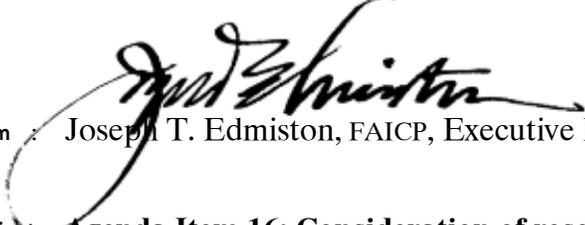


Memorandum

To : The Conservancy
The Advisory Committee

Date: October 24, 2005

From : 
Joseph T. Edmiston, FAICP, Executive Director

Subject: **Agenda Item 16: Consideration of resolution authorizing a grant of Proposition 40 funds to the Conejo Recreation and Park District for park improvements and restoration of the historic Joel McCrea Ranch, North Moorpark Road, Thousand Oaks.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Conservancy adopt a resolution authorizing a grant of \$750,000 in Proposition 40 funds to the Conejo Recreation and Park District for park improvements and restoration of the historic Joel McCrea Ranch in Thousand Oaks, pending review and approval of the grant application by the Office of the Attorney General.

Legislative Authority: Section 33204 of the Public Resources Code provides, in part, as follows:

The conservancy may . . . (c) Award grants to . . . park and recreation districts for the purpose of acquiring sites identified as necessary for park, recreation, or conservation purposes and for *development of related public facilities*. [Italics added.]

Section 33203.5 of the Public Resources Code provides, in part, as follows:

Notwithstanding any other provisions of this division, the conservancy may acquire and *improve real property*, or any interests therein, anywhere within the zone upon a finding that the action is consistent with the plan. [Italics added.]

Background: Joel McCrea Ranch improvements and historic restoration project scored the highest ranking, tied with Arroyo Seco improvements, in the Conservancy's Workprogram for Park Development and Improvements. The McCrea Ranch is located in the easternmost Santa Rosa Valley just north of Thousand Oaks, between Moorpark and the Tierra Rejada Valley. The regionally significant park and historic site is also listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The Conservancy granted Proposition 12 funds to the park district in 2001 for stabilization and protection of the historic structures, to design park improvements, and prepare construction drawings. The current grant request would be used for park improvements including restoration of a stream, lake construction, trails, parking, and additional ranch building improvements. The Conservancy grant would be matched on a greater than 3.5 to 1 ratio with other park district funds. Please refer also to the attached grant

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application and materials provided by the park district.

Additional background: The ranch was first acquired by actors Joel McCrea and Frances Dee in 1933, and the home they built served as their primary residence for decades. The McCrea's ranch was featured in the April 1994 *Architectural Digest*. The ranch property was acquired by the Conejo Recreation and Park District from the McCrea family in a highly innovative acquisition package which involved a large investment of District funds, and a substantial donation from the family.