

# Memorandum

To : The Conservancy  
The Advisory Committee

Date: December 11, 2017

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

Subject: **Agenda Item 18: Consideration of resolution authorizing a grant of Proposition 1 funds to the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority for Reseda Park Project Planning and Design, City of Los Angeles.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Conservancy adopt the attached resolution authorizing a grant of Prop 1 funds to the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority in the amount of \$350,000 for Reseda Park Project Planning and design, City of Los Angeles.

Legislative Authority: Sections 33204.2 and 33204.27 of the Public Resources Code; and Section 79735(a) of the Water Code.

Background: Reseda Park is owned and operated by the City of Los Angeles in the West San Fernando Valley, situated in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Council District represented by Councilman Bob Blumenfield. The park is bisected by the Los Angeles River, although a pedestrian bridge connects the two parts of the park. The northern portion of the park is an extremely under utilized space that does not incorporate native plants, has no Best Management Practices (BMPs) for water quality or infiltration on site and before water reaches the river, and offers no relation, integration or connection to the adjacent Los Angeles River. This portion of Reseda Park was identified a few years ago as a potential Los Angeles River improvement project before Proposition 1 was enacted in 2014.

The Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) has submitted the attached application for Proposition 1 funding to perform project planning and design for a renovation of Reseda Park. Notable aspects of the subject project with respect to the Urban Creeks program are its location directly adjacent to the main channel of the Los Angeles River, the ability to create multiple benefits including recreation, water quality enhancements and native habitat, the location being adjacent to a disadvantaged neighborhood as defined by the CalEnviroScreen mapping tool, and potential connections upstream to the Aliso Confluence Park (recently completed by the Trust for Public Land) and downstream to MRCA's Caballero Creek Park. The site is already publicly owned and improvements can be made to the site without displacing any entrenched uses.

Potential improvements to be evaluated during project planning and design include a riverside walkway, storm drain diversion for efficient infiltration, low-tech bioswales for stormwater

cleansing, efficient irrigation, interpretation of natural resources, and native habitat creation. Sources of stormwater that could be diverted onto the site are a large drain pipe on the eastern side of the property, surface flows from adjacent streets, and the rainfall that naturally occurs on the site. Reseda High School is directly across the street from the park and offers an opportunity for joint use and partnerships. The river channel in this section has a trapezoidal channel, meaning that it may be possible to remove, reduce, or relocate the fence that currently separates the park from the river. This adds the potential of allowing more direct access to the river's edge, and the adjacent maintenance ramp could also provide direct access to the water.

### **Analysis - General Obligation Bond Law**

The General Obligation Bond Law provides that bond funds may be used for the construction and acquisition of "capital assets." Capital assets include major maintenance, reconstruction, demolition for purposes of reconstruction of facilities, and retrofitting work that is ordinarily done no more often than once every 5 to 15 years or expenditures that continue or enhance the useful life of the capital asset (Government Code Section 16727 (a)). Capital assets also includes equipment with an expected useful life of two years or more, and tangible physical property with an expected useful life of 10 to 15 years. Section 16727 (a) also allows bond funds to be used for costs that are incidentally but directly related to construction or acquisition including costs for planning, engineering and other design work.

The activities that MRCA proposes to fund with this grant constitute acquisition of a capital asset, as well as planning of a land improvement project to protect land and water resources, protect and restore rivers, lakes and streams, their watersheds and associated land, water and other natural resources. Thus, the proposed activities fall within the definition of "capital assets" or are incidentally but directly related to acquisition or construction, and therefore are proper under the General Obligation Bond Law.

### **Scoring - Competitive Grant Program**

Please see the attached Proposition 1 grant application from the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority for a detailed description and maps. Scoring under the Conservancy's Proposition 1 Guidelines results in the Reseda Park Project Planning and Design project receiving 83 points (out of a possible 86; 61 minimum required), plus 4 out of 4 climate change value points, plus 20 out of 25 possible points under Additional Criteria. **Total points: 107** (out of possible 115).

Consideration: The application from the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority is for \$350,000 of Proposition 1 funds.