

DATE: September 17, 2026

TO: WCA Governing Board

FROM: Robert Segarra, Senior Director of Project Management

THROUGH: Mark Stanley, Executive Officer

SUBJECT: Item 12: Consideration of a resolution to ratify a professional services contract with the law firm Richards, Watson & Gershon (RWG) to provide legal representation for acquisition of property at 3916-4201 Ambecco Road, Long Beach, CA

RECOMMENDATION

That the Watershed Conservation Authority (WCA) Governing Board ratify a professional services contract with the law firm Richards, Watson & Gershon (RWG) to provide legal representation for acquisition of property at 3916-4201 Ambecco Road, Long Beach, CA.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Richards, Watson & Gershon is willing to provide legal services to the Watershed Conservation Authority (WCA) in connection with the planned acquisition of the property located at 3916–4201 Ambecco Road in Long Beach, California. Also known as the Wrigley Heights Park Acquisition.

RWG will be represented by David M. Snow, an attorney with over 23 years of experience in public sector contracts and policies. Mr. Snow has expertise in navigating the legal requirements for entitlements, natural resources management, and complex environmental land use factors.

Neither the Firm nor its attorneys guarantee a particular outcome regarding the property acquisition or related negotiations. WCA may terminate the Firm's representation at any time, and the Firm may also terminate the representation subject to providing reasonable notice. If the representation is terminated, WCA will be responsible for paying all fees and expenses incurred through the date of termination.

In the unlikely event, the engagement also provides that fee disputes may be resolved through California's mandatory fee-arbitration process. Fee disputes will generally be subject to binding arbitration in Los Angeles through the American Arbitration Association. The Firm maintains professional liability insurance with \$1 million in coverage and will provide WCA with a certificate of insurance. The engagement and its terms will be governed by the substantive laws of the State of California.

BACKGROUND

The Wrigley Heights River Park site is 5.32 gross acres along the Lower Los Angeles River in the City of Long Beach. Acquisition of the property supports the mission to increase access to open space and align with the 2018 Lower Los Angeles River Revitalization Plan (LLARRP) vision. The property is within the Wrigley Heights River Park Opportunity Area of the LLARRP and is one of seven signature project sites. It is a portion of Opportunity Site 68 in the Lower Los Angeles Revitalization Plan and was given the Opportunity Potential score of 98, making it one of the highest-ranking sites out of the 155 identified Opportunity Sites in the Plan. The site provides opportunities to expand access to recreation and programming opportunities along the Lower LA River that serves a Severely Disadvantaged Community (SDAC). The property is comprised of 4 parcels (APN 7140-014-021, 022, 023, 027) of vacant land covering 4.33 acres, 0.90 of an acre City of Long Beach city street (North Pacific Place & Frontage Road) through the four parcels, plus a right-of way easement over 0.09 of an acre (Ambecco Road) that runs for approximately 160' to the northeast and dead ends at the Metro A Line (former Blue Line) tracks. In addition, an outdoor advertising sign may potentially be included in the acquisition, which would provide future billboard revenues.

The Wrigley Heights River Park project will help to increase connectivity both to and along the Lower LA River path, as well as increase access to open space for the Wrigley Heights neighborhood. Both planning and implementation of Wrigley Heights River Park will encourage workforce development opportunities, and partnership with the Conservation Corps of Long Beach will be explored during both site developments.

In 2015, California State Assembly Bill 530 (AB 530) was passed to revitalize the Lower Los Angeles River through development efforts informed by community input, nature-based solutions, and accessibility. AB 530 called for a working group, chaired by the RMC, which included community insight to create the Lower Los Angeles River Revitalization Plan. The property is within the Wrigley Heights River Park Opportunity Area of the LLARRP and is one of seven signature project sites. It is a portion of Opportunity Site 68 in the Lower Los Angeles Revitalization Plan and was given the Opportunity Potential score of 98, making it one of the highest-ranking sites out of the 155 identified Opportunity Sites in the Plan.

