



Legislation Text

File #: 17-1213, **Version:** 1

Community Development Services, Administration and Finance Division, recommending the Board approve the Adopt-a-Cemetery-Project Program; direct staff to establish a working group of volunteers to assist with adoption and coordination of cemetery projects, train volunteers and provide guidance as needed, and monitor projects to ensure the success of the program; and authorize staff to make necessary minor changes to the program as it is implemented, if needed, with County Counsel and Risk Management approval. (Est. Time: 10 Min.)

FUNDING: Cemetery Fees and General Fund.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION

Community Development Services (CDS), Administration and Finance Division, recommending the Board approve the Adopt-a-Cemetery-Project Program; direct staff to establish a working group of volunteers to assist with adoption and coordination of cemetery projects, train volunteers and provide guidance as needed, and monitor projects to ensure the success of the program; and authorize staff to make necessary minor changes to the program as it is implemented, if needed, with County Counsel and Risk Management approval.

DISCUSSION / BACKGROUND

The Cemetery Advisory Committee (CAC) formed a subcommittee in 2017 to discuss how to coordinate volunteers to handle various projects in historical cemeteries within the County. The subcommittee formulated a proposal and the CAC approved the Adopt-a-Cemetery-Project Program. The CAC's proposal included provisions for the County to authorize volunteers to work on projects in any cemetery in the County, including non-County operated cemeteries. Those portions of the CAC proposal were removed. The proposed program requires that each project be approved by County Cemetery Operations.

The basic concept for the Adopt-a-Cemetery-Project Program was taken directly from the County's Adopt a Trail Program utilized by Parks and Recreation, but adapted to accommodate the needs of cemeteries. CDS also revised several Adopt a Trail Program forms for cemetery use in this program. The Adopt a Trail Program was approved by the Board of Supervisors on September 10, 2013 (Legistar 13-1078, Item 2).

Cemetery Operations staff are contacted periodically by volunteers and organizations requesting to be allowed to assist with projects at the County's historical cemeteries. The Adopt-a-Cemetery-Project Program will allow these volunteers to perform maintenance and repairs, as well as assist with beautification projects such as installation of kiosks, benches, fencing, and historical signage. This program would provide an opportunity for Cemetery Operations to structure activities and spread volunteers to cemeteries that receive only minimal routine maintenance. Staff anticipates that a working group of volunteers would be established to assist with the implementation of the program.

Much of the County's history is reflected in its historic cemeteries. Giving volunteers the opportunity

to take care of these special places provides a sense of ownership and commitment to the cemeteries. This ownership translates into protection of the cemeteries through vigilance, making cemeteries less of a target for vandalism and degradation.

ALTERNATIVES

Projects could be performed by County staff or vendors, at considerable cost to the General Fund, or projects would not be done, leaving some cemeteries looking abandoned and unkempt.

OTHER DEPARTMENT / AGENCY INVOLVEMENT

County Counsel and Risk Management approved the program, with minor wording changes suggested by County Counsel. These changes were incorporated into the document.

CAO RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Board approve this item.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The General Fund could be impacted by materials costs for some projects, which would be within approved annual CDS cemetery budgets.

CLERK OF THE BOARD FOLLOW UP ACTIONS

NA

STRATEGIC PLAN COMPONENT

Good Governance

CONTACT

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