



# MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

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## MEMORANDUM

TO: The Governing Board

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

DATE: November 9, 2011

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item VI(d): Consideration of resolution authorizing a professional services contract with Alta Planning & Design for the Construction Document & CEQA phase of the Park to Playa project.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board adopt the attached resolution authorizing a professional services contract with Alta Planning & Design for the Construction Document and CEQA phase of the Park to Playa project.

Background: The goal of the Park to Playa project is to create a seamless regional trail that connects urban residents with the natural coast. This goal will be realized through coordination between multiple-agencies and jurisdictions. Once completed, the final trail will be a total of approximately 13 miles and will cross through and connect the trail systems of parks and open spaces within the Baldwin Hills, along Ballona Creek, in the Ballona Wetlands and along the Pacific Ocean.

On April 15, 2010, the governing board of the BHRCA took action to authorize a funding agreement in the amount of \$150,000.00 with the MRCA for work on the feasibility report and implementation plan (FR/IP) for Phase I of the Park to Playa regional trail project.

After an extensive RFP process for the FR/IP in June 2010, MRCA contracted with Alta Planning & Design (Alta) as the consultant for the preparation of the FR/IP for this phase of the work. In addition to evaluating the competence and qualifications of each design team relative to the project, the following items were received per the MRCA's Purchasing and Contracting procedures, Section 3.3, Professional Services:

- List of names and contact information for clients for which services were performed in the last five years.
- Samples of the services performed including the scope and cost.

Based on the background checks Alta was found to be the most qualified bidder for this type of work with years of experience in master plans, landscape architecture, design guidelines, signage and wayfinding plans, GIS mapping, construction documents, public involvement, trail design and planning and much more. They have designed and implemented over 5,000 miles of bikeways, walkways, and trails. Alta was able to display and demonstrate that their previous experience with trail work was exactly what the MRCA was looking for with regard to this project. Alta is scheduled to complete the final FR/IP in mid-November 2011.

The FR/IP is a document created by Alta that fully evaluates the seven-mile portion of the Park to Playa trail in the Baldwin Hills. The feasibility report evaluates alignment and connectivity alternatives, identifies key connection points, and explores trail design to a level sufficient to determine the feasibility of this portion of the Park to Playa trail. The implementation plan includes recommendations for short- and long-term phasing alternatives, identifies necessary acquisitions, geotechnical and environmental investigations, and permitting requirements for the successful implementation of this trail.

At this time BHRCA is moving forward with the Baldwin Hills Parklands portion of the trail, initiating Phase II of implementation and planning. Phase II work is comprised of producing Construction Documents, CEQA analysis and permitting for this 7-mile segment. Due to MRCA's extensive knowledge, expertise, and prior performance with this project, BHRCA would like MRCA staff to continue being the lead project manager and planner and will award additional funds in the amount of \$1.18 million to work on Phase II of the planning phase.

Based on the Phase I FR/IP, it was determined that there will be seven different trail "segments" within the Baldwin Hills Parklands portion of the Park to Playa trail. Alta's now wide expertise and prior performance with this project, specifically with the various trail segments proposed and the recommended alignments, makes them an ideal and logical candidate for the next Phase of work.

MRCA would like to contract with Alta for the creation of Construction Documents, CEQA analysis, and permitting for Phase II of the project in the amount of \$868,125. Alta plans to subcontract with multiple consultants with various specialties for this CD/CEQA Phase. These consultants include David Evans and Associates for Engineering, Tim Best for Geological and GIS work, and Bonterra for CEQA analysis and compliance. The execution of this contract shall be contingent on a revised and amended grant agreement with BHRCA for the additional project funds and potential advancement of those funds.