The property was a part of the former North Long Beach Oil Field and by the mid-1980s oil operations had ceased. It became a Golf Learning Center from 1996-2014 and during that time was included in the concept of industrial park development by CRG Properties. That concept was based on an 18-acre potential industrial park and the partnership of two property owners, which is no longer active. In 2005, CRG Properties entered into a Voluntary Clean Up Agreement (VCA) with the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC), which erroneously included the five-acre McDonald Property. In 2019, the owners of the Property conducted exploratory borings to test and analyze soil and soil vapor particles on their site. The Limited Subsurface Assessment found that environmental issues that had been found on the other parcels had not impacted the McDonald Property. Subsequently, the owners of the property contacted DTSC to be removed from the VCA, and the removal was

granted. As the WCA became interested in acquiring the property, the RMC conducted due diligence with a Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) and Phase 2 ESA to understand the current site condition. The Phase 2 ESA confirmed that the site does not need remediation to serve as open space.

EXHIBIT

Exhibit A: RWG Proposal with description of services.

Exhibit B: Location of 3916-4201 Ambecco Road, Long Beach, CA on a map.

Exhibit C: Opportunity Site 68 as identified in the Lower Los Angeles Revitalization Plan.

FISCAL INFORMATION

RWG will bill attorneys at a rate of \$375 per hour and paralegals at \$200 per hour. These rates will remain unchanged through the end of 2027, and any future rate changes will require at least 30 days' notice. WCA will also be responsible for reasonable costs and expenses associated with the representation, including copying, mileage, travel, messenger and delivery services, and similar expenses.

Legal fees and expenses will be billed monthly, with invoices reviewed by the Firm prior to issuance. WCA will be expected to pay invoices within 45 days of receipt. Because the total cost of legal representation cannot be accurately estimated in advance, the Firm will keep WCA informed of significant developments that may substantially affect costs.



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August 28, 2026

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL
MSTANLEY@RMC.CA.GOV

Mark Stanley, Executive Director
Watershed Conservation Authority
100 North Old San Gabriel Canyon Road
Azusa, CA 91702

Re: Legal Services Agreement - Advice regarding 319-4201 Ambecco Road
Acquisition

Dear Mark:

Richards, Watson & Gershon (the Firm) is very pleased to have the opportunity to provide legal services to the Watershed Conservation Authority (WCA) in connection with the planned acquisition of the property at 3916- 4201 Ambecco Road, Long Beach, California (the matter).

This letter sets forth the terms upon which the Firm will provide legal services for this engagement and the basis upon which we will bill for our services and expenses in connection with this matter.

The Firm maintains a conflict of interest database. Based on the information provided by WCA, we have examined this database to determine whether we might have a professional conflict of interest with respect to the parties listed below. We find no current relationships that would interfere with our ability to represent WCA in this matter.

The names we have used in determining whether any potential or actual conflicts of interest exist are the following:

Watershed Conservation Authority (Client)
Mark Stanley, Executive Director (Client)
Robert Segara, WCA Project Manager (Other)
Cumming Group, (Other)
David Burningham, Appraiser for WCA (Other)
Jeanne McDonald-Powers, Trustee of McDonald Trust (Adverse Party)

Michael R. Leake, Partner at Sheppard Mullin, Counsel for Jeanne McDonald-Powers
(Attorney for Adverse Party)
Joe Dimola, Managing Director, Savills (Representative of Adverse Party)

We will ensure that these names are in our internal Firm database for consultation in regard to future matters. If there are other parties who would be affected by this matter or who you otherwise feel we should consider, please provide those names to us so we can determine whether there are conflicts as to those parties. We will proceed on the understanding that the above listing is accurate and complete unless we hear from you to the contrary.

With respect to this engagement, I will have primary responsibility for the representation. My billing rate, and the rate of any attorney in the Firm working on this matter, is \$375 per hour. The rate of any paralegal working on this matter is \$200 per hour. Our rates generally are evaluated at the beginning of each year, but because this engagement is occurring towards the middle of 2026, we agree that the rates will not be changed throughout the remainder of 2026 or 2027. Furthermore, the rates charged will not be changed except upon at least thirty days' notice. At all times we strive to provide the most cost-efficient service possible and we allocate work on matters accordingly.

In addition to legal fees, we will bill WCA for costs in connection with our representation. Such costs include copying documents (\$.10/page), mileage (based on the federal government's standard mileage rate) to the extent incurred, travel costs, messenger and delivery services, and other similar costs. Such costs frequently are billed to the Firm from third-party vendors and therefore there sometimes will be a delay between the time such costs are incurred and the time when they appear on your bill. Please note that we make every effort to be as efficient and cost-effective as possible. For example, we transmit documents by email whenever possible to avoid postage charges.

