



MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

Los Angeles River Center & Gardens
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MEMORANDUM

TO: The Governing Board

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

DATE: November 7, 2007

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item V(c): Consideration of resolution authorizing the use of Santa Monica Mountains Open Space Preservation Assessment District No. 1 funds to acquire APNs 5577-008-001 and 002, 5581-005-001, 5581-010-001 and 002, and authorizing the granting of said funds to a public not-for-profit entity, Cahuenga Peak, Hollywood.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board adopt the attached resolution authorizing the use of an amount not to exceed \$900,000 of Santa Monica Mountains Open Space Preservation Assessment District No. 1 funds to acquire APNs 5577-008-001 and 002, 5581-005-001, 5581-010-001 and 002, and authorizing the granting of said funds to a public not-for-profit entity, Cahuenga Peak, Hollywood.

Background: The subject parcels, totaling 137.75-acres, are located in the Hollywood Hills adjacent to Griffith Park and other public lands. Acquiring these properties furthers Assessment District goals of acquiring open space, viewshed, watershed, wildlife habitat, and parkland. This acquisition is important to the westward expansion of Griffith Park and will further enhance the park's ecological and recreation value. It is the most significant unprotected open space in Area E.

Previously, the proprietors of the properties have proposed to build an estate on each parcel. Since then, Trust for Public Land has been working on a deal with the owners, and both the City of Los Angeles and Trust for Public Land have been working together to amass funding for these properties as dedicated open space.

The Citizens' Oversight Committee District No. 1 approved that the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) acquire these parcels at its December 10, 2003, meeting. Staff has internally reserved Assessment District Area E funds for the acquisition of the subject properties. The reserved amount is approximately \$875,000, and will not exceed \$900,000. The Council office has requested that Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority take an action of committing Assessment District funds even though acquisition is not imminent. The

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City of Los Angeles recently began a Class A Appraisal of the subject properties. Most probably the City of Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks will acquire and manage the properties. The proposed action would allow the Assessment District funds to be granted to the City of Los Angeles.