RESOLUTION APPROVING AN APPLICATION FOR $1,800,000 IN GRANT FUNDS FROM THE SAN GABRIEL AND LOWER LOS ANGELES RIVERS AND MOUNTAINS CONSERVANCY CLIMATE RESILIENCE GRANT PROGRAM FOR THE NICKERSON GARDENS OPEN SPACE DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Douglas Guthrie
President & Chief Executive Officer

Jenny Scanlin
Chief Strategic Development Officer

Purpose: The Strategic Initiatives team prioritizes filling in gaps in services available to our residents and addressing the Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles’ (“HACLA”) capital needs, particularly for social, outdoor and program spaces. As one of the largest public housing sites in HACLA’s portfolio, Nickerson Gardens serves over 1,000 households, mostly families with children. Play spaces are critical to supporting community health and cohesion. Without enough federal capital funds available to make needed improvements, the Housing Services Department and Strategic Initiatives are actively seeking to apply for grant opportunities to improve the property’s open space. As a grant application requirement, HACLA’s Board of Commissioners is asked to approve the submittal of an application for funding to the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy for the Climate Resilience Program for Nickerson Gardens Open Space Development Project (the “Project”).

Regarding: This seeks approval from the Board Of Commissioners (“Board”) for a board resolution to apply for Climate Resilience Grant Program (“Climate Grant”) funds as an additional funding source to support the Project. Resolution No. 9753, adopted on October 28, 2021, approved an application to the Los Angeles County Regional Park and Open Space District (“RPOSD”) for Measure A Grant funds to support the same Project. In February 2022, RPOSD awarded $650,000 in funding to the Project.

Issues: Background HACLA desires to transform and update the outdoor field and recreation space at the Nickerson Gardens public housing development to create a more environmentally friendly, vibrant, and healthy community. The redevelopment of the outdoor spaces at Nickerson Gardens is envisioned as part of a larger renewal of the programmable and community spaces within Nickerson Gardens and is coupled with a philanthropic investment in the Nickerson playground and the pending solicitation of new program partners for the gym facility in an upcoming Request for Proposal. This opportunity to apply for Climate Grant funds aligns with HACLA’s 25-year Vision Plan and will help increase the reach of services and amenities to residents.
HACLA desires to redevelop the outdoor field and adjacent areas at Nickerson Gardens to enhance the overall quality of life for the development’s residents and the greater Watts community. Residents expressed the need for outdoor exercise equipment, a picnic area, updates to the existing green space, and a walking path. The Project will be developed over two phases, and includes a playground, walking paths, a central grassy area, updates to the basketball courts, picnic area, and renovation of the baseball field as well as a soccer field, fitness equipment, and hardscape. Concept drawings of these Project components are included in Attachment 2. Benefits from this Project will extend beyond the physical improvements by helping to attract additional youth and adult programs and services to the site.

**Secured and Pending Grants**

HACLA has received a series of funding commitments to support this Project. In April 2021, we secured $1,000,000 from a private donor to revitalize the outdoor playground. As noted, the Regional park and Open Space District (RPOSD) Measure A Grant will provide $650,000. We secured $460,000 under the new federal Community Project Funding Grant program through Representative Nanette Barragan’s Office in March 2022. We are awaiting a commitment from the Los Angeles Dodgers Foundation to revitalize the baseball fields and a $200,000 commitment from the Los Angeles Lakers Foundation to resurface the basketball courts. With these commitments, we anticipate funding secured from the Climate Grant to fully fund the Project.

**Proposed Resolution**

The California Natural Resources Agency’s San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy (RMC) has adopted program guidelines that govern applications for Climate Grant funds (‘Program Guidelines’). The Program Guidelines require applicants’ governing bodies, here the Board, to certify, by resolution, that they have given applicants’ authorized signatories authority to apply for, receive, and manage Climate Grant funds in support of their respective projects. The proposed resolution, which follows the sample resolution format provided by RMC, certifies that HACLA has approved the application for Climate Grant funds, will abide by Climate Grant program requirements, and has authorized designated representatives to execute Climate Grant documents and other documents necessary for completion of the Project.

**Climate Grant Program:**

RMC was appropriated $11.1 million through the State of California’s General Fund in the Climate Resilience package of the Budget Act of 2021 (Sec. 69 Item 3825-103-0001) over three years to support investments that address the climate risks within RMC’s jurisdictions, which ultimately contributes to the State’s overall promotion.
of climate resiliency. Climate Grant funds aim to build community resilience and capacity where resources are most needed.

HACLA desires to submit an application requesting $1,800,000 in Climate Grant funds. Approximately $100,000 of the grant amount being requested is for Project design by the Los Angeles Neighborhood Land Trust (“LANLT”), with the remainder applied towards eligible Project implementation costs.

**Project Partnership:** LANLT has extensive experience developing green spaces in Los Angeles. Since 2002, they have added nearly thirteen acres of accessible land and green space to Los Angeles by creating 29 parks and gardens. For the previously submitted and awarded Measure A Grant in support of the Project, they coordinated a series of community engagements at Nickerson Gardens to capture resident feedback on how to best use the potential grant funds. If Climate Grant funds are awarded, LANLT has committed to continuing coordination of community engagement, managing the project’s design and build in collaboration with HACLA, and applying for additional grant funding. LANLT will leverage its own staff capacity to assist with grant application materials for submittal, engagement and design services as a partner on this Project.

Climate Grant award announcements are in late 2022. If awarded, funds will be available as soon as the standard agreement is signed. The design and build of the Project must start right away. HACLA’s anticipated timeline starts upon funding award in early 2023, and is expected to be completed in Fall 2024. Extensions to the Project timeline may be possible, but requests for extensions are assessed on a project-by-project basis. HACLA’s anticipated timeline will leave HACLA sufficient opportunity to secure additional financing sources to further support the Project.

