

EXECUTIVE OFFICER SUMMARY REPORT
December 2, 2005

ITEM: **14**

SUBJECT: **LAKESIDE'S RIVER PARK CONSERVANCY
PRESENTATION/PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES**

Deborah Jones (Executive Director, Lakeside's River Park Conservancy) will provide an overview of Lakeside's River Park Conservancy's accomplishments and future plans. The presentation will emphasize specific ways in which the San Diego River Conservancy can partner with and support the Lakeside's River Park Conservancy. The Board may take an action. (*Deborah Jones*)

PURPOSE: Information Item. As a critical link in the overall fifty-two mile San Diego River Park and trail system, this item is included to inform the Board of the Lakeside's River Park Conservancy's significant achievements and plans along the San Diego River. Potential partnership opportunities will also be highlighted.

DISCUSSION: As you know, the Lakeside's River Park Conservancy is a small, local nonprofit which was formed in 2001 to meet the challenge of restoring the six-mile segment of the San Diego River that flows through Lakeside.

As one of our most important partners in restoring the River and creating the River Park, we have invited Ms. Jones to update us on recent achievements and plans within the Lakeside area. Overall, Lakeside encompasses approximately fifty square miles and includes the El Monte Valley. Ms. Jones' presentation today is particularly timely due to the upcoming El Monte Valley restoration project(s) as discussed in Agenda Item 12.

Lakeside's River Park Conceptual Plan

At the February 11, 2005 Governing Board meeting, Deborah Jones presented each Board member with a copy of Lakeside's River Park Conceptual Plan. (****PLEASE REMEMBER TO**

BRING YOUR COPY TO THE BOARD MEETING**.) This planning document provides the framework for the establishment of Lakeside's segment of the overall San Diego River Park.

CalMat Property

In late 2002, former Governor Davis signed the fiscal year 2002-03 budget bill which appropriated \$12 million in bond funds for the protection and restoration of the San Diego River. Of that, \$4.2 million dollars was awarded to the Lakeside's River Park Conservancy for the acquisition of the 100 acre CalMat property.

The CalMat property, zoned for industrial development, is located in the community of Lakeside on the south side of the San Diego River. The Lakeside Conservancy intends to restore the site to its former riverine and riparian habitats to benefit several threatened and endangered species and to restore the historic floodplain offering the community flood protection and water quality benefits. The plans also include trails and other recreational features.

On August 19, 2005 the San Diego County Planning Commission approved the habitat restoration project (the excavation of over 600,000 cubic yards of fill along the river between Channel and Riverford Roads) on the CalMat property. This was a major milestone for Lakeside. On behalf of the San Diego River Conservancy, I addressed the Planning Commission on August 19 in strong support of the restoration project as did numerous other stakeholders and local groups. In addition, I submitted a related supportive op-ed piece to the Union Tribune (see Supporting Document 2). The restoration project is scheduled to begin in early 2006. Throughout the past year, I have also written letters of support for other smaller Lakeside projects.

Partnership Opportunities

The six-mile segment of the San Diego River which flows through Lakeside is an important component of the River's overall health as well as the overall San Diego River Park and trail system. Ms. Jones will emphasize specific ways in which the two conservancies can work together to strengthen each other's efforts and achieve our many common goals. Opportunities for our Conservancy to utilize our resources and state affiliation to support the Lakeside's River Park Conservancy abound and will be included in our upcoming

Strategic Plan/Five Year Infrastructure Plan for your review. One current example of a need for additional funding is an important river-side acquisition in the vicinity of the Calmat property which Mr. Beck (Lakeside's River Park Conservancy, Chairman) has been working on for many months.

LEGAL CONCERNS: None.

FISCAL IMPACT: None.

SUPPORTING
DOCUMENTS:

1. "Widening Of River in Lakeside Advances". San Diego Union Tribune. August 20, 2005.
2. Op-Ed Piece Submitted to the San Diego Union Tribune by Deborah Jayne, August 5, 2005.
3. A Conceptual Plan for Lakeside's River Park (*distributed at the 2/11/05 meeting – **please bring your copy to the meeting***)

RECOMMENDATION: Accept Ms. Jones' report.