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Staff Report

Item # 6

To: Lemoore City Council
From: Holly Smyth, Planning Director
Date: September 14, 2006
Subject: Authorize environmental review for a possible Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Economic Development grant application

Discussion:

A few weeks ago staff was approached by a business owner who is actively looking into the possibility of entering into a long-term lease of the Food King building, upgrading the interior and exterior of the store to meet current market standards, and providing additional job opportunities on site. In order to fill possible funding shortfalls, the lessee and staff have been investigating possible funding sources for the improvements. Initially, the idea of utilizing CDBG funds and RDA façade improvement funds to remove much of the blighted condition of the grocery store seem feasible.

A notice of funding availability was just released for "Over-the-Counter Economic Development Block Grant" applications to be submitted to the State of California. In order to adequately pursue the CDBG funds, staff would like to get authorization to begin the federal NEPA and state CEQA environmental review process as a possible City project. Environmental review for this possible project can take between 45-60 days and the potential business owners would like to move forward as quickly as possible.

The potential lessee will be present at the Council meeting to answer any questions. It is anticipated that the lessee will help put together the necessary information together to help write the grant application to the State.

Budget Impact:

Staff time to conduct the environmental assessments.

Recommendation:

The City Council should give staff the authority to move forward with the needed environmental assessments under CEQA and NEPA for the possible project.