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## Use and Management Committee

Memo-22-02

Meeting 22-03

July 28, 2022

To: Use and Management Committee

From: Jennifer Hooper, Associate Open Space Planner

Subject: Informational Item: Update on the Americans with Disabilities Act Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan

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### **REVENUE/COST**

The total cost for the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan is \$80,111.30. The contract for services was approved by the Board in December 2021.

### **BACKGROUND**

The ADA Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan will evaluate the Authority's public-serving facilities, programs and services, and communications for compliance with accessibility regulations, pursuant to ADA Title II and Section 504. The Transition Plan will identify applicable regulations, accessibility barriers, and an implementation plan for the removal of barriers over time.

The development and implementation of the ADA Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan aligns with the Authority's values of Justice, Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Access (JEDIA) in connecting people to nature. The outcomes of the Transition Plan will create more inclusive places and ways for the public to engage with the Authority.

### **DISCUSSION**

In December 2021, the Board approved a contract with Sally Swanson Architects (SSA) to develop an ADA Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan for the Authority, a project that was identified in the Authority's Fiscal Year 2020/2021 Work Plan.

The project will begin with a Self-Evaluation of the Authority's public-serving facilities, programs and services, and communications. Planning Staff will coordinate this effort with consultants and a team of Department representatives from Administrative Operations, Field Operations, and Public Affairs.

Physical assessments will be performed by a Certified Access Specialist (CASP) of the Authority's three open preserves: Coyote Valley Open Space Preserve, Rancho Cañada del Oro Open Space Preserve, and Sierra Vista Open Space Preserve. The facilities assessment will also evaluate the historic home at Tilton Ranch and review the tenant improvement plans from 2016 for the Authority's tenant improvement project at the Administrative Office at 33 Las Colinas Lane for consistency with current accessibility regulations including the Americans with Disabilities Act, California Building Code, and local ordinances.

Evaluation of the Authority's programs, services, and communications will include an assessment of practices, policies, documentation, and procedures. Programs and services to be evaluated include: virtual and in-person volunteer, docent, and educational programs; Open Access Days; and publicly-noticed Board and Committee meetings. The Self-Evaluation will also include a review of the Authority's standards for public communications such as email notifications, webpages, and other written/graphic content.

The results of the physical assessments and Self-Evaluation will be compiled into a report and GIS database for ongoing monitoring by Authority Staff.

Following the Self-Evaluation, SSA will develop a Draft Transition Plan to share with Authority Staff and the public. The Transition Plan will include, at a minimum, the following sections:

- Introduction detailing purpose and methodologies used for the Transition Plan
- Identification of personnel responsible for implementation of the Transition Plan
- Report of findings
- Identification of all barriers to meeting compliance, prioritization criteria for mitigating barriers where multiple options or scenarios exist, and a timeline for barrier removal
- For non-physical barriers, an action plan for accessibility improvements
- Cost estimates for recommendations
- Outline of the Authority's Grievance Procedure for resolving discriminatory claims
- Appendices including facility reports for all sites assessed, consisting of diagrams, plans, and a summary table to help identify and prioritize barriers, solutions, and probable costs for corrections

At key milestones in the planning process, the Authority will engage accessibility advocates and the general public through at least three public meetings. The purpose of the meetings will be to share information about the goals and process of the Transition Plan and to seek feedback on the findings, implementation plans for barrier removal, recommendations for accessibility improvements, and Draft Transition Plan. Staff will continue to share updates regarding the Transition Plan as the project progresses and the Final Transition Plan will be presented to the Board of Directors. Once complete, the Transition Plan will enable Staff to integrate barrier removal projects as part of the development of annual work plans and long-term capital improvement planning.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

This item is informational only.