



MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

Los Angeles River Center & Gardens
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MEMORANDUM

TO: The Governing Board

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

DATE: January 8, 2020

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item IX: Consideration of resolution (a) authorizing amending the allowed uses in an approximately 5,791-square-foot portion of a conservation easement in exchange for greater than 40,000-square-feet of new conservation easement area on APN 521-0-031-140, and (b) accepting payment for expenses, University Village, City of Thousand Oaks.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board authorize (a) amending the allowed uses in an approximately 5,791-square-foot portion of a conservation easement in exchange for greater than 40,000-square-feet of new conservation easement area on APN 521-0-031-140, and (b) accepting payment for expenses, on the University Village property in of Thousand Oaks.

Background: Representatives from the University Village retirement community have requested that a portion of an existing Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) conservation easement have its allowed uses be amended in exchange for at least ten times more square footage of new conservation easement area. The original conservation easement was mitigation for improvements within and adjacent to University Village. The easement includes a riparian corridor with well developed willow woodland.

The request is to amend the existing conservation easement such that a non-lit paddle tennis court can be built on an approximately 5,791-square-foot area. That area now flanks a golf practice green that apparently receive little use. The court would replace the green. The amendment area does not include riparian vegetation or special habitat such as rock outcrops. Rather than eliminate that area from the conservation easement entirely, staff and the representatives agreed that amending the easement was more expeditious.

In exchange for the lost habitat in the conservation easement University Village would deed between 70,000 and 120,000 square feet of new conservation easement in several pieces to the MRCA. The attached exhibit shows the existing

conservation easement, the proposed amended conservation easement areas, and the proposed new conservation easement additions. The largest conservation easement additions on the west side would connect to property that University Village is donating to COSCA. The new easements would provide a permanent habitat linkage between COSCA open space and the larger MRCA conservation easement. University Village would pay for all legal descriptions and title reports. In addition the MRCA would receive \$20,000 for its staff and legal expenses. The ecological value of the new easement area far out weighs the less than 6,000 square feet that would be lost even if much of the new easement area is within fuel modification zones.

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