



MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

Los Angeles River Center & Gardens
570 West Avenue Twenty-six, Suite 100
Los Angeles, California 90065
Phone (323) 221-9944

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Governing Board

FROM:  Joseph T. Edmiston, FAICP, Hon. ASLA, Executive Officer

DATE: October 7, 2009

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item V(f): Consideration of resolution authorizing the acceptance of APN 2290-025-021, approximately 0.5 acres as a donation, Encino area of Los Angeles.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board adopt the attached resolution authorizing acceptance of APN 2290-025-021 in Encino with approximately 0.5 acres as a donation.

Background: The subject approximately 0.5 acre property is located in the core of Assessment District No. 2 Acquisition Area G between Encino Reservoir and Ventura Boulevard. The parcel has broad access on Charmion Lane. The wooded site is integral to the 1.73-acre potential acquisition addressed in Agenda Item no. IX. This integration is slightly tarnished by the encroachment of a parking area and landscaping from the adjacent parcel on Charmion Lane. The staff recommendation is to accept the fee simple donation from the National Bank of Arizona (seller of adjacent APN 2290-025-020) and to sell an easement to the adjoining owner to cover all or some of the existing encroachments. The proceeds can be used for a maintenance endowment. Additional frontage on Charmion Lane will also improve access—such as a trail to Louise Avenue—to the whole potential two-acre open space area created by the subject parcel and adjacent APN 2290-025-020.

The staff report for item IX includes extensive background on this potential two-acre open space area. Most of the two-acre site is shaded. In preparation to sell the lot, the bank that owns it did extensive brush clearance and tree trimming. There is no understory vegetation where people can hide. Superb access to the site and perfect existing fuel clearance conditions should lead to minimal annual maintenance costs. The result is an unusual, scenic, accessible open space area. The mix of large, mature native and non-native trees should be particularly valuable to owls and hawks. The evergreen tree canopies screen the park from the surrounding houses.

The option remains to create a shortcut neighborhood trail through the property to connect Louise Avenue to Encino Reservoir via Charmion Lane. Staff anticipates that the DWP's Encino Reservoir 1,000-acre open space area will ultimately be open for public access. Because of the nature of the broader area street layout, such a trail would make the reservoir a short walk for hundreds of additional homes.

