



# MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

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## MEMORANDUM

TO: The Governing Board

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

DATE: September 4, 2019

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item VI(i): Consideration of resolution authorizing a professional services contract with VS2 Consulting, Inc. for technical design development of the Natural Park at Ramona Gardens, City of Los Angeles.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board adopt the attached resolution authorizing a professional services contract with VS2 Consulting, Inc. for technical design development of the Natural Park at Ramona Gardens, City of Los Angeles, in the amount of \$177,000.

Background: In February 2019, the MRCA Board authorized entering into a grant agreement with the State Coastal Conservancy (SCC) to proceed with Schematic Design and feasibility studies for Natural Park at Ramona Gardens project (Project). The project had previously been led by the non-profit organization Community Conservation Solutions (CCS), with assistance from a team of consultants including VS2 Consulting, Inc. (VS2), and input provided by Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) staff.

The concept design (including engineering studies prepared by VS2) envisions creating a green buffer that will reduce air and noise pollution, an arroyo to filter a portion of nearby storm drain flows, a variety of native plants, play and fitness areas, and a multipurpose plaza. The proposed park development would improve conditions for Ramona Gardens' 1,800 residents, including 700 children, who disproportionately suffer from chronic health problems. The Ramona Gardens project site is an underutilized, narrow strip of land that lies between the housing buildings and a fifteen-lane transit corridor. The Project is a unique opportunity to provide a natural park in Boyle Heights, with multiple benefits for the disadvantaged community related to health, water resources, recreation and greening.

Section 5.3 of the MRCA's Procurement Policy states that the selection of consultants to perform professional services shall be on the basis of demonstrated competence and the professional qualifications necessary for the satisfactory performance of the services required. As part of the consultant team that developed

the initial concept design, VS2 is the most appropriate firm for this technical design phase. Their services will include the development of structural, mechanical, electrical and plumbing engineering and cost studies.

Consideration: The proposed action would authorize a professional services contract to VS2 Consulting, Inc. for technical design development of the Natural Park at Ramona Gardens in an amount not to exceed \$177,000.

Fiscal Impact: The contract will be funded through the existing State Coastal Conservancy grant for the project and the expense was anticipated in the grant budget. The expense is included in the fiscal year 19/20 budget. There is no impact on the general fund. Proceeding with the subject contract work does not obligate MRCA to construct or maintain any improvements, nor to proceed with the project should the concept become infeasible. A maintenance entity has not been identified.