existing Highway 1 corridor. Caltrans determined that the most feasible way to remove these road emergency repairs would be in coordination with the overall debris removal and bluff cleanup effort that are proposed to be managed by Sonoma County.

The current proposal for Sonoma County to manage the cleanup program was developed in a partnership between Caltrans and Sonoma County and memorialized in the County's April 17, 2018 Board Resolution, Caltrans District Director Tony Taveres' April 18, 2020 letter to Sonoma County Supervisor Linda Hopkins, and Caltrans Project Manager Lilian Acorda's September 14, 2020 letter to Commission Staff Peter Allen. Under the Coastal Commission's proposed conditions of approval, the cleanup will be funded by a $5 million in lieu fee that Caltrans will pay into a special account established by Sonoma County. The Coastal Commission's

conditions contemplate a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Coastal Commission and the County governing the use of the $5 million for coastal cleanup which is anticipated to come before your Board for approval in 2021. The funds may be used for a variety of administrative, planning, acquisition (if needed), hazard abatement, code compliance, construction, oversight, restoration, maintenance and monitoring costs associated with the cleanup and disposal of manmade materials from the debris field along the bluff and shoreline within the identified Coastal Hazard Mitigation Area. The in lieu fee was determined using engineering estimates provided by Caltrans with a 20% contingency. The actual clean-up costs will not be known until the County solicits formal bids.

In addition to the $5 million to fund cleanup of debris, Caltrans in consultation with the County will develop the Coastal Trail along the existing Highway 1 right-of-way, develop parking areas, install rock slope protection to protect parking south of Scotty Creek, and contribute $1.135 million to the County to install a pedestrian bridge across Scotty Creek and other amenities necessary to complete the public access component of this project. This contribution will be pursuant to a Cooperative Agreement with Caltrans that is anticipated to come before your Board for approval in 2021. In addition, and per the agreement, Caltrans will be relinquishing to Sonoma County all of its property interests that have public access utility between the western edge of the new realignment right-of-way and the western edge of the existing Highway 1 right-of-way so that the Coastal Trail may maintain continuous connectivity through a managed retreat strategy. An annual monitoring program of bluff and shoreline conditions will allow Sonoma County to facilitate the bluffs' return to a natural condition while proactively keeping pace with erosion and landslide events so that cleanup of manmade structures occurs in a timely fashion, along with the managed retreat of a continuous Coastal Trail and related access improvements over time.

Coastal Commission and Caltrans staff have been working in partnership with Sonoma County to create a realignment project for Highway 1 at Gleason Beach that will well serve the local community and be a statewide model for planned retreat and protection of coastal resources. Conceptual Public Access Plans and Hazard Cleanup Program Overview are attached.

Additional information for the project can be found on the Caltrans Highway 1 Gleason Beach Realignment website at <https://gleasonbeachrealignment.org/>. Caltrans has hosted several public meetings for this project to solicit public input in March 2014, July 2015, April 2016, February and November of 2017, May and July of 2019 and the most recent held as a virtual public meeting on October 14, 2020. This project will also be heard by the Coastal Commission during their November 2020 virtual hearing (Nov 4-6). The exact date has not been set but will soon be posted on Coastal Commission website at <https://www.coastal.ca.gov/>. Caltrans CTC approvals are also scheduled to move forward in December 2020 with planned construction in April. Caltrans, Coastal Commission, and County staff will continue to discuss the Cooperative Funding Agreement and subsequent Memorandum of Understanding on the implementation of the Gleason Beach Debris Hazard and Clean up in lieu fee program between the Coastal Commission and the County in addition to the Gleason Beach Access Plan (Phase I and II), and the creation of the Gleason Beach Access Taskforce. Caltrans will transfer easements and right of way (not needed for the Hwy 1 realignment work) to the County. Staff will return to your Board in 2021 with draft agreements for your consideration and approval.

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Prior Board Actions:
April 17, 2018 (Resolution 18-0133) Board authorizes the consolidation of the Coastal Development Permit for the Caltrans Gleason Beach Roadway Realignment Project.
February 11, 2020 (Resolution 2020-0059) Board authorizes the acquisition of 0.65 acres of the McAllister Property for Scotty Creek Beach public access.

FISCAL SUMMARY

Expenditures	**FY 20-21 Adopted**	**FY21-22Projected**	**FY 22-23 Projected**
Budgeted Expenses			
Additional Appropriation Requested			
Total Expenditures			
Funding Sources			
General Fund/WA GF			
State/Federal			
Fees/Other			
Use of Fund Balance			
Contingencies			
Total Sources			

Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:
Staff will provide information on Fiscal Impacts at a future board meeting when the draft MOU and draft Cooperative Agreement are available.

Staffing Impacts:			
Position Title (Payroll Classification)	**Monthly Salary Range (A-I Step)**	**Additions (Number)**	**Deletions (Number)**

Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):
None

Attachments:
Conceptual Public Access Plan
Caltrans Sonoma County Hazard Cleanup Program Overview

Related Items "On File" with the Clerk of the Board:
None