



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

*"Parks Make Life Better!"*

John Wicker, Director

Norma E. Garcia, Chief Deputy Director

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October 25, 2016

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

Dear Supervisors:

**PUENTE HILLS LANDFILL PARK MASTER PLAN  
CERTIFY THE FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT  
APPROVE THE MITIGATION MONITORING AND REPORTING PROGRAM  
APPROVE THE FINDINGS AND STATEMENT OF OVERRIDING CONSIDERATIONS  
APPROVE THE PUENTE HILLS LANDFILL PARK MASTER PLAN  
(ALL DISTRICTS) (3 VOTES)**

**SUBJECT**

The approval of the recommended actions will certify the Final Environmental Impact Report and approve the Puente Hills Landfill Park Master Plan and related actions to authorize planned improvements at the future park at the Puente Hills Landfill as described herein and subject to the availability of funding.

**IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT THE BOARD:**

1. Certify that the Final Environmental Impact Report for the Puente Hills Landfill Park Master Plan has been completed in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act and reflects the independent judgment and analysis of Los Angeles County; find the Board of Supervisors has reviewed and considered the information in the Final Environmental Impact Report, including comments received during the public review period prior to approving the Final Environmental Impact Report and adopt the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program; find that the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program is adequately designed to ensure compliance with the mitigation measures during the Puente Hills Landfill Park Master Plan implementation; find that there are no further feasible alternatives or feasible mitigation measures within the Board's jurisdiction that would substantially lessen or avoid any significant effect that the Puente Hills Landfill Park Master Plan would have on the environment; and determine that the significant adverse effects of the Puente Hills Landfill Park Master Plan have either been reduced to an acceptable

level or are outweighed by the specific considerations as outlined in the Findings and Statement of Overriding Considerations, which findings and statement are adopted and incorporated herein by reference.

2. Approve the Puente Hills Landfill Park Master Plan as described in the Final Environmental Impact Report and determine that the Puente Hills Landfill Park Master Plan is compatible with and supports the goals and policies of the Los Angeles County General Plan.

### **PURPOSE/JUSTIFICATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTIONS**

The recommended actions will certify the Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) for the Puente Hills Landfill Park Master Plan (Project) and approve a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program and Findings and Statement of Overriding Considerations for capital improvements at the future park at the Puente Hills Landfill Park.

#### Project Location

The Project is located within the boundaries of the Puente Hills Landfill (Landfill), which is owned by the Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County (Sanitation Districts). The Landfill is approximately 1,365 acres in size and has been closed since 2013. The Landfill is located southeast of the intersection of State Route 60 (SR-60) and Interstate 605 (I-605) in the unincorporated area of Los Angeles County (County). Although the entire Landfill site is not located in the City of Industry, the address of the landfill front entry is 13130 Crossroads Parkway South, City of Industry, California 91746. Full vehicular access to the site is currently available via a single driveway from Crossroads Parkway South.

#### Project Significance and Need

The Project offers County residents the rare and significant opportunity for a new regional park. The last County regional park to open was over 30 years ago in January 1986, when the State conveyed Otterbein State Recreation Area (presently Peter F. Schabarum Regional Park) to the County. Prior to that, the County opened the first phase of Kenneth Hahn State Recreation Area (formerly known as Baldwin Hills State Recreation Area) and Santa Fe Dam Recreational Area in 1974. Like the Project, all three of the regional parks referenced are joint-use facilities where existing public land has been repurposed for County recreational use and programming. Maximizing opportunities for parks, such as the adaptive reuse of other public agency lands, is critical due to the limited availability of land and demand for parks caused by continued urbanization throughout the region.

A Regional Park intends to serve residents within a 25 mile radius and therefore it is anticipated that the project will benefit constituents from all five Supervisorial Districts.

The Project will offer diverse, healthy, passive, and active recreational and educational experiences and programming for residents living in park-poor areas in the San Gabriel Valley, gateway cities, and southeast cities. The additional 142 acres of parkland that will be provided by the Project will help offset the severe shortages for parkland regionally and the surrounding communities, as revealed by the Countywide Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment (Needs Assessment) that was adopted by the Board on July 5, 2016. Specifically, the Needs Assessment determined that various communities adjacent to the Project site have a "Very High Need" or "High Need" for parks, including the unincorporated communities of Bassett/West Puente Valley and Valinda, and the cities of La Puente, Baldwin Park, and El Monte. All of these communities have less than one acre of parkland per 1,000 residents, which is significantly lower than the County average of 3.3 acres per 1,000 residents and the County General Plan goal of 4 acres per 1,000 residents. Furthermore, the percentage of residents living within a half-mile of a park in these communities is below the countywide average of 49 percent.

