

APPROVED
APR 04 2018

BOARD REPORT BOARD OF RECREATION AND PARK COMMISSIONERS NO. 18-053
DATE April 04, 2018 C.D. #4

BOARD OF RECREATION AND PARK COMMISSIONERS

SUBJECT: OUTDOOR ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION FACILITIES (OEEF) GRANT - GRIFFITH PARK URBAN ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER - EDUCATION AND DEMONSTRATION VIEWING TERRACE; AND CATEGORICAL EXEMPTION FROM THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA) PURSUANT TO ARTICLE III, SECTION 1, CLASS 2 [REMOVAL AND REPLACEMENT OF EXISTING STRUCTURES], CLASS 4(1) [GRADING ON SLOPES LESS THAN 10%], AND CLASS 11(1) [INSTALLATION OF ON-PREMISES SIGNAGE] OF THE CITY CEQA GUIDELINES

AP Diaz _____ V. Israel _____
R. Barajas _____ S. Piña-Cortez _____
H. Fujita _____ *N. Williams NDW


General Manager

Approved X Disapproved _____ Withdrawn _____

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1. Approve the proposed Griffith Park Urban Environmental Center - Education and Demonstration Viewing Terrace project (Griffith Project), contingent on the award of the Outdoor Environmental Education Facilities (OEEF) Grant;
- 2. Find that the proposed Griffith Project is categorically exempt from the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and direct the Department of Recreation and Parks' (RAP) staff to file a Notice of Exemption for Outdoor Environmental Education Facilities (OEEF) Grant - Griffith Park Urban Environmental Center - Education and Demonstration Viewing Terrace project; and,
- 3. Authorize the RAP's Chief Accounting Employee to make technical corrections as necessary to carry out the intent of this Board Report, and prepare a check for Seventy-Five Dollars (\$75.00) to the Los Angeles County Clerk for the filing the Notices of Exemption for OEEF - Griffith Park Urban Environmental Center - Education and Demonstration Viewing Terrace project.

SUMMARY

At the September 20, 2017 Board Meeting, the Board of Recreation and Park Commissioners (Board) approved RAP staff to apply and submit the Outdoor Environmental Education Facilities (OEEF) grant applications for:

BOARD REPORT

PG. 2 NO. 18-053

- 1) Griffith Park Urban Environmental Center – Education and Demonstration Viewing Terrace for Four Hundred Thirty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$435,000.00), located at 2650 N Commonwealth Avenue, Los Angeles; and
- 2) Cabrillo Marine Aquarium – Marine Themed Interactive/Interpretative Structures and Exhibits for Four Hundred Twenty Thousand Dollars (\$420,000.00), located at 3720 Stephen M. White Drive, San Pedro

to the State Department of Parks and Recreation Office of Grants and Local Services (State) (Report No. 17-204).

In November 2017, the State conducted site visits with RAP staff for both projects. During the evaluation period, the State requested several documents from RAP such as the Authorizing Resolution, CEQA Compliance Certification Form, copy of Notice of Exemption draft, and the documentation of Land Tenure for the Griffith Park Urban Environmental Center – Education and Demonstration Viewing Terrace and the Cabrillo marine Aquarium – Marine Themed Interactive/Interpretative Structures and Exhibits projects. RAP has provided these requested documents to the State for both projects.

Regarding the CEQA Notice of Exemption (NOE), RAP has informed the State that the NOE will only be filed if the grant is awarded. The State has accepted a draft of the NOE.

As of March 2018, the State is now requesting a recorded CEQA NOE for Griffith Park Urban Environmental Center – Education and Demonstration Viewing Terrace project (Griffith Project) to complete the OEEF grant application process. RAP is requesting that the Board approve the Griffith Park Urban Environmental Center – Education and Demonstration Viewing Terrace Project, contingent upon award of the OEEF Grant. This will allow the filing of the CEQA NOE with the Los Angeles County Register Office to complete the OEEF application evaluation process.

The scope of the Griffith Project includes the construction an outdoor nature lab; a wide-stepped gathering area to view ongoing research and propagation; and a soils display area to offer hands-on learning experiences about the importance of biodiversity, water conservation, native plants, and healthy soils. RAP and the Los Angeles Parks Foundation (LAPF), a non-profit organization, have partnered to provide additional resources to restore the Nursery. LAPF has committed to cover all non-construction costs as a match to the grant award.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

The proposed Griffith Park Urban Environmental Center – Education and Demonstration Viewing Terrace project includes the removal and replacement of existing structures that are located in the same location and of the same size of the structure replaced. It also includes grading on land with a slope of less than ten percent (10%) not located in a waterway or wetland and the installation of on-premises signs. Therefore, Staff recommends that the Board determine that the proposed project is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Article III, Section 1, Class 2, Class 4(1) and Class 11(1) of the City CEQA Guidelines. An NOE will be file with the Los Angeles County Clerk upon Board

BOARD REPORT

PG. 3 NO. 18-053

approval of this project. If the OEEF grant is not awarded, this project will not be constructed and the NOE will become inapplicable.

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

At this time, there is no anticipated fiscal impact to RAP's General Fund. The Outdoor Environmental Education Facilities (OEEF) Grant, if awarded, would fund the construction of the Griffith Project. The improvements made to Griffith Park Urban Environmental Center will be operated and maintained by the Los Angeles Parks Foundation (LAPF) under the "Donation Agreement for the Development and Construction of the Griffith Park Horticulture Learning Center" between RAP and LAPF previously approved by the Board on September 23, 2010 (Report No. 10-247).

This Report was prepared by Kai Wong, Senior Management Analyst, Grants Administration, Finance Division and reviewed by Bill Jones, Chief Management Analyst, Grants Administration, Finance Division.