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SMMC  
Attachment  
June 1, 2020  
Agenda Item 10

May 15, 2020

Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy  
Los Angeles River Center and Gardens  
570 West Avenue Twenty-six, Suite 100  
Los Angeles, California 90065

**Proposition 1 Competitive Grant Application  
Paseo del Río Project – G2 and Bowtie**

Dear Conservancy Members:

I am pleased to present the enclosed application for a grant for the Paseo del Río Project – Planning and Implementation. The City of Los Angeles, Bureau of Engineering requests a grant in the sum of \$5,840,000 from the Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2014 (Proposition 1), under the Conservancy's Urban Creeks Program.

The proposed grant would fund project planning and implementation of the Paseo del Río Project within the Taylor Yard G2 Parcel, and site assessment efforts within the G1 ("Bowtie") Parcel. Objectives of this grant are to protect the Los Angeles River watershed through the planned restoration of native habitat, and promote public access to the watershed's land, water, and wildlife resources. This application is complementary to the grant applications from the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) and California Department of Parks and Recreation (State Parks) for the same project.

Please refer to the enclosed materials that describe the proposed grant and how it fits the Conservancy's Evaluation Criteria and an executed Letter of Intent (LOI) signed by the City of Los Angeles, State Parks, and MRCA to establish the "100-Acre Partnership at Taylor Yard" to formally work together. The Paseo del Río Project will be the opening activity to showcase the Partners working collaboratively. If you have any questions regarding this, please contact Christopher Johnson at 213-923-4707.

Sincerely,

Gary Lee Moore, P.E., ENV SP  
City Engineer





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The Taylor Yard Paseo del Río Project (Project) is an early activation project at the Taylor Yard G2 and G1, or “Bowtie,” Parcels which would develop the site into a nature-focused restorative habitat and recreational open space along the Los Angeles River. The integrated Project is planned to be approximately eight acres (approximately six acres on G2, and two acres on G1) to implement over one mile of contiguous River-front public access. Proposed improvements may include trails, native habitat, water quality improvement features, greenspaces, trail recreational opportunities, kayak launch and landing, gathering spaces or outdoor classrooms, restorative elements, amenities, such as parking, access points, restrooms, gates, lighting, and interpretive signage, and access to an adjacent water quality improvement project on the Bowtie.

The City of Los Angeles (the City), the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA), and the California Department of Parks and Recreation (State Parks) (collectively, Partners) have signed a Letter of Intent (LOI) (attached within application) to establish the 100-Acre Partnership at Taylor Yard (Partnership). The long-term goal of the Partnership is to design, construct, finance, operate, maintain, and manage a project that encompasses a 100-acre area consisting of the G2 Parcel, the Bowtie Parcel, and Rio de Los Angeles State Park (herein referred to as the Long-Term Project). The Paseo del Río Project will be the opening activity to showcase the Partners working collaboratively. The City, who acquired the 42-acre G2 Parcel in fee title in March 2017, has been working with the MRCA, a permanent easement holder of 12.5 acres of the G2 Parcel, and State Parks, who retains the 18-acre Bowtie Parcel, to develop a contiguous Project.

The activities for which this grant application is for are as follows: the City will be conducting the environmental scopes for both G2 and Bowtie Parcels and project planning and implementation of improvements at the G2 site, while continuing to coordinate with the MRCA and State Parks to develop the integrated Project. The MRCA will manage and execute the community engagement component of the G2 site and actively participate with the City in the planning of the G2 Parcel. State Parks will be conducting project planning, community engagement, and implementation of improvements at the Bowtie Parcel. Both the MRCA and State Parks have also submitted complimentary grant applications which will together supplement this grant application. The Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (SMMC), the MRCA’s joint powers authority, and the MRCA have concerted efforts over nearly two decades to preserve Taylor Yard for use as a public open space park along the Los Angeles River. The Paseo del Río Project will be an essential part of these efforts in working toward the Long-Term Project.

The Taylor Yard River Park is Project No. 165 of the Los Angeles River Revitalization Master Plan adopted by the City Council and described in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Los Angeles River Ecosystem Restoration Feasibility Study (ARBOR Study), for which the City is serving as local sponsor. The Taylor Yard G2 Parcel (G2), a former rail yard and adjacent to a soft-bottomed portion of the Los Angeles River, is critical to fulfilling the ARBOR Study goals to restore ecosystem values in and along an 11-mile corridor of the river from the edge of Griffith Park into downtown Los Angeles, which overall calls for more than 700 acres of riparian restoration in the coming decades. The MRCA’s acquisition of the 12.5-acre easement on the northern end of the site will ultimately allow the development of the easement into a multi-purpose space for habitat restoration; to secure open space preservation; and to provide future wildlife-oriented, habitat restoration, public access, and recreation.

