



MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

Los Angeles River Center and Gardens
570 West Avenue 26, Suite 100
Los Angeles, California 90065
Phone (323) 221-9944 Fax (323) 221-9933

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Governing Board

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

DATE: June 29, 2016

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item IV: Consideration of resolution declaring intention to establish Community Facilities District No. 2016-1.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board adopt a resolution declaring intention to establish Community Facilities District No. 2016-1 (Fire Prevention, Wildlife Corridor and Open Space Protection); schedule a public hearing on August 3, 2016 at 11:00 a.m.; and direct staff to advertise a notice of public hearings for the formation of CFD No. 2016-1.

Background: On June 27, 2012 this Board adopted resolutions to declare its intention to form two Community Facilities Districts in the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy Zone in the City of Los Angeles, Community Facilities District No. 1 and Community Facilities District No. 2 ("CFDs 1 and 2"). On August 7, 2012, separate public hearings were held in each of the Districts, and this Board adopted a resolution of formation in each District and submitted to a vote of the registered voters within CFDs 1 and 2 for a special tax to finance the costs of the maintenance, acquisition, improvement, servicing, protection, and preservation of open space, parkland, wildlife corridors, natural habitats, lands, waters, and facilities owned or managed by MRCA within the CFDs, and the protection of water quality, reduction of the risk of wildfires, and park ranger safety and security services.

The vote was held at the general election on November 6, 2012. A two-thirds majority of the votes cast was required for the special tax to pass. In CFD-1 (east of I-405) at a rate of \$24 annually for ten years the vote passed by 76.18 percent. In CFD-2 (west of I-405) at a rate of \$19 annually for ten years, the vote passed 68 percent. The taxes were levied with the regular property tax bill beginning in fiscal year 2013-2014.

The proposed CFD 2016-1 has the exact boundaries as the 2012 CFD-1 (see attached map). In the four years since the original measures passed, no one could have anticipated the unprecedented needs that have faced these communities

because of increased use of Mulholland Drive, the scenic overlooks managed by MRCA, and MRCA parks and open space including Franklin Canyon Park, Wilacre Park and Fryman Canyon Park. Social media and cell phone traffic applications such as Waze have driven inordinate amounts of vehicles to shortcuts through the parks and canyons. Increased numbers of foreign tourists and tour operators are on Mulholland Drive every day of the year. Data from the National Park Service shows a 50 percent increase in car traffic in Franklin Canyon Park (southbound from Mulholland Drive) between 2012 and 2015. The attached memo from the Chief of Operations indicates that the public safety needs in the proposed CFD, including fire and patrol along the Mulholland Corridor, have increased at the same rate (almost 50 percent in three years). The funds generated by the 2012 CFD have not kept pace with the unanticipated increased use of Mulholland Drive and MRCA parklands in the CFDs and the impacted neighborhoods.

Further, the improvement in the economy has spurred an increase in hillside development pressure. The recent highly publicized National Park Service studies of mountain lion activity in the Santa Monica Mountains, and the mountain lion P-22 who is known to have traveled through CFD-1 and across Los Angeles freeways to get to Griffith Park, have underscored the importance of MRCA's efforts to acquire open space in the eastern Santa Monica Mountains. Some sections of the I-405 to Griffith Park wildlife corridor are vulnerable to being permanently severed by a single new house.

Experience has shown that land values will continue to increase and the City of Los Angeles will be under pressure to permit building that might not have been feasible in the past. The attached memo from the Chief of Natural Resources and Planning further describes the need for additional acquisition funding.

In addition, the 20-year funding from Los Angeles County Proposition A, which was passed by the voters in 1992 and 1996 and provided the MRCA \$1.6 million in annual operations and maintenance funding is now expired. However, there remains a clear and pressing need for increased MRCA services in the Mulholland Corridor. A new CFD will guarantee base funding for these purposes through 2027.

In April, 2016, this Board approved survey work to determine the public support and desire of voters in the CFD to levy a special tax to increase fire protection, and protect wildlife corridors and open space and increase ranger patrol in the CFD. In the proposed CFD 2016-1, east of I-405, results indicated strong support for a new measure.

Should the Board approve these actions, additional steps in the process would need to be taken:

1. The map of the proposed boundary for CFD 2016-1 must be recorded with the County Recorder.
2. A Public Hearing for CFD 2016-1 will be held on August 3, 2016 at 11:00 a.m.
3. At the Public Hearing, if approved, the Board would adopt a resolution calling

for a special tax election to be held at the general election on November 8, 2016.

4. A two-thirds majority would be required for the measure to pass.