We will bill the WCA for fees on a monthly basis. When a bill is to be sent, we will review it before it is issued to ensure that the amount charged is appropriate and accurately reflects the services rendered. We agree that you will pay our bills within 30 days of receipt of our billing statement.

The nature of legal representation makes it impossible for us to accurately estimate the total amount of fees and costs that may be incurred over time. We will keep you informed of significant developments in the matter, including those that might have a substantial effect on the cost of this representation. Please feel free to inquire at any time about expected future costs.

Naturally, we expect you to ask us about the likely results of our work. We will respond as best we can, but cannot and do not guarantee any particular result. We can make no promises about

the outcome of the matter or negotiations and any opinions about likely outcomes are not intended to constitute a guarantee.

We rarely have fee disputes with clients. Nevertheless, WCA should be aware that it is entitled to require that any fee dispute be resolved through the mandatory fee arbitration provisions of the California Business & Professions Code. One such program is operated under the auspices of the Los Angeles County Bar Association. Many other local bar associations have similar programs.

In the event that you choose not to use the Los Angeles County Bar arbitration procedures, WCA agrees that, to the extent permitted by law, all fee disputes between us shall be submitted to binding arbitration in Los Angeles to be conducted by the American Arbitration Association, in accordance with its commercial arbitration rules.

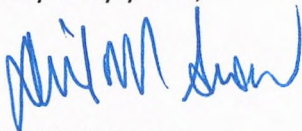
WCA has the right to terminate our representation at any time. We have the same right, subject to our obligation to provide WCA with reasonable notice to arrange alternative representation. In either circumstance, WCA agrees to secure new counsel as quickly as possible, if necessary, and to cooperate fully in the substitution of the new counsel as counsel of record in the matter. If WCA elects to terminate the firm, we will be paid all fees and costs incurred prior to the termination within 30 days after delivery of a final bill for services.

We are also required to inform you that we currently maintain professional liability insurance. We will provide you with a certificate of insurance to this effect showing coverage in the amount of \$1 million dollars.

Our legal relationship and the terms of this agreement will be governed by the substantive laws of the State of California.

Thank you again for this opportunity to assist WCA with this matter. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions, and I look forward to working with you.

