



# MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

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## MEMORANDUM

TO: The Governing Board

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

DATE: August 6, 2014

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item VI(h): Consideration of resolution authorizing a legal services contract with Blank Rome, LLP.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board adopt the attached resolution authorizing a legal services contract with Blank Rome, LLP.

### Background:

Residents of Sullivan Canyon in Pacific Palisades have approached staff about the possibility of legal action to preserve historic public access and trail rights in the area.

The proposed contract with Blank Rome, LLP will be limited to preliminary research into the historic use of the various trails in Sullivan Canyon. The MRCA's total costs will not exceed \$5,000 and its contribution will be conditioned on the residents of this neighborhood contributing an additional \$5,000. Blank Rome, LLP is the successor firm of Finestone & Richter, which has successfully litigated similar cases for the MRCA previously.

The source of funds will be the Santa Monica Preservation Assessment District No. 2, Area I. The Engineer's Report for District No. 2 specifically identifies "legal fees and court costs" as allowable within the definition of "improvements." By adopting the attached resolution, the Board will be making the finding that the proposed expenditure is consistent with the criteria and requirements contained in the Engineer's Report.

Staff will report any relevant findings to the Board upon the conclusion of the services described herein.