LOS ANGELES COUNTY REGIONAL PARK AND OPEN SPACE DISTRICT

October 11, 2011

ADOPTED
REGIONAL PARK AND OPEN SPACE DISTRICT

#1-P OCTOBER 11, 2011

Sachi A. Hamai
SACHI A. HAMAI
SECRETARY

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:

APPROVE A CHANGE IN SCOPE FOR THE MOUNTAINS RECREATION AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY'S BALLONA CREEK TO PARKS CONNECTION LOOP PROJECT (SECOND DISTRICT) (3 VOTES)

SUBJECT

Approval of the recommended actions will expand the existing project scope of trail improvements in the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority's Ballona Creek to Parks Connection Loop Project by adding trail improvements on portions of the 13-mile-long existing Park to Playa Trail along the creek.

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT YOUR BOARD:

1. Find that the proposed scope change for the Ballona Creek to Parks Connection Loop Project is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act according to Sections 15303 and 15304 of the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines and Classes 3 and 4 of the Environmental Document Reporting Procedures and Guidelines, adopted by your Board on November 17, 1987, because the project involves new construction of small structures and minor alteration to the condition of land to construct a trail.

2. Approve the change in scope for the Ballona Creek to Parks Connection Loop Project from the original improvements at three connection gateways along portions of the creek to trail, decorative gate, native planting and signage improvements along portions of the 13-mile Park to Playa connection route.

3. Authorize the Director of the Department of Parks and Recreation, in his capacity as the Director of the Los Angeles County Regional Park and Open Space District, to award a grant amendment, to the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority for the expanded scope for the Ballona Creek to Parks Connection Loop Project if applicable conditions have been met and to administer the amended grant as of the date of this action and pursuant to procedures 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 ACTIONS

On May 19, 2009, your Board approved an allocation of $700,000 in Specified Excess Funds available to the Second Supervisorial District to the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) for the Ballona Creek to Parks Connection Loop Project. The project scope consisted of a loop trail; decorative gates; interpretive, way-finding and connection route signage; and artwork at three connection gateways located at Duquesne Avenue, between Culver City Park and the Baldwin Hills Scenic Outlook and Higuera Street stretching approximately 1.5 miles along Ballona Creek. The loop trail from Duquesne Avenue to the Baldwin Hills Scenic Outlook and gateway improvements at those entrances has been completed. However, the City of Culver City plans to widen the bridge at Higuera Street, requiring that portion of the project to be deferred until after the City completes its bridge-widening project. To continue making improvements along the Park to Playa Trail while Culver City's bridge-widening project is implemented, and to expend the funds remaining in the grant that would have funded the now deferred improvements, the MRCA requests your Board's approval to expand the project's scope to encompass portions of the entire Park to Playa connection route from parklands in the Baldwin Hills to the Pacific Ocean spanning a total of 13 miles. Added improvements will include the development of a greenway along a portion of the existing bike path and other improvements consistent with the original project scope.

Implementation of Strategic Plan Goals

The recommended action will further the Board-approved County Strategic Plan Goals of Operational Effectiveness (Goal 1), Children, Family, and Adult Well-Being (Goal 2), and Community and Municipal Services (Goal 3), by providing trails and other recreational opportunities along Ballona Creek in the Second Supervisorial District.

FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING

The proposed project will be funded with the previously allocated $700,000 in Specified Excess Funds available to the Second Supervisorial District and $150,000 in Environmental Enhancement Mitigation Program funds.

Sufficient appropriation for the grant, in the amount of $700,000, is budgeted in the Second 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 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 MRCA has met this requirement.

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 is funded from the Excess Funds available to the Second Supervisorial District for Specified projects.

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

ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTATION

The proposed scope change for the Ballona Creek to Parks Connection Loop Project is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (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 project involves new construction of small structures and minor alteration to the condition of land to construct a trail.

CONTRACTING PROCESS

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

IMPACT ON CURRENT SERVICES (OR PROJECTS)

These actions will have no impact on any other projects funded by the District but are required so that the MRCA may proceed with the project along Ballona Creek in the Second Supervisorial District, if all applicable conditions are met.

CONCLUSION

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

Respectfully submitted,

John Wicker for

Russ Guiney
Director, Parks and Recreation

RG:IV:LB:REGIONALPARKOPENSPACEDISTRICT(BALLONA CREEK BL)

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