Very truly yours,



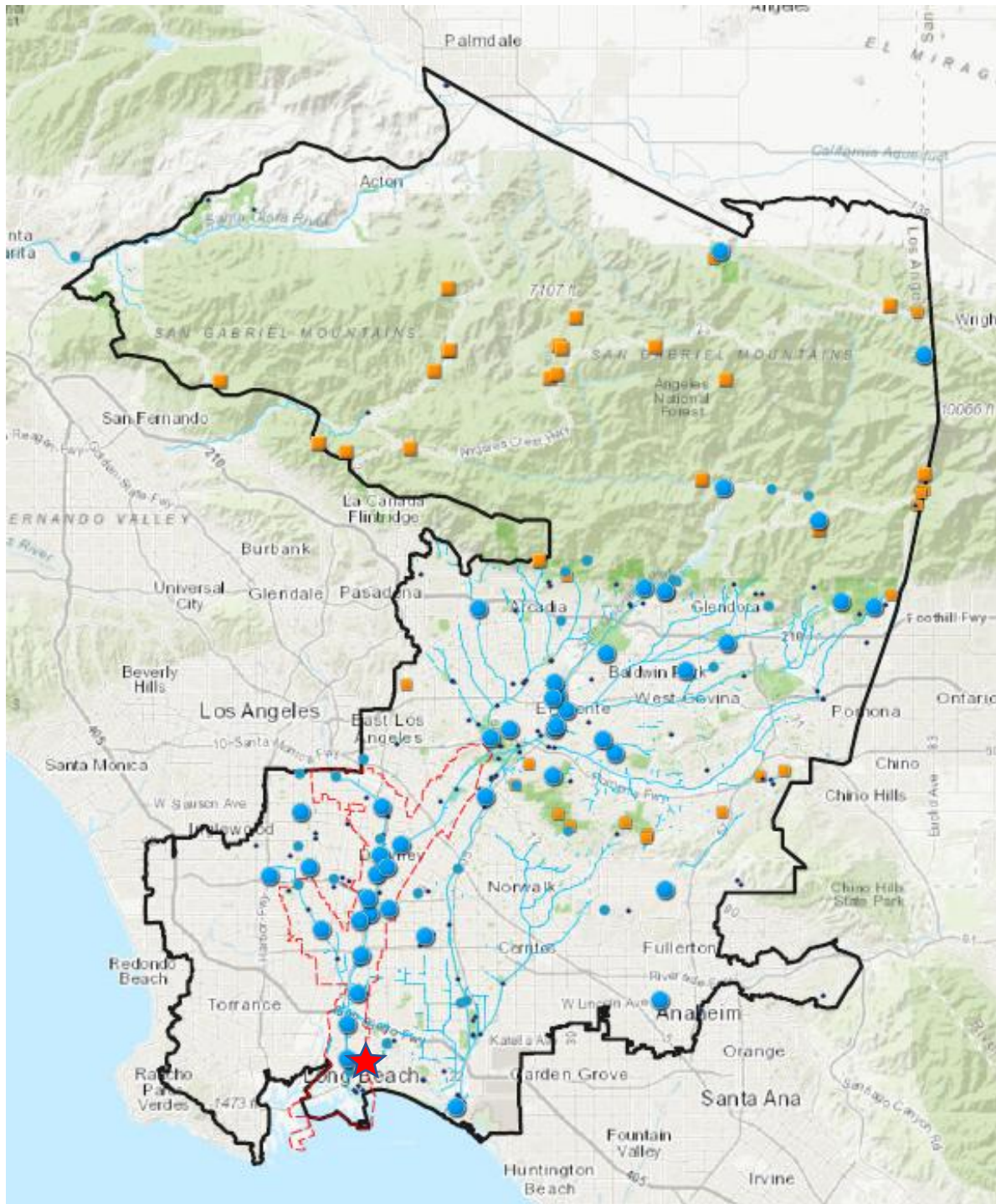
David M. Snow

All of the foregoing terms and provisions are hereby agreed to by:

