

DATE SUBMITTED 05/26/2016
 SUBMITTED BY CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE
 DATE ACTION REQUIRED 06/01/2016

COUNCIL ACTION (x)
 PUBLIC HEARING REQUIRED ()
 RESOLUTION ()
 ORDINANCE 1ST READING ()
 ORDINANCE 2ND READING ()
 CITY CLERK'S INITIALS ()

**IMPERIAL CITY COUNCIL
 AGENDA ITEM**

SUBJECT: DISCUSSION/ACTION: SUPPORT AB 2444 – CALIFORNIA WATER, CLIMATE, AND COASTAL PROTECTION AND OUTDOOR ACCESS FOR ALL ACT OF 2016

1. APPROVAL TO ISSUE LETTER IN SUPPORT OF AB 2444 – CALIFORNIA WATER, CLIMATE AND COASTAL PROTECTION AND OUTDOOR ACCESS FOR ALL ACT OF 2016

DEPARTMENT INVOLVED: CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE

BACKGROUND/SUMMARY:

AB 2444 California Water, Climate and Coastal protection and Outdoor Access for All Act of 2016 will allow investments to improve and to further create parks and recreation areas, as well as to create trail networks that provide access from neighborhoods to parks and recreational opportunities, will help ensure Californian's have access to safe places to exercise and enjoy recreational activities. This bill is the latest attempt by legislature to pass comprehensive park funding and allocates nearly \$3 Billion in state funds for the rehabilitation and conservation of water resources, as well as funding for parks and recreation infrastructure. AB2444 is unique because it carves out a portion of funding for rural and low population regions like Imperial County.

FISCAL IMPACT: None

F.O. INITIALS: 

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: It is Staff's recommendation that the City Council of Imperial support AB 2444 in an effort for Staff to later apply for funding through the State for the potential parks and recreation facility rehabilitation and infrastructure.

MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION: It is the City Manager's recommendation to agree with Staff and that the City Council support AB 2444

MANAGER'S INITIALS

MOTION:

SECONDED: APPROVED () REJECTED ()
 AYES: DISAPPROVED () DEFERRED ()
 NAYES:
 ABSENT: REFERRED TO:



Assemblymember Eduardo Garcia, 56th Assembly District

AB 2444 – California Water, Climate, and Coastal protection and Outdoor Access for All Act of 2016

Updated: 02/26/16

BACKGROUND

According to the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Plan of 2015, of the nearly 300 local/regional park directors surveyed, 55% cited rehabilitation of existing parks as the highest priority, versus 19% for new park development and 17% for new facilities in existing parks.

It has been 14 years since California last approved a “true park bond.” The protracted economic downturn in 2008 had a disproportionate impact on the local, regional and state parks infrastructure in the state as the services and investments associated with this type of infrastructure were, during this period, viewed as less critical and were oftentimes subject to cuts. As a consequence, demand for capital dollars continues to be at a fever pitch as witnessed by the 8-1 ratio of available grant dollars versus grant application requests during the last and final round of competitive awards in 2010 under the Statewide Parks Program. There has been particularly high demand in both urban and rural disadvantaged communities where many still lack access to safe parks, trails, recreation areas, and access to the great outdoors.

Previous Bonds

Recently, there have been three separate vehicles that have served as park bonds approved the voters since 2000:

Proposition 12 (2000) Total \$2.1 billion including:

- A) \$780m for local, regional parks primarily through block grant awards.
- B) \$400m for state parks to address deferred maintenance and acquisition priorities

Proposition 40(2002) Total \$2.4 billion including:

- A) \$946m for local, regional parks through both block grants and competitive grant awards
- B) \$250m for State Parks to address deferred maintenance and acquisition priorities

Proposition 84(2006) Total \$5.4 billion(Primarily Water and Flood Control Bond)

- A) \$457m for park poor/disadvantaged community funding and nature center investment
- B) \$400m for state parks to address deferred maintenance and acquisition priorities

SUMMARY

Investments to improve and to further create parks and recreation areas, as well as to create trail networks that provide access from neighborhoods to parks and recreational opportunities, will help ensure all Californians have access to safe places to exercise and enjoy recreational activities. Additionally, continued investment in the state’s parks, trails, and natural resources, and greening urban areas will mitigate the effects of climate change, providing California access to its bountiful natural resources for future generations to come.