The Project will not only help offset the deficiencies of parkland in these high-need areas, but will offer a variety of recreational amenities (as described in the Project Description) not readily available in the region that were prioritized by the public during the extensive community outreach and engagement process.

### Project Background

In the mid-1960s, when the closure of the Palos Verdes Landfill in the South Bay was anticipated, the Sanitation Districts identified the Puente Hills canyons as a location to provide the long-term disposal capacity for the southern and eastern portions of Los Angeles County. The Sanitation Districts acquired the 1,214-acre Puente Hills site in June 1970, where 500 acres had been operated as the San Gabriel Valley Dump since 1957. The Sanitation Districts continued the operation of the site for solid waste disposal and renamed it the Puente Hills Landfill. In May 1981, the Sanitation Districts acquired land adjacent to the Puente Hills Landfill that enlarged the site to its present 1,365 acres.

In 1983, Conditional Use Permit (CUP) No. 2235-(1) was the first of several issued by the County to the Sanitation Districts that set in motion the eventuality that a regional park be developed within the larger landfill site once closed. On April 28, 1987, the County and the Sanitation Districts entered into a Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) requiring the Sanitation Districts to offer the County "fill" areas for park and recreation purposes once they were no longer needed for landfill operations. Subsequent to the approval of the master plan, the JPA will be amended and restated to incorporate information from the master plan and more detailed agreements about roles and financial responsibilities for the development, operation, and maintenance of the site.

In 1994, CUP 92-250-(4) expanded provisions related to the future park, including funding obligations by the Sanitation Districts, as well as the intention by the Board to provide for both recreation and open space opportunities on the Landfill site as follows:

- 14.a. "The permittee shall dedicate for open space Canyon 7 and 8, and portions of Canyon 6 lying outside the landfill footprint and the area lying generally east and northeast of the landfill...and shall provide that the areas so dedicated will not be used for future landfill expansion."
- 14.b. "To ensure future use of the landfill site as a public park, the permittee shall fund the preparation of a park master plan and the full development, operation and maintenance of the park in an amount appropriate to the level of development shown on the master plan."
15. "The permittee shall make an annual payment of one dollar per ton of refuse disposed of at the Puente Hills Landfill into a fund established for the purpose of acquiring, restoring, and/or maintaining additional open space lands in the La Puente/Whittier Hills areas in the vicinity of the permittee's property."
47. "Canyons 6, 7 and 8 shall remain as undeveloped natural open space and low intensity park and recreational use (i.e. trails, bird watching)."

The Puente Hills Habitat Preservation Authority (Habitat Authority) came into existence in 1994 as a result of CUP 92-250-(4). The Habitat Authority currently manages approximately 3,870 acres of preserved public open space, of which 225 acres are located in Canyons 6, 7, and 8 of the landfill site.

In 1999, a pertinent agreement was executed between the Sanitation Districts and Rose Hills Memorial Park, providing for a future roadway easement for ingress and egress by Rose Hills Memorial Park through the Landfill. The agreement was crafted with the understanding that the needs of the future park master plan should inform the final alignment specifically stating that "a permanent alignment of the access road and easement area shall be subject to master planning by the County of Los Angeles for the future park and recreation use of the landfill site." The Project has fully evaluated alignment alternatives and accommodations for the shared use of the landfill roads.

In 2002, CUP 02-027-(4) reiterated and further clarified the provisions from the prior CUPs as follows:

33. "As a condition of approval for the existing landfill operations, the ultimate use of a portion of the landfill site upon closure has been identified as recreational use. The specific type of recreational use (i.e., trails, nature center, soccer fields, golf course) would be the subject of a dedicated master planning process involving the

Sanitation Districts, Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation, Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning, and the surrounding community.”

