

# Memorandum

To : The Conservancy  
The Advisory Committee

Date: June 29, 2020

From :  Joseph T. Edmiston, FAICP, Hon. ASLA, Executive Director

Subject: **Agenda Item 12: Consideration of resolution authorizing an official request and acceptance to the City of Agoura Hills and California Department of Transportation for a Transfer of Jurisdiction to the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy of a portion of the pending vacation of Vendell Place for Liberty Canyon wildlife corridor permanent habitat protection purposes, City of Agoura Hills.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Conservancy adopt the attached resolution authorizing an official request to and acceptance from the City of Agoura Hills and the California Department of Transportation for portions of the pending vacation of Vendell Place to facilitate the Liberty Canyon wildlife overpass over the 101 freeway and other habitat purposes.

Legislative Authority: Public Resources Code Section 33211(c)

Background: Vendell Place is a remnant of the old Ventura highway that has survived the creation of the 101 freeway and all that has accompanied it for over almost 100 years. The City of Agoura Hills first moved to vacate the dead end street in 2015. Upon the Conservancy's request the City has delayed the process until a final adjacent parcel was acquired by the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) that occurred a couple of months ago.

Portions of the proposed street vacation area critical for completion of the proposed Liberty Canyon wildlife freeway overpass. If the street is vacated, adjacent portions of the property would go to the Conservancy and the MRCA (see attached map). Staff is not sure if the northern half of the street would go to Caltrans - the adjoining fee ownership. Caltrans is an integral part of the wildlife overpass project and the CEQA lead agency. The overpass should proceed as planned if that land is added to Caltrans holdings. If such land does go to Caltrans; and Caltrans wants to transfer it to the Conservancy, that can be done pretty simply through a Transfer of Jurisdiction between State agencies.

The attached City of Agoura Hills Planning Commission and City Council staff reports provide additional details. On June 4, 2020, the Agoura Hills Planning Commission took an action recommending that the City Council proceed with the street vacation. The item is on the June 24, 2020 City Council agenda. This action would allow the Conservancy to accept the property

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from the City or Caltrans.