



AGENDA MEMORANDUM

First Reading Ordinance for the Council Meeting of January 26, 2021
Second Reading Ordinance for the City Council Meeting of February 9, 2021

DATE: January 26, 2021

TO: Peter Zaroni, City Manager

FROM: Jeff H. Edmonds, P. E., Director of Engineering Services
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<p>Ordinance Accepting and Appropriating Texas General Land Office-Coastal Management Program's Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act Grant Funding for Redhead Pond Project</p>
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CAPTION:

Ordinance authorizing the acceptance of the Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act ("GOMESA") grant funding from the Texas General Land Office – Coastal Management Program in an amount of \$253,307.00 for the acquisition of property adjacent to Laguna Madre and in the Redhead Pond area, for stormwater re-route associated with the Bond 2018 Laguna Shores street reconstruction projects, located in Council District 4, and appropriating an amount of \$253,307.00 in the Community Development Grant Fund.

SUMMARY:

This ordinance authorizes the acceptance of the Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act ("GOMESA") grant funding from the Texas General Land Office – Coastal Management Program for the acquisition of property located adjacent to Laguna Madre and the Redhead Pond area for stormwater re-route associated with the Bond 2018 Laguna Shores street reconstruction projects. This project is expected to improve water quality, re-establish a vital freshwater source, and increase wildlife diversity in the area.

BACKGROUND AND FINDINGS:

Redhead Pond area has been converted from a freshwater source for many wintering ducks and shorebird populations to a saline/brackish water pond due to re-routing of stormwater infrastructure changes in the area and rising tides. Additionally, a nearby culvert has also allowed saline waters from the adjacent body of water, Laguna Madre, to enter Redhead Pond during high tide events. To resolve this issue, the City has developed a Mitigation Plan for Laguna Shores Rehabilitation – Segments 1, 2, and 3 (each segment is related to the three Laguna Shores street reconstruction projects). The mitigation plan proposes a "watershed approach" and involves stormwater re-route projects associated with Bond 2018 Laguna Shores reconstruction, wetland preservation, and other hydrologic restoration activities for Redhead Pond. The City's stormwater re-route project will take place in the Segment 2 area, but will impact all 3 segments, and will re-introduce freshwater into Redhead Pond to gradually restore the freshwater balance in Redhead

Pond. This project is expected to result in improved water quality, re-establishment of fresh habitats, and significant increases in wildlife diversity and use due to the availability of freshwater in the area.

To proceed with the mitigation plan, the City must acquire the property adjacent to Redhead Pond and contiguous with the existing Texas Parks & Wildlife Department's Redhead Pond Wildlife Management Area (WMA). The City plans to use the GOMESA grant funding to acquire 24.43 acres of wetland and upland property adjacent to Redhead Pond. The acquisition and subsequent conservation of this ecologically sensitive property will provide a physical continuum of and a buffer around the Redhead Pond WMA and will prevent the land from being developed in the future.

The City already has conducted the title search and has acquired the following documents: Willing Seller Letter, Title Commitment, and Environmental Study – Phase I. Upon Council approval, the City will fulfill the following grant requirements:

- Property Appraisal in accordance with the Uniform Appraisal Standards for Federal Land Acquisitions.
- Phase 2 Environmental Study, if needed.

ALTERNATIVES:

The alternative is to not accept the grant. By doing so, Redhead Pond will continue to be brackish and saline and negatively impact local and migratory wildlife.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The fiscal impact in FY 2021 is the acceptance and appropriation of the GOMESA grant in an amount of \$253,307.00 to the Community Development Grant Fund. There is no required City match.

Funding Detail:

Fund: Community Development Grant (Fund 1072)
Mission Elem: 071
Account: 550005 – Land & Land Rights
Activity: 870104S
Amount: \$253,307

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the ordinance to authorize the acceptance and appropriation of the GOMESA grant. This grant will acquire 24.43 acres of wetland and upland property which includes the 9.0-acre Redhead Pond. The acquisition of this property is expected to improve water quality, reduce non-point source pollution, re-establish fresh and brackish march habitats, and increase wildlife diversity in the area.

LIST OF SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS:

Ordinance
Mitigation Plan – Laguna Shores Rehabilitation – Segments 1, 2, and 3
Maps
Willing Seller Letter
Title Commitment