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Due to Taylor Yard's size, context, and potential, the Project will be the first implemented project on the G2 and Bowtie Parcels which will, in tandem, establish deeper roots, momentum, and potential advocates in the community as the Partnership continues to implement the "crown jewel" of the Los Angeles River revitalization effort. Its proximity to existing open space and recreational and interpretive resources, including Río de Los Angeles State Park, Elysian Park, riparian habitat in the River itself, numerous parks along the opposite bank of the River, and Sonia Sotomayor Arts and Sciences Magnet, means that Taylor Yard is a singularly unique opportunity to create a regional multiple-benefit park, enhance habitat connectivity, develop wildlife habitat, provide recreation and interpretation, improve the water quality of the watershed, and promote access to the Los Angeles River.

The Taylor Yard site was used for maintenance and fueling of trains from the 1930s to 2006. Conversion of the site to public parkland and watershed restoration will be through the development of multiple projects to ensure that the public is allowed safe access to portions of the site, while safely remediating other areas of the site. The Project is the first phase to provide riverfront public access all along the G2 and Bowtie Parcels; therefore, community engagement will be vital to establish relationships with the neighboring community for both the Paseo del Río Project and Long-Term Project. The proposed grant will help accomplish the implementation of the Project, along with the MRCA's and State Park's proposed implementation grants, to spearhead new strategies in public engagement and outreach in a historic, culturally-rich, significant, and habitat-sensitive area in Los Angeles.

The Project is consistent with the goals set forth in the SMMC's Climate Change Policy, State Planning Priorities, and AB 32. The Project seeks to improve a locally and regionally significant public resource for public enjoyment and environmental benefit. When fully developed, the Project seeks to ultimately mitigate greenhouse gas emissions and address the impacts of climate change on the State's natural resources. Further objectives of this pre-improvement planning grant are to protect the Los Angeles River watershed through the planned restoration of native habitat, and promote public access to the watershed's land, water, and wildlife resources while managing flood risk and remediation.

The supplemental information below describes how the Project would reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

### **BUDGET**

See attached budget.

### **TIMELINE**

The proposed Project's design phase will be completed within approximately 18 months after grant approval, followed by the implementation of the Project, which is estimated to last approximately 12 months.

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**RESPONSE TO EVALUATION CRITERIA**

**Project achieves the purposes of Proposition 1 per Water Code Section 79732(a).**

The Project will involve the protection and restoration of California rivers, lakes, streams and watersheds. The proposed grant achieves the following eight (8) Proposition 1 purposes:

1) Protect and increase the economic benefits arising from healthy watersheds, fishery resources, and instream flow.

The Project is anticipated to improve accessibility and increase usage of the currently vacant LA River-adjacent property, attracting more visitors to the area and boosting local businesses. Once the construction phase begins, the Project would also provide economic benefits by creating new jobs and profit for businesses that provide supplies, materials, consultant services, and labor.

2) Implement watershed adaptation projects in order to reduce the impacts of climate change on California's communities and ecosystems.

It is likely that Los Angeles will be impacted by climate change in the form of severe droughts, intense heat spells, and loss of California's native biodiversity. The Project design anticipates these changes and attempts to mitigate them. The density of trees and vegetation sequester carbon and help cool the atmosphere. Native plant landscaping will serve as new and enhanced habitat and open space for wildlife, minimizing the threats of Global Warming on California's biodiversity. The Project will begin that effort by strategically placing native trees and shrubs at the currently barren site. In addition, the Project will incorporate water treatment and conservation measures to improve water quality and reduce trash and other pollutants within the Los Angeles River. Additionally, the Project will provide access to an existing storm drain daylighting project, conducted by The Nature Conservancy (TNC) on the Bowtie parcel, which will demonstrate stormwater capture, stormwater treatment, and habitat enhancement along the Los Angeles River. The Project will take the first steps toward the necessary remediation and activation of the site working toward the long-term goal. Because the Project site is located adjacent to the soft-bottomed portion of the River, survival rate for wildlife is more prevalent than in other areas. Improving the water quality within the River is essential to the survival of the area's wildlife species. Griffith Park is also located relatively nearby the site, providing habitat to sensitive species. The educational and nature programming facilities completed by the Project will provide visitors with a connection and appreciation of the vital ecosystem surrounding the site, promoting local environmental stewardship.

3) Restore river parkways throughout the state.

A main objective of the Project is to publicly activate the River's edge with walking paths, native vegetation, look-outs, outdoor classrooms, and other possible recreational uses. The site is directly adjacent to the Río de Los Angeles and State Park and the Los Angeles River itself in

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the highly urbanized Los Angeles River watershed. The Los Angeles River is both a River Parkway and an Urban Stream. Southern California contains a network of open space and trails throughout the local mountains and coastline however, it is not readily accessible to urban residents. Improved connectivity is needed for existing public parks. The Project will provide new access to the River at the Bowtie Parcel and G2 sites, providing over one mile of River-front access and tying nature into the urban community.

4) Protect and restore aquatic, wetland, and migratory bird ecosystems, including fish and wildlife corridors and the acquisition of water rights for instream flow.

