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July 20, 2012

Mr. Robert E. Doyle
General Manager
East Bay Regional Park District
2950 Peralta Oaks Court
Oakland, California 94605

Subject: Support for the East Bay Regional Park District Community Transformation Grant (CTG) application

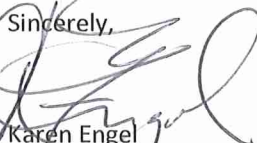
Dear Mr. Doyle:

The East Bay Economic Development Alliance (EDA) has always supported the East Bay Regional Park District's excellent work in promoting health and outdoor activity and the many contributions you have made to improve the quality of life in the East Bay. We strongly endorse and support your efforts to expand this work through an application for a Community Transformation Grant (CTG).

We applaud the District's proposal to lead a multi-sector collaborative – the Get Outdoors! (GO!) Network for Healthy Kids to further strengthen the relationship between health, education and outdoor activity providers. One of EDA's principle objectives is to facilitate a closer integration of government, community, and private sector institutions. For this reason it is especially heartening to see how the GO! Network complements school district efforts to holistically meet student, family and community needs by training teachers and school district staff in the health related value of outdoor activity, and supporting this training with regional park activities. GO! Network programs also provide institutional support for the California Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights (COBOR) – a statewide resolution which defines ten outdoor activities every child has the "right" to experience before the age of 14. In addition the GO! Network will work to align transportation and policy barriers which prevent children from experiencing the outdoors.

It is also worth noting that expanding the connections linking the District's facilities and programs with our schools and health care providers is a natural complement to the strong cultural support for health and wellness that already exists in the East Bay. The East Bay is the birthplace of "California Cuisine" with its emphasis on the health, environmental and aesthetic benefits of fresh organic meats and produce. Companies headquartered in the East Bay such as Annie's Homegrown, Jamba Juice, Numi Organic Tea, Oakland Chocolate Company and Revolution Foods – not to mention numerous restaurants – have grown in response to a population that values a healthier, active and environmentally sensitive lifestyle.

As a regional economic development organization we appreciate that the District not only plays a significant role in promoting the physical and mental wellness of our residents, but also creates the type of environment that has become critical for attracting, supporting and retaining the knowledge-based companies that are key to the region's economic competitiveness. Our hope is that ultimately the GO! Network will provide a transformative, replicable model of how to build collaborations to promote outdoor activity, increase communitywide awareness of these activities and reduce park access barriers.

Sincerely,

Karen Engel
Executive Director

cc: Executive Committee