

**Proposed Park on Southern California Edison Utility Corridor in East Los Angeles**

On July 6, 2016, the Board approved and adopted the Los Angeles Countywide Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment, a study prepared to document and better understand the recreational needs of County residents as well as the quantity and quality of parks throughout the County. As part of the public engagement process, many residents in East Los Angeles identified the SCE utility corridor located at 6233 Whittier Boulevard and 6254 Hubbard Street as the preferred location of a new community park. Additionally, the community identified this vacant site as part of the Community Park and Recreation Plan completed in 2013. This park has been identified by the community as a top priority and is very much needed in East Los Angeles which has a Very High level of park land. According to the Parks Needs Assessment, the area only has just 0.1 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents which is substantially below the Countywide average of 3.3. Also, only 34% of residents in this study area live within walking distance of park comparing to 49% of residents Countywide.

For more than a decade, repeated attempts to improve this utility corridor have

MOTION

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languished despite the best efforts of the community and the County of Los Angeles. This impasse must be broken so that SCE and the County can make a historic contribution to the lives of tens of thousands of East Los Angeles residents. Developed with community input, the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR)'s proposal for a new 8.4-acre park incorporates design feedback from SCE to ensure that a new park is safe, complements SCE operations, and allows for routine powerline maintenance. Utilities across California, including many in Los Angeles County, have successfully partnered with park departments on very similar projects without significant issues. Given the scale of problems associated with climate change and public health, the issues preventing this project from moving forward are far from impossible to address.

The use of utility corridors for recreational purposes is a key strategy to increase the availability of parkland in our County, especially in dense, built-out communities like East Los Angeles. I am advocating on behalf of my constituents for greater park access so that no child is faced with the choice between playing in a vacant lot or in a crowded street. Funds available from the competitive Proposition 68 program represent a historic opportunity to invest in parks and green spaces for areas most in-need of such infrastructure, including East Los Angeles. In order to apply for Prop 68 State funding, SCE will need to provide a 30-year term for land tenure requirements. It is imperative that the County pursue these funding opportunities when available to improve the quality of life for our residents. The development of this park will result in a significant community benefit to the residents. The recommended actions allow DPR to apply for grant funding for the proposed new community park in East Los Angeles. If a grant is awarded for the project, the responsible Department for the park development will return to your board to

obtain approval of a board letter to establish a capital project and appropriation adjustment. The board letter will include the one-time and ongoing cost for the operation and maintenance for the new park upon project completion. The proposed action to submit a grant application to the California Department of Parks and Recreation for Proposition 68 funds is not subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) because the action does not meet the definition of a project and is an administrative activity of government which will not result in direct or indirect physical changes to the environment.

**I, THEREFORE, MOVE** that the Board of Supervisors direct the Department of ~~Public Works~~ Parks and Recreation in collaboration with County Counsel to:

1. Find that the submission of a grant application to the State Department of Parks and Recreation for Proposition 68 funds is not subject to CEQA because it is an activity that is excluded from the definition of a project by section 21065 of the Public Resources Code and section 15378(b) of the State CEQA Guidelines. This proposed action is an administrative activity of government, which will not result in direct or indirect physical changes to the environment.
2. Authorize DPR to apply for Proposition 68 funds for the proposed new community park in East Los Angeles.
3. Authorize the Director of DPR or her designee, to negotiate a 30-year license agreement with SCE for the utility corridor located at 6233 Whittier Boulevard and 6254 Hubbard Street for the proposed new community park.

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HLS:gm