Dated: _____

By: _____
Mark Stanley, Executive Officer

Project Location Map





LOWER LOS ANGELES RIVER Opportunity Assessment

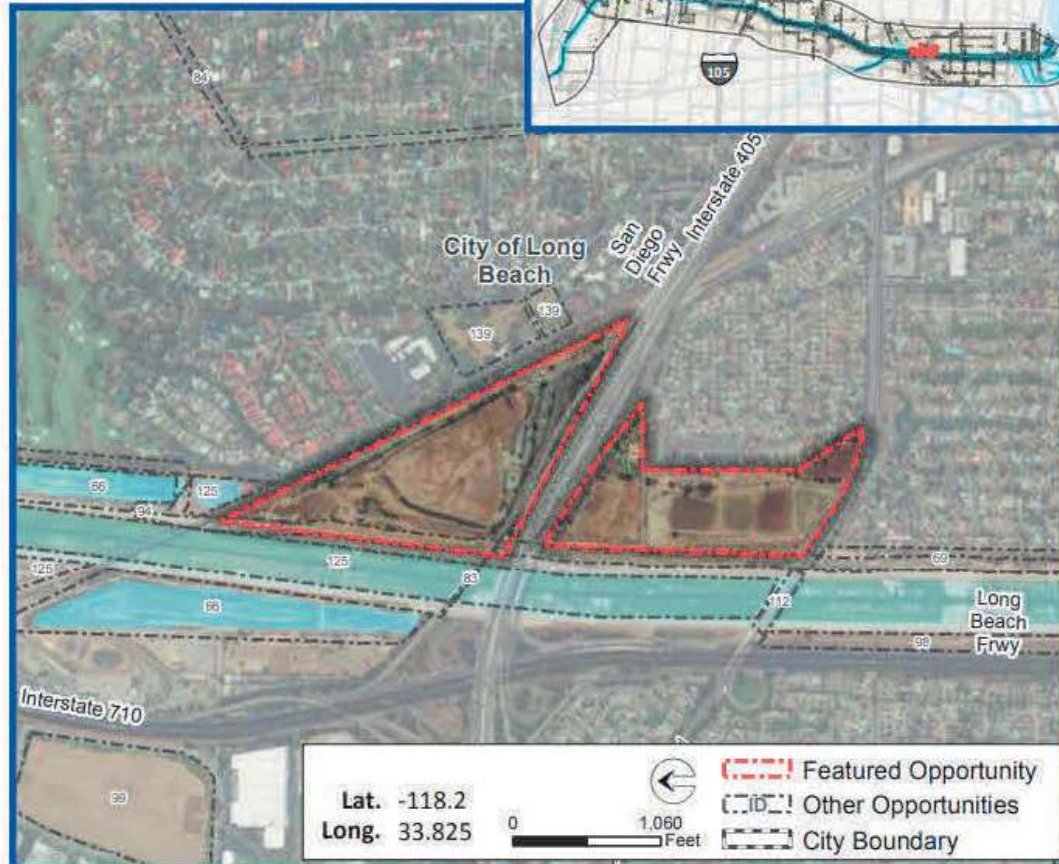
Opportunity Area

Wrigley Heights River Park

Opportunity ID 68
Opportunity Driver Priority/Long Beach RiverLink

Opportunity Description

Driving Range. Potential to continue Dominguez Gap-like wetland southward. Propose wetland, riparian woodland, pedestrian and bicycle paths.



Plan Element	Objective	Applicable Metrics Advanced (%)
Water and Environment	Conserve, Enhance, and Restore Habitat, Biodiversity, and Floodplain Functions	100
	Enhance Local Water Capture and Use	100
	Improve Environmental Quality	100
	Manage Flood Risk	100
Public Realm	Enhance Connectivity	100
	Improve User Experience and Equitable Access	100
	Enhance and Create Diverse, Vibrant Public Spaces	100
Community Economics, Health, and Equity	Address Homelessness	75
	Increase Community Green Infrastructure	100
	Increase Equitable Community Access to Multi-use Trails, Assets	100
	Prevent Local Gentrification-Induced Displacement	100
	Promote Wellness and Physical Activity	100
	Support and Develop Local Business and Workforce	100

Opportunity Potential
(Average of Applicable Metrics Advanced)

98

September 17, 2026 – Item 12

RESOLUTION 2026-34

**RESOLUTION TO RATIFY A PROFESSIONAL
SERVICES CONTRACT WITH THE LAW FIRM
RICHARDS, WATSON & GERSHON (RWG) TO
PROVIDE LEGAL REPRESENTATION FOR
ACQUISITION OF PROPERTY AT 3916-4201
AMBECCO ROAD, LONG BEACH, CA**

WHEREAS, The Watershed Conservation Authority has been established as a joint powers agency between the Rivers and Mountains Conservancy (RMC) and the Los Angeles County Flood Control District (District); and

WHEREAS, the Watershed Conservation Authority (WCA) has further been established to focus on projects which will provide open space, habitat restoration, and watershed improvement projects in both the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers watershed; and

WHEREAS, RWG will be represented by David M. Snow, an attorney with over 23 years of experience in public sector contracts and policies; and

WHEREAS, RWG will bill attorneys at a rate of \$375 per hour and paralegals at \$200 per hour through the end of 2027 plus responsible for reasonable costs and expenses associated with the representation, including copying, mileage, travel, messenger and delivery services, and similar expenses; and

WHEREAS, the proposed action is exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act; NOW

Therefore be it resolved that the WCA hereby:

1. **FINDS** that this action is consistent with the purposes and objectives of the WCA.
2. **FINDS** that the actions contemplated by this resolution are exempt from the environmental impact report requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).
3. **ADOPTS** the staff report dated September 17, 2026.
4. **RATIFIES** a professional services contract with the law firm Richards, Watson & Gershon (RWG) to provide legal representation for acquisition of property at 3916-4201 Ambecco Road, Long Beach, CA.

~ End of Resolution ~

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Motion: _____ Second: _____

Ayes: _____ Nays: _____ Abstentions: _____

Passed and Adopted by the Board of the
WATERSHED CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
On September 17, 2026

Vincent Chang
Governing Board Chair

ATTEST: _____
John Natalizio
Deputy Attorney General