

CHAPTER SIX: LAND ENCROACHMENT

Everyone Wants What Elysian Park Has

Amy Anderson

"You can see how such open space gets eroded piecemeal: here by the wide double swath of the Pasadena Freeway, there by a fenced reservoir, by three power lines and two radio antenna towers, by a police academy enclave, by city-width streets that foster speed and traffic volume"

Sunset Magazine, 1965

whole or in part, shall be placed in a special trust fund by City and such funds shall be expended solely for the purpose of providing and maintaining recreational facilities to promote the youth program of Ball Club, the location and type of such recreational facilities to be mutually agreed upon by the parties hereto, with approval by the City Council by ordinance; further provided, that Ball Club reserves the right to the use of said Wrigley Field until the stadium referred to in paragraph 6 shall be completed and ready for use, conditioned upon payment to City of a rental to be mutually agreed upon.

6. Ball Club shall cause to be constructed on property conveyed by City, at Ball Club's cost and expense, a modern baseball stadium, seating not less than 50,000 people.

7. Ball Club will cause to be moved to the City of Los Angeles the present Brooklyn National League Baseball franchise and ball team known as the "DODGERS".

The City of Los Angeles agrees that it will initiate proceedings for the purpose of rezoning said property to "C-3" and for the granting of a conditional use permitting its use for a baseball stadium as herein provided.

It is recognized that the method or means of carrying out the terms and conditions of this contract in detail have not been provided herein in every instance but that the parties hereto will use their best efforts in arriving at mutually acceptable methods of procedure and modes of operation as to such details. Any such action on the part of the City shall be submitted to the City Council for approval.

IT IS EXPRESSLY UNDERSTOOD AND AGREED that this agreement is made in reliance upon the action taken by the Board of Supervisors of the County of Los Angeles in Resolution of said Board of Supervisors adopted and entered in the minutes of said Board on Tuesday, September 17, 1957, a copy of which said resolution is attached hereto, marked Exhibit "B", and made a part hereof, providing for the furnishing of funds to construct necessary access roads, including cost of acquiring any required rights of way, and the City agrees that upon the County's making such funds available to City it will diligently proceed with the construction of such access roads. City agrees that it will make demand as required upon the County of Los Angeles to furnish the funds heretofore voted and/or appropriated for said access roads.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, The City of Los Angeles has caused this instrument to be executed in its behalf by its duly authorized officers, and the Ball Club has executed the same

by its duly authorized officers and has caused its corporate seal to be hereunto affixed, all on the day and year first hereinabove written.

THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES

By _____

Acting Mayor

(SEAL)

ATTEST:

City Clerk

LOS ANGELES DODGERS, INC. (formerly known as the BROOKLYN NATIONAL LEAGUE BASEBALL CLUB, INC.)

By _____

President

(SEAL)

By _____

Secretary

EXHIBIT "B"

Gordon T. Nesvig, Chief Clerk of the Board.
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES BOARD OF SUPERVISORS, 501 HALL OF RECORDS, LOS ANGELES 12.

Members of the Board: John Anson Ford, Chairman; Herbert C. Legg, Kenneth Hahn, Burton W. Chace and Warren M. Dorn.

RESOLUTION

Introduced by Supervisors
Tuesday, September 17, 1957

The Board met in regular session. Present: Supervisors John Anson Ford, Chairman presiding, Herbert C. Legg, Kenneth Hahn, Burton W. Chace and Warren M. Dorn; and Harold J. Ostly, Clerk, by Gordon T. Nesvig, Deputy Clerk.

* * * * *

IN RE MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL IN COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES:
RESOLUTION DETERMINING THAT COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES WILL MAKE

WHEREAS, Ball Club is willing to cause Wrigley Field to be conveyed to the City for said property now owned and to be acquired as aforesaid by the City in Chavez Ravine; and

WHEREAS, the bringing of said Major League Baseball Club to Los Angeles would result in a large additional payroll in this area; and

WHEREAS, all of the foregoing is useful and convenient in connection with the exercise of the City's rights and powers and is in the public interest,

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS UNDERSTOOD AND AGREED AS FOLLOWS, TO WIT:

1. City will convey the property presently owned by it in Chavez Ravine consisting of 185 acres, more or less, and will use its best efforts to acquire, at a reasonable cost, and convey additional land, to make a total of 300 acres, more or less, all as shown in Exhibit A, to Ball Club, or nominee; provided, however:

(a) City shall reserve all mineral rights which it now owns or may hereafter acquire, and a suitable drill site for the production of oil from said property, the location of such site to be mutually agreed upon by the parties hereto, which location shall not interfere with Ball Club's operations, and not exceed 5 acres in size.

(b) One-half of all monies, payments, royalties, or other consideration received by City from said mineral rights, or any of them, in whole or in part, shall be placed in a special trust fund by City, and such funds shall be expended solely for the purpose of providing and maintaining recreational facilities to promote the youth program of Ball Club, the location and type of such recreational facilities to be mutually agreed upon by the parties hereto, with approval by the City Council by ordinance.

(c) That title to said 40 acres thereof, the location of such 40 acres to be designated by Ball Club, shall be retained by the City for a period of 20 years to assure performance by Ball Club of its policy of providing and maintaining recreational facilities. In the event such policy, and all of the terms of this agreement pertaining to the recreational facilities on said 40 acres, shall have been fully and faithfully performed for a period of 20 years, title of such 40 acres shall be conveyed to the Ball Club, or nominee, forthwith, without further consideration.

It is understood and agreed that any violation of the terms of the agreement with reference to the recreational facilities shall not invalidate or affect any transfers of land

which may theretofore have been made pursuant to this agreement.

