



MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

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MEMORANDUM

TO: The Governing Board

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

DATE: July 26, 2017

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item XII: Consideration of resolution authorizing a grant application to the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy for Proposition 1 funds for Project Planning and Design for the Reseda Park project.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board adopt the attached resolution authorizing a grant application to the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy for Proposition 1 funds in the amount of \$350,000 for project planning and design of capital improvements for Reseda Park.

Background: Reseda Park is owned and operated by the City of Los Angeles in the West San Fernando Valley, situated in the 3rd Council District represented by Councilman Bob Blumenfield. The park is bisected by the Los Angeles River, although a pedestrian bridge connects the two parts. The northern portion of the park is an extremely underutilized space that does not incorporate native plants, has no Best Management Practices (BMPs) for water quality or infiltration, and offers no relation, integration or connection to the adjacent river. This portion of Reseda Park was identified a few years ago as a potential Los Angeles River improvement project before Proposition 1 was enacted.

Earlier this month the State of California finally appropriated Proposition 1's Urban Creeks funding to the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy. Although the Conservancy has not yet issued grant guidelines, the Reseda Park project is expected to be a very competitive application. Staff is asking for authorization at this time so that the project is ready to be submitted with the first round of applications.

Aspects of the subject project that make it a good candidate for Urban Creeks funding are its location directly adjacent to the main channel of the river, the ability to create multiple benefits including recreation, water quality enhancements and native habitat, the location adjacent to a disadvantaged neighborhood as defined by the CalEnviroScreen mapping tool, and potential connections upstream to the Aliso Confluence Park (recently completed by Trust for Public Land) and downstream to MRCA's Caballero Creek Park. Furthermore, the site is already publicly owned and

improvements can be made to the site without displacing any entrenched uses. The MRCA's goals and mission can be carried out through our work in bringing natural environments and natural systems that increase efficiency of the current park.

Conceptual plans for the project have not been completed. Potential improvements include a riverside walkway, storm drain diversion for efficient infiltration, low-tech bioswales for storm water cleansing, efficient irrigation, interpretation of natural resources, and native habitat creation. Sources of stormwater that could be diverted onto the site are a large drain pipe on the eastern side of the property, and surface flows from the adjacent streets. Reseda High School is directly across the street, and offers an opportunity for joint use or partnerships. The river channel in this section has a trapezoidal channel, meaning that it may be possible to remove, or reduce, the fence that currently separates the park from the river. A maintenance ramp nearby could one day provide direct access to the water.

Consideration: The grant application will be for \$350,000 for project planning, design and permitting of capital improvements for Reseda Park.

Fiscal Impact: The subject grant was anticipated in the fiscal year 2017-18 budget. There is no impact on the general fund. The City of Los Angeles currently maintains the site.