35. “Portions of the remainder of the site not set aside for active recreational use have already been set aside for native habitat preservation (i.e. Canyons 6, 7 and 8). These areas will continue to be managed as passive open space areas in perpetuity pursuant to that designation.”
60. “Pursuant to Conditional Use Permit Case No. 2235-(1), Condition No. 21, and Conditional Use Permit Case No. 92-250-(4), Condition No. 14, the permittee has agreed to designate as open space for recreational use in perpetuity those portions of the site on which fill has or will be placed. In addition, the permittee has agreed to provide all funds needed for the preparation of a park feasibility study, park master plan and environmental documentation as well as reasonable funding for the development, operation and maintenance of the park to support recreational use.”

In October 2013, the Puente Hills Landfill ceased operations, as required by CUP 02-027-(4). In November 2014, the Board unanimously approved the commencement of the Puente Hills Landfill Park Master Plan, including the preparation of conceptual alternatives and the required environmental documents, funded by the Sanitation Districts.

#### Community Engagement Process

The Department of Parks and Recreation (Department) has undertaken extensive outreach efforts that have been integral to the planning framework for this Project. The purpose of these outreach efforts is to continuously engage the community, relevant agencies, policy makers, and local and regional stakeholders in a dialogue about the future regional park.

Key project stakeholders were engaged early in the planning process, where a total of 18 organizations participated in a fact finding and visioning process. These initial meetings targeted individuals representing a diversity of interests, agencies and organizations to explore a broad range of issues and needs. Stakeholders interviewed include, but are not limited to: representatives from five local cities (El Monte, Industry, La Puente, South El Monte, and Whittier); CORBA; Equestrian Joint Council; Hacienda Heights Improvement Association (HHIA); Puente Hills Habitat Preservation Authority; Rio Hondo College; Rivers & Mountains Conservancy; Rose Hills Memorial Park; San Gabriel Mountains Forever; Sierra Club; and Workman Mill HOA.

Between August 2015 and June 2016, the Department hosted a series of six public workshops to build community consensus on the long-term vision of the future park and gather public input at pivotal points throughout the planning process. The community workshops were held on August 24, 2015, September 30, 2015, November 3, 2015, November 10, 2015, January 27, 2016, and June 29, 2016, and translation was available in multiple languages (Chinese, Korean, and Spanish).

A variety of other outreach efforts were performed to ensure broad and representative participation in the Project, including, but not limited to:

- Technical Advisory Committee<sup>1</sup> meetings;
- Presentations to the councils, boards, and organized groups of many local cities, unincorporated communities, and educational institutions;
- A Youth Ambassador Program and meetings at high school to engage local youth;
- A Project website ([www.puentehillslandfillpark.org](http://www.puentehillslandfillpark.org)), updated regularly;
- Project information on social media (Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram);
- Electronic e-mail blasts to interested parties;
- Mobile outreach at various community events to provide Project information; and
- Flyers to 5,500 property owners/occupants within a half-mile radius of the Project site.

### Project Objectives

The following 12 project objectives are priorities highlighted as a result of the extensive community outreach and engagement process, and serve as guiding principles for the Project:

1. **Park For All:** Develop a “Park For All” that offers diverse, healthy, passive, and active recreational experiences and programming for visitors of all ages, abilities, interests and backgrounds.
  2. **Unique Regional Destination:** Develop a regional destination park which uniquely reflects the site’s history, urban-wildland location, scale, and topography.
  3. **Range of Recreation and Outdoor Fitness:** Develop a range of active and passive amenities to meet varied recreational demands and provide outdoor fitness opportunities to help address national trends related to inactivity, obesity, and nature-deficit disorder.
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4. **Gateway to Nature for Diverse New Audiences:** Attract diverse, new audiences, particularly underrepresented or disadvantaged populations, to inspire connection to outdoor activities, nature, and environmental stewardship.
5. **Integrated Recreation and Habitat:** Integrate active recreational facilities with natural habitats to enhance and sustain both the recreational and ecological functions of the park.
6. **Wildlife Habitat Connectivity:** Promote and support wildlife movement and habitat connectivity through the Puente Hills Significant Ecological Area (SEA), the Rio Hondo College Wildlife Sanctuary SEA, and the San Gabriel River.
7. **Environmental Sustainability:** Demonstrate environmentally sustainable design and practices.
8. **Multi-modal and Universal Accessibility:** Provide multi-modal, universal access and circulation into and through the park to the extent feasible.
9. **Education and Interpretation:** Incorporate design elements for education and interpretation on the park's unique landfill history and natural environmental features.
10. **Captivating Trail Experience:** Provide a captivating trail experience within the park which also alleviates the overuse and degradation of the adjacent trail network.
11. **Public Health, Safety and Landfill Operations:** Balance development of park facilities with landfill maintenance activities to protect public safety, water quality, and meet the Sanitation Districts' regulatory requirements.
12. **Balance Multiple Objectives:** Balance multiple project objectives in a manner that considers the complex site constraints, park needs of the overall region, and the competing interests and needs of adjacent entities.