(d) All property herein agreed to be conveyed by City, including said 40 acres, will be conveyed free and clear of any deed restriction on use, and title policy shall be furnished to Ball Club. In this connection, it is expressly understood and agreed that the portion of property described in paragraph 1 now owned by the City and which was acquired by City from the Los Angeles Housing Authority has a deed restriction reading, in part, as follows:

"To be used for public purpose only; and not to be used directly or indirectly by the City of Los Angeles, or its grantees, successors in interest, assigns, or any other person or persons whatsoever claiming by, through or under the City of Los Angeles, for a period of 20 years from and after the date hereof, for residential development or residential subdivision."

City agrees to use its best efforts to have such deed restrictions eliminated or modified so as to permit the use contemplated by Ball Club; provided that in the event City is unable to have such restriction so eliminated or modified, this contract shall be of no further force or effect.

2. Upon conveyance of such property to Ball Club, the existing public streets therein which would no longer be needed for present or future street purposes will be vacated and the City shall, upon demand of Ball Club, commence proceedings to vacate said streets and deliver any title which may remain in the City without further consideration.

3. Prior to passage of title to any of the acreage described in paragraph 1, City shall spend up to but not to exceed \$2,000,000 to place such property in a proper condition to convey to Ball Club or its nominee, the manner in which such money will be spent for such purpose to be designated by Ball Club.

4. City agrees to provide such public streets as may be needed within the periphery of the area to be acquired by Ball Club; provided, however, that the cost thereof, other than the cost of acquiring necessary land, shall be considered a part of the \$2,000,000 which the City is to spend to prepare the site for sale.

5. Ball Club shall cause to be conveyed to City the land and improvements now known as Wrigley Field, including all mineral rights; provided, however, that one-half of all monies, payments, royalties, or other consideration received by City from said mineral rights, or any of them, in

The Chavez Ravine Agreement

A G R E E M E N T

THIS AGREEMENT, made and entered into this 3rd day of June, 1959, by and between THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES, a municipal corporation (hereinafter called City), and the LOS ANGELES DODGERS, INC. (formerly known as the BROOKLYN NATIONAL LEAGUE BASEBALL CLUB, INC.), a New York corporation (hereinafter called the Ball Club).

W I T N E S S E T H :

WHEREAS, City is the owner of certain property in an area generally known as Chavez Ravine, and is in the process of acquiring additional property in said area; and

WHEREAS, such property is no longer required for the use of the City; and

WHEREAS, the bringing of major league baseball to Los Angeles would result in direct and indirect benefits to the City, and would be highly beneficial to the City, to the public, and to its inhabitants to have such property the site of a major league baseball stadium; and

WHEREAS, the placing of such property on the tax rolls would produce substantial additional property tax revenues to the City; and

WHEREAS, the City would receive substantial tax revenues from sources, other than the Ball Club, incident to major league baseball in Los Angeles; and

WHEREAS, the Ball Club is willing to acquire such property, and would, at its cost and expense, construct a major league baseball stadium for the purpose of providing

facilities for the major league baseball club known as the LOS ANGELES DODGERS (formerly known as the BROOKLYN DODGERS); and

WHEREAS, such Club has a long-standing policy of admitting juveniles to various games free of charge as a method of combating juvenile delinquency and stimulating interest in healthful recreational activities; and

WHEREAS, as part of this policy said Ball Club will construct recreational facilities costing not to exceed a half million dollars on a 40-acre portion of the property to be conveyed by the City, as herein provided, in Chavez Ravine, such recreational facilities to be mutually agreed upon by the parties hereto before such property is conveyed to said Ball Club, such recreational facilities to be constructed simultaneously with the construction of said stadium; and as a further part of said policy Ball Club will maintain such recreational facilities for a period of 20 years, at an annual cost of \$60,000, but shall be under no obligation to furnish personnel for the operation thereof; provided, that in the event such maintenance cost in any one year does not amount to \$60,000, then as a further part of said Ball Club policy the difference between such maintenance cost and \$60,000 shall be paid to City so that it may be used by City for the providing of or maintaining recreational facilities elsewhere in said city.

In this connection, it is understood that such recreational facilities shall be under the control of City, but City shall not permit the scheduling of any event at any of the recreational facilities on said 40 acres which would involve the concentration of a large number of participants or spectators during any time when Ball Club has scheduled an event at said baseball stadium, and that during any event at said baseball stadium Ball Club shall have the right to use any facilities suitable for parking as may be provided within said 40 acres; and

WHEREAS, such additional recreational facilities are sorely needed by the City and will fill a definite public need and will be of great value to the City; and

WHEREAS, the City is also in need of a suitable place for the holding of various events, including but not limited to amateur baseball games and similar activities; and

WHEREAS, Ball Club is able to have the baseball stadium and grounds known and Wrigley Field conveyed to City; and

WHEREAS, said Wrigley Field would be suitable for such purposes and would be of great value to the City and its bit ; ar

ENDNOTES

1. "The Forgotten Forest Retreat Right in Central L.A.," Sunset 135 (September 1965): 87.
2. Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles, "Real Estate Appraisal for Elysian Park Heights, Cal 4-11," Los Angeles, CA, 1949.
3. "The Chavez Ravine Agreement", 1959. Quoted in Sullivan, Neil J., The Dodgers Move West, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987): 221.
4. Report of General Manger to Board of Recreation and Park Commissioners: Elysian Park (Buena Vista Reservoir Picnic Area) -- Right of Entry Permit to DWP in Connection with Construction of New Water Pumping Station, August 28, 1989, No. 486-89.
5. San Francisco Recreation and Park Department, "Objectives and Policies: The Plan for Golden Gate Park," San Francisco, CA, July 18, 1985.

Interviews

Luther Derian, Department of Sanitation (Los Angeles, April 1990).

Judith Jamison, Citizens Committee to Save Elysian Park (Los Angeles: May 1990).

Peter Kovounas, Department of Water and Power (Los Angeles: April 1990).

Sallie Neubauer, Citizens Committee to Save Elysian Park (Los Angeles: May 1990).

Chief Rudd, Los Angeles Police Department (Los Angeles, April 1990).

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"The Forgotten Forest Retreat Right in Central L.A." Sunset 135 (September 1965): 86-90.

