August 21, 2018

Board of Supervisors
Marin County Civic Center
San Rafael, California 94903

SUBJECT: APPROVAL OF GUIDELINES TO SUPPORT THE LAND CONSERVATION GRANT PROGRAM, WHICH WOULD PROVIDE SMALL GRANTS TO QUALIFYING ORGANIZATIONS USING MEASURE A FUNDS TO SUPPORT THE CONSERVATION OF NATURAL AREAS

Dear Board Members:

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve Guidelines for the land conservation grant program.

SUMMARY:

As described in the Measure A expenditure plan, twenty percent of the funds reserved for Marin County Parks (Parks and Open Space Program) are for the conservation of natural lands through the acquisition of fee title and conservation easements. Marin County Parks is proposing to use a small portion of these conservation funds to support other public agency and non-profit organization acquisition projects. This Land Conservation Grant Program (Program) would allow qualifying organizations to apply for grants from the county as "seed money" to support their fund-raising efforts and will fund up to twenty-five percent of a purchase.

The Program will support county goals for land protection as identified in the Countywide Plan and the Marin County Parks Strategic Plan. This program would allow the county to contribute to the preservation of natural lands that are of regional significance but not appropriate for Marin County Parks or the Open Space District (District) to own and manage. However, since the intent of this Measure A program is to support Marin County Parks and Marin County Open Space District acquisitions, the number and size of grants that would be recommended to the board for funding is envisioned to be small, and county or District purchases will have priority over grant projects.

The Program is consistent with the Measure A ordinance and the expenditure plan. Staff has developed program guidelines which include a grant application and a model grant agreement to guide the program. Staff will review applicant proposals together with the required supporting documentation (e.g. appraisal, title report, and other similar documents), and prepare a recommendation for the board's consideration.
Final authority to approve a grant agreement and to disburse funds will rest with the Board of Supervisors.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

There are no direct fiscal impacts from the board's consideration of the Program. However, future grant applications will require the use of Measure A funds and the board will consider these expenditures at the time it reviews the grant application.

**REVIEWED BY:**

[ ] Dept. of Finance [ X ] N/A
[ ] County Counsel [ X ] N/A
[ ] Human Resources [ X ] N/A

Senior Open Space Planner James Raives is the principal author of this report.

Respectfully submitted,

[Signature]

Chris Chamberlain
Assistant Director