#### Project Description

The Project is a long range master plan that, over time, would develop a portion of what was formerly the largest landfill in the western United States into a regional park, providing recreation and open space for the greater Los Angeles area. Of the 600 acres of fill within the site boundaries, which includes the landfill slopes and flat landfill caps, approximately 117 acres of top deck fill area would be the focus for the majority of formal park development (or approximately 10 percent of the site's total acreage) over time. An additional 25 acres of non-fill areas are also included in the master plan to support park

development, equaling a total 142 acres. The Project is reflective of extensive community input, and takes into account and balances a number of important considerations that includes the relationship of this highly disturbed, post-industrial site to the adjoining natural areas and wildlife corridor. The Project places an emphasis on ecology and dedicates over two-thirds of the project area to passive uses and open space, complemented by some dynamic recreational amenities desired by the community.

The Project would include a variety of recreational facilities that can be sustained on the site, despite significant development constraints and the ongoing maintenance and operations by the Sanitation Districts. Park development would be integrated with existing landfill facilities, including a shared entrance and joint use of an existing loop road system, which would be improved to accommodate public access. A transportation management plan is also being prepared to support the Project in order to sustainably manage and provide equitable public access for surrounding communities to and from the future hilltop park, which is currently constrained by: limited multi-modal access (i.e. pedestrian, cyclists, and public transit); significant physical barriers such as the I-60 and I-605 freeways; and a single entrance shared by park patrons, on-going truck traffic to the Materials Recovery Facility, and potentially future funeral processions accessing Rose Hills Memorial Park.

The implementation of the Project will occur in multiple phases over a long period of time (refer to Attachment 1), which is primarily due to the physical development constraints that exist on the site. The Project envisions three major phases of park development over the next 30 years that would provide the majority of the park elements proposed in the master plan. Three additional phases are conceptually identified in the master plan for potential improvements in approximately 40-75 years, which would likely be re-evaluated and redefined based on the site conditions at that time.

The first phase of park development will occur primarily on the Western Deck, which the Sanitation Districts has deemed ready for development in 2017-2019. Certain non-fill areas will also be improved in the first phase to provide the basic park infrastructure for park visitors and park maintenance, including the Entry Plaza, Maintenance and Operations (M&O) Area, and Nike Hill (subject to further technical analysis). The neighboring Eastern and Southern Decks will continue to lose elevation, up to 125 feet over a 30-year period. As top deck settlement slows and methane gas production decreases, the parklands on the capped areas will become more stable. The additional phases include proposed park elements that can be implemented once deck settling slows and when environmental systems are no longer required. The park site transformation will be incremental and selective. Each phase is designed to build upon the last in response to public interest for a variety of programs and specific park elements.

Early investments in jointly used maintenance areas and offices will begin the co-agency (County and Sanitation Districts) transition to manage the site as a public space.



Extensive infrastructure such as multi-use trails, roads, utilities, and structures will be laid into the site to accommodate a wide range of future park activities. All phases will include new landscape plantings to establish a complex ecology over time that reflects the soil conditions and continual shifting of the top decks.

Amenities that will be built and opened in Phase I would create the foundation for a distinctive regional park destination where industrial and passive recreation land uses come together. Beyond the infrastructure, distinctive park elements will be strategically located to showcase the assets of the Puente Hills to provide recreation that is unique to the region. The ever-changing parklands must be safe and secure during a lifetime of transition that may take 50 to 75 years as methane production and landfill settlement ceases.

