

Memorandum

To : The Conservancy
The Advisory Committee

Date: June 26, 2017

From : 
Joseph T. Edmiston, FAICP, Hon. ASLA, Executive Director

Subject: **Agenda Item 16: Consideration of resolution authorizing a grant of Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy Funds to Community Nature Connection for the Transit to Trails Program.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Conservancy adopt the attached resolution authorizing a grant of Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy Funds to Community Nature Connection for the Transit to Trails Program.

Legislative Authority: Section 33204.2 of the Public Resources Code.

Background: Lack of transportation is a well documented barrier to access to open space. The Transit to Trails program (formerly the Recreational Transit Program) has been operated by Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (Conservancy) partners for over 30 years to fulfill the Conservancy's statutory obligation to "implement a program to provide recreation access from downtown Los Angeles and the inner city in order to provide recreational opportunities for all income and ethnic groups wishing to enjoy the Santa Monica Mountains" (Section 33204.5 a of the Public Resource Code) and the Conservancy's strategic objective to expand education, public access, and resource stewardship in a manner that best serves the public, protects habitat and provides recreational experiences.

Transit to Trails is operated by the non profit Community Nature Connection(CNC). The program identifies communities and community based organization who otherwise would not have access to open space and provides them with a bus and an interpretive guide to facilitate the experience. Interpretive guides are often from the same community as the riders, having graduated from CNC's Naturalist Explorers or Bridge to Park Careers program. When possible bilingual guides are assigned to programs where the majority of participants are bilingual.

Transit to Trails includes Explore the Coast, buses to coastal communities funded by the California Coastal Conservancy and bus funds from the County of Los Angeles to serve disadvantaged communities in unincorporated areas of the County. The funding requested would allow programming to go to the mountains (non coastal areas), provide staffing for the buses funded by the county and provide program support non funded by other sources.

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The Conservancy Fund is a repository for donations, settlements, bequests, and other funds to be used for the purposes of Division 23 of the Public Resources Code, as determined by the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy Board.

Consideration: The grant request from Community Nature Connection is for \$32,000.