Dear Redondo Beach City Council, Planners, Staff, City Officials, Recreation and Parks, Historic, and Harbor Commissions, and Members of the General Plan Advisory Committee

September 22 was Public Lands Day, so I’d like to share a few thoughts with you.

Today we are witnessing the monumental, once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for deciding the future of the AES Power Plant Site, Edison Power Line Corridor, and the adjoining waterfront and harbor across Harbor Drive. The time is now to finally give Redondo Beach its place in the sun as a visionary, progressive, example of how a city can improve upon the past, rather than destroy it. The time is now to join other great American and worldwide cities that enjoy status as a healthy, livable, welcoming place to be. All great cities have Great parks!

The South Bay Parkland Conservancy has not officially approved my letter, but I think that I dare speak for its founders, leadership, and members as I share a few thoughts with you as SBPC Vice President. Many years ago, way before we moved to Redondo Beach, I heard about these unknown, visionary, people in Redondo Beach that advocated for a Great Park at the AES site. As an earlier, founding, member of the Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy and many other conservation groups, I was deeply inspired!

We envision planning our entire adjacent waterfront area, AES site, and Power Line Corridor as one comprehensive project. There is a chance that the Olympic Committee could choose Redondo to host the 2028 Olympic Open Swim events here, in which case it is even more urgent to move forward, as one mind, to transform this vision into reality. Our combined waterfront will be the center of hospitality for visitors and locals for this great event and for all time to come.

Waterfront
We can see our Great Park embrace the entire waterfront, with beautiful, broad promenades, interesting amenities like a historic carousel, a remodeled Fun Factory, re-imagined Pier Plaza and International Boardwalk, boat ramp, and improved boating and water sports designs.

Ancient Salt Lake
The future Redondo Historic Wetlands Park will restore the lake that has been lying submerged under the power plant, making it the centerpiece of the new park. As the lake comes back up to the light, welcoming waterfowl and water plants back here again, it will provide the birds an essential resting and feeding place on their migratory flight path. California has lost at least 90% of its wetlands to unwise
development over the past century, so this lake is sorely needed in the environmental scheme of things. It will serve as an affirmation of new life.

Natural and Human History
Education is an important element in SBPC goals. The stories about the species and the people who have come before us will be shared through interpretive installations created through partnerships with the Redondo Historical, Harbor, and Recreation and Parks Commissions, and others.

Urban Trails and Bike Paths
Will connect from Hermosa Beach’s Green Belt Parkway and join into the park with the planned trails network our organization has identified. We plan to partner with other like-minded organizations to expand and create a fully connected system of trails here, throughout The South Bay and beyond.

Native Plants and Native Species
Native plants will nurture other native species, encouraging wildlife to come here and thrive as part of the Coastal Habitat Plan that SBPC is creating with partner communities from Palos Verdes to Torrance, Redondo, Hermosa, Manhattan, El Segundo and Ballona Wetlands. Native planting will follow the trail and bike path system throughout the Coastal Plan and throughout our communities.

Power Line Corridor
The Redondo Historic Wetlands Park will extend up the hill and continue as far as imagination can take it. It will be refreshingly green with trails and bike paths, the Dog Park, recreational amenities, the beautifully sculptured skateboard park, and native gardens, possibly even connecting into Torrance’s Columbia Park.

Serendipity
Throughout the entire park and along the trail network we envision delightful, unique, creative, play and art installations tucked in along the way, no ordinary plastic play equipment allowed. There will be special shaded nooks to rest, relax, and reflect.

Partnership
The City of Redondo Beach will also be the champion for preserving all of our public lands for the good of the public, and the champion for a better Redondo quality of life, as far as we can see into the future. This is a big idea, leaders, and yes, it can be paid for. We can do this with your help. If we can send men to the moon we can certainly have a Great Park.

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