



MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

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MEMORANDUM

TO: The Governing Board

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

DATE: August 7, 2019

SUBJECT: **Special Agenda Item IV: Consideration of resolution approving contract with SCI Consulting Group for preliminary feasibility analysis, continued and improved wildland fire protection, and land acquisition measures.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board adopt the attached resolution approving a contract with SCI Consulting Group for preliminary feasibility analysis, continued and approved wildland fire protection, and land acquisition measures.

Background: On August 7, 2012 the Governing Board established Community Facilities District Nos. 1 and 2 (CFD Nos. 1 and 2) for the purpose of funding open space protection and fire prevention within the East Santa Monica Mountains/Hollywood Hills and in the Encino, Tarzana, and Woodland Hills areas in the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy Zone in the City of Los Angeles from Griffith Park to Calabasas. Also on August 7, 2012, the Governing Board ordered special tax elections (Measures HH and MM) for November 6, 2012 to receive voter-approval of the CFD. Nos. 1 and 2 and levy of the special tax of \$24 in CFD-1 and \$19 in CFD-2 for ten years.

On November 6, 2012 Measure HH was approved by the qualified registered voters within the boundaries of CFD No. 1 by receiving 76.18% support. Measure MM was approved by the qualified registered voters within the boundaries of CFD No. 2 by receiving 68.67% support.

On August 3, 2016 the Governing Board established Community Facilities District Nos. 2016-1 and 2016-2 (CFD Nos. 2016-1 and 2016-2) for the purpose of funding fire prevention, wildlife corridors and open space protection within the East Santa Monica Mountains/Hollywood Hills and in the Encino, Tarzana, and Woodland Hills areas in the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy Zone in the City of Los Angeles from Griffith Park to Calabasas. Also on August 3, 2016, the Governing Board ordered a special tax election (Measure GG and FF) for November 8, 2016 to

receive voter-approval of CFD Nos. 2016-1 and 2016-2 and levy of the special tax of \$35 in CFD-2016-1 and \$15 in CFD-2016-2 for ten years.

On November 8, 2016 Measure GG was approved by the qualified registered voters within the boundaries of CFD No. 2016-1 by receiving 83.68% support. Measure FF was approved by the qualified registered voters within the boundaries of CFD No. 2016-2 by receiving 76.99% support.

The 2018 fire season was devastating for the Santa Monica Mountains. The November 1, 2018 Woolsey Fire burned 96,949 acres of land, destroyed 1,643 structures, killed three people, and prompted the evacuation of almost 300,000.

It would be of great benefit to the CFD areas in the highly populated Eastern Santa Monica Mountains for MRCA to bolster its fire prevention efforts. This could include services such as prevention of homeless encampments in open space area, and additional patrol. In addition, local homeowners organizations have expressed a desire to preserve several open space properties in the areas, which cannot be done with existing funding. This survey will give the Governing Board information about the willingness and interest of property owners within the CFD boundaries to levy additional taxes for these purposes.

Because of their understanding of the MRCA, and extensive experience in establishing prior CFDs for MRCA, SCI Consultants are uniquely qualified to evaluate the community support to augment and extend the prior CFDs and design a funding mechanism that could provide more public safety services and protect the remaining open spaces in these areas.