



LOS ANGELES COUNTY REGIONAL PARK AND OPEN SPACE DISTRICT

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December 11, 2012

The Honorable Board of Directors
County of Los Angeles
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, California 90012

Dear Directors:

**ALLOCATE COUNTY EXCESS FUNDS AVAILABLE
TO THE FIFTH SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT
AND AUTHORIZE AWARD AND ADMINISTRATION
OF AN EXCESS FUNDS GRANT TO THE
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION FOR THE
VASQUEZ ROCKS ACQUISITION PROJECT
(FIFTH DISTRICT) (3 VOTES)**

**CIO RECOMMENDATION: APPROVE (X) APPROVE WITH MODIFICATION ()
DISAPPROVE ()**

SUBJECT

Approval of the recommended actions will allocate \$479,000 in County Excess Funds available to the Fifth Supervisorial District pursuant to the Safe Neighborhood Parks Proposition of 1996 to the Department of Parks and Recreation for a grant to fund the Vasquez Rocks Acquisition Project.

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT THE BOARD:

1. Find the proposed Vasquez Rocks Acquisition Project categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act because the project consists of acquisition of land to preserve open space or lands for park purposes for the reasons stated herein and reflected in the record of the project.
2. Allocate \$479,000 of County Excess Funds available to the Fifth Supervisorial District to the Department of Parks and Recreation for the Vasquez Rocks Acquisition Project.

3. Authorize the Director of the Department of Parks and Recreation, in his capacity as Director of the Los Angeles County Regional Park and Open Space District, to award a grant to the Department of Parks and Recreation in the amount of \$479,000, for the Vasquez Rocks Acquisition Project when applicable conditions have been met, and to administer the grant as of the date of award and pursuant to guidelines in the Procedural Guide for Specified, Per Parcel, and Excess Funds Projects, otherwise funds shall remain in the Excess Funds account.

PURPOSE/JUSTIFICATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTION

Approval of the recommended actions will allocate \$479,000 in County Excess Funds available to the Fifth Supervisorial District to the Department of Parks and Recreation (Department) for the Vasquez Rocks Acquisition Project (Project) and provide for administration of the grant, when awarded, under the existing Procedural Guide for Specified, Per Parcel, and Excess Funds Projects (Procedural Guide).

Vasquez Rocks Natural Area Park is a 945-acre park located at 10700 W. Escondido Canyon in Agua Dulce in the Antelope Valley. The Project consists of acquisition of a 31-acre parcel of open space property, bordering the park, located at 32820 Deerglen Lane in Santa Clarita. This open space area is comprised of two blue line streams, two pristine canyons, riparian habitat, and a geologic corridor for a variety of wildlife species, including mountain lion, mule deer, and bobcats. The total cost of the Project is \$679,000. The \$479,000 in County Excess Funds will be supplemented with \$200,000 from a State of California Habitat Conservation grant.

It is also recommended that the Director of the Department (Director), in his capacity as Director of the Los Angeles County Regional Park and Open Space District be authorized to award the grant to the Department, when applicable conditions have been met, such as grantee qualifications, consistency between the projects and requirements of the 1996 Proposition, and grantee agreement with California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements for the project, if applicable, and to administer the grant pursuant to the Procedural Guide previously approved by your Board.

In a related item on your Board's agenda, the Department requests your Board's approval to fund the Project.

Implementation of Strategic Plan Goals

The proposed recommendations further the Board approved County Strategic Plan Goals of Operational Effectiveness (Goal 1) by funding the acquisition of additional protected open space land in the Fifth Supervisorial District.

FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING

Sufficient appropriation for the grant, in the amount of \$479,000, is budgeted in the Fifth Supervisorial District's portion of the Los Angeles County Regional Park and Open Space District's (District) Excess Funds Project Fund, HD6.

FACTS AND PROVISIONS/LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

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. The Department meets this requirement. The 1996 Proposition also

requires that Excess Funds be awarded to cities in the same total amount as is awarded to the County in the same fiscal year.

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 grant would be funded from the Excess Funds available to the Fifth Supervisorial District from Excess Funds for County projects.

The Board may establish additional conditions on grants of Excess Funds. The Director of the Department would be authorized to award a grant to the Department 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.

On June 2, 2009, your Board approved the Procedural Guide, for governing the administration of District grants. The Procedural Guide will appropriately govern the administration of the recommended additional grant as well.

ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTATION

All public agency projects funded by the District are required to comply with CEQA as a condition of the grant. The lead agency is responsible for preparing the appropriate environmental documentation for the project. The County is the lead agency for the Project.

The proposed Project is categorically exempt from CEQA according to Section 15325 (f) of the State CEQA Guidelines and Class 25 of the County's Environmental Document Reporting Procedures and Guidelines, Appendix G, because the proposed Project consists of acquisition of land to preserve open space or lands for park purposes.

CONTRACTING PROCESS

A Grant Project Agreement will be entered into and administered under authority delegated to the Director and pursuant to the Procedural Guide approved by the Board in 2009 only if all applicable conditions of the grants have been met. The Project Agreement will be approved as to form by County Counsel.

IMPACT ON CURRENT SERVICES (OR PROJECTS)

The project will have no impact on any other District funded project.

CONCLUSION

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

The Honorable Board of Supervisors

12/11/2012

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Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Russ Guiney". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

RUSS GUINEY

Director

RG:IV

WRO:LB

c: Chief Executive Office
County Counsel
Executive Office, Board of Supervisors