South Portland City Council

Position Paper of the City Manager

Subject:

ORDER #106-18/19 – Authorizing the City accepting a Coastal Community Grant from the Municipal Planning Assistance Program in the amount of $50,191.

Position:

This item is brought forward to accept a Coastal Community Grant from the Municipal Planning Assistance Program in the amount of $51,191. The purpose of the grant is to create a vulnerability assessment map that models flood and coastal hazards in South Portland. This map will be web-based and will serve many purposes for the City.

For one, this map will help with the Council’s goal of a waterfront master plan by providing better flood-related data for our coastal areas. It will also aid in our emergency planning efforts by displaying data regarding the vulnerability of our emergency evacuation routes and critical infrastructure. This information will also assist in our efforts to create a Climate Action and Adaptation Plan.

Lucy Brennan, Sustainability Program Coordinator, has provided a more detailed memo regarding the grant and how the City will undertake this project. Ms. Brennan will be at Tuesday’s meeting to answer any questions the Council may have.

Requested Action:

Council passage of Order #106-18/19.
To: Scott Morelli, City Manager;
From: Lucy Brennan, Sustainability Program Coordinator
CC: Julie Rosenbach, Sustainability Director
Date: December 18, 2018
Subject: Acceptance of Coastal Community Grant

On December 12th, the Sustainability Office was awarded a Coastal Community Grant of $50,191 to create a vulnerability assessment map that models flood and coastal hazards in South Portland.

**Background**
In June 2018, the Sustainability Office took the first step to evaluate how well the City is positioned to prepare for, respond to, and recover from flooding events and future sea level rise scenarios. The Sustainability Office brought together City staff to complete the Maine Flood Resilience Checklist in a workshop led by the Southern Maine Planning and Development Commission. The Checklist was a practical self-assessment tool that gave staff a comprehensive view of existing plans and identified strategies to enhance community resilience. The Sustainability Office applied for a Coastal Community Grant from Maine Coastal Program to take the next step on two identified strategies:

1. Develop a standardized, cross-departmental protocol for documenting flood-related information and impacts. Use data gathered about the cause, location, and impacts of historical flooding events to inform land-use planning, emergency response and management, stormwater management, and climate adaptation.

2. Conduct a vulnerability assessment to identify natural, social, and build assets that are likely to be most affected in the future as local threats of coastal flood hazards become more severe. Use findings to inform the development of adaptation and mitigation programs and policies today that will enhance resiliency.

**Proposal**
The grant funding will support the development of a web-based, vulnerability assessment map that will serve as a key resource in the re-imagination of our coastal community in the face of a changing climate. The Sustainability Office will serve as the project lead and work with several key partners: Southern Maine Planning and Development Commission (SMPDC), Greater
Portland Council of Governments (GPCOG), Gulf of Maine Research Institute (GMRI), and Maine Geological Survey (MGS). The tasks included in the proposed project are outlined below:

**Task 1 Flood Data Collection Protocol:** South Portland will partner with SMPDC to develop a standardized, cross-departmental protocol and associated form for documenting flood-related information and impacts. Once the protocol and data collection form have been developed, the project team will coordinate with SMPDC staff to train relevant municipal departments/staff on their use.

**Task 2 Data Collection and Aggregation:** The Sustainability Office will gather and organize geo-referenced data related to historical flooding events (collected in Task 1), sea level rise and storm projections, economic and social vulnerability, emergency evacuation routes, and critical infrastructure.

**Task 3 Vulnerability Assessment Map Development:** The Sustainability Office will partner with GMRI to integrate data collected during Task 2 into ESRI’s online mapping platform and create an interactive, web-based vulnerability assessment map. Once created, users can analyze the combined impacts of climate projections and coastal hazards on vulnerable public/private assets and populations.

**Task 4 Outreach to Support Local and Regional Coastal Community Planning:** South Portland will leverage the vulnerability assessment map to inform community decision-making and drive resiliency planning efforts in the Climate Action and Adaptation Plan. The City will also partner with GPCOG and SMPDC to share the map as a model for municipal/regional adaptation planning in other coastal communities.

**Timeline:** December, 2018 - August, 2019

**Recommendation**
The City of South Portland’s Sustainability Office recommends acceptance of $50,191 in Coastal Community Grant funding to develop a web-based vulnerability assessment map for the City. Grant funding is awarded and administered by the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry, the Municipal Planning Assistance Program, and the Maine Department of Marine Resources.
ORDERED, that the City Council hereby accepts fifty thousand one hundred ninety-one dollars ($50,191) from the Municipal Planning Assistance Program through its Coastal Community Grant Program to be used by the Sustainability Office.

Said amount shall be credited to the Coastal Community Grant Account #219841-414001-19575.

Fiscal Note: $50,191 Revenue

Dated: December 18, 2018