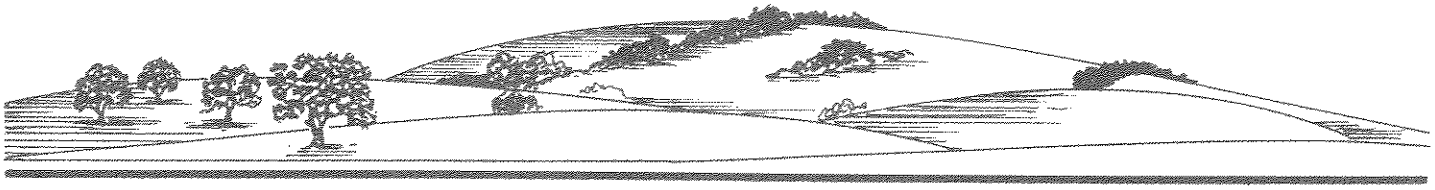

LOS ANGELES COUNTY REGIONAL PARK AND OPEN SPACE DISTRICT

February 19, 2008

The Honorable Board of Directors
Los Angeles County
Regional Park and Open Space District
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, California 90012

Dear Directors:

ALLOCATE CITIES AND COMPETITIVE EXCESS FUNDS AVAILABLE TO THE FIRST SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT AND AUTHORIZE AWARD AND ADMINISTRATION OF EXCESS FUNDS GRANTS (FIRST DISTRICT - 3 - VOTE MATTER)

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT YOUR BOARD:

1. Find the proposed actions exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act for the reasons cited herein.

2. Allocate Cities and Competitive Excess Funds available to the First Supervisorial District in the amount of $1,647,477 for 12 trails projects along the Los Angeles River, the San Gabriel River, and in the area known as the Emerald Necklace.

3. Authorize the Director of Parks and Recreation, in his capacity as Director of the Los Angeles County Regional Park and Open Space District, to award grants as identified in the Attachment when applicable conditions have been met and to administer the grants as of the date of this action and pursuant to procedures in the Procedural Guide for Specified and Per Parcel Projects.

PURPOSE/JUSTIFICATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

Approval of the recommendations will allocate $1,647,477 in Cities and Competitive Excess Funds available to the First Supervisorial District for 12 trails projects along the Los Angeles River, the San Gabriel River, and in the area known as the Emerald Necklace in the First Supervisorial District. The projects are individually identified in the Attachment.

The 1996 Proposition requires that agencies to which funds were allocated under the Safe Neighborhood Parks Propositions of 1992 and 1996 encumber all such funds prior to receiving grants of Excess Funds. All of the agencies to be awarded grants meet this requirement.

It is also recommended that the Director of Parks and Recreation be authorized to award grants to the grantees identified in the Attachment, when applicable conditions have been met, such as grantee qualifications, consistency between the projects and requirements of the 1996 Proposition, as well as grantee agreement with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements for the project, and to administer the grant under procedures previously approved by your Board.

IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

The proposed recommendations further the Board approved County Strategic Plan Goal No. 1 (Service Excellence), Goal No. 4 (Fiscal Responsibility), Goal No. 5 (Children and Families' Well-being), and Goal No. 6 (Community Services), by allocating Excess Funds for projects to enhance trails along the Los Angeles and San Gabriel Rivers and their tributaries including the area known as the Emerald Necklace in the First Supervisorial District.

FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING

Sufficient appropriation for the grants in the amount of $1,647,477 is budgeted in the First Supervisorial District portion of the Los Angeles County Regional Park and Open Space District Excess Funds Project Fund, HD6.

FACTS AND PROVISIONS/LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

The 1996 Proposition provides a method for determining each fiscal year the amount of funds available in the following fiscal year to fund capital improvement projects in addition to the amounts specifically identified for projects in the Safe Neighborhood Parks Propositions of 1992 and 1996. The recommended grants would be funded from the Excess Funds available to the First Supervisorial District from Excess Funds for city and competitive projects.

The Board may establish additional conditions on grants of Excess Funds. The Director of Parks and Recreation would be authorized to award grants when all applicable conditions have been met. Any funds allocated by the Board, but not encumbered by award of a grant contract in the same fiscal year, shall be available for allocation by the Board in the following fiscal year.

Your Board approved a Procedural Guide on June 17, 1997, to govern the administration of Regional Park and Open Space District grants for Specified and Per Parcel projects. This Procedural Guide would appropriately govern the administration of the recommended additional grants as well.

CONTRACTING PROCESS

Grant Project Agreements will be entered into and administered under authority delegated to the Director of Parks and Recreation and pursuant to the Procedural Guide approved by the Board in 1997. The Project Agreements will be approved as to form by County Counsel.

IMPACT ON CURRENT SERVICES (OR PROJECTS)

The recommended projects will enhance trails along the Los Angeles and San Gabriel Rivers and their tributaries including the area known as the Emerald Necklace in the First Supervisorial District.

ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTATION

All public agency projects funded by the Los Angeles County Regional Park and Open Space District are required to comply with California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) as a condition of the grant. The lead agencies are responsible for preparing the appropriate environmental documentation for the project.