This Project will provide a significant habitat link and node within this important ecological and wildlife corridor. Because the River is an open waterway, it functions as a habitat corridor for migratory birds and small mammals and provides an appropriate location for greening and restoration efforts. Additionally, the Project will significantly reduce the amount of pollutants currently being expelled into the River untreated via proposed stormwater daylighting and capture at the site. This will help improve the habitat potential and water quality within the River and Pacific Ocean. Since the Project is adjacent to the soft-bottom portion of the Los Angeles River, more species survive, fly and swim. It is also adjacent to Elysian Park, upstream from the Arroyo Seco Confluence, and downstream from Griffith Park, which are home to many sensitive plant and animal species. By capturing and treating runoff on the site, the implementation of G2 will improve water quality in the River and help protect and restore aquatic, wetland, and migratory bird ecosystems. In addition to native planting, the Project will begin to provide new habitat for area bird and other species. This first step in site cleanup, of the historically contaminated site, is important for the ultimate revitalization of the site which will support and restore native habitats and ecosystems.

9) Protect and restore rural and urban watershed health to improve watershed storage capacity, forest health, protection of life and property, stormwater resource management, and greenhouse gas reduction.

Because the site is known to be contaminated from previous use as a rail yard, the Project will begin what will be a lengthy remediation process. By capping and/or removing existing contaminants adjacent to the River's edge, the River and the surrounding community will be healthier and more resilient. Also, the Project will decrease the amount of untreated pollutants currently making their way into the River. This will protect and restore the health of the watershed. The Project will be the first phase of site cleanup, which will be followed by more comprehensive remediation efforts as the site is further planned and developed.

Another element of the Project is to plant native trees and shrubs throughout a portion of the Project site. The trees will provide a habitat for local wildlife, provide shade for pedestrians, reduce the Urban Heat Island effect, generate oxygen, and remove pollutants from the air, ultimately decreasing Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions and helping with the adverse impacts of global warming. These benefits will be maximized through location and density of vegetation.

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10). Protect and restore coastal watersheds, including, but not limited to, bays, marine estuaries, and nearshore ecosystems.

As mentioned before, improving stormwater quality is one of the goals of the project that it can be beneficial for the water quality of the LA River and the larger watershed.

11). Reduce pollution or contamination of rivers, lakes, streams, or coastal waters, prevent and remediate mercury contamination from legacy mines, and protect or restore natural system functions that contribute to water supply, water quality, or flood management.

The Project design will reduce sediment, trash, and organic matter from loading and contaminating the Los Angeles River, thereby limiting sedimentation. The Taylor Yard is currently contaminated with different metals, petroleum hydrocarbons, and chlorinated solvents from its historic use as a railroad facility. The Paseo del Río Project is the first phase of site cleanup and multiple-benefit improvements that will help reduce the opportunity for contaminants to migrate from the site during storm events, thereby protecting the watershed. The Project will be designed to capture runoff in order to remove various pollutants including trash, metals, bacteria, and oil from the water before they can reach the River. Also, the Long-Term Project plans to restore a hydrologic connection from the River to the G2 site, which will help contribute to increase local water supply, improve water quality and enhance flood management. The overall cumulative impact of this Project is potentially substantial for the given urban area and will treat water that would otherwise enter the river untreated.

12). Assist in the recovery of endangered, threatened, or migratory species by improving watershed health, instream flows, fish passage, coastal or inland wetland restoration, or other means, such as natural community conservation plan and habitat conservation plan implementation.

Stormwater treatment and improvement projects help protect wildlife and their habitat as found in fragmented urban landscapes. Both the Paseo del Río Project and Long-Term Project will improve watershed health and benefit sensitive and endangered species, such as the California Gnatcatcher and the Least Bell's Vireo. Water conservation methods will be utilized to improve the water quality and reduce refuse within the Los Angeles River. Improving the water quality within the River is essential to the survival of the area's wildlife species. Cleaner water in the River means cleaner water within San Pedro Bay, restoring and enhancing local wildlife habitat. Increasing tree density and vegetation will aid in carbon sequestration. The atmosphere will also be cooled, further bolstering California's native biodiversity by reducing intense heat spells that climate change may cause.

**The project will provide multiple benefits related to water quality, water supply and/or watershed protection and restoration.**

Upon completion, the Project will feature many uses and benefits including: stormwater capture and treatment resulting in improved watershed health and water quality in the Los Angeles River; increased vegetation will reduce concentration of greenhouse gases (slowing the rate of global

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warming) and reduce the heat-island effect; recycled water use for irrigation which will promote a sustainable landscape model; nature education and habitat restoration which will benefit the area's animal and plant species; reduced impervious surfaces and promotion of infiltration projects following contaminant remediation; and aesthetic enhancement to the public and River area. The Long-Term Project will require further site cleanup, which will provide multiple benefits related to water quality and watershed health. The early activation Project, Paseo del Río, will initiate a first phase of site cleanup and is an important step to restoration within the Los Angeles River watershed. Additionally, the Project will provide access to an existing storm drain daylighting project, conducted by The Nature Conservancy (TNC) on the Bowtie parcel, which will demonstrate stormwater capture, stormwater treatment, and habitat enhancement along the Los Angeles River.

