



Park and Recreation Commission

City of Arts & Innovation

TO: HONORABLE COMMISSIONERS **DATE: JULY 19, 2021**
FROM: PARKS, RECREATION AND COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT
SUBJECT: UPDATE ON THE SANTA ANA RIVER GATEWAY PROJECT

ISSUE:

Present the Commission with an update on the Santa Ana River Gateway Project.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Park and Recreation Commission provides feedback and receive the report for file.

BACKGROUND:

In 2003, the Santa Ana River Task Force developed a vision and concept plan for developing a parkway along the river in Riverside. The plan recommends nature trails, a boardwalk, and a nature center with programming in the area now proposed for Camp Evans at Fairmount Park. The plan further recommends recreational improvements in the area around Tequesquite Ave. and the Old Landfill, and that Martha McLean Anza Narrows Park be further improved and renovated to support the Santa Ana River Parkway concept.

In 2009, the Santa Ana River Task Force reconvened to review and update their prior recommendations based on work accomplished and other changes since 2003.

In 2014, through Senate Bill 1390, the California state legislature created the Santa Ana River Conservancy Program within the State Coastal Conservancy. The program addresses the resource and recreational goals of the Santa Ana River region, including open space, trails, wildlife habitat, agricultural land protection, water quality protection, educational use, and public access. The Conservancy has grant funding available to help agencies and non-profit organizations move forward with projects to meet these resource and recreational goals.

On May 21, 2019, the City Council adopted a resolution authorizing the submission of a grant application to the California Coastal Conservancy for a grant amount of \$2,358,500 to: acquire one property, and to develop park master plans and complete California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) analysis and documentation for nine project sites along the Santa Ana River corridor.

On December 26, 2019, the City of Riverside entered into a grant agreement with the California Coastal Conservancy for the River-side Gateway Project Suite Design and CEQA project in the

amount of \$1,960,000.

On January 6, 2020, the City of Riverside entered into a grant agreement with the Coastal Conservancy for the acquisition of the property at 5200 Tequesquite Ave for the River-side Gateway Project Suite in the amount of \$65,000.

On May 11, 2021, the City Council approved a Professional Consultant Services Agreement with MLA Green, Inc. dba Studio-MLA of Los Angeles, California, for the River-side Gateway Project Suite – Planning & Design for Park Master Plan and California Environmental Quality Act Services for Park, Trail and Greenway Improvements at Nine Sites through June 30, 2023, in an amount not to exceed \$1,963,681.79

DISCUSSION:

The River-side Gateway project suite supports the Santa Ana River Task Force’s vision and concept for developing park, trail, and open space resources along the Santa Ana River. The Consultant’s scope of work includes environmental inventor, analysis, community outreach, development of master plans, and project-level CEQA documentation for each site. The following park properties are included in the River-side Gateway project suite:

1. Fairmount Park - Camp Evans (undeveloped property on west end of the park, adjacent to the Santa Ana River levee);
2. Loring Park;
3. Santa Ana River trailhead at Carlson Park & St. Francis Falls Water Feature Restoration;
4. Santa Ana River Greenway Trail (between Carlson Park and Tequesquite Extension South);
5. Tequesquite North Extension;
6. 5200 Tequesquite (adjacent to Ryan Bonaminio Park at the Tequesquite Arroyo) – contingent upon the City’s acquisition of the site;
7. Tequesquite South Extension;
8. Martha McLean Anza Narrows Park/Riverside Gateway; and
9. Jurupa Avenue Trailhead (near Van Buren).

In order to develop the master plans for each site, the Consultant will:

1. Provide a detailed inventory of environmental resources;
2. Analyze opportunities and constraints;
3. Gain input and support from the community;
4. Develop concept plans;
5. Develop final plans; and
6. Prepare the appropriate environmental documents.

By completing the planning and environmental scope of work for these projects, the City will be prepared to submit competitive applications for construction grants. Proposition 68 (the 2018 Parks, Environment, and Water Bond) is a prime funding opportunity for these projects. The project kickoff meeting was held in May 2021, and work is projected to be completed in the fall of 2022.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with this report.

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Attachment: Presentation