Gordon, Larry. "Panels Squabble Over Land Swap for Pump House." Los Angeles Times, 16 May 1985, 1-2 Part IX.

Hines, Thomas. "Housing, Baseball, and Creeping Socialism: The Battle of Chavez Ravine, Los Angeles, 1949-1959." Journal of Urban History 8 (February 1982), 123-142.

Sneiderman, Phil. "Panel OKs Scrapping Walkway." Los Angeles Times.

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"The Chavez Ravine Agreement", 1959. Quoted in Sullivan, Neil J. The Dodgers Move West. New York: Oxford University Press, 1987.

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Lively, Bruce R. "Naval and Marine Corps Reserve Center Los Angeles."

Los Angeles Department of City Planning. Silver Lake - Echo Park District Plan. Los Angeles, CA, 1984.

Report of General Manger to Board of Recreation and Park Commissioners: Elysian Park (Buena Vista Reservoir Picnic Area) -- Right of Entry Permit to DWP in Connection with Construction of New Water Pumping Station. August 28, 1989, No. 486-89.

Report of General Manager to Board of Recreation and Park Commissioners: Elysian Park -- Proposed Widening of Pasadena Freeway. February 26, 1990, No. 123-90.

San Francisco Recreation and Park Department. "Objectives and Policies: The Plan for Golden Gate Park." San Francisco, CA, July 18, 1985.

strong ordinance should only permit "activities, features, and facilities...(which are) subordinate to the present design and character of the Park."⁵

More comprehensive Environmental Impact Reports would be an additional means of regulating development. Studies should consider the social, psychological and historic impacts of the Park as a entire entity. Measuring the impacts only to land adjacent to a proposed development, and not to the Park as a whole, inaccurately describes potential effects. And failure to consider difficult-to-quantify benefits, like quiet and serenity, misrepresent the full value of the Park. All proposed developments near such a sensitive area like Elysian Park should require rigorous and comprehensive EIRs.

At the time of Dodger Stadium's construction, the City removed land adjacent to Stadium Way from the Park and gave the Department of Public Works jurisdiction (DPW). The DPW expanded all of Stadium Way, except for the section between Academy Road and Scott Avenue, into a six-lane highway. The Avenue of the Palms, a Los Angeles Cultural landmark, escaped a similar fate when the City agreed to return the land, including the unwidened section, to the jurisdiction of the Department of Recreation and Parks in 1965.

The straightening of Stadium Way for a full-service highway has remained an ingrained City policy. The City continues to act to improve the speed and access of the road through straightenings and rerouting, always ignoring the impacts on the surrounding park environment. People come to the Park to enjoy its quiet and open space. Both are diminished by the character of Stadium Way. The cars create noise and the speed and quantity of traffic make the road both a physical and visual barrier. Crossing the street to use open space on the other side is difficult and dangerous for both adults and the many children in the Park. The 1984 Community Plan recommendation to reroute Stadium Way away from the heavily used Chavez Ravine area would help return the entire meadow to pedestrian use. The Dodgers, however, refuse to relinquish land that would fulfill this proposal.

A complete and integrated form and ambiance elude the Park because Stadium Way cuts right through it. Instead of encouraging the division, City policy should seek to reintegrate the road back into the Park environment. Stop signs and cross walks would allow people to use land on both sides of the street, it would create a larger sense of space by eliminating barriers, it would quiet the area, and it would limit the park to use as a recreational area and not as a freeway. Further, stop signs would slow traffic down to such an extent that its use as a route to downtown would be eliminated.

EDUCATION AND REGULATION

This chapter intends to present the many past, present and potential physical impacts to the character of Elysian Park caused by development. A more thorough understanding of the policies and events surrounding each issue is necessary for pursuing any attempt to involve outside interests in preserving the integrity of the Park.

Outside interests must be taught, either through dialogue or regulation, that each incremental alternation to Elysian Park has a cumulative impact on the Park. Each change, even to an infrequently used area, sacrifices the integrity of the Park as an historic open space. In addition, the continual erosion of the Park's open space by development weakens its psychological and social value as a vast natural refuge.

There are effective tools for communicating the value of Elysian Park. The Elysian Park Master Plan, approved by the City Council in 1971, defines priorities for enhancing the Park for enjoyment by City residents. It outlines improvements that strengthen the Park as a cohesive space. Recommendations like a swim lake in the Buena Vista area, the realignment of roads to a winding, pastoral form, and consistent design for Park furniture reinforce recognition of the entire Park as a public open space. The Master Plan effectively defines appropriate development for Elysian Park and should be complied with by all interests.

More general guidelines are effective for handling unanticipated proposals for intrusion into the Park. Open Space zoning would specifically define what kind of development is appropriate for Elysian Park and, more importantly, what is not. Ideally, these regulations would effectively prevent land use in Elysian Park that is unrelated to recreation and open space. Only by special permit would this type of development be allowed to occur. An appropriately

as enjoyable open space and vistas. The Department has the opportunity to create an integrated facility by leaving the reservoir expanse open to public view and enjoyment.

As a recreational resource, the foremost purpose of any development in Elysian Park should be recreational (both passive and active). Though City departments have valuable goals to fulfill, within the Park they should be accomplished with an exceptional regard to the surroundings. Like other users of the Park the DWP should respect it, and even seek to improve its conditions for others.

Radio Tower

The City radio tower occupies a prime location that with improved access and maintenance could become an integral part of the Park. The present radio tower, built at least fifty years ago, is under the jurisdiction of the Department of General Services. Almost all City agencies, including Police and Fire services, use the tower for communication purposes. The Fire Department has been allocated funds to construct a new tower that will surround the existing one and stretch to a height of 180 feet. A small maintenance building is also on the hill and a fence encloses the entire area.