**The project results in more reliable water supplies pursuant to the California Water Action Plan.**

The Project may include the use of recycled water, which will reduce the amount of potable water needed. This will reduce the amount of imported water needed for Southern California.

**The project results in restoration or protection of important species and habitat pursuant to the California Water Action Plan.**

The Project design and goals aim to benefit Los Angeles River and the larger watershed, which provides a migratory route and habitat to both sensitive and endangered species.

**The project results in more resilient and sustainably managed water infrastructure pursuant to the California Water Action Plan.**

By designing to capture onsite runoff, water entering the River infrastructure will be reduced and cleaner through the implementation design elements that filter stormwater.

**The project employs new or innovative technology or practices, including decision support tools that support the integration of multiple jurisdictions, including, but not limited to, water supply, flood control, land use, and sanitation.**

An innovative approach is being taken for the Project's planning and implementation by the three agencies with land control to jointly work together. The MRCA, City, and State Parks have jointly signed a Letter of Intent to work together across the full 100-acres of publicly-owned open space and this early activation project is the first step in this effort – this Project is truly a Partnership between jurisdictions. Since the Project will provide a connection to adjacent State Park's Bowtie site (currently undeveloped) by way of a MRCA easement, a historical Partnership – one that has been of utmost importance to the neighboring communities and stakeholders – will be first utilized in the development of the Paseo del Río Project between the MRCA, City, and State Parks.

Another innovative approach will be taken for the Project's operations and maintenance through a Partnership between many City of Los Angeles agencies and likely the County Flood Control District. By the time the Project design is complete, the plans will have been vetted by the Bureau of Sanitation Watershed Protection Division, the Department of Recreation and Parks, the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, the MRCA, the County, and the USACE.



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**Applicant has proven that implementation of the project is feasible.**

The BOE has decades of experience planning, designing, permitting and implementing projects more complex than this. The Project is supported by many local, state, and federal elected officials and the community. The Partnership between the City, State Parks, and MRCA will allow both G2 and Bowtie parcels to be developed in tandem and pave the way for further future efforts at Taylor Yard to be planned and implemented together. Working collaboratively will simplify for the community the complexity of work to occur at Taylor Yard by reducing the volume of meetings and bringing together the project team(s) to better answer questions and collectively receive feedback.

**Applicant has the financial capacity to perform project on a reimbursable basis.**

The City has the financial capacity to perform this project on a reimbursable basis with nearly 50% of required funds on hand as match funding that can be used as a front-funding source for this scope of work.

**Applicant, or active project partner, has successfully completed multiple projects of similar size and scope.**

The City, as well as our active partners, the MRCA and State Parks, have successfully designed and implemented many multi-benefit recreational projects throughout Los Angeles. The City's Echo Park Lake Rehabilitation Project was recently restored and now serves as a Los Angeles icon. The Lake was previously deemed by the State of California as an impaired water body but now functions primarily as a detention basin in the City's storm drain system, while providing recreational benefits and wildlife habitat. The South Los Angeles Wetlands Park was also an innovative project completed by BOE that treats storm water runoff while also providing space for recreational activities. The park replaced an existing blighted site with greenery and a storm drain that collects urban runoff, removes trash and pollutants, and sends it through the constructed wetlands for treatment at the site. The park also serves as an outdoor classroom by providing educational signage along the walkways and a haven for open green space for the community. Lastly, the Wilmington Drain Multi-Use and Machado Lake Ecosystem Rehabilitation project was accomplished through integrated ecological and engineering strategies and solutions involving watershed-based management approaches, in-lake rehabilitation and streambed assessment techniques, riparian system enhancements, and stormwater BMPs at strategic areas in the park. BOE worked in collaboration with other City departments to design, plan, and implement all of the above three projects.

**The project is a partnership between two or more organizations and each organization has committed to contributing toward project implementation.**

As discussed earlier, the proposed project is a joint Partnership with the City, MRCA, and State Parks, all entities which have publicly committed to working together in revitalizing the River's edge during the early activation of the G2 and Bowtie parcels. The City, MRCA, and State Parks seek to collaboratively work together to use the individual talents and capacity within each organization to expediently develop a successful early activation River's edge space. Coordination amongst the Partnership will be instrumental to the success of this and subsequent projects, as it is extremely important to the community that efforts are integrated and community feedback is shared.

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**Completion of the project would assist a government agency in fulfilling a water resources protection, watershed ecosystem restoration, or multi-benefit river parkway plan.**

The Los Angeles River Ecosystem Restoration Feasibility Study, the Los Angeles River Revitalization Master Plan, and the County of Los Angeles Master Plan all include the restoration of Taylor Yard as a high priority.

