

APPROVED
FEB 02 2011

REPORT OF GENERAL MANAGER

NO. 11-042

DATE February 2, 2011

**BOARD OF RECREATION
and PARK COMMISSIONERS**

C.D. 13

BOARD OF RECREATION AND PARK COMMISSIONERS

SUBJECT: VERMONT/WESTERN STATION NEIGHBORHOOD AREA PLAN - PARKS
FIRST TRUST FUND – REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS – WILLINGNESS
LETTER

R. Adams	_____	F. Mok	_____
H. Fujita	_____	K. Regan	_____
S. Huntley	_____	*M. Shull	<u><i>M. Shull</i></u>
V. Israel	_____		

[Signature]
General Manager

Approved *[Signature]*

Disapproved _____

Withdrawn _____

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Board:

1. Approve the issuance of a letter to the Los Angeles Community Garden Council (LACGC), substantially in the form on file in the Board Office that indicates the Board’s willingness to accept the transfer of property and enter into an agreement as described in the Summary of this Report;
2. Authorize the Board President to sign the letter to the LACGC; and,
3. Direct staff to present the transfer and agreement to the Board for final authorization should LACGC be awarded a grant from the Vermont/Western Station Neighborhood Area Plan Parks First Trust Fund.

SUMMARY:

On December 17, 2010, the Proposition K – LA for Kids Program released a Request for Proposals (RFP) that seeks to identify eligible proposers and projects for grants to be awarded under the Vermont/Western Station Neighborhood Plan Area Parks First Trust Fund (“Parks First Trust Fund”). The RFP process invites eligible non-profit organizations, government entities, and City

REPORT OF GENERAL MANAGER

PG. 2 NO. 11-042

departments to submit proposals for viable capital improvement and/or acquisition projects that will meet the eligibility and other requirements of the Parks First Trust Fund. Proposals must be submitted by February 10, 2011.

LACGC proposes to acquire property located at 1171 and 1175 Madison Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90029 (Assessor's Parcel Nos. 5542-028-018, -019, and -020) for development into a community garden. LACGC intends to develop, operate and maintain the park.

Under the RFP, proposals for land acquisitions must submit a letter from the Board of Recreation and Park Commissioners regarding the willingness of the department to own the property and lease it back to the proposer for development, operation, and maintenance. This is due to the requirement that all property acquired using Parks First Trust Fund money must be owned by the City. Consequently, the Los Angeles Community Garden Council (LACGC) approached the Department to ensure whether the Department would accept a transfer of land and be willing to lease same back to LACGC.

Department staff worked with LACGC representatives and has considered their proposal. It is staff's opinion that with the information available at this time, it would be willing to recommend acceptance of the transfer of the property and lease it back to LACGC.

LACGC is a non-profit corporation that has extensive experience in the operation and maintenance of community gardens. The organization has operated the following community gardens: (1) the seven acre Stanford Avalon Garden in Watts under a lease from the Los Angeles Department of Water Power for the last seven years; (2) the 0.15 acre Jardin del Rio under a lease from the Department of General Services since 2003, and (3) the one acre Vermont Square Community Garden, which it acquired in 2001.

As described above, the letter to be provided will allow LACGC to complete its proposal for submission. Should LACGC be successful in being awarded a grant and obtain the subject property, Department staff would, after completion of its due diligence requirements, bring the matter of the transfer and acceptance of the property and the execution of a lease with LACGC back to the Board for final approval.

Staff has determined that the letter indicating the willingness of the Department to own and lease the proposed property to be acquired, if LACGC is successfully awarded a Prop K grant under the Parks First Fund, does not constitute a project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 15378 of the State CEQA Guidelines. This action is an organizational and administrative activity of the Department that will not result in direct or indirect physical changes in the environment, and therefore, not subject to the provisions of CEQA. An appropriate environmental evaluation under CEQA will be required when the Board considers acceptance of the property and the execution of a lease with LACGC.

REPORT OF GENERAL MANAGER

PG. 3 NO. 11-042

FISCAL IMPACT:

Approval of the issuance of a letter to LACGC will not have impact on the Department's General Fund.

This report prepared by Cid Macaraeg, Sr. Management Analyst II, Real Estate Section, Planning and Development Branch