

**CITY OF GOODYEAR  
COUNCIL ACTION REPORT**

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>SUBJECT: Budget Transfer for Sonoran Valley Parkway Right-of-Way from BLM</b> | <b>STAFF PRESENTER:</b> Joe Schmitz, Long Range Planner<br><br><b>CASE NUMBER:</b> None<br><br><b>OTHER PRESENTER:</b> None |
|--|---|

**PROPOSED ACTION:**

Approve a budget transfer to fund completion of the project to obtain a Right-of-Way over Bureau of Land Management (BLM) lands for the Sonoran Valley Parkway.

**BACKGROUND AND PREVIOUS ACTIONS:**

The Sonoran Valley Parkway is a proposed roadway that will connect the northern portion of Goodyear with the Mobile area that was annexed in 2007. The roadway will extend from the intersection of Riggs Road and Rainbow Valley Road to its intersection with SR238. This project began in 2008 to obtain a Grant of Right-of-Way (ROW) Permit from the BLM where this roadway crosses federal lands. The scope of work for this project involves identifying an alignment for the roadway, preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), and filing an application with the BLM for a ROW Permit. The project also includes funding the costs incurred by the BLM in reviewing and processing the ROW application.

The City contracted with SWCA Environmental Consultants to file an application for ROW with the BLM and prepare the EIS and other associated documents. To date, the City has expended \$790,477 on this project. The project is nearing completion and it has been estimated that an additional \$32,000 will be needed to make certain revisions to the final EIS document; shepherd it through the last steps of the approval process; and cover BLM's costs to complete its final review and processing.

**STAFF ANALYSIS:**

This project was initiated in 2008 by the City of Goodyear on behalf of the developer of Amaranth, a master planned community containing over 10,000 acres that was to be developed in the Mobile area. The developer was to provide the funds necessary to obtain a roadway ROW from the BLM across federal lands. Due to the economic downturn at the end of 2008, the Amaranth development did not proceed, however, since the property had been annexed into the city, it was decided that it would be appropriate to continue the work necessary to establish a route for the roadway pursuant to the NEPA process and obtain a grant of ROW from the BLM. While construction of the roadway is not imminent, establishment of the roadway alignment and acquisition of the ROW from the BLM is the first and most important step. It is estimated that a total of 471 acres of ROW will be needed over the 15.5-mile length of the project. The City will obtain 280 acres from the BLM through a ROW permit.

The Draft Final EIS was completed in March 2015 and submitted for review by the Washington office of the BLM in April 2015. A Programmatic Agreement needed to be executed prior to the issuance of a Record of Decision (ROD) to address certain provisions of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. The Programmatic Agreement was approved and executed by the City in April 2016. Due to personnel changes at the federal, state and local levels of the BLM; additional review requirements by the State Historic Preservation Office; changing BLM priorities; and new policy directives issued by the administration in Washington; this project has languished at the federal level, but now has the opportunity to move forward for completion.

As a result of these issues, the ROW application process has taken longer than planned and cost more than was originally projected. Due to the potential volatility in the Federal process, we are requesting a grand total of \$32,000, although it is anticipated that only \$22,000 will be needed. Any unused funds will be returned to the City Manager One-time General Fund Contingency account. If the funds requested are not made available for this additional work, the project will be terminated and the City will have little to show for the funds already expended.

The project needs to be completed because a roadway connection between the northern portion of Goodyear and the Mobile area is still needed, even without the development of Amaranth. Furthermore, establishing the roadway alignment through the NEPA process not only allows the City to obtain a ROW over federal lands, it sets the stage for future acquisition of the balance of the ROW from the Arizona State Land Department and private property owners and maintains the eligibility of this project for future federal funding. Obtaining a ROW from BLM also will demonstrate that a roadway can be developed through this area without adverse impact, which would be beneficial to the I-11 alignment alternative through Goodyear that is under consideration in the I-11 Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement by providing detailed data and background information to that study. The SVPP will serve a different function than the I-11 project, and the MAG Hidden Valley Transportation Study projected that both roadway corridors will be needed in the future. Lastly, the I-11 project team has indicated that it doesn't see completion of the SVPP EIS and ROW application as a detriment to the I-11 project and supports completion of the project.

For these reasons, staff is requesting approval of a budget transfer in the amount of \$32,000 from the City Manager One-time General Fund Contingency budget to the Development Services Department's budget for the Sonoran Valley Parkway Project.

### **FISCAL ANALYSIS:**

The fiscal impact of this request will be to transfer \$32,000 from the City Manager One-time General Fund Contingency to the Development Services Department's budget for the project. \$22,000 will be used to fund additional work necessary to complete the project. The other \$10,000 will be available to cover any other unexpected costs that may occur before the end of the project. The one-time portion of the City Manager General Fund Contingency will have a remaining balance of \$218,000 if this item is approved.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

City Council approve the budget transfer to fund completion of the project to obtain a Right-of-Way over BLM lands for the Sonoran Valley Parkway.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Map of Sonoran Valley Parkway Project