**The project provides a plan or feasibility study that enhances cooperative watershed health protection and restoration important to two or more organizations.**

Paseo del Río, which is first step of the Long-Term Project, is critical to fulfillment of the Los Angeles River Ecosystem Restoration Feasibility Study's goals to restore ecosystem values in and along an 11-mile corridor of the river from the northern edge of Griffith Park into Downtown Los Angeles. Many organizations commented publicly on the development of the feasibility study. These organizations include: the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, the United States Environmental Protection Agency, the Regional Water Quality Control Board, Council for Watershed Health, Heal the Bay, Friends of the Los Angeles River, California State Assembly, State Senator de Leon, and others.

**Applicant, or project partner, has 1+ years experience maintaining and operating projects of similar size and scope.**

The City of Los Angeles, Department of Recreation and Parks (RAP), State Parks and the MRCA will be maintaining and operating the Paseo del Río Project. RAP has many years' experience maintaining and operating very complex projects within the City of Los Angeles of similar size and scope. Some recently implemented projects that have been maintained by RAP include the Ken Malloy Harbor Regional Park (Machado Lake Ecosystem Rehabilitation Project) and the Echo Park Lake Rehabilitation Project. These multi-beneficial projects provide recreational benefit, water quality improvements, water conservation, and enhancement of wildlife habitat. Since the 1980's, the MRCA has successfully implemented and currently maintains and operates many multiple benefit recreational projects throughout Los Angeles. Several MRCA projects that are currently maintained by the MRCA, include the Lewis MacAdams Riverfront Park (formerly Marsh Park), Vista Hermosa Park, and the Tujunga Wash Stream Restoration.

**The project implements a major component of an existing relevant plan related to a major recreational public use facility or watershed ecosystem restoration plan.**

The Project implements the Los Angeles River Ecosystem Restoration Feasibility Study's goals in Reach 6 of the Los Angeles River. Restoration of Taylor Yard is a major component of this watershed ecosystem restoration plan. Also, the Los Angeles River Revitalization Master Plan envisions the River as a natural resource asset and recreational facility; the proposed Project is in-line with these established goals.

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**The project provides a high-quality access point for nearby open space, parkland, regional multi-modal trails, or water-based recreation.**

Currently, on the north bank of the River in Glassell Park, only the Bowtie State Park parcel offers any open space (with limited amenities) along the River. To date, no successful connecting linkage has been developed along the north bank. This project will add to the network of parks and open space along the Los Angeles River, providing a significant new connection and gateway. The proposed Project, in conjunction with the adjacent State Parks and the Taylor Yard Bikeway and Pedestrian Bridge (currently underway), will create a major regional multi-modal Greenway along the River and provide regional links for access to the Project. Upon Project completion, the Bowtie Parcel, the G2 Parcel, and the existing Río de Los Angeles State Park will be connected and create over 100 acres of contiguous parkland. Also, there are no boat launches within the River Recreational Zone (RRZ) on the River's north bank, and the addition of access points from the G2 site will serve to create new regional access, as well as create its own smaller Taylor Yard RRZ that might be more conducive to new or inexperienced boaters, or visitors with less time than a trip down the entire RRZ.

**Applicant has conducted outreach to the affected communities**

Public outreach and engagement efforts for the Taylor Yard Project have been conducted since the acquisition of the G2 Parcel by the City which includes more than 500 people attending two public events for the Project within five days of one another in January 2018 and 1,321-people completing a paper and online survey between January and March 2018. Input received to date from the public and through the survey presents a clear desire for a more natural and passive type of a park that provides opportunities for walking and engaging with nature and play. Overall, the robust amount of input provided to date by the community gives the Project team insights into community expectations and desires for features, activities, and uses for the site, but this Project will supplement those efforts with significant additional on-going community engagement for the development of a River edge greenway. The responses will be actively referenced to guide the design team throughout the Project planning and design process.

The G2 Concept Development Project has been promoted through a combination of traditional grassroots engagement and innovative approaches. Project partners have included non-profit organizations, Mujeres de la Tierra, and Friends of the LA River. Through these entities, the City was able to promote and engage the public at a neighborhood level through local meetings and walking door to door, as well as reaching out to a broader group of river and watershed advocates. Efforts for this Project will include similar types of engagement, but also look to include additional technical strategic guidance from entities that focus on brownfields redevelopment and community health, and a variety of programs that facilitate participation and community trust. Community engagement activities, led by the MRCA, will include a series of brownfield and environmental education workshops or events to further build on past efforts to provide information about brownfields becoming parks. Central to this work will be empowering the local community to understand the environmental process and to advocate for resolutions that meet their goals.

Previous community engagement only involved the G2 Parcel; however, due to the newly-formed Partnership and the grander goals of the Long-Term Project, further community engagement will

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be conducted by the MRCA. MRCA will work with a team of consultants and stakeholders to ensure community involvement and coordinate with State Parks.