The Project at full build-out will be comprised of the following primary park features:

1. **Entry Plaza and the Visitor Center:** The Project will include an Entry Plaza to provide a transit operations area for park visitors and shuttle/bus loading and unloading. The Visitor Center is proposed to be 7,000-square feet in size. It will include an educational foyer with interpretive exhibits, joint offices for the Department, and Sanitation Districts, and spaces for concessionaires.
2. **Multi-Use Trails:** The Project will provide approximately 14 miles of multi-use (hiking, mountain biking, horseback riding) trails. Trails will be developed to County standards and would generally consist of a trail tread composed of natural surface materials. Trails will be accessible from parking areas throughout the park.
3. **Open Space, Habitat and Landscaping:** The Project will dedicate over two-thirds of the top deck area to large swaths of open spaces. The Project will create a park landscape that is inclusive of connectivity to adjacent preserve wildlands, and identifies areas of the site for strategic habitat enhancement efforts. The proposed planting includes grasslands with differing heights creating strata of grass varieties, over which are shrub layers in patterns that define outdoor rooms for flexible park spaces. The ecology of the park is the “base layer” on top of which are the flexible programmed spaces, the bird observation areas, the interpretive areas, and the trails throughout the top decks. The planting would consist mainly of California natives. However, drought-tolerant nonnatives are part of the planting plan because planting is difficult to establish on the mono-soil clay landfill cap that covers the filled areas
4. **Fitness Amenities:** One of the top deck trails will be dedicated to a 3.5-mile fitness running loop with distance markers. In addition, three miles of paths will be distributed throughout the decks. Other proposed fitness-related amenities include stair climbs, slides, zip lines, and a bike skills area. Stair climbers will be six to ten

feet in width and be constructed of movable segments of steel stair components. Bike rentals will be available for park users.

5. **Educational and Interpretive Elements:** The Project will include interpretive signage to educate the public about the history and significance of the site; cameras into the adjacent Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) to show how it operates; park elements constructed from recycled materials; and park structures that meet Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) criteria. Ideal locations for bird and wildlife observation will also be marked along particular trails.
6. **Children's Play and Picnic Areas:** The Project will include areas for nature play with loose parts (i.e. sticks, rocks, log rounds, fabric, crates, ropes, etc.) for young children, and four picnic areas that will be located near parking areas for family use. The picnic areas will range in size from one to five acres, and will be planted to provide buffer and shade wherever possible.
7. **Circulation, Internal Park Transportation, and Parking:** Park entrance improvements will include a modified road system that will include crosswalks, either additional signalization or a roundabout, entry re-configuration, and/or additional road lanes. Park circulation will include a paved one-way loop park road that follows existing landfill roads for approximately four miles. A trail lift is proposed as a transportation alternative for park visitors with a station and parking at the Entry Plaza. The trail lift will provide visitors access to the highest elevation of the park (Nike Hill) and will serve as a people mover to reduce the number of cars operating within the park. The Project will include a total of 200 parking spaces distributed over five parking areas.
8. **Shared Park Access Road:** The front entry of the park will share a common gated entrance off of Crossroads Parkway South with the Sanitation Districts' Materials Recovery Facility (MRF). The MRF is designed specifically for the management of municipal solid waste and recovery of recyclable material and would remain in operation at this location into the foreseeable future. Ongoing inspections, maintenance, and monitoring of the former landfill will require shared park roads, as will the future use by Rose Hills Memorial Park patrons that was granted by the Sanitation Districts.

#### General Plan Consistency

The Project site has two land use designations. The western portion of the site is designated as "Public and Semi-Public" (P) in the Land Use Element of the Los Angeles County General Plan. The eastern portion of the site is designated as "Open Space - Parks and Recreation" (OS-PR) in the Hacienda Heights Community Plan. As a regional park, the Project is an allowed use under both land use designations. The Project is also

consistent with and supports the following goals and policies in the Parks and Recreation Element of the General Plan:

Goal P/R 1: Enhanced active and passive park and recreation opportunities for all users.

- Policy P/R 1.1: Provide opportunities for public participation in designing and planning parks and recreation programs.
- Policy P/R 1.2: Provide additional active and passive recreation opportunities based on a community's setting, and recreational needs and preferences.
- Policy P/R 1.3: Consider emerging trends in parks and recreation when planning for new parks and recreation programs.
- Policy P/R 1.5: Ensure that County parks and recreational facilities are clean, safe, inviting, usable and accessible.
- Policy P/R 1.10: Ensure a balance of passive and recreational activities in the development of new park facilities.
- Policy P/R 1.11: Provide access to parks by creating pedestrian and bicycle-friendly paths and signage regarding park locations and distances.

Goal P/R 2: Enhanced multi-agency collaboration to leverage resources.

- Policy P/R 2.6: Participate in joint powers authorities (JPAs) to develop multi-benefit parks as well as regional recreational facilities.

