

APPROVED

JAN 17 2007

REPORT OF GENERAL MANAGER

NO. 07-20

DATE January 17, 2007

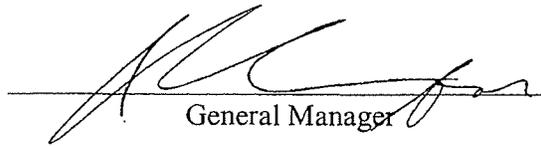
BOARD OF RECREATION
and PARK COMMISSIONERS

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BOARD OF RECREATION AND PARK COMMISSIONERS

SUBJECT: PORTER BILL – LEASE AGREEMENT WITH CALTRANS FOR PROPERTY
ADJACENT TO THE 118 FREEWAY IN PORTER RANCH

J. Combs	_____	J. Kolb	_____
H. Fujita	_____	F. Mok	_____
S. Huntley	_____	K. Regan	_____
B. Jensen	_____	*M. Shull	_____


General Manager

Approved _____ Disapproved _____ Withdrawn _____

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Board:

1. Approve a Fifty (50) year lease agreement, substantially in the form on file in the Board Office, between the State of California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) and the City of Los Angeles (City) for the use of Caltrans property located along the 118 Freeway between Tampa Avenue and Oso Avenue;
2. Direct the Board Secretary to forward the proposed agreement to the Mayor in accordance with Executive Directive No. 3 and concurrently to the City Attorney for review and approval as to form and legality; and,
3. Authorize the Board President and Secretary to execute the lease agreement upon receipt of the aforementioned approvals.

SUMMARY:

Since 1987, the Department of Recreation and Parks (Department) has been leasing parcels located adjacent to the 118 Freeway from the Caltrans. The Caltrans property has been used by the Department for open space, hiking and equestrian trail purposes to benefit the community. Discussions about the future use of the property between the Department and Caltrans have prompted both agencies to agree to formalize this agreement by leasing the property to the City

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through a Porter Bill Lease. A Porter Bill Lease allows Caltrans to lease to a local agency, land that is outside of the state highway boundary, when such use will protect the highway and its environs, with the condition that the local agency will develop and maintain the land as a park. Caltrans will benefit from the area being maintained and the City will gain additional park land. The City has obtained additional park space through other Porter Bill Leases with Caltrans. Eagle Rock Center and the Valley Plaza are two other sites that have benefited from additional land obtained from Caltrans through the Porter Bill Lease. The above mentioned Porter Bill Lease is for 50 years. The current proposed Porter Bill Lease for the property along the 118 Freeway provides another opportunity to acquire additional land that will benefit the surrounding community by providing much needed park space.

The 118 Freeway property is vital to the preservation of the Rim of the Valley Trail System, of which a portion is located on Caltrans property. The Rim of the Valley is a State of California designated corridor that has a long and historic affinity with horses and equestrian lifestyles. The City of Los Angeles has instructed several City Departments to develop a regional trail plan for the San Fernando Valley that will incorporate high quality trails and a comprehensive trail network for the enjoyment of the community. The Plan calls for the connection of the equestrian trails in the Rim of the Valley to Griffith Park and the Los Angeles River areas. The 118 Freeway site is essential since there are very few locations in the immediate area that could accommodate the equestrian trail without disruption or additional costs to the City of Los Angeles.

The Caltrans site measures approximately 14 acres and is located along the 118 Freeway between Oso Avenue and Tampa Avenue, in Porter Ranch, CA 91326. The property consists of Parcels DL 064635-01-01, DL 064635-02-01, DL 064635-03-01, DL 64635-04-01 and DL 064637-02-01 (Attachment A). Currently, the site is an open green space area that has an unimproved equestrian trail. Upon the execution of the lease agreement, the City will move ahead with its plan to improve the site by developing the area with landscaping and improvements to the equestrian trail and open space area. The improvements will consist of a possible irrigation system, trees and native plants, trail enhancements, and park benches and tables. The intent is to keep the area in a natural state for use as a passive park. The improvements will be completed in two phases. Phase one improvements will commence with Parcel DL 64637-02-01 no later than August 1, 2007 and shall be completed by August 1, 2008. The second phase for the remaining parcels will be completed on or before August 1, 2014. The City's proposed development plan has been reviewed by Caltrans and is considered acceptable. This proposed phased development plan will allow the City to apply for and obtain additional funding for the second phase improvement. The conceptual plan of the proposed project is included as Attachment B.

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The proposed lease between the Department and Caltrans is for a term of fifty (50) years beginning January 1, 1987 and ending December 31, 2037. The Department will be required to pay an annual fee of \$4,550 dollars for the use of the Caltrans property. The lease payment will be retroactive to May 1, 2006. The proposed lease will preserve the existing trail portion of the Rim of the Valley trail. As indicated above, Caltrans supports the proposed improvements and agrees that the City's efforts will enhance the quality of life for the surrounding community.

This action will formalize the agreement between the City and Caltrans allowing for continued use of equestrian and other trail facilities involving negligible or no expansion of those uses. Therefore, the project has been determined to be categorically exempt from the provisions of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant Article III, Section 1(a), Class 1(14) of the City CEQA Guidelines.

This project has support from Caltrans, the community, and the Councilmember for the Twelfth District. In addition, the Assistant General Manager of Operations West and Superintendent for the Valley Region have been consulted and concur with staff's recommendations.

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT:

The Department will pay Caltrans \$4,550 per year in rent from May 1, 2006 through December 31, 2037. Proposed improvements and increase in maintenance demands will increase the Department's cost and will require a budget increase which will be requested through the Department's standard budget process.

Prepared by John Barraza, Management Analyst II of Real Estate and Asset Management Unit