The Los Angeles County Regional Park and Open Space District is the lead agency for grants to non-profit organizations and the following projects: Cudahy River Park, Encanto Nature Walk, Emerald Necklace Entrance and Safety Signage Project, and the Trust for Public Land (TPL) Parks for People Fitness Zones Installation Project. The proposed projects are categorically exempt from CEQA according to Sections 15303 and 15304 of the State CEQA Guidelines and Classes 3 and 4 of the Environmental Document Reporting Procedures and Guidelines, adopted by your Board on November 17, 1987, because the projects involve new construction of small structures, and minor alterations to land.

For the projects involving grants to the County of Los Angeles: Whittier Narrows Trails Access Staging Area, First District Trails Signage Project, First District Staging Area and Arena Refurbishment, and Rio Hondo Rail Fencing and Trail Gates Project, the County Board of Supervisors found all the projects to be exempt on February 27, 2007.

The City of El Monte is the lead agency for the following projects: Santa Anita and Valley Boulevard Pocket Park and Emerald Necklace Gateway. The City of La Puente is the lead agency for the Puente Creek Nature Education Center. The City of Montebello is the lead agency for the Camino Real Corridor. The Watershed Conservation Authority is the lead agency for Duck Farm Phase 1A.

The proposed administrative actions are not subject to CEQA in that the actions do not meet the definition of a project according to Sections 15376 (b)(4)(5) of the State CEQA Guidelines because the actions are administrative activities for government grants which by their terms do not involve any commitments at this time to any specific projects which may result in a potentially significant physical impact on the environment.

CONCLUSION

Please instruct the Executive Officer-Clerk of the Board to return one conformed copy of this action to the Chief Executive Office, Capital Projects Division, and to the Department of Parks and Recreation.

Respectfully submitted,

Russ Guiney
Director, Parks and Recreation

RG:IV:LB:REGIONALPARKOPENSPACEDISTRICT(1st District Competitive Grants BL)

Attachment

c: Chief Executive Officer
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors (22)
County Counsel

ATTACHMENT

PROPOSED FIRST SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT EXCESS FUNDS PROJECTS

Project	Grantee	Amount

Cudahy River Park **North East Trees** **$150,000**
Scope: Design and construction of a new park adjacent to the Los Angeles River to provide bikeway users with shade trees, seating areas, a way station for wildlife and the development of infiltration basins to reduce storm water run-off.

Encanto Nature Walk **Los Angeles Conservation Corps** **$150,000**
Scope: Construction of a 1,200 foot-long trail and viewpoint along the San Gabriel River.

Whittier Narrows Trails Access Staging Area **County Parks and Recreation** **$150,000**
Scope: Construction of a new staging area for trail access on the west side of the San Gabriel River for hikers, equestrians and bicyclists. The project will also include a parking area, turnaround area, trail safety modifications, landscaping, fencing and signage.

First District Trails Signage Project **County Parks and Recreation** **$80,000**
Scope: Replacement of existing signage with upgraded signage providing updated information constructed for durability and to reduce vandalism.

First District Staging Area and Arena Refurbishment **County Parks and Recreation** **$140,000**
Scope: Refurbishment of various staging areas and equestrian arenas including new hitching rails, nose troughs, split rail fencing, picnic benches, tree planting, parking lot improvements and paint.

Rio Hondo Rail Fencing and Trail Gates Project **County Parks and Recreation** **$80,000**
Scope: Installation of trail fencing and gates along the Rio Hondo River to provide a safety buffer along the river trail and to deter unauthorized vehicle entry.

Santa Anita and Valley Blvd. Pocket Park and Emerald Necklace Gateway **City of El Monte** **$150,000**
Scope: Development of a pocket park to serve as a gateway to the Emerald Necklace Park and Trail Network along the Rio Hondo River in the City of El Monte.

Duck Farm Phase 1A **Watershed Conservation Authority** **$147,477**
Scope: Development of a pocket park and trail access to passive recreation areas at the Duck Farm as well as access to a newly developed river promenade on the east back of the San Gabriel River.

Puente Creek Nature Education Center **City of La Puente** **$150,000**
Scope: Design and construction of a 1.2-acre nature center at Puente Creek including a nature trail and an outdoor classroom.

Camino Real Corridor **City of Montebello** **$150,000**

Scope: The North Lincoln Avenue River Enhancement Project along the Rio Hondo River includes new landscaping and the installation of a decorative rail fence, gates at the north and south access points and new trail directory signs.

Emerald Necklace Entrance and Safety Signage **Amigos de los Rios** **$150,000**

Scope: Development and installation of wayfinding and mile marker signage in the Emerald Necklace Park and Trail Network.

TPL Parks for People Fitness Zones Installation **Trust for Public Land** **$150,000**

Scope: Installation of five Fitness Zones adjacent to existing greenways and trails along the Rio Hondo and San Gabriel Rivers. One will be installed at Santa Fe Dam. Two will be installed at Whittier Narrows Recreation Area. One fitness zone will be installed at Lashbrook Park in the City of El Monte and a last fitness zone will be installed at the San Gabriel Basin Spreading Grounds in the City of Pico Rivera.

Total: **$1,647,477**