**Vision Plan:**  
**PATHWAYS Strategy #5: Expand HACLA’s role in the broader communities it serves to improve neighborhood-wide health and well-being**

The requested Climate Grant funds will facilitate HACLA’s contributions to and support of community-based efforts to advocate for improvements to infrastructure, safety, health, education, and economic equity. The anticipated result of utilizing the funds to support the redevelopment of the outdoor spaces at Nickerson Gardens will be to improve the health and well-being of residents and their surrounding community.

**PATHWAYS Strategy #6: Utilize HACLA-owned property to provide community amenities that meet broader neighborhood needs.**

Through the requested Climate Grant funds, we are ensuring that redevelopment efforts at HACLA-owned properties consider and prioritize opportunities to create community-serving amenities, developed with neighborhood-wide input. Through
the grant application development, and in coordination with LANLT, we engaged residents and community members in surveying to determine the activities and application of this grant opportunity. It is anticipated that these grant funds will support HACLA communal and open spaces to increase the richness of social and educational programming for residents.

**Funding:**

The Chief Administrative Office confirms:

- **Source of Funds:** No funds are required for this action.

- **Program and Budget Impact:** The proposed redevelopment of outdoor spaces at Nickerson Gardens will be funded using the requested Climate Grant and other leveraged or competitive resources. The capital improvement is aligned with HACLA’s Vision Plan and can be accomplished in the future fiscal years utilizing existing staff and external partners.

**Environmental Review:**

- **CEQA:** The Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles is the lead agency for the Project for purposes of the California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”). In that capacity, HACLA has determined that the Project is categorically exempt under 14 CCR Section 15301 (Class 1). The Project qualifies for a Class 1 categorical exemption since the proposed park improvements involve minor alterations to and repairs of existing structures and topographical features and involve negligible expansion of existing uses. A CEQA Notice of Exemption for the Project was filed with the County of Los Angeles Clerk on June 2, 2022 and was posted until July 5, 2022, satisfying the 30-day Notice of Exemption posting requirement.

- **NEPA:** Climate Grant funding is non-federal, and acceptance and expenditure of the funds in implementing the Project will not require National Environmental Policy Act (“NEPA”) review. However, it is possible that the expenditure of federal Community Project Funding Grant funds will trigger review, and if so, HACLA anticipates seeking a Categorical Exclusion determination, under which neither an environmental assessment nor an environmental impact statement would be required. In all instances, HACLA will ensure that the Project is conducted in accordance with applicable permitting and environmental review requirements.

- **Section 3:** The action to apply for these funds does not trigger Section 3 but HACLA will be applying its Section 3 requirements to any professional and public works contracts associated with the Project.

**Attachments:**

1. Resolution
2. Nickerson Gardens Open Space Development
Attachment 1

Resolution
RESOLUTION NO.

RESOLUTION APPROVING AN APPLICATION FOR $1,800,000 IN GRANT FUNDS FROM THE SAN GABRIEL AND LOWER LOS ANGELES RIVERS AND MOUNTAINS CONSERVANCY CLIMATE RESILIENCE GRANT PROGRAM FOR THE NICKERSON GARDENS OPEN SPACE DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

WHEREAS, the Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles (“HACLA”) is a public body, corporate and politic, duly created, established and authorized to transact business and exercise powers under and pursuant to the provisions of the Housing Authorities Law, consisting of Part 2 of Division 24 of the California Health and Safety Code;

WHEREAS, the State of California has authorized an expenditure of General Funds by the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy (“RMC”) for the Climate Resilience Grant Program in Section 69 of the Budget Act of 2021;

WHEREAS, RMC has been delegated responsibility for the administration of the grant program in its jurisdiction and for setting up necessary procedures;

WHEREAS, said procedures established by RMC require each Climate Resilience Grant applicant’s governing body to certify by resolution the approval of their application before submission of said application to the State; and

WHEREAS, HACLA will enter into a contract with the State of California for the Project.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the HACLA Board of Commissioners hereby:

1. Approves the filing of an application for grant funds ("Application") from the RMC Climate Resilience Grant Program;

2. Certifies that the Nickerson Gardens Open Space Development Project (the “Project”) is consistent with local or regional land use plans or Programs (or if it is not, that the project is still approved);

3. Certifies that the Project is consistent with the goals of the Climate Resilience Grant Program including multi-beneficial and multi-jurisdictional ecosystem and watershed protection projects in accordance with statewide priorities;

4. Certifies that the Application has or will have sufficient funds to operate and maintain the Project that is being submitted for funding consideration;

5. Certifies that HACLA has reviewed and understands the General Requirements and General Policies of the RMC Grant Program Guidelines; and
6. Appoints the President & CEO, along with the Designated Officers named below, to conduct all negotiations, and to execute and submit all documents including, but not limited to, applications, agreements, amendments, payment requests and so forth, which may be necessary for the completion of projects or programs.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Designated Officers of HACLA referred to above are as follows:

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Douglas Guthrie</td>
<td>President and Chief Executive Officer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marlene Garza</td>
<td>Chief Administrative Officer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jenny Scanlin</td>
<td>Chief Strategic Development Officer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Margarita Lares</td>
<td>Chief Programs Officer</td>
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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Resolution shall take effect immediately.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this 29th day of September 2022.

APPROVED AS TO FORM

HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES

By: __________________________
 James Johnson, General Counsel

By: __________________________
 Cielo Castro, Chairperson

DATE ADOPTED: __________________________
Attachment 2

Nickerson Gardens Open Space Development Concept Design