



# MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

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## MEMORANDUM

TO: The Governing Board

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

DATE: June 6, 2012

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item IX: Consideration of resolution authorizing a request for an amendment and budget augmentation from the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy for SMM-0836 for 8<sup>th</sup> Street Park.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board adopt the attached resolution authorizing a request for an amendment and budget augmentation from the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy for SMM-0836 in the amount of \$700,000 for 8<sup>th</sup> Street Park.

Background: On May 12, 2008, the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (SMMC) authorized a grant of Proposition 84 funds in the amount of \$1,200,000 to the MRCA for construction and project management for the Pacoima Wash Greenway 8<sup>th</sup> Street Park Project. MRCA began construction of the 8th Street Park in Pacoima in July 2008 but suspended work in December 2008 pursuant to the statewide bond freeze.

After careful study of the project's condition and uncompleted work, construction resumed in late September 2011. Due to the half-completed construction, almost three years of inactivity, and the unknown conditions, staff determined that it was in the best interest of the agency to complete the project construction using force account labor. Bidding out the remaining work to a general contractor, who would be required to take responsibility for the already-constructed elements for a fixed cost, was infeasible and the exact extent and scope of work could not be determined until construction was underway. The use of force account allows MRCA to address unforeseen conditions and problems as they are discovered and still continue to make forward progress on construction.

At the time of the bond freeze suspension, the project was within budget with a small contingency, and the general contractor was obligated to finish the project for the bid amount. After the general contractor terminated the contract in 2009, it became unlikely that the project could be finished for the same amount of funding. Some value engineering was incorporated into the project to reduce costs, but damage

and deterioration to the site (caused by vandalism, erosion, and exposure to the elements), remobilization costs, inflation, escalating fuel costs, revisions to the engineering plans, and increased project management needs have caused the cost of the project to exceed the original secured funding.

Some changes to the project were made after the project's design and amenities were reevaluated for ease of maintenance. MRCA's recent years of experience with Vista Hermosa Park has increased staff knowledge about how residents of Los Angeles utilize natural parks, and the park design was reevaluated from that perspective as well. The end result of this analysis is that a second arbor and additional large shade trees were added to the project.

As construction has continued, numerous unforeseen conditions have been discovered that result in increased cost, design revisions, and/or extended schedules. A few elements, which had not been completed by the contractor (or signed off on by MRCA), were found to be inaccurate. Problems with the installed irrigation are on-going, and were unforeseeable because the pipes were already buried underground. Not until crews were able to uncover the pipes and test the irrigation did they realize the amount of work involved in repairing the system. More elements of the project than originally anticipated have been completed using subcontractors, including electrical, concrete paving, custom specialty concrete seating, decorative tile work, brick paving, large tree planting, and surveying. These subcontractors are specialty trades, equipment or licenses that MRCA does not have on force account.

For all of the described reasons, an augmentation is necessary to complete the project and open the site for public access. The requested augmentation will be used to complete the construction of all the park's features and amenities: placitas, streams, and detention basins to capture and treat rainfall from the adjacent 33-acre residential area at the end of Bromont Street and Eighth Street, installation of new fencing, arbors, bridges, restoration of native plant communities, installation of benches, picnic tables, and interpretive elements.

Consideration: The requested augmentation is \$700,000, for a new total grant amount of \$1,900,000.