

APPROVED
AUG 12 2009

REPORT OF GENERAL MANAGER

NO. 09-205

DATE August 12, 2009

**BOARD OF RECREATION
and PARK COMMISSIONERS**

C.D. 4

BOARD OF RECREATION AND PARK COMMISSIONERS

SUBJECT: SUNNYNOOK RIVER PARK - DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF A NEW PARK ALONG THE LOS ANGELES RIVER - MAINTENANCE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION AND PARKS AND STATE OF CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

R. Adams	_____	J. Kolb	_____
H. Fujita	_____	F. Mok	_____
S. Huntley	_____	K. Regan	_____
V. Israel	_____	*M. Shull	_____

[Handwritten initials]

[Handwritten signature]
General Manager

Approved _____

Disapproved _____

Withdrawn _____

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Board:

1. Approve the proposed Agreement for Development and Maintenance of a Landscaped Area within State Highway Right of Way (Maintenance Agreement), substantially in the form on file in the Board Office, between the Department of Recreation and Parks (RAP) and the State of California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) for the development and maintenance of a park along the Los Angeles River to be known as the Sunnynook River Park, subject to the approval of the Mayor and the City Council, and the City Attorney as to form;
2. Direct the Board Secretary to transmit the proposed Maintenance Agreement concurrently to the Mayor in accordance with Executive Directive No. 3, and to the City Attorney for review and approval as to form; and,
3. Authorize the General Manager to execute the Maintenance Agreement upon receipt of the necessary approvals.

SUMMARY:

The Sunnynook River Park project is a multi-benefit project that will create a new, 3.4 acre, public park and greenway along the existing Los Angeles River Bike Path on the west side of the

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Los Angeles River. The five acre project site has two property owners, Caltrans and Department of Water and Power (DWP), and is located between the I-5 Freeway (west boundary), the Los Angeles River bike path (east boundary), the Glendale-Hyperion Viaduct (south boundary) and the Sunnynook pedestrian bridge (north boundary). Caltrans owns an approximately four acre parcel, of which the project is utilizing and developing approximately two acres and the remaining two acres of the property will be left in its natural state to provide a buffer along the I-5 Freeway. DWP owns the remaining 0.96 acre parcel which is located immediately adjacent to the Los Angeles River Bike Path, as shown on Exhibit A.

The Sunnynook River Park project offers the opportunity to simultaneously meet the objectives of the City's 2007 LA River Revitalization Master Plan and the Los Angeles County's 1996 River Master Plan. The Sunnynook River Park project will provide a vital pedestrian connection and green linkage to the Los Angeles River for visitors to Griffith Park as well as to the communities of Silver Lake and Atwater Village. The project will transform an underutilized, degraded, and unimproved property. It will restore native woodland and riparian habitats and be landscaped with native vegetation, and will include a variety of park improvements such as a decomposed granite walking path, picnic areas, benches, educational amenities, and signage. Once completed, the Sunnynook River Park will serve as a rest area for pedestrians and cyclists, and where possible, support habitat for terrestrial, riverine, and avian wildlife.

The Sunnynook River Park project design is scheduled to be completed by April 2010, with the construction contract bid and award process to be conducted from April 2010 through September 2010. Project construction is scheduled to start September 2010 and be completed by September 2011. The Sunnynook River Park project is funded by a \$350,000 grant from the State Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Program and a \$1,350,000 grant from the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) for a total of \$1,700,000. With the award of these two grants, this project is fully funded.

The proposed Maintenance Agreement will authorize the City to complete the development of the Sunnynook River Park project and provide the newly developed park as passive, open space for the benefit and enjoyment of the general public. Under this agreement, RAP will be responsible for the maintenance, operations, and security for the project site. The term of the proposed Maintenance Agreement with Caltrans is thirty (30) years, with no payment required for the use of Caltrans property. A separate agreement with the DWP to license the 0.96 acre parcel under their control is still pending, and will be submitted to the Board for consideration at a later date.

On April 7, 2008, the Department of Public Works, Bureau of Engineering, determined that, as the project consists of a minor alteration of an existing site, the Sunnynook River Park Project qualifies for a categorical exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under

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Class 1 Paragraphs c, d, f and h of the City CEQA Guidelines. Therefore, no additional CEQA documentation is required for approval of the project.

The Assistant General Manager of Operations East, the Superintendent of the Metro Region, and Council District 4, support the recommendations set forth in this report.

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT:

There will be no fiscal impact to the Department's General Fund associated with this project, except the cost of maintenance and operations related to operating the newly developed park. Future costs related to the park's maintenance and operation will be included in the Department's annual budget request. All development costs are being funded through grant funding.

This report was prepared by Darryl Ford, Management Analyst II, Planning and Development Division.