Goal P/R 3: Acquisition and development of additional parkland.

- Policy P/R 3.1: Acquire and develop local and regional parkland to meet the following County goals: 4 acres of local parkland per 1,000 residents in the unincorporated areas and 6 acres of regional parkland per 1,000 residents of the total population of Los Angeles County.
- Policy P/R 3.3: Provide additional parks in communities with insufficient local parkland as identified through the gap analysis.

Goal P/R 4: Improved accessibility and connectivity to a comprehensive trail system including rivers, greenways, and community linkages.

- Policy P/R 4.1: Create multi-use trails to accommodate all users.
- Policy P/R 4.4: Maintain and design multi-purpose trails in ways that minimize circulation conflicts among trail users.

Goal P/R 6: A sustainable parks and recreation system.

- Policy P/R 6.1: Support the use of recycled water for landscape irrigation in County parks.
- Policy P/R 6.4: Ensure that new buildings on County park properties are environmentally sustainable by reducing carbon footprints, and conserving water and energy.

### **IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS**

The Project furthers the Board-approved County Strategic Plan Goals of Operational Effectiveness/Fiscal Sustainability (Goal 1), Community Support and Responsiveness (Goal 2), and Integrated Service Delivery (Goal 3) by providing additional recreational opportunities and open space through the development of a new regional park with a variety of features and amenities.

### **FISCAL IMPACT/ FINANCING**

The Project recommends that the majority of recreational facilities that the County intends to construct occur within the first three phases of development, starting in 2019 and continuing through 2045. The full implementation of the Project is proposed to be in six phases over approximately 75 years (refer to Attachment 1). Each phase would be developed independently from a site design perspective (i.e. functional grading phases and construction logistics) as funding for construction of amenities becomes available and as physical development constraints diminish over time.

The preliminary cost for the Phase IA development is estimated at approximately \$45,926,000, which includes escalation for the midpoint of construction in 2020. Phase IA development will be funded in large part by Sanitation Special Districts Funds, (approximately \$35,000,000), collected during landfill operations to support the final recreational use of the site. Supervisorial Districts 1 and 4 will each provide an additional \$5,000,000 in Project funding from their respective Proposition A allocations. The Department will return to the Board at a future time to establish the capital project for the Phase IA development.

The preliminary cost estimate for Phase IB is \$21,453,449, which includes escalation for the midpoint of construction in 2024. The preliminary cost estimate for Phase II is \$68,918,211, which includes escalation for the midpoint of construction in 2030. The preliminary cost estimate for Phase III is \$32,628,726, which includes escalation for the midpoint of construction in 2045. The combined total estimated cost for Phase IA, IB, II and III is approximately \$168.93 million.

### **Operating Budget Impact**

Based on the Project description, the Department anticipates additional one-time and operating costs. The Department will work with the Chief Executive Office to determine the appropriate level of funding for these costs and address them in New Facilities requests that coincide with the various phases of the proposed Project. It is anticipated that Phase 1A will be completed by fiscal year 2020/2021.

## **FACTS AND PROVISIONS/ LEGAL REQUIREMENTS**

On May 17, 2011, the Board authorized the Department to execute consultant services agreements with Withers & Sandgren and five other consulting firms to provide as-needed planning, environmental, and architectural/engineering services for various County projects. In March 2015, Withers and Sandgren was selected to develop the Project and prepare the Environmental Impact Report (EIR). Utilizing this contract, the Department established the Project to guide the development of a regional park to provide recreational opportunities and open space for the greater Los Angeles area. In January 2016, the Board approved supplemental funding for the Project, (funded by the Sanitation Districts), for additional consultant services to support the development of the Project and the EIR.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTATION**

The County, as the lead agency pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), has prepared a Draft EIR, FEIR, Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program and Findings and Statement of Overriding Considerations pursuant to CEQA (Cal. Pub. Res. Code 21000, et seq.).

In accordance with CEQA, a Notice of Preparation (NOP) was distributed on December 18, 2015 to the Office of Planning and Research and responsible State agencies in addition to public agencies and organizations and individuals with a possible interest in the Project. The purpose of the NOP was to provide notification that the County planned to prepare an EIR and to solicit input on the scope and content of the EIR. A total of 40 written comment letters were received from various agencies, organizations, and individuals.

