



## 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 XII: Consideration of resolution authorizing a grant application to the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission for the Ballona Creek – Milton Street Park project.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board adopt the attached resolution authorizing a grant application to the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission in the amount of \$200,000 for the Ballona Creek – Milton Street Park project.

Background: The Milton Street Park Project (project) area is located in the City of Los Angeles and consists of a 1.2-acre vacant rectangular parcel owned by the Baldwin Hills Regional Conservation Authority (BHRCA). MRCA staff is currently responsible for planning, design and implementation of the project. The property is immediately adjacent to the Ballona Creek Bike Path and is across Milton Street from the Marina Del Rey Middle School. To the east of the site is Centinela Park, a rest area and access point to the bike/pedestrian path from Centinela Boulevard. To the west a short distance away lie the Ballona Wetlands, separated from the proposed park by a few homes and the bridge of the Route 90- Marina Freeway which acts as a threshold.

The site is the only sizable publicly-owned property along the Ballona Creek with the potential to serve the public as a park. The park design includes both recreational and educational amenities. It contains on-site and off-site stormwater improvement components to maximize public benefit and take advantage of the project location adjacent to the heavily-used bike path, a middle school, and the soft-bottom portion of the Ballona Creek.

Once constructed, this will be a 1.2-acre multiple-benefit park that, in addition to on-site park improvements, will include a “Green Street” component within the public right-of-way (ROW) of Milton Street (approx. 1000 linear feet). Milton Street is currently an asphalt-paved, two-lane street, with parallel parking available along both sides. No street trees or other vegetation exists. The green street design calls

for Vegetated Stormwater Curb Extensions (VSCEs) located on both sides of the street. The vegetation in these curb extensions will consist of 54 native trees and a variety of shrubs. The VSCEs are designed to capture, treat, and infiltrate the wet and dry weather runoff from the street as well as runoff from the park. They will remove various pollutants including trash, metals, bacteria, organics, oil, and grease from the water before they reach the Creek. This will significantly reduce the amount of pollutants presently being expelled directly into Ballona Creek and thus improve the habitat potential and water quality in the Ballona Creek, the Santa Monica Bay, and Pacific Ocean. The green street will also help increase green space by acting as an extension of the park and will promote water infiltration.

The capital improvements planned for on-site elements include grading, construction of gabion retaining walls to stabilize the slopes, implementation of "green techniques" through recycling of existing site materials, on-site stormwater treatment components, pedestrian pathways including stairs and an ADA-accessible ramp, new gateways, outdoor classroom area, irrigation and native plantings, overlooks, seating, fencing, bike racks, interpretive panels, and a structure to provide shade and birdwatching opportunities.

Funding has previously been granted to the MRCA by the Baldwin Hills Conservancy (BHC) and State Coastal Conservancy (SCC) for the planning and design phase through the completion of 100% Construction Documents (CDs). Staff is currently working with consultants to complete the CDs by June 2012, proceed with the permitting and bidding thereafter, and to complete the CEQA by September 2012. Provided that we secure all funding, permits, and contractors, it is anticipated the park will be shovel ready and construction could begin by early 2013.

The project's capital cost is currently estimated at \$3,000,000. In 2008, staff secured \$500,000 in Proposition A funds for planning and capital improvements. \$2,500,000 in additional funds is required to fully fund the construction of the park. Staff is requesting to apply for the additional funding from Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission (SMBRC) in the amount of \$200,000. SMBRC is very supportive of the project and is eager to see it constructed.

Staff also plans to request funding from the State Coastal Conservancy (SCC) in the amount of (\$300,000), and the Baldwin Hills Conservancy (BHC) in the amount of (\$2,000,000) to complete the funding gap.

Consideration: The requested funding from SMBRC will be \$200,000 to construct both the park and green street improvements and accomplish the goals described above.