



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: October 3, 2012

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item VI: Consideration of resolution authorizing entering into an option agreement on APN 2274-018-014 and making said option payments, Sherman Oaks, City of Los Angeles. Negotiators: Joseph T. Edmiston and Derek Wiseman. Under consideration: price and terms. (This item may be heard in closed session pursuant to Section 54956.8 of the Government Code).**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board adopt the attached resolution authorizing entering into an option agreement on APN 2274-018-014 and making said option payments, Sherman Oaks, City of Los Angeles.

Background: The subject parcel is a 1.6-acre lot is located on the north slope of the eastern Santa Monica Mountains in Sherman Oaks. The address is 3967 Camino de al Cumbre. The attached map shows how the property is bounded by Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) on the north and west and by Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy property to the south and east. The property is part of the only east-west habitat linkage in that portion of the Santa Monica Mountains. This subject cluster of MRCA and Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy open space forms a significant habitat node at a key juncture in this wildlife corridor. California black walnut woodland is the dominant habitat type.

Development of the subject property would eliminate the ecological node value of the area and result in wholesale elimination of habitat resources on public land from required brush clearance.

The property was acquired in the last 18 months by a development partnership. Strong community involvement and concern in the area has convinced the partnership to give the community a chance to raise the money to acquire the property. The same community raised significant funding to help acquire both adjoining properties and most recently provided \$25,000 to the MRCA as a brush clearance fund as part of the MRCA acquiring the adjoining property. Key resource value, community energy, and a flexible willing seller warrant the expenditure of

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funds to option the property for a period to be negotiated. All option payments would apply to the final purchase price.