A Notice of Availability (NOA) of the Draft EIR was issued on June 24, 2016 and was mailed to approximately 5,500 addresses. The NOA was posted at the Registrar Recorder/County Clerk, pursuant to Section 21092.3. Copies of the Draft EIR for public review were located at the Department of Parks and Recreation at 510 South Vermont Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90020; Hacienda Heights Library at 16010 La Monde Street, Hacienda Heights, CA 91745; Sorensen Library at 6934 Broadway Avenue, Whittier, CA 90606; and Sunkist Library at 840 North Puente Avenue, La Puente, CA 91746. The NOA also contained the availability of the document online with the link to the Department website and on the Project website ([www.puentehillslandfillpark.org](http://www.puentehillslandfillpark.org)). The Department conducted a Draft EIR Public Meeting on June 29, 2016 at the Hacienda Heights Community Center to seek input from the public regarding environmental issues that may result from the proposed Project. Approximately 96 people attended the meeting and six written comments were submitted.

An additional 51 comment letters were received subsequent to the public meeting, including 15 from the following public agencies: California Department of Transportation,

City of Whittier, Los Angeles County Arts Commission, Los Angeles County Fire Department, Puente Hills Habitat Preservation Authority, Regional Water Quality Control Board, Rio Hondo College, Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County, South Coast Air Quality Management District, the United States Department of Fish and Wildlife, Watershed Conservation Authority, and Wildlife Corridor Conservation Authority. Twelve organizations also submitted comments: Amigos de Los Rios, Bike San Gabriel Valley, Concerned Off-Road Bicyclist Organization, Day One, Friends of Whittier Hills, Hacienda Heights Improvement Association, Hills for Everyone, Rose Hills Memorial Park and Mortuaries, San Gabriel Mountains Forever, San Gabriel Valley Conservation Corps, Save Our Community, and Sierra Club. In addition, five general comment letters and 19 support letters were received from the public. All comments received and responses to those comments are included in the FEIR. Responses to the comments were sent to public agencies mentioned above, pursuant to CEQA requirements. Comments ranged from support for the broad community benefit and appeal that would be provided by the proposed Project, to those interested in minimal development serving only passive recreational needs.

Issues addressed in the Draft EIR include aesthetics; air quality; biological resources; cultural, tribal, and paleontological resources; geology and soils; greenhouse gas; hazards and hazardous materials; hydrology and water quality; land use and planning; noise; public services; recreation; transportation and circulation; and utilities and service systems. Impacts to biological resources; cultural, tribal, and paleontological resources; geology and soils; hazards and hazardous materials; noise; public services, and transportation and circulation would be less than significant with the implementation of mitigation measures. There is one potentially significant and unavoidable impact that could not be reduced to less than significant with implementation of mitigation measures: Greenhouse Gas (GHG). Specifically, the Draft EIR includes five mitigation measures (GHG-1 to GHG-5) to address GHG-related impacts. However, the implementation of these measures would not be able to reduce emissions from mobile and construction sources to less than significant levels. Mobile sources contributing to the projected emission levels analyzed include vehicular traffic on the shared park roadways from park patrons, Rose Hills' processions/patrons, and the Sanitation Districts. Therefore, GHG-related impacts are considered to be significant and unavoidable for the Project.

The location of the documents and other materials constituting the record of the proceedings upon which the Board's decision is based in this matter is at the Department of Parks and Recreation, 510 South Vermont Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90020.

Upon the Board's certification of the FEIR, the Department will file a Notice of Determination in accordance with Section 21152(a) of the California Public Resources Code and pay the required filing and processing fees with the Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk.

**IMPACT ON CURRENT SERVICES (OR PROJECTS)**

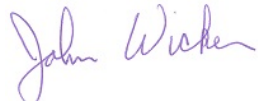
There will be no impact on current services or projects.

**CONCLUSION**

Please instruct the Executive Officer-Clerk of the Board to return two adopted copies of this action to the Department of Parks and Recreation.

Should you have any questions, please contact Michelle O'Connor at (213) 351-5121 or moconnor@parks.lacounty.gov, Kathline King at (213) 351-5098 or kking@parks.lacounty.gov, Kasey Dizon at (213) 738-2986 or kdizon@parks.lacounty.gov, or Kaye Michelson at (213) 738-2955 or kmichelson@parks.lacounty.gov.

Respectfully submitted,



JOHN WICKER  
Director

JW:NEG:KK  
MO:CL:jy

Attachments

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