

RESOLUTION NO. 2022-____

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COSTA MESA, CALIFORNIA, IN SUPPORT OF THE ACQUISITION OF BANNING RANCH BY THE TRUST FOR PUBLIC LAND

THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COSTA MESA DOES HEREBY RESOLVE AS FOLLOWS:

WHEREAS, Banning Ranch is located within the ancestral homelands of the Tongva and Acjachemen Nations and along the Santa Ana River, adjacent to Costa Mesa's Westside neighborhoods; and

WHEREAS, Banning Ranch covers 401 acres of undeveloped land and is the largest private piece of land remaining on the California coast between Ventura County and the United States/Mexico border; and

WHEREAS, Banning Ranch, the site of Genga, has been utilized by the Tongva and Acjachemen Nations as a village, cultural, and ceremonial site since time immemorial and contains more than 3000 years of documented evidence of use by these indigenous communities; and

WHEREAS, Banning Ranch was part of the historic 63,414-acre Rancho Santiago de Santa Ana; and

WHEREAS, Banning Ranch was part of the historic 4000-acre Banning Ranch, and named after, and owned by the family of, Phineas Banning, "The Father of the Port of Los Angeles;" and

WHEREAS, Banning Ranch is the southern-most oil field in California and has a historic and ongoing role in the Southern California oil industry since the 1940s; and

WHEREAS, Banning Ranch contains federal- and state-listed species and other rare plants and animals, including those of special significance to the Tongva and Acjachemen people; and

WHEREAS, Banning Ranch contains one of only two federally recognized vernal pool complexes in coastal Orange County; and

WHEREAS, the California Coastal Commission found that Banning Ranch has extensive Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Area (ESHA), which is afforded the highest protection under the California Coastal Act; and

WHEREAS, The Trust for Public Land has worked diligently with the landowners for more than four years, secured an exclusive option to purchase 384 acres of the property and raised public and private dollars so far totaling \$83M towards the \$97M purchase price; and

WHEREAS, the creation of a public open space, park, and coastal nature preserve at Banning Ranch would provide much-needed park space accessible to Costa Mesa residents and address park space deficits in Costa Mesa and other nearby cities; and

WHEREAS, creation of a public open space, park, and coastal nature preserve at the site of Genga creates an opportunity to reconnect Native people with their ancestral home lands and sacred spaces; and

WHEREAS, the restoration and reintroduction of tidal flow to the degraded salt marshes of Banning Ranch would address and mitigate anticipated sea-level rise along the Southern California coast; and

WHEREAS, studies have shown that natural habitat, open space and park access improves mental health, provides respite from modern day intrusions, and reduces stress; and

WHEREAS, Banning Ranch serves as a wildlife corridor for immediately surrounding publicly-owned open spaces (Talbert Preserve, Fairview Park, Army Corps of Engineers Santa Ana River Marsh, Sunset Ridge Park and Huntington Beach Wetlands Conservancy properties), all of which are envisioned to become part of the future 1000-acre Orange Coast River Park (OCRCP); and

WHEREAS, the 2015-2035 Costa Mesa General Plan (Open Space Element) states that, "As a built-out community, Costa Mesa will face challenges acquiring new open space land due to high land costs and the limited availability of land;" and

WHEREAS, the 2021 City Council's strategic objectives include identifying strategies to increase park access;

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Costa Mesa that the City of Costa Mesa supports the acquisition of Banning Ranch by the Trust for Public Land.

PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED this 18th day of January, 2022:

John Stephens, Mayor

ATTEST:

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Brenda Green, City Clerk

Kimberly Hall Barlow, City Attorney

STATE OF CALIFORNIA)
COUNTY OF ORANGE) ss
CITY OF COSTA MESA)

I, BRENDA GREEN, City Clerk of the City of Costa Mesa, DO HEREBY CERTIFY that the above and foregoing is the original of Resolution No. 2022-__ and was duly passed and adopted by the City Council of the City of Costa Mesa at a regular meeting held on 18th day of January, 2022, by the following roll call vote, to wit:

AYES: COUNCIL MEMBERS:

NOES: COUNCIL MEMBERS:

ABSENT: COUNCIL MEMBERS:

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereby set my hand and affixed the seal of the City of Costa Mesa this 19th day of January, 2022.

BRENDA GREEN, CITY CLERK

(SEAL)