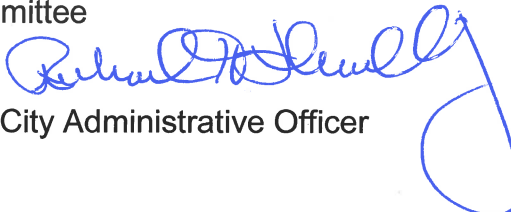


CITY OF LOS ANGELES
INTER-DEPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE

Date: May 08, 2019

To: Budget and Finance Committee

From: Richard H. Llewellyn, Jr., City Administrative Officer



Subject: **CITY PLANNING – RESOURCES NEEDED FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF WILDLIFE CORRIDORS**

During its consideration of the Department of City Planning's 2019-20 Proposed Budget, the Budget and Finance Committee requested City Planning to report on the resources required to establish a Wildlife Study Area. Attached is the Department's response.

The Department provides a four-year plan for the implementation of a Wildlife Study Area. The Department is requesting authority and nine-months funding for the first year of the program for four positions, consisting of one Environmental Specialist II, one City Planner, and two City Planning Associates for a cost of \$386,548 (\$253,424 direct costs and \$133,124 related costs) and \$220,000 in expense and consultant costs for a total cost of \$606,548. Please note that this amount is less than the amount provided by the Department as the Department's calculation includes full-year funding for the Environmental Specialist II. Also note that the paygrade for the Environmental Specialist is subject to review by the City Administrative Officer, Employee Relations Division. The full cost of the program by year four is \$1,061,426 and includes eight positions (\$726,680 direct costs and \$334,746 related costs) and \$10,000 in expense funding.

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

The General Fund impact of funding the additional resources for the first year of the Wildlife Study Area is \$606,548 (\$473,424 direct costs, including expense funding and \$133,124 related costs). Should this item be funded, offsetting General Fund revenues or reductions to appropriations will need to be identified.

RHL:CEA:02190162


Question No. 508

Attachment

CITY OF LOS ANGELES
INTER-DEPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE

DATE: May 7, 2019

TO: Honorable Members of the Budget and Finance Committee
c/o Richard H. Llewellyn, City Administrative Officer

FROM: Vincent P. Bertoni, AICP 
Director of Planning
Department of City Planning

SUBJECT: 2019-20 BUDGET MEMOS
QUESTION NO. 508 – WILDLIFE STUDY AREA

During its consideration of the 2019-20 Proposed Budget, the Budget and Finance Committee requested the Department of City Planning (DCP) to report back on resources needed to establish a Wildlife Study Area that examines biological resources and potential impacts on wildlife habitat in the hillsides. In recognition of the growing understanding of climate change impacts and the importance of protecting the City's natural resources, this proposal is viewed as a priority for the City.

Summary

The Wildlife Study Area program could be phased in over a four-year period and would be made up of a combination of biologists and planners who would identify and implement both ministerial and discretionary regulations to be applied in the City's hillside areas. The first two years of the program would include work to establish a Wildlife Pilot Study Area. The budget for this effort would include one staff biologist, one City Planner, and two City Planning Associates at a cost of \$422,092 (including indirect costs) for nine months of salary funding for the first year and \$559,099 for the second year. In addition, \$220,000 per year would be needed for supplemental technical expertise. This assumes the use of an Environmental Supervisor II as the staff biologist position. DCP would work with the Personnel Department to identify the most appropriate classification or work on creation of a new classification for the specific needs of the program.

Background

Los Angeles is located in a temperate geography that is part of a larger ecologically complex zone containing important mountain, coastal, and water resources. This zone has been recognized for its biodiversity, and the Wildlife Study presents an opportunity to develop regulations that address the City's unique resources in an urbanized area. The proposed Wildlife Study would initially require a Pilot Study to develop wildlife protection regulations in the hillsides and ecologically sensitive portions of the Santa Monica Mountains, generally bounded by 101 and 405 Freeways. Given the size of the City, creation of a Pilot Study area would serve to inform identification of development standards for new construction for future application Citywide.

It is anticipated that the Pilot Study would identify both ministerial and discretionary regulations to be applied in the hillsides. The Pilot program may cover thousands of parcels in the Pilot Study

area, and projects would be subject to either a ministerial or discretionary review process depending on the details of the project. To establish a program that would properly identify and protect the City's natural resources, the Wildlife Study program staff may need to do site visits and on-site inspections to confirm the proper program implementation.

The citywide application of this effort requires the full staffing of 2 biologists and 6 planners and would involve the identification of Protection Areas for Wildlife (PAWs) citywide.

Phased-In Staffing Proposal

The staffing proposal is divided between the Pilot Study (the first two years) and the resources needed for citywide implementation in future years. In the first two years, the program would consist of one biologist, one City Planner, and two City Planning Associates. The long-term program would require double the staffing to administer the resulting ordinance in addition to studying and applying regulations citywide in other hillside areas.

Staffing for a biologist is critical to the successful implementation of the wildlife study. A trained biologist would apply natural resources and watershed management knowledge to the discretionary process and could also review and corroborate analysis submitted to the City by third parties. A biologist would also contribute technical expertise to avoid regulatory conflicts with water, wildfire, CEQA, or other existing or emerging regulations. Due to the unique nature of this work, the Department has identified two to three existing classifications that may be appropriate. However, the Department would need to work closely with the Personnel Department Classification Division to determine if any would be appropriate for the work, or may explore creation of a new classification. In the table below, the Department is assuming the use of an Environmental Supervisor II to serve as the biologist.


Additionally, the program would benefit from technical expertise from outside consultants to supplement the staff work. The long-term requirements the program are listed below.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Staffing	(1) Env. Sup. II (1) City Planner (2) City Planning Associates	No Change	+ (1) Env. Sup. II + (1) City Planning Associate	+ (1) City Planner + (1) City Planning Associate
Salaries	\$422,092	\$559,099	\$786,449	\$1,058,998
Consultant & Expenses	\$220,000	\$200,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
TOTAL:	\$642,092	\$759,099	\$746,449	\$1,0168,998

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