



MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

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MEMORANDUM

TO: The Governing Board

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

DATE: February 7, 2018

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item VI(h): Consideration of resolution authorizing a grant application to the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy for Proposition 1 funds for the Caballero Creek 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 for the Caballero Creek Park project in an amount of up to \$2,000,000.

Background: On October 7, 2015, MRCA Governing Board approved the application to the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy for Proposition 1 Urban Creeks funds for the Caballero Creek Park project. However, the State of California did not appropriate funding to the Conservancy until July 2017. The first regular grant application round ends on February 28, 2018 and staff recommends submitting an application at this time.

The Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2014 ("Proposition 1") was approved by voters in November 2014. Proposition 1 authorizes \$7.545 billion in general obligation bonds for State water projects, including surface and groundwater storage, ecosystem and watershed protection and restoration, and drinking water protection. Proposition 1 allocated funding to the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (Conservancy) for multiple benefit ecosystem and watershed protection and restoration projects (Water Code Section 79731(j)) and for projects to protect and enhance an urban creek (Water Code Section 79735(a)).

The Caballero Creek Park will convert a 1.6-acre underutilized site owned by the City of Los Angeles (City) adjacent to the confluence of the Los Angeles River and Caballero Creek into a multiple-benefit park. The project is a partnership between the MRCA and the City (Department of Recreation and Parks, and Bureau of Sanitation). The site is a paved asphalt lot and is not currently used. Once completed, the park will be operated and maintained by the City.

The Proposition 1 grant request will fund planning, engineering and construction of items related to watershed protection, including a bioswale to treat dry weather runoff from Lindley Avenue, a wetland, and a cistern to store the treated water from both sources for use in irrigating the site. The wetland will take in dry weather runoff from Caballero Creek, which will be treated and then used to irrigate the park. This system includes pumps, a cistern, a secure and screened enclosure for the equipment, sediment and debris filtration systems and screens, photovoltaic panels, various drainage elements for filtration and detention, and multiple vaults and manholes for maintenance access. Excess water will be put back into the creek after treatment, and the Caballero Creek wall will be penetrated twice for the water intake and outlet.

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, native habitat, and interpretation; and the location adjacent to a disadvantaged neighborhood as defined by the CalEnviroScreen mapping tool. Furthermore, improvements can be made to the site without displacing any entrenched uses or local housing options.

Consideration: The grant application to the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy will be for up to \$2,000,000.

Fiscal Impact: If additional funding is not secured, the project will be delayed until sufficient funding is secured. There is no feasible way to phase implementation. If awarded, the subject grant would need to be added to the fiscal year 17/18 budget. There is no impact on the general fund.