A priority will be made throughout the investments to recognize the need for poor-park and disadvantaged communities throughout the state following both the current “disadvantaged communities” definition and the “severely disadvantaged community” definition listed in the Health and Safety code.

The following investments will be the primary targets of the bond:

- A) Investments in the creation and expansion of safe neighborhood parks in park-poor neighborhoods in accordance with the Statewide Park Development and Community Revitalization Act of 2008. At least 10% of funds available pursuant to this division shall be allocated to severely disadvantaged communities. Up to 10% of funds available may be allocated for technical assistance to disadvantaged communities.
- B) Investments for Local Park Rehabilitation and Improvement grants to local governments on a per capita basis. Priority will be on rehabilitating existing infrastructure and to address deficiencies in neighborhoods lacking access to the outdoors.
- C) Investments in regional park districts, counties, open-space districts, open-space authorities, and eligible nonprofit organizations to restore facilities, including trails, that facilitate new or enhances use and enhanced user experiences.
- D) Investment in the restoration and preservation of existing state park facilities and units to preserve and increase public access to those facilities and units and to protect the natural, cultural, and historic resources of those facilities and units.

Priority would be made upon the department's backlog of deferred maintenance.

- E) Investments to provide non-motorized infrastructure development and enhancements that promote new or alternate access to waterways, outdoor recreational pursuits, and forested or other natural environments to encourage health-related commuting and opportunities for Californians to reconnect with nature. Percentage of funds will be made available to communities for innovative transportation programs that provide new and expanded outdoor experiences to disadvantaged youth.
- F) Investments will be made into projects providing improvements in the rehabilitation or expansion of local or regional park infrastructure to mitigate the impacts of substantial visitor and tourist oriented use patterns.
- G) Investments into the protection and expansion of wildlife corridors including projects to improve connectivity between habitat areas, for projects to improve climate adaptation and resilience of natural systems, and for projects to protect and improve existing open space corridors and trail linkages related to utility or transportation infrastructure that provide habitat connectivity and public access or trails.
- H) Investments in California River Parkways
- I) Investments in State Conservancies

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Staff Member: Mark Rossow

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The Honorable Eduardo Garcia
California State Assembly
State Capitol, Room 4162
Sacramento, CA 95814-4900

Re: AB 2444 (Garcia) California Water, Climate, and Coastal Protection and Outdoor Access for All Act of 2016 – SUPPORT

Dear Assemblymember Garcia:

On behalf of the City of Imperial, I am writing to express our strong support of Assembly Bill 2444 (Garcia) California Water, Climate, and Coastal Protection and Outdoor Access for All Act of 2016, a bill that will help provide funding for critically needed conservation efforts and recreation infrastructure equitably throughout our State.

The last legislatively crafted park bond was Proposition 40, which was approved by the voters over fourteen years ago. AB 2444 will deliver much needed investments in underserved urban communities as well as our regional and state parks, offer protection of our coastal and inland watersheds, expand wildlife corridors, and conserve and restore our upper watersheds. Unlike in previous park bonds the most vulnerable Californian's needs have been considered in this legislation. AB 2444 creates two separate pots of funding for rural and urban districts, this crucial distinction prevents smaller districts from competing with large county and regional projects and ensures everyone in California has the same recreational opportunities, regardless of zip code.

The City of Imperial plays a critical role in preserving our natural surroundings for our current community as well as posterity. This means providing outdoor access through organized recreational activity, such as sports fields and programs, as well as maintaining natural trails, lake and seabeds. This work relies on multiple sources of financing and the state has for the past two decades been a key funding partner. Unfortunately, recent years have been defined by dwindling state funding sources as Proposition 84 and other voter approved measures have run low. AB 2444 is an important step towards creating new state funding to address the tremendous need for conservation and parks projects that will benefit our communities, economy, and our environment now and in the future.

For these reasons the City of Imperial is proud to support AB 2444. I would like to thank the Assemblymember for his hard work and leadership on this issue.

Sincerely,

Doug Cox
Mayor
City of Imperial

Cc: Senator Ben Hueso

CITY COUNCIL
Doug Cox – Mayor
James Tucker – Mayor Pro Tem
Geoff Dale – Councilmember
Mark Gran – Councilmember
Betty Sampson – Councilmember

CITY CLERK
Debra Jackson

CITY TREASURER
Stacy Cox