

APPROVED

REPORT OF GENERAL MANAGER

NOV 09 2007

NO. 07-255

DATE November 9, 2007

~~BOARD OF RECREATION
and PARK COMMISSIONERS~~

C.D. 2

BOARD OF RECREATION AND PARK COMMISSIONERS

SUBJECT: LAURELGROVE PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE AND LAUREL CANYON GREENWAY - PROPOSED USE AGREEMENTS WITH LOS ANGELES COUNTY AND CONSIDERATION OF A FUTURE, MULTI-SITE AGREEMENT FOR OTHER RIVERFRONT PROJECTS

R. Adams	_____	J. Kolb	_____
H. Fujita	_____	F. Mok	_____
S. Huntley	_____	K. Regan	_____
V. Israel	_____	*M. Shull	<u>Cur for MS</u>

[Signature]
General Manager

Approved _____

Disapproved _____

Withdrawn _____

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Board:

1. Approve the proposed Use Agreement with the Los Angeles County Flood Control District for the Laurelgrove pedestrian bridge and the proposed Use Agreement with the same entity for the adjacent, riverfront bicycle/pedestrian path, substantially in the form on file in the Board Office, subject to approval of the Mayor and the City Council and of the City Attorney as to form;
2. Direct the Board Secretary to transmit forthwith the proposed Agreements concurrently to the Mayor in accordance with Executive Directive No. 3 and to the City Attorney for review and approval as to form;
3. Authorize the General Manager to execute the Agreements upon obtaining the required approvals; and,
4. Direct staff to assist the Office of the City Attorney, the Department of Transportation, the Bureau of Engineering and others with the draft of a master Use Agreement applicable to other riverfront projects.

REPORT OF GENERAL MANAGER

PG. 2

NO. 07-255

SUMMARY:

In 1995 the City received from the Los Angeles County Flood Control District, an entity within the County's Department of Public Works, a permit to reconstruct the pedestrian bridge crossing the Los Angeles River adjacent to Laurelgrove Avenue in Studio City (Permit No. 95100-B). The project was completed soon thereafter. One of the proposed Use Agreements formalizes the terms by which the Department will cooperate with the City's Bureau of Street Services to ensure the continuation of adequate maintenance involving the bridge and adjacent landscaping.

The second proposed Use Agreement concerns Phase I of a greenway project located within the County's right-of-way bordering the Los Angeles River in the same area as the pedestrian bridge. The Phase I segment was completed in 2004; the Board of Recreation and Park Commissioners accepted the contractual work on January 19, 2005 (Report No. 05-18). At that time the project was known by both City and County staff as the "Los Angeles Riverfront Park"; the completed segment is now known by project staff as the "Laurel Canyon Greenway."

It extends for a half mile on the south side of the Los Angeles River between Whitsett Avenue on the west and Laurel Canyon Boulevard on the east. There, it connects to another, shorter path constructed and maintained by Los Angeles County that extends eastward to Radford Avenue and the CBS Studio Center. Amenities on the City's Greenway include a multi-use path with fencing and decorative retaining walls, landscaping, access ramps, seating and informational signage. One access ramp connects the middle of the Greenway to the pedestrian bridge at Laurelgrove Avenue. The total cost of the Greenway's design and construction, approximately \$2.73 million, was funded by the Proposition K grant program. The County has made their approval of a Use Agreement for the Greenway contingent upon City approval of a Use Agreement for the pedestrian bridge.

Since nearly completing the Laurel Canyon Greenway, the City has embarked on an ambitious plan to work with other agencies and create a variety of multi-use areas along the 32-mile River corridor. Several projects having recreational components form a priority list approved by Council in July 2007. The list was based on the Los Angeles River Revitalization Master Plan and the related Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Report/Statement that Council approved in May 2007 (Council File No. 07-1342 and S2). A central goal is to expand the concept behind the Laurel Canyon Greenway; future path projects are expected to include strategies for improving water quality and the ecological functioning of the River and for conserving and filtering stormwater runoff. Over the next twenty years, a major and publicly valued amenity will emerge from what is now primarily a concrete-lined, flood-control channel. One of these prioritized projects is the westward extension of the Laurel Canyon Greenway to Coldwater Canyon Avenue.

In response to the anticipated need for further agreements with Los Angeles County concerning River greenways and associated plans, Department and County staff and their respective legal counsel seek to negotiate a master City-County riverfront-recreation agreement. Its anticipated

REPORT OF GENERAL MANAGER

PG. 3

NO. 07-255

duration would coincide with the implementation of the River Master Plan. Once executed, this "umbrella" agreement can expedite each agency's review and approval of site-specific agreements for individual projects. Staff believes that the general terms of the two proposed Use Agreements now before the Board will be a useful template for a master riverfront-recreation agreement. Staff intends to bring the draft of this more general document before the Board at a future date.

For reference, these greenways or riverfront paths differ in funding and purpose from the bicycle paths generally financed by the State and constructed by the City's Department of Transportation (DOT). The DOT paths provide transportation alternatives that connect local communities. City staff implementing the River Master Plan intends that over time and where feasible, new recreational paths will connect to the expanding DOT network.

Department environmental staff determined that the action now before the Board is exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Article III, Section 1, Class 1 (14) of the City CEQA Guidelines; the two Agreements involve a negligible or no expansion of use beyond that previously approved.

The Assistant General Manager of Operations West and the Superintendent of the Valley Region join the Office of Council District Two in concurring with staff's recommendation.

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT:

Valley Region personnel estimate that the Department's annual maintenance costs will be approximately \$5,200. This sum can be included in the annual budget request.

Report prepared by Joan Reitzel, Senior Management Analyst in Real Estate and Asset Management.