Though physically cut off from the rest of the Park by the Pasadena Freeway and Solano Street, improved access to radio hill would increase public use. The hill is one of the highest points in the park and offers unique views of downtown and the surrounding area. City facilities on the hill could continue to be appropriately protected by a fence, with the land surrounding them improved to increase the area's use for recreation. Greater use of the area will integrate Radio Hill back into the Park physically and conceptually.

Bishop Canyon Landfill

From 1966 to 1969 the Department of Sanitation operated a landfill in Bishop Canyon that significantly impacted the physical form of Elysian Park. The Canyon was one of a series of ravines that poured down from the Northern section of the Park. Within the dramatic space of the Canyon the Department of Recreation and Parks had built swings and baseball diamonds for public use. The landfill permanently filled the ravine, eliminating the unique environment it had offered to those using the recreational facilities.

Once covered, the landfill created a new land form in the Park. The area is now a flat 16-acre expanse that Recreation and Parks is seeking to develop as open space recreation fields. The land, however, continues to settle causing damage to the irrigation system. In addition, gas from landfill material is continually emitted. There is potential for this area to be returned to public access for recreational purposes. The time frame, however, remains unclear. Yet even with the return of the land to public use, an unalterable change in the Park's historical character has occurred.

Stadium Way

Since Chavez Ravine Road became Stadium Way in 1961, it has significantly impacted the ambiance of Elysian Park. The road was renamed and improved to ease access to Dodger Stadium. Further, it also serves as a commuter route to downtown that by-passes freeway congestion. The street's high-capacity, high-speed traffic has made full and enjoyable use of the Park difficult.

also contains a number of classrooms and recreational facilities that would form an ideal public resource should the Federal government decide to leave the site.

Completed in 1940, the Works Progress Administration constructed the Reserve on the previous location of the Hebrew Benevolent Society Cemetery and the City smallpox isolation hospital. The City gave the Federal government land for the Reserve under the condition that it would revert to City ownership when the government terminated use of the facility. In 1943, the Federal government also acquired vacant land surrounding the original building through the process of eminent domain. The Reserve covers almost 11 acres of land that contain many large spaces and recreation areas. The buildings hold a swimming pool and basketball courts that have in the past been utilized by the YMCA and community children.

The Los Angeles Fire Department also uses the Reserve for training and recreation. The stipulation that the site will eventually revert to City ownership leaves open the possibility that another protective service enclave, like the Police Academy, may be developed adjacent to the Park. Such restricted access to the resources of the Reserve should be avoided. City ownership of the site offers a wonderful opportunity for ensuring that the Reserve's future use will be accessible to the public. Already outfitted with extensive recreational facilities, the Reserve and its surrounding land would be a wonderful addition to recreational resources and would also be compatible to the environment of Elysian Park.

CITY FACILITIES WITHIN ELYSIAN PARK

City facilities provide essential services to Los Angeles. Their construction within Elysian Park, however, detracts from the natural character of the Park and diminishes its value as a public open space.

Department of Water and Power Facilities

In addition to the pumping station, the Department of Water and Power (DWP) has other facilities located in Elysian Park; most notably, the water tank next to the Bishop Canyon landfill and the Elysian Park Reservoir. Both facilities provide important public services to the population of Los Angeles. However, by not appropriately integrating these facilities into the Park's physical environment, the DWP fails to recognize the value of the Park as an important public resource.

The DWP built the Park water tank in 1926. Covering about 2800 square feet, it is thirty-four feet high and has a holding capacity of 719,000 gallons. The water tank services the water needs of the park and is placed on high ground to facilitate distribution. Since the tank is not fenced there is no offensive barrier to the area. It is, however, covered with graffiti and stands out on the edge of a high, barren point. In its physical appearance the tank is a blemish on the Park. No attempt has been made to make the tank's existence less conspicuous. Landscaping with plants would help to integrate the tank into the Park environment, and also deter graffiti.

The Elysian Park Reservoir was one of the first reservoirs constructed under the City controlled water department. Completed in 1903, the DWP expanded the reservoir in the early 1940s, increasing the reservoir's capacity from 10 million gallons to the present 55 million and its size to approximately seven acres. In addition to servicing the water needs of Los Angeles, the Reservoir has become an important recreational resource as well. It offers pleasant vistas of open space and water and serves as a relaxing environment for running or walking. To the detriment of the Park, the DWP has proposed covering the reservoir to improve water quality. Improved water quality is a desired goal, but not at the expense of another public benefit such

however, continue to offer a serene setting for both patients and staff. As well, the park benefits from the existence of a rural-like development on adjacent land. Both the Department of Recreation and Parks and the Barlow Hospital Board would benefit from preservation of these compatible environments. An open dialogue between the two organizations would help ensure that the needs of one entity are not realized at the expense of the other.

Police Academy

In 1972, the City removed 21 acres of Park land from public access by giving the Department of Public Works (DPW) jurisdiction over the Police Academy site. The change occurred shortly after the City Council approved the Elysian Park Master Plan which recommended that the Police leave the Park. The transfer allowed the needs for expansion of the Police Academy to predominate over any consideration of the use and character of Elysian Park. DPW jurisdiction facilitates fulfillment of future Police Academy development decisions because this department is under no obligation to consider the needs of the Park. Both the expansion of the Police Academy on its existing site or its relocation will significantly impact the use and integrity of Elysian Park. The former could increase traffic, disfigure the canyon and permanently remove the 21 acres from the Park. The latter option may allow for the reincorporation of recreational facilities and a serene space back into the Park.

Use of the Elysian Park site by the Police was initiated when the Los Angeles Police Revolver and Athletic Club (LAPRAC) leased Park land to establish a pistol range in 1925. In 1932, buildings from the Olympics were brought to the site for eventual use as Police training facilities. The LAPRAC originally located its pistol range in a beautiful canyon of the Park to both muffle the noise of the guns and to realize an attractive environment for its users. The enjoyment of such a pleasant and isolated canyon, however, should not be limited to the Los Angeles Police. The general public, to whom the land was originally ordained, should also have access.

