

REPORT OF GENERAL MANAGER

NO. 03-128

DATE April 16, 2003

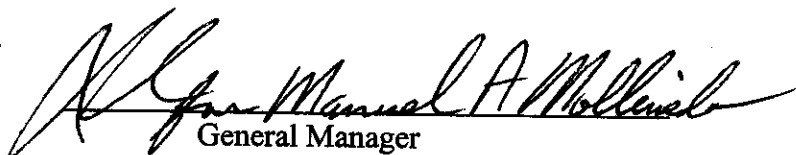
C.D. 12

BOARD OF RECREATION AND PARK COMMISSIONERS

SUBJECT: RESEDA-RINALDI PROPERTY: PRELIMINARY AUTHORIZATION TO ACQUIRE A 0.08 ACRE PARCEL OF VACANT LAND IN PORTER RANCH FOR POCKET PARK DEVELOPMENT

J. Combs \_\_\_\_\_  
A. Coroalles \_\_\_\_\_  
J. Duggan \_\_\_\_\_

H. Fujita \_\_\_\_\_  
J. Kolb \_\_\_\_\_  
\*B. Lukehart BSL

  
General Manager

Approved \_\_\_\_\_

Disapproved \_\_\_\_\_

Withdrawn \_\_\_\_\_

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Board:

1. Preliminarily approve the acquisition of a 0.08 acre parcel (APN 2871-021-037) of vacant land, located at the northwest corner of Reseda Boulevard and Rinaldi Street in Porter Ranch, for purposes of future pocket park development;
2. Authorize the Department of General Services, Asset Management Division (DGS) to act as the lead negotiator on behalf of the Department of Recreation and Parks, for the acquisition of said property;
3. Authorize staff to assist and direct the DGS in negotiations with the property owner, for the purchase of said property; and,
4. Upon the conclusion of negotiations by General Services, direct staff to prepare the escrow instructions and related documents for the Board's final approval, authorizing the purchase said property.

SUMMARY:

With the assistance and support of Councilmember Hal Bernson and staff of the Twelfth Council District (CD 12), the Department of Recreation and Parks has identified the property located at the corner of Reseda Boulevard and Rinaldi Street, for possible passive pocket park development.

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Although there is no known street address, the property is identified on Los Angeles County land records as APN 2871-021-037.

Located in a residential area of Porter Ranch, the subject property, measuring approximately 0.08 acres, is currently vacant and has been for many years. In its present state, the property can be considered an eyesore, inviting the dumping of debris, abandoned personal property and the posting of unauthorized signs. The conversion of this property from a vacant lot to passive green parkland will enhance the area's appearance and provide the community with a place to relax and rest while walking or bicycling on the nearby bike paths. The subject property is located adjacent to two major thoroughfares (Reseda Blvd. and Rinaldi St.) which are often frequented by pedestrians and bicyclists. The proposed pocket park will act as a staging area and/or rest area for pedestrians and bicyclists using the bike paths which intersect at Reseda and Rinaldi.

The Office of Councilmember Bernson has expressed a strong community desire for this parcel of land to be transformed into green space. Although the Department has envisioned this property with park benches, green turf and shaded trees, a formal design plan has not been developed. Upon completing the property acquisition, project design and planning procedures will be implemented.

Although a mutually acceptable selling price has not been determined, the property owner has formally indicated his willingness to sell the property to the City. Based on initial communications and correspondence between the Department and property owner, staff is confident that negotiations will be completed in an expeditious manner. The Department of General Services, Asset Management Division (DGS) has estimated the value of the property to be \$63,000.00, and associated contingencies to be \$12,600.00, to include Phase I Environmental Assessment (\$2,900.00), filing of CEQA documents (\$500.00), and property appraisal (\$4,000.00, estimate). Because the property is vacant, there will be no requirements for relocation assistance associated with this acquisition. Staff has requested a formal appraisal, upon which the DGS will base the City's purchase offer.

Funding for this acquisition has been identified through Proposition 12, 2/3 Per Cap funds (\$256,250.00), and has been approved for the acquisition of the subject property which is in a HATS eligible census tract. In addition, the Department has requested L.A. for Kids Steering Committee and City Council approval authorizing the use of existing funds (acquisition savings) for development of the proposed pocket park.

The Phase I environmental site assessment, completed February 2003, concluded that there appears to be no soil contamination or other environmental liabilities associated with the site. Given that the intended purpose of the proposed land acquisition is to create a passive pocket park that would largely preserve the natural character of the site, the Department's Environmental staff has

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determined that the subject land acquisition is exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), pursuant to Article III, Section 1, Class 3 (6) and Class 16 of the City CEQA Guidelines.

The Superintendent of the Valley Region and Councilmember Hal Bernson of the 12th Council District support staff's recommendations.

This report was prepared by Joel Alvarez, Management Analyst II, of the Department's Real Estate and Asset Management Section.