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R-23-34  
Meeting 23-06  
March 23, 2023

**CONSENT ITEM #C3**

To: Board of Directors  
Open Space Authority

From: Andrea Mackenzie  
General Manager

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**SUBJECT**

Authorization for Open Space Authority Staff to Travel to Washington D.C.

**REVENUE/COST**

The total cost for travel to and from Washington D.C. for three staff of the Open Space Authority is estimated to cost no more than \$9,000.

**BACKGROUND**

There are several potential sources of federal funding that Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority (Authority) staff have been pursuing to fund projects that help fulfill the agency's mission. Examples of these sources include recent legislation such as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill (2021) and the Inflation Reduction Act (2022), both of which allocated new funding, existing funding at relevant federal agencies, and specific budget requests.

Emerging federal policies that affect our work also become important to address from time to time. One example of this policy work is engagement in the Federal Farm Bill to expand eligibility for certain farmland conservation programs that are relevant to our work in Coyote Valley and throughout the southern Santa Clara Valley.

The Authority's federal consultants, Townsend Public Affairs, under contract since the latter half of 2022, have worked with Authority staff to develop a strategy for our federal engagement. The strategy includes researching applicable funding programs, developing relationships with federal agency staff responsible for those programs, and developing relationships with our federal elected representatives and their staff – both in-district and in Washington D.C.

**DISCUSSION**

Authority staff propose that Andrea Mackenzie (General Manager), Marc Landgraf (External Affairs Manager), and Megan Dreger (Grants Program Manager) travel to Washington D.C. as a key part of the implementation of the strategy outlined above. Dates for the proposed trip would be April 17-20, 2023. Meetings with agency staff, elected representatives and their staff would take place on April 18 and 19, with travel to Washington D.C. on April 17, returning on April 20.

Estimated costs for air travel, hotel, ground transportation (primarily to and from the airport), and meals are as follows:

Category	Estimated Cost (April 17-20 for three people)
Air travel	\$3,970
Hotel	\$3,486
Ground transportation	\$300
Meals	\$720
Potential unanticipated expenses	\$500
Total Estimated Cost	\$8,976

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends authorization for expenditure of up to \$9,000 for travel by three staff members to and from Washington D.C. on April 17 through April 20, 2023.

Prepared by:

Marc Landgraf, External Affairs Manager

*Attachment(s): Resolution 23-19 – A Resolution of the Governing Board of the Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority Authorizing Open Space Authority Staff Travel to Washington D.C*