**The project includes interpretive programming or personal interpretation, and a plan to reach community audiences with meaningful information about a watershed resource.**

The Project will include interpretive signage, within the proposed project, which will provide information about the project site, water quality improvement characteristics of the Project, as well as the natural resources of the Los Angeles River. Outdoor classrooms will provide an opportunity for local schools and organizations to convene educational programming at designated locations along the Project. This will promote environmental stewardship by teaching the public about environmental issues, potential solutions, and about the areas' precious natural resources and how they can play a role in improving the environment and supporting a healthy watershed. Additionally, the Project can support the environmental science-based curriculum at the Sotomayor Arts and Sciences Magnet.

**The project adds visitor-serving amenities, accessibility, and public safety improvements to public parkland with multiple ecosystem benefits.**

The Project will provide new amenities that include signage, accessibility, picnic areas, trails and walking paths, and areas to learn about the native habitat and ecology of the river. These desirable features will help attract people to the park and aid in improving public safety.

**The project provides non-personal interpretive elements that will significantly enhance appreciation and enjoyment of a watershed resource.**

The Los Angeles River and its natural resources will be highlighted via interpretive signage throughout the park. These signs will give visitors an opportunity to learn about the Project, environmental challenges and potential solutions, and how visitors can play a role in improving the environment and supporting a healthy watershed. Interpretive signage within the proposed Project will provide information about the Project site as well as the natural resources of the Los Angeles River.

**The site has the potential to create a new venue for education and/or interpretation activities that promote water conservation and stewardship.**

Educational information about the Project and its environmental benefits will be available to the public. This will allow users to be informed about local natural resources and environmental challenges. Panels throughout the Project site will describe and draw awareness to GHG emissions, reduction measures that the public can take in their personal lives to improve air quality, water conservation, water quality improvement measures, and carbon sequestration methods and their benefits. The Sotomayor Arts and Sciences Magnet curriculum will also be supported through use as a water conservation, plant, and wildlife learning tool.

**The project results in new public access to a watershed resource with high interpretive and/or educational value.**

The Project will provide new public access to a watershed resource that has both high interpretive and educational value. This will encourage long-term stewardship by teaching the public about natural resources and environmental issues. As mentioned earlier, the Project will support the curriculum at Sotomayor Arts and Sciences Magnet through use as a water

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conservation, plant and wildlife learning tool, creation of outdoor classrooms, and ultimately creating future environmental stewards.

**Project will benefit specially protected species pursuant to the California Wildlife Protection Act of 1990.**

The Project will improve watershed health and benefit sensitive and endangered species, such as the California Gnatcatcher and the San Diego Horned Lizard. Stormwater treatment and improvement projects help to protect plant and animal species and their habitat found in the scattered urban landscape.

**Indicate whether the project will benefit a disadvantaged community.**

The Project would provide a major regional recreational destination and much-needed open space in a historically underserved and park-poor community. Also, the City plans to develop the Los Angeles Greenway Trail along the Los Angeles River, as part of the City's Mobility Plan 2035, which will provide new access to the River and active transportation to disadvantaged communities.

**A detailed method for monitoring and reporting on the progress and effectiveness of the project during and after project implementation.**

The Project aims to improve water quality and reduce the pollutants within the LA River and ultimately remediate the contaminated soil of the Project site in the long-term. Groundwater monitoring is conducted at the Project site annually and reported to the site's regulatory authority, the State Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC), which will continue. The Operation and Maintenance Plan (O&M) presents policies and procedures for long-term operation, maintenance, monitoring and addresses an inspection and monitoring program, minimization measures and administrative record of inspections and repairs.

**EXTRA CONSIDERATION POINTS**

**QUANTIFIABLE CARBON REDUCTION POINTS**

**The project develops or maintains multi-use trails that connect communities, provides access to public resources and reduces vehicle miles traveled.**

The Project goals and elements support the protection of natural resources and add to the expansion of a livable, walkable, and healthy community. The City plans to design a network of trails within the park and also enhance and highlight the bridge that connects the remainder of the park on the opposite side of the River. This will enable visitors to more conveniently access and utilize the amenity and will encourage more outdoor activity. These proposed new improvements are expected to create better user experiences and watershed benefits. Because the Project is located adjacent to a residential community, it will encourage people to bicycle, walk, exercise, and enjoy the outdoors. This amenity will serve to reduce GHG emissions from transportation sources. The Project would result in very limited new vehicle trips and is expected to reduce vehicle miles traveled.