In addition to preventing public access to a beautiful part of the Park, the presence of the Police Academy has had other detrimental impacts. Day and night firing of arms disrupts the quiet of the Park and surrounding neighborhoods, as does increased traffic. And the lack of landscaping around the front parking lot prevents physical integration of the facility into the Park environment.

Future plans for the Police Academy will have significant consequences for Elysian Park. Park impacts should be of a primary concern when the Academy decides where it will build new facilities, even if that implies sacrificing some of its own goals. As suggested in the Elysian Park Master Plan, the noise and private character of the Police Academy are not compatible with the park environment. Off-duty officers may provide a sense of security, but the pleasant site of their training and recreation facilities should be open to enjoyment for all. The Academy's facilities and serene environment could best serve the community as a public space for leisure and active recreation. A decision by the DPW and the Academy to build new, higher-density facilities on the Park site must demand that the physical, social and historical impacts to the Park be considered and that the effects be adequately mitigated.

United States Naval and Marine Corps Reserve

The United States Naval and Marine Corps Reserve is a State recognized historical monument, just south of Barlow Hospital on Stadium Way. The building's large interior expanse gives the Reserve an architectural and historic significance that compels its preservation. The Reserve

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Having established the goals of this master plan, the pieces begin to fall into place. Generally, the land forms would remain undisturbed and those values which now exist in low key would be enhanced to gain maximum use of the vast park acreage. There are certain basic land values which should be established before the description of individual areas.


We believe that the continued use of one of the park canyons by the Police Academy, while comforting in a security aspect, is in conflict with the spirit of the park as set forth in this report. The noise from the police target ranges is at odds with the otherwise peace and quiet which prevails in the park. Therefore we recommend that the police facility be relocated in an area where they can readily expand without restriction to meet their new challenges and future needs.


It is also the recommendation of this report that the parcel of land bounded by Stadium Way, Academy Road and Elysian Park Drive be obtained for park use and to protect the fabulous views from Angel's Point. Development of this land for anything other than low key park use would be disastrous to the form of the park and seriously cripple efforts to solidify park functions.

The area south of Academy Road and north of the Dodger Park parking (about 35 acres) is zoned for parking and will be turned over to Dodger Park in about 12 years. We propose that the Dodger group consider the possibility of developing this area into a first rate pony league and little league ball complex as a community involvement program which would relate to youth development with the Dodger organization as the sponsor, which could have interesting long-range potential for the Dodgers as far as community involvement is concerned.

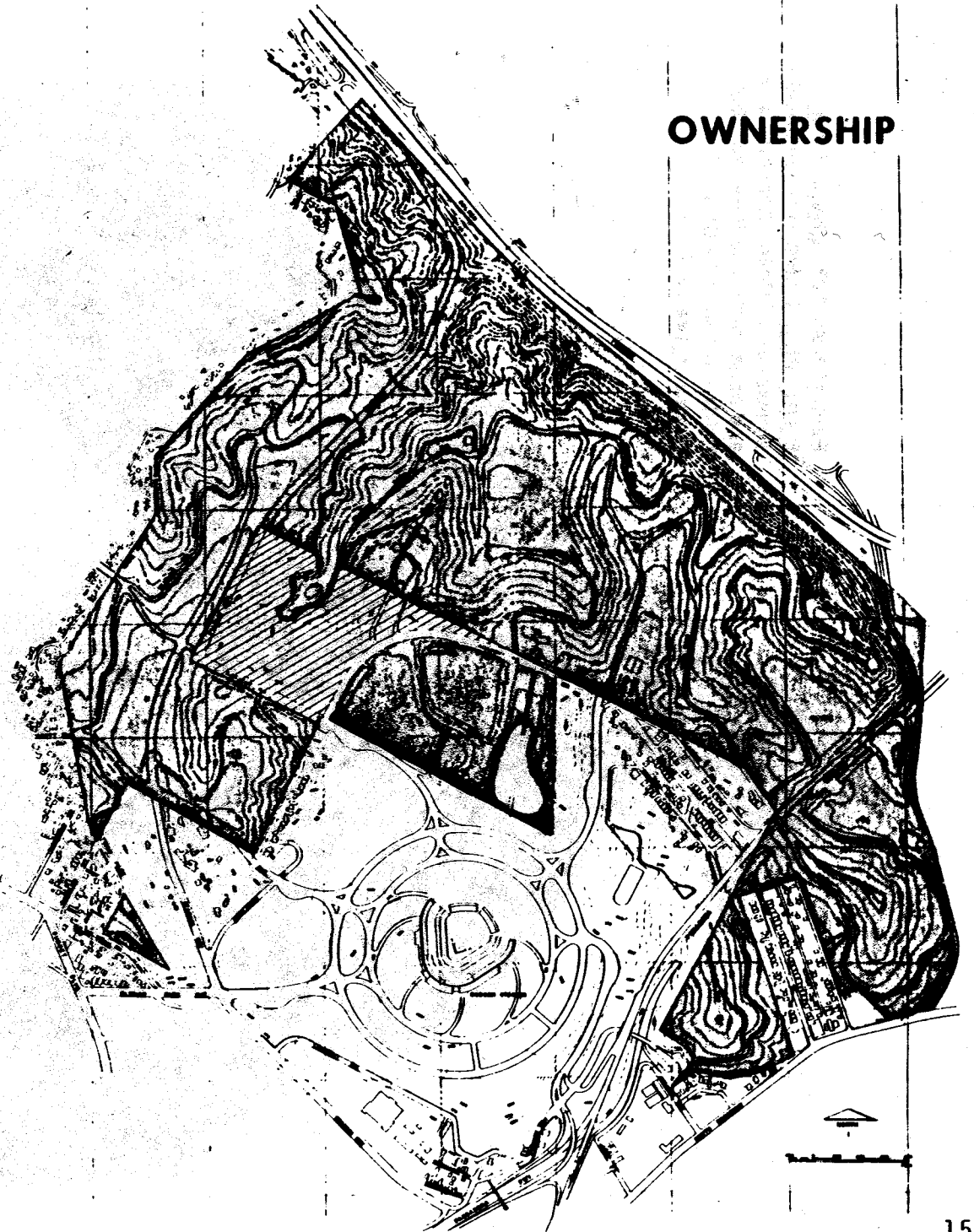
This facility should have a clubhouse to direct the activities and adequate restroom facilities and parking. There should be provisions for concession stands and sensitive landscape development to make the area attractive.

