

APPROVED
NOV 19 2014

REPORT OF GENERAL MANAGER

NO. 14-278

DATE: November 5, 2014

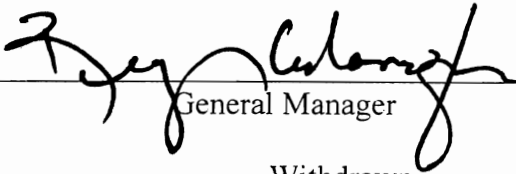
BOARD OF RECREATION
& PARK COMMISSIONERS

C.D. 4

BOARD OF RECREATION AND PARK COMMISSIONERS

SUBJECT: RUNYON CANYON PARK – MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH FRIENDS OF RUNYON CANYON FOUNDATION, INC., ESTABLISHING ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR FUNDRAISING AND OTHER SUPPORT FOR THE RESTORATION, PRESERVATION AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE PARK

R. Adams	_____	*V. Israel	<u>RAH</u>
R. Barajas	_____	K. Regan	_____
H. Fujita	_____	N. Williams	_____


General Manager

Approved _____

Disapproved _____

Withdrawn _____

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Board:

1. Approve the proposed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), substantially in the form on file in the Board office, between the City of Los Angeles (City) and Friends of Runyon Canyon Foundation, Inc. (FORC), outlining FORC's responsibilities and roles for fundraising and other support for the restoration, preservation, and enhancement of Runyon Canyon Park, subject to approval of the Mayor and the City Attorney as to form;
2. Direct the Board Secretary to transmit the proposed MOU 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 Board President and Secretary to execute the MOU subsequent to all necessary approvals; and,
4. Direct the Department of Recreation and Parks (RAP) Chief Accounting Employee to create a subaccount in Fund 302 Department 89, Account 89708H (Donations and Gifts) for deposit of any funding provided to RAP through this MOU.

SUMMARY:

Located in the heart of Hollywood at 2000 N. Fuller Avenue, Los Angeles, California 90046,

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Runyon Canyon Park (Park) comprises 160 acres of hiking, walking, and jogging trails with panoramic views of mountains and cityscape. Additionally there is a designated off-leash dog area and picnic tables. This unique park adjoins one of the most densely populated neighborhoods in Los Angeles and yet the Park's native ecology remains largely intact. The distinctive combination of urban and wilderness qualities also makes the Park a popular locale for fitness activities.

In late 1984, after twenty (20) years of development battles and neglect prior to RAP becoming involved with the property, Runyon Canyon became available for sale. The Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy raised four million dollars (\$4,000,000.00) and the City of Los Angeles contributed the remaining one million, six hundred thousand dollars (\$1,600,000.00) to acquire the property. Once the purchase was completed, the land was dedicated as a City park in perpetuity. In February 1985, the City hired the design firm of Community Development Planning and Design, to plan for the future development of Runyon Canyon as a City park. Work on that project began in May of 1985. The resulting "Master Plan" established the Park's regional significance, yet respected the needs of the surrounding neighborhoods.

FORC supports the Runyon Canyon Park Master Plan, and desires to fundraise to restore, preserve, and enhance the Park based on the goals identified in the 1986 Master Plan, which include but are not limited to: (1) maintain a large part of the site as an urban wilderness area; (2) make the Park a safe place for all users; (3) protect the uniqueness of Runyon Canyon as a wilderness area juxtaposed with the City's past and present; (4) allow people to learn about the urban wilderness and how to enjoy, respect, and protect the unique quality of the Park; (5) limit the development of primary facilities to the "old estate area" of Runyon Canyon (which before the fires of 1972 included a mansion originally named "San Patrizio" and later referred to as "The Pines", a guest house also known as the "cottage hotel," and a futuristic "play resort" which included a country club pool pavilion & tennis courts) to be consistent with past development and to protect the rest of the Canyon; (6) meet the special needs of the surrounding community and the needs of Los Angeles residents for open space; and (7) encourage community involvement in Runyon Canyon to address the community's needs and develop a group who cares about the Park.

FORC is a 501(c)(3) non-profit public benefit corporation, approved by the IRS in July 2014, whose mission is to assist in the restoration, preservation, and enhancement of the Park through public-private collaboration. FORC was incorporated in California on February 3, 2014, for the purpose of improving the quality of the open space for visitors, while also improving the quality of life for neighboring residents. FORC is governed by its Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws, and the activities and affairs of FORC are conducted and all of its corporate powers are exercised by or under the direction of its Board of Directors, the members of which are designated, selected, and elected in accordance with FORC's Bylaws.

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FORC's focus, as stated in the MOU, is based on the 1986 Master Plan, and includes the following main objectives: (1) Identify a short and long term solution for sanitation issues and lack of water, as well as, parking and neighborhood quality of life; (2) Provide the Park with a full-time Ranger and Ranger Station, public restrooms and running water, visitor parking, and improved general maintenance and reestablishment of the full Master Plan; (3) Resolve the misuse of the Park, off-leash dog concerns, after hours usage, and dog defecation issues through gate closures and park oversight; and, (4) Address environmental impact, trail erosion, and trail marking concerns through trail maintenance plans and the installation of items as park benches, trash containers, and dog waste bag stations.

FORC is committed to acquire private funding and donations to augment current City resources for the Park, obtain consensus among stakeholders, provide a plan for improvements and enhancements to the Park, subject to RAP approval, and to assist RAP by performing competitive contractor selection(s) in conformance with RAP standards. In doing so, FORC would manage their own resources to recommend changes within the Park and maintain records of projects, including budgets and volunteer logs, while providing RAP with transparent financial records. Major projects funded by FORC, subject to RAP's prior concurrence and approval, will be reported to the Board for acceptance through gift agreements between the City and FORC, and smaller project donations through donation reports.

While potential roles for other organizations are not included in the proposed MOU, FORC has communicated their intention to collaborate with Council District 4, Hollywood Hills West Neighborhood Council, and independent contractors for the purpose of fulfilling their and RAP's objectives at Runyon Canyon. Collaborative in nature, FORC envisions the developments made in conjunction with the MOU will involve these four (4) main entities. RAP will continue to play the primary role in all proposed projects and activities, assuring safety and maintainability, as well as, providing approval for all design changes and enhancements. Council District 4 would be looked upon to provide guidance and fund raising assistance, while also supporting the facilitation of communication with the surrounding community. Hollywood Hills West Neighborhood Council would be involved in engaging community stakeholders and providing feedback. Thus, FORC would have the ability to focus on the identification and solicitation of private funding, and obtaining consensus. All proposed projects will be submitted to RAP for review and approval prior to implementation, and Board approval when required.

Staff has discussed the proposed MOU with the Assistant General Manager of the Planning, Construction, and Maintenance Branch, with the staff of Council District 4, and each supports the MOU and concurs with staff's recommendations.

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT:

Improving and enhancing Runyon Canyon Park is work that RAP is not budgeted to perform.

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Therefore, this MOU with FORC will contribute to the City by potentially providing increased quality of life for the public's benefit, at no cost to the City, and restoring and preserving this Park's legacy into the future.

This report was prepared by Joel Alvarez, Senior Management Analyst, and Cassandra Reyes, Senior Recreation Director II, Partnership Division.