**The project engages local communities through outreach, education, and interpretation**

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**regarding long-term stewardship and climate change awareness.**

Local communities have been engaged and continue to be engaged as the Project progresses. A supplemental grant proposal, from the MRCA, will primarily focus on local community engagement before and during the project. Key project partners are community-based organizations that represent a variety of disadvantaged populations and can reach constituencies with varying cultural lenses. Key project topics include stewardship and climate change awareness. The surrounding community will be engaged to participate in public meetings and design workshops where they will be given the opportunity to help shape the vision of the site through this early activation project. During these meetings, the importance of providing multiple benefit spaces, protecting our natural resources, establishing healthy watersheds, and providing wildlife habitat will be promoted and discussed. This will lead to increased public awareness and eventually provide an outdoor learning tool for nearby students, which will contribute to future and additional environmental stewardship. The project team will also adopt an innovative grass-roots engagement model in which conversations and engagement will be ongoing and continue between community meetings.

**A detailed description of how the project helps meet the State’s greenhouse gas emissions reductions targets, including a quantification of the metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub> or CO<sub>2e</sub> removed or avoided, and an explanation of the methodology used to quantify this figure;**

The Project presents many opportunities to reduce the GHG during design, construction, and operation. By considering energy efficient design strategies, reducing vehicle idle time, using local materials and workers to minimize transport, and using newer equipment, the GHG emissions can be minimized. Having additional electrical vehicle charging stations, encouraging visitors to walk, bike, or using public transit help this process as well.

As mentioned before, planting native trees is one of the elements of the Project that will provide shade, reduce energy demand due to cooling, remove pollutants, and decrease GHG.

The GHG benefits were quantified using the California Air Resources Board (CARB) Benefits Calculator Tool for the Urban Greening Grant Program with inputs developed using i-Tree Planting. i-Tree estimates the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> saved using number of trees, species, and trunk diameter.

**ADDITIONAL CRITERIA**

**Completion of the project would assist in fulfilling a Federal water resources protection or watershed ecosystem restoration plan.**

The Project development will facilitate implementation of public access and habitat restoration. The Long-Term Project aims to implement the Los Angeles River Ecosystem Restoration Plan, led by the City and USACE, to move forward in restoring a hydrologic connection of the River into the Taylor Yard area. The implementation of the Project greatly helps progress and momentum towards this larger vision.

**Project utilizes a local job training entity for a portion of the work.**

The City’s planning team includes non-profit entities and the project will seek to partner with project partners to conduct programs specifically designed to increase employment opportunities

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for disadvantaged communities. A portion of improvements will be implemented by at-risk youth. The Los Angeles Conservation Corps (LACC), a local job training entity, could potentially perform a portion of the construction.

**Project has secured matching funds of at least 25 percent of total project costs.**

The City has already made significant investment in this Project and is developing a funding strategy to assure future phases. The City Council unanimously approved the acquisition of the Taylor Yard G2 parcel in 2017 for \$60,000,000. Of those funds, \$14,715,000 are held in escrow and available to be used for the remediation of contaminated soils on the site. The California Coastal Conservancy has generously provided a \$2,000,000 grant for the initial planning and public outreach phases of the Long-Term Project. The MRCA has provided \$27,000,000 from the Wildlife Conservation Board to the City for an easement to help fund improvements on a 12.5-acre portion of the site. In addition, the City has approved the use of an additional \$1,035,000 for planning, design, and construction of Paseo del Río.

**Project is within 1 mile of public transportation.**

The Project area is located approximately 0.25 mile from Metro Bus 90/91 and 94 routes along San Fernando Road. The Metro Gold Line Avenue 26 Station is located 1.6 miles from the Project site.

**Project results in additional uses for users of a wide range of ability levels.**

As previously mentioned, the design will incorporate a wide range of new amenities that currently do not exist within the Project site.

In an effort to provide early public access to the site, the City has prioritized near-term activation of portions of Taylor Yard with the goal of opening the site for regular public use by the end of 2022. The portions of the site to be used for Paseo del Río will be confined to areas deemed suitable for public use by the DTSC or areas that can be most easily mitigated. Currently under consideration, some features of Paseo del Río would include multi-use event space for the community or regional events, venue for cultural or artistic display, open space, and a focus on nature and future ecological improvements. These elements would kick-start Project goals to attract users of all ability levels to the site and provide a range of amenities in a natural setting that everyone can enjoy. The Paseo del Río Project will also facilitate public participation in the long-term planning and evolution of the property.

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SMMC Attachment June 1, 2020 Agenda Item 10
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<b>Budget for Grant Application</b>				
<b>Taylor Yard Paseo del Río Project – G2 and Bowtie</b>				
		Grant Request:	\$5,840,000	
Task		Grant	Match*	Total
1	Planning & Design – G2	\$220,000	\$745,000	\$845,000
2	Environmental Review and Documentation – G2 and Bowtie	\$110,000	\$25,000	\$135,000
3	Site Assessments – Bowtie	\$500,000	\$0	\$500,000
4	Construction/Implementation – G2	\$5,010,000	\$3,100,000	\$8,150,000
	<i>Total</i>	<i>\$5,840,000</i>	<i>\$3,870,000</i>	<i>\$9,630,000</i>

\* Match funds consist of contributions from the City, Environmental Protection Agency, and Wildlife Conservation Board.