LEGEND

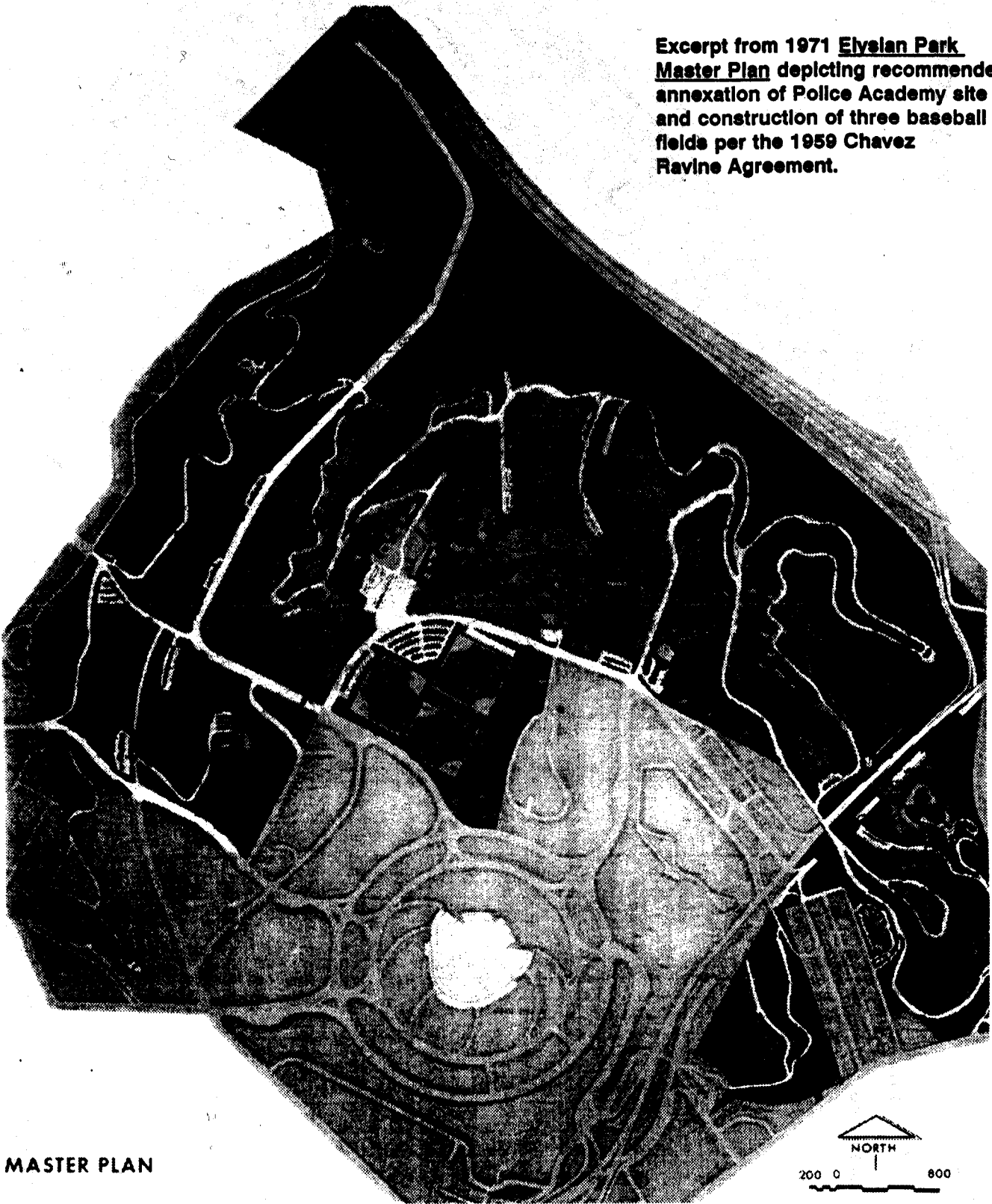
Park Land 

Recommended for Aquisition 

OWNERSHIP



**Excerpt from 1971 Elysian Park
Master Plan depicting recommended
annexation of Police Academy site
and construction of three baseball
fields per the 1959 Chavez
Ravine Agreement.**



MASTER PLAN



Pasadena Freeway

CALTRANS has proposed widening the Pasadena Freeway from the Golden State Freeway to Hill Street to relieve congestion on the inbound lanes. The proposed widening plans to take land from Elysian Park and also to eliminate a pedestrian walkway and access stairs. For the Board of Recreation and Park Commissioners (which approved the widening in concept), CALTRANS, and the Department of Transportation, the need to improve transportation systems into downtown takes precedence over the value of Elysian Park. Impacts to the Park from the taking of land and the destruction of the only remaining pedestrian connection to an isolated area may be tempered by the DWP-suggested exchange of lands. Even useful additions, however, can not regain the loss caused to the Park's true form.

The City originally built Figueroa Street through Elysian Park in 1930. The beautiful Art Deco tunnels and the walkway illustrate the concern and interest for both physically and visually integrating the new roadway into the natural surroundings. Ten years later the State blasted a second road through the park for the Pasadena Freeway. Though less attention was given to integrating the Freeway into the environment, the construction of stairs to the crossing bridge created an important access link between the separated areas of the Park.

The loss of the access stairs and the walkway between the inbound and outbound lanes effectively removes land from the Park by significantly limiting access to its entirety. The removal of land from park use sacrifices the character and full use of the whole Park. Acquiring land in another area, even accessible and beneficial land, can not compensate for the harm inflicted upon the park in another area. Improvements and new acquisitions will always enhance Elysian Park, but not if it demands the surrender of other land. Such a sacrifice only weakens the entire entity.

PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT WITHIN AND ADJACENT TO ELYSIAN PARK

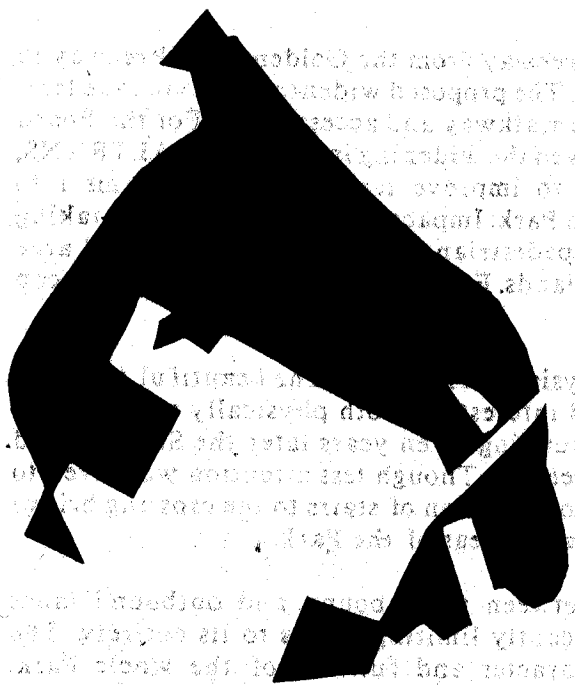
Development on land adjacent to Elysian Park occurs to meet the demands of an outside interest. Such interests, however, should be enlightened about the need for developing uses and designs that are harmonious with the Park. Conscientious development preserves the Park and allows all interests to benefit from its secluded, natural setting.

Barlow Hospital

Barlow Hospital is a loose grouping of historically significant structures located just outside park land, but within its common environment. The small Bungalow-style cottages in their rural-like setting fit well into the natural surroundings and enhance Elysian Park. Continued use and design of Barlow Hospital in a form compatible to that of the Park will mutually benefit both the Park and the Hospital.

Dr. Jarvis Barlow established Barlow Hospital in 1902, organizing the institution on the basis of new ideas for the treatment of tuberculosis patients. Dr. Barlow chose the location in Elysian Park because it offered an ideal environment for patient care. The quiet and solace of the natural environment provided a place for peaceful rest and the clean air allowed patients to breathe more easily. The location of the hospital on land adjacent to the Park ensured that those surroundings would be maintained into the future.

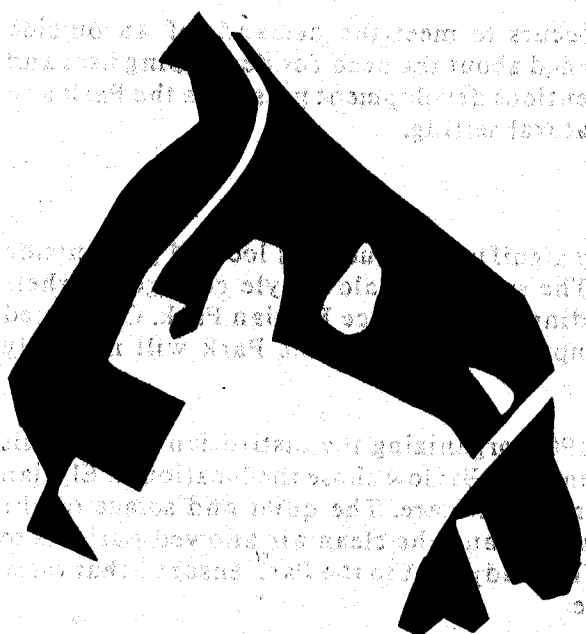
The hospital continues to care for patients with respiratory disorders, but now depends on technology, rather than the environment, for treatment. Elysian Park's pleasant surroundings,



