

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR KATHRYN BARGER

JUNE 6, 2023

**DEMOLITION OF FORMER PROBATION CAMP ROUTH AND TRANSFER OF PROPERTY TO MRCA**

The former Probation Camp Louis Routh, located at 12500 Big Tujunga Road in the City of Los Angeles (the "Camp Routh property"), was built in 1954 and was used as a fire training camp for the Probation Department until it was vacated in 2009. Since being vacated, the camp has had multiple break-ins by unauthorized persons resulting in severe property damage, theft, and vandalism. Documented damage includes burned buildings; broken or missing windows, doors, ceilings, walls, cabinets; smashed sinks/toilet fixtures; and debris scattered throughout the camp. Recyclable materials and all other materials of value (i.e. metals and/or copper items such as utility wiring, compressors, ducting, electrical panels, backup generator, appliances) were also stolen or removed. The Los Angeles County Probation Department (Probation Department) has spent hundreds of thousands of dollars to secure the site and remove debris from damaged, burned, and vandalized buildings. Continuous efforts by the Probation Department to secure the site, which included repairs to the perimeter fence and replacement of locks, were met with constant vandalism and trespassing. As a result, the vacant facilities have been damaged beyond repair and pose a liability risk to the County.

In addition to the building conditions, the Camp's septic system has several problems, including an oversaturated leach field. The Probation Department was unable to repair the existing septic system and installing a new one was not possible due to the oversaturated leach field and poor soil conditions with an unacceptable percolation rate. The domestic water tank was also vandalized, and all recyclable pipes and electrical lines have been stolen.

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Due to the significant degradation and risk that this site poses for the County and to others who enter the site, the complete demolition of the site was recommended. To that end, a historical assessment report was completed in June 2022 to assess the site's potential historical importance. The report included a finding of "No Significant Impact to Historical Resources" for the proposed demolition of all site structures. Following this report, the Los Angeles County Department of Public Works' Building and Safety Division surveyed the site in October 2022 and deemed the site's facilities to be hazardous and unsafe for human occupancy. In response to the emergency situation, the complete demolition of nearly all structures at this site is necessary on an urgent basis as the facilities are past the point of repair or renovation and the current site conditions pose a serious safety risk to County employees, the Probation Department staff, and the general public.

The general scope of work of the proposed project (Camp Routh Demolition Project) would clear the approximately four (4) acre site and transfer fee title of the site to the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) on a gratis basis to utilize as open space. The proposed work would include the following:

- Complete demolition and removal of 37 buildings and nearly all structures, masonry, HVAC and utilities (including sewer lines, water lines, gas lines, water tank, septic tank, irrigation lines, propane tank, bollards, power poles, fencing, stone landscaping, handrails, and asbestos and lead paint abatement).
- Complete demolition of nearly all site asphalt and concrete pavements totaling 63,500 square feet.
- Limited clearing and grubbing of 174,240 square feet of green space within the camp's four (4) acre boundary without any tree removal or changing of the existing topography and elevation contour lines.
- Transfer fee title to the Camp Routh property, approximately 639,065 square feet or 14.67 acres, to MRCA via a quitclaim deed and the recording of covenants restricting use of the Camp Routh property as open space.

The conveyance of the Camp Routh property to MRCA is authorized by Government Code section 25365, which authorizes the conveyance of real property between the County and joint powers agency when the property is not required for County use. Unless the joint powers agency to which the property is transferred pursuant to this section and the joint powers agency transferring the property are governed by the same County Board of Supervisors, the transferring Board of Supervisors shall publish a notice of its intended action pursuant to Section 6061 at least one week prior thereto in a newspaper of general circulation published in the county.

The Camp Routh property is exempt surplus land as defined in Government Code section 54221(f)(1)(D) in that it is surplus land that a local agency is transferring to another local, state, or federal agency for the agency's use.

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**I, THEREFORE, MOVE THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:**

1. Find that the Camp Routh property demolition project, located at 12500 Big Tujunga Road in the City of Los Angeles, is statutorily and categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The scope of work consists of demolition and removal of structures, masonry, utilities, and various materials, equipment and features as well as clearing and grubbing of vegetation within the site. Circumstances at the site present an emergency threat of damage to life, health, and property. As such, immediate action to prevent or mitigate an emergency, specifically, the removal of all structures and clearing of the site, is necessary. The action is therefore statutorily exempt from CEQA pursuant to section 21080(b)(4) and section 15269(c). Clearing and grubbing activities are also categorically exempt under section 15301(h) and Class 1 (j) of the County's Environmental Document Reporting Procedures and Guidelines (County Guidelines), Appendix G, Class 1(j) as it includes maintenance of landscaping and native growth. Further find that the proposed transfer of the Camp Routh property to MRCA is categorically exempt from CEQA pursuant to section 15325 (f) of the State CEQA Guidelines and Class 25 of the County Guidelines, Appendix G, which apply to transfer to preserve open space or lands for park purposes. In addition, based on the proposed project records, it will comply with all applicable regulations, and there are no cumulative impacts, unusual circumstances, damage to scenic highways, listing on hazardous waste site lists compiled pursuant to Government Code section 65962.5, or indications that it may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource that would make the exemption inapplicable. Upon the Board's approval of the proposed project, the Internal Services Department (ISD) will file a Notice of Exemption with the Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk in accordance with section 21152 of the California Public Resources Code and will post the Notice to its website in accordance with section 21092.2.
2. Establish and approve the proposed Camp Routh Demolition Project, Capital Project No. 87828, with a total budget of \$2,917,000.
3. Authorize the Director of the ISD, or his designee, to deliver the proposed Project using a Board-approved Job Order Contract.
4. Find that pursuant to California Government Code Section 25365(a), the County may quitclaim real property or interest therein belonging to the County to a joint powers authority, or any public agency, within the County if the interest to be quitclaimed is not required for County use.
5. Find that the Camp Routh property is not required for County use and that the quitclaim will not interfere with the open space use.
6. Find that a notice of intent to transfer the Camp Routh property has been published in a newspaper of general circulation at least one week in advance of this action pursuant to Government Code section 6061.

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7. Find that the County-owned real property is exempt surplus land, as defined in Government Code Section 54221(f)(1)(D), in that it is surplus land that a local agency is transferring to another local, state, or federal agency for the agency's use.
8. Approve the gratis transfer of the County's right, title, and interest in the Camp Routh property to the MRCA pursuant to Government Code section 25365 and instruct the Chief Executive Officer, or her designee, to execute the Quitclaim Deed to convey the Camp Routh property to the MRCA.
9. Authorize the Chief Executive Officer, or her designee, to execute any other documents necessary to complete the Camp Routh property conveyance, including any restrictive covenants restricting use of the Camp Routh property as open space, and any amendments, upon approval, as to form by County Counsel.

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