## LA RIVER PARK AT TAYLOR YARD PARTNERSHIP: LETTER OF INTENT

A collection of publicly-owned properties along the Los Angeles River (LA River) -- pieces of the former "Taylor Yard" rail maintenance yard--form an approximately 100-acre area that is being transformed into a significantly-restored signature park. As envisioned by the Los Angeles River Revitalization Master Plan (LARRMP), many relevant plans, numerous supporters including the Los Angeles River State Park Partners, those 100 acres will be home to restored habitats, engaging recreational activities, cultural and educational enrichments, and a full mile of access to the LA River.

The LA River properties included in the 100-acre unified open space are: (1) The Rio de Los Angeles (RdLA) State Park, an existing 40-acre park owned by California State Parks (State Parks) and managed cooperatively by State Parks and the City of Los Angeles (City) through its Department of Recreation and Parks (RAP); (2) The Taylor Yard G1 parcel, an 18-acre property also known as the "Bowtie" parcel for its distinctive boundary shape, which is owned and managed and in the process of design by State Parks; and (3) The Taylor Yard G2 parcel, a 42-acre property that is owned by the City. The Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) purchased and now holds the rights to a 12.5-acre easement within the Taylor Yard G2 parcel owned by the City. It is subject to use restrictions under grant funding agreements with the California Wildlife Conservation Board and the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, as well as subject to appropriate design, implementation, and early activation integration. Together, these agencies--the City, State Parks, and the MRCA--shall be known as "The River Parties."

The purpose of this letter is to express The River Parties' mutual intent to cooperate to create a unified LA River Park at Taylor Yard (working title) in recognition of the significant mutual public benefits to be realized by cooperating on the design, construction, financing, operation, maintenance and management of the project. The LA River Park will be developed to a standard of global excellence. It will be unique in biological and social character and will be the single largest open space along the LA River to be created in 100 years. The Park will directly benefit the residents of the surrounding neighborhoods and the City at large, it will be a signature feature of Southern California.

The River Parties recognize common goals:

- Create a world-class, physically-connected and unified public open space that advances revitalization of the Los Angeles River and supports urban ecology
- Engage local communities and stakeholders to guide development of the project
- Establish equity, ecology, River revitalization and flood management as the cornerstones for the Park's design, implementation, and programming
- Increase Park access by linking the interiors of the Park and the exteriors of the Parks and community to new transportation options

- Incorporate safety, sustainability and resilience into the remediation, design, construction, operation, and stewardship of the park
- Restore ecosystem values and native habitats along the LA River
- Integrate the Park and the LA River by rethinking the LA River's bank
- Include River activities in the short-term, mid-term and long-term vision
- Establish facilities to enable cultural, artistic, community, and educational experiences and skills
- Curate appropriate revenue-generating programming to provide rich user experiences, to help develop the project, and to sustain future operation and maintenance
- Create physical and programmatic connections between local educational centers and the project's outdoor learning environment
- Provide varied passive and active recreational opportunities and play spaces within the park
- Improve and enhance athletic fields at Rio de Los Angeles State Park
- Establish on-site stewardship staff, on-going daily programming and encourage neighborhood community care
- Include educational, artistic, and cultural/historical partners in the Park's development, programming, and operation
- Create safe and easy physical connections between all of the areas of the 100 acres and to the surrounding communities on both sides of the River

To fulfill these common goals, The River Parties intend to work together to:

- Establish a cooperative agreement within one (1) year to define a collaborative approach to the remediation, design, construction, financing, operation, and management of the project
- Articulate and implement a common vision for the 100-acre area that is ecologically focused and community-driven and delivers on goals outlined above
- Coordinate on marketing, communication and outreach of the common vision
- Seek other implementation and program partners through a wide-ranging engagement process and City-led contracting process

LA RIVER PARK PARTNERSHIP: LETTER OF INTENT

- Provide near-term public programming on each of the properties, as feasible.
- Cooperatively raise funds for design and implementation from multiple sources and using creative value capture techniques
- Engage regulatory and permitting agencies to secure necessary approvals for site remediation, water quality, flood control, and all other environmental reviews consistent with the CEQA and NEPA processes
- Secure necessary authorizations to execute various partnership agreements

The River Parties understand that this Letter of Intent is not a financial commitment to future expenditures and does not create any obligations, legal or otherwise, between them that do not already exist.

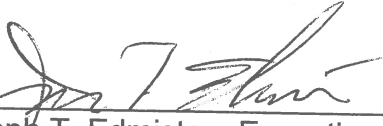
On behalf of California State Parks:



Craig Sap, Parks Superintendent

Date: 12/30/19

On behalf of the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority:



Joseph T. Edmiston, Executive Officer

Date: 12-11-19

On behalf of the City of Los Angeles:



Michael A. Shull, General Manager, Department of Recreation and Parks

Date: 12/13/19

Gary Lee Moore  
Gary Lee Moore, City Engineer, Bureau of Engineering

Date: 1-10-20