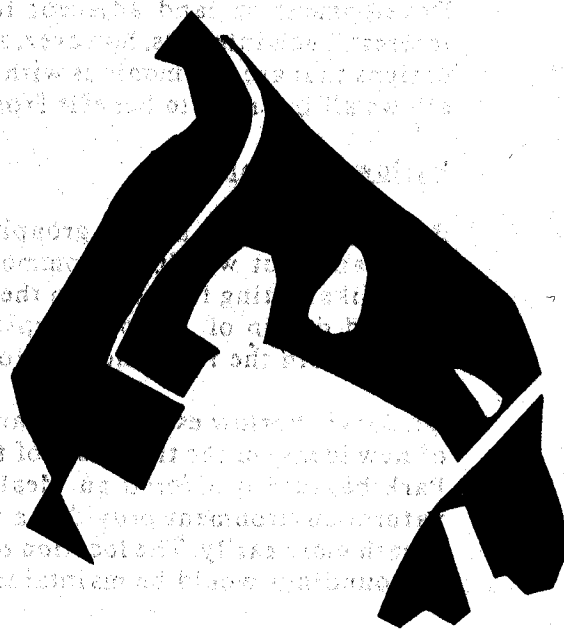
Pasadena Freeway, 1940



Dodger Stadium, 1962

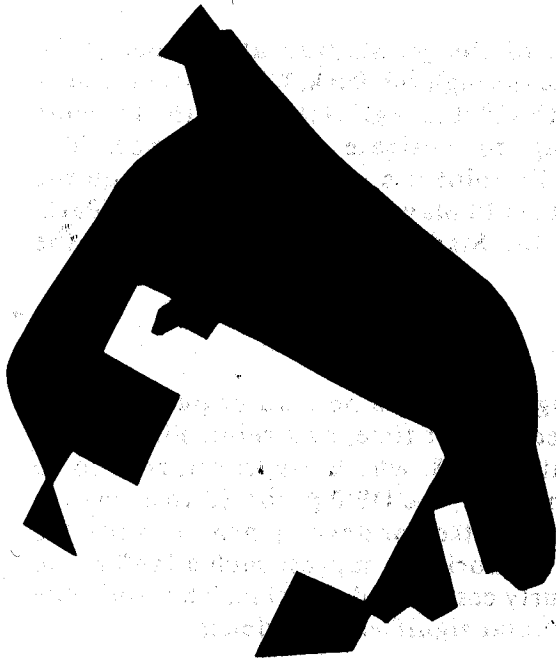


Police Academy, 1972

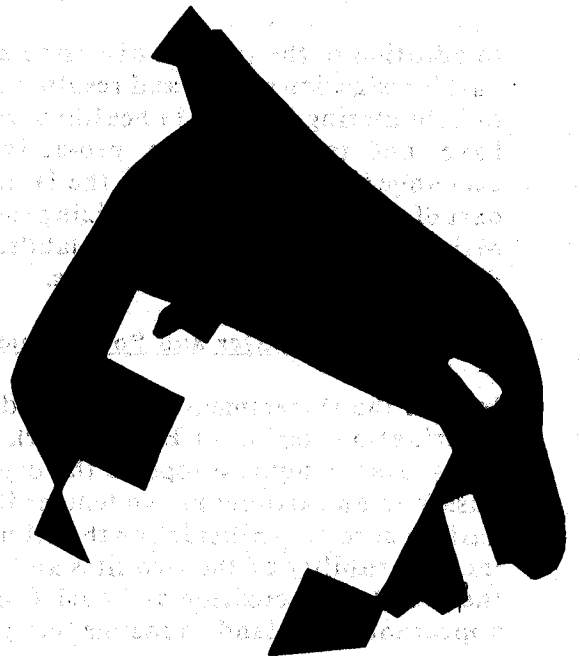


Dodger Land Exchange, 1980

ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS TO ELYSIAN PARK



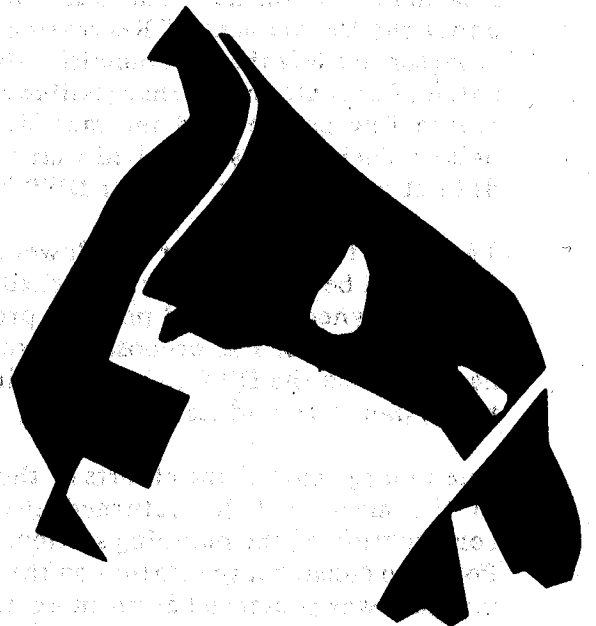
Elysian Park, 1886



Elysian Park Reservoir, 1903



Stadium Way, 1962



Bishop Canyon Landfill, 1966

accommodate the new and popularly desired baseball stadium, a distinct environment of slopes and ravines was sacrificed. Unfortunately few baseball fans today recognize that the unique surrounding terrain also once lay beneath the stadium.

In addition to the impacts discussed above, construction of Dodger Stadium also damaged the Park's irrigation system and resulted in increased traffic through the Park. With a commitment to "stimulating interest in healthful recreational activities",³ it is regrettable that the Dodgers have not taken a more pro-active role in seeking to mitigate their presence. The exchange/relinquishment of the land adjacent to Angel's Point is a positive first step on the part of the ball club in recognizing the beneficial role it could play in improving Elysian Park. Maintenance of the dramatic landscape surrounding the Stadium would only benefit the Dodgers and its Los Angeles fans.

Department of Water and Power Pumping Station

In 1980 the Department of Water and Power (DWP) sought to build a new water pumping and chlorination station in Elysian Park. The plan proposed at that time, and reintroduced five years later, sought to replace the original station, built in 1888, which was considered to be unsafe in an earthquake. To temper its intrusion into the park, the DWP proposed to exchange half an acre on a hillside for the 1.1 acres of park that it wanted for development. Despite the incomparability of the two sites and the DWP's lack of authority to suggest such a land swap, the Board of Recreation and Park Commissioners seriously considered the plan. The equitable appearance of a land exchange had given the DWP proposal significant credence.

The site that the DWP sought to exchange was a small half-acre site located on a hillside next to the existing pumping station. The land was located just within the Park boundaries in the east and above the railroad tracks. This site was already Park land, not DWP land, for which the latter held an easement. In affect, the exchange would have given the Park its own land.

The proposed site for the pumping station's construction was a 1.1 acre meadow, once the location of the Buena Vista Reservoir. Taken out of service in 1956, the Reservoir was placed under the Department of Recreation and Parks jurisdiction in 1966. The Reservoir's removal from service left the area blemished by a large ditch, projecting manholes and air vents, a large patch of asphalt and an inaccessible road. In defense of their proposal, the DWP suggested that only a few people used the meadow due to the site's remoteness and exposure to freeway noise.⁴ Their analysis implied that the meadow would hardly be missed by Park users. They did not consider that leftover DWP infrastructure made enjoyment of the meadow difficult.

The Department of Water and Power also failed to consider the Park as a comprehensive entity that could be significantly weakened with the relinquishment of land. The ease of developing on City-owned park land possibly prevented the DWP from considering the full impact to the Park as a whole. The proposal to exchange land for which it merely held an easement would have allowed the DWP to fulfill their own needs at a minimal financial cost, but at great cost to Elysian Park and its users