

SANTA MONICA MOUNTAINS CONSERVANCY

RAMIREZ CANYON PARK
5750 RAMIREZ CANYON ROAD
MALIBU, CALIFORNIA 90265
PHONE (310) 589-3200
FAX (310) 589-3207
WWW.SMMC.CA.GOV



October 24, 2011

Ms. Claire Bowin, City Planner
Los Angeles Department of City Planning
200 North Spring Street, Room 667
Los Angeles, California 90012

Cornfield Arroyo Seco Specific Plan
Draft Environmental Impact Report No. ENV-2009-599-EIR
SCH No. 2009031002

Dear Ms. Bowin:

The Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (Conservancy) strongly supports the Cornfield Arroyo Seco Specific Plan. This is an innovative planning strategy to promote smart growth in a suitable infill location adjacent to transit and the future Los Angeles River Greenway bicycle and pedestrian path. Locating an ideal blend of residential and industrial land uses in a collection of "urban villages" and "urban centers" will create a natural user base for the future Greenway, promoting a safe and welcoming park environment. The Specific Plan leverages this ideal location to encourage sustainable transportation and reduce the environmental impacts of urban development. The Conservancy requests two small changes to better reflect planned land uses at the Los Angeles River Center and Gardens and Confluence Park.

First, the Specific Plan Area includes the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA)-owned Los Angeles River Center and Gardens. The proposed plan would zone this area as Greenway/Open Space. The River Center contains offices for the Conservancy, the MRCA, and several river and open space nonprofit groups. The property is also frequently rented for filming and events, such as weddings and meetings. While there is a public park on a portion of the property, the primary use is offices. The Conservancy and MRCA intend to continue these uses at the River Center and therefore request that the designation of Greenway/Open Space, which is intended for parkland and visitor-serving uses, be changed to Public Facility, which more accurately reflects the River Center's current and future use. Without this change, the Conservancy is concerned that any future renovation or expansion of the River Center would be inappropriately constrained as the property already likely exceeds the maximum Floor Area Ratio for the Greenway designation.

Ms. Claire Bowin, Department of City Planning
Cornfield Arroyo Seco Specific Plan DEIR; SCH No. 2009031002
October 24, 2011
Page 2

Second, the city-owned parcels at San Fernando Road and North Figueroa Street are planned to become an expansion of Confluence Park, which currently consists of a plaza across the street on MRCA-owned property. These parcels are a critical gateway for the Los Angeles River Greenway, linking the Cypress Park neighborhood and North Figueroa corridor to the River. This project is funded by a \$3 million Transportation Enhancements grant from Caltrans. The Conservancy requests that these city-owned parcels (Block 55) be designated as Greenway/Open Space to facilitate the planned and funded park improvements.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments. If you have any questions, please contact Paul Edelman of our staff at (310) 589-3200, ext. 128.

Sincerely,

ANTONIO GONZALEZ
Chairperson