



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: May 1, 2013

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item VI(j): Consideration of resolution authorizing requesting a budget augmentation for grant SMM-84-0879 from the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board adopt the attached resolution authorizing requesting a budget augmentation for grant SMM-84-0879 from the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy.

Background: Marsh Park is located in the community of Elysian Valley in the City of Los Angeles, adjacent to the Los Angeles River. Improvements to the three-acre site will include an open-air picnic shelter, landscaped walking and nature trails with health and fitness stations, a restroom building and storage shed, a free play meadow, picnic tables, a community gathering/outdoor classroom area, bioswales, and parking for forty-three cars. Project construction will include demolition of the two existing on-site buildings, site grading, park construction and landscaping.

The 5.4-acre property was acquired in 2001. In 2006, the first phase of improvements was completed and planning and outreach began for Phase II. That design process continued until late 2008, when the State suspended the use of bond funds. In late 2010, the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy awarded grant funds to MRCA to complete design and construction of Phase II. CEQA compliance was completed in September 2012, and construction plans submitted for permitting in October 2012. On April 18, 2013, construction bids were received from 21 firms and are now under review by the project's construction manager.

Since 2010, the project underwent the following changes that resulted in increased cost:

- CEQA analysis resulted in a Mitigated Negative Declaration, adding consultant costs, staff time, and 6 months delay.

- A professional construction manager was hired to manage the bid and construction phases, adding consultant costs.
- An architect was hired to design a custom outdoor pavilion, adding to consultant costs.
- The area of the park that will be used for public interpretive programs was expanded and lighting was added to facilitate more evening programs. The summer campfires at Marsh Park Phase I are consistently well-attended, and the addition of parking and a restroom facility is expected to result in higher attendance and greater demand for programs.
- The Council office requested an extended community process to evaluate other options for parking, adding consultant and staff costs and several months delay.
- The CEQA analysis indicated that a larger parking lot was needed to prevent parking/traffic impacts to neighborhood streets, increasing construction cost.
- The CEQA analysis indicated that solid block walls were needed where the park abuts residential properties to prevent noise impacts to the neighbors, an increased cost over typical park fencing.
- The cumulative cost inflation from 2010 to 2013 is over 6%.

Consideration: The bids are currently being evaluated by the project's construction manager. The augmentation request will be between \$600,000 to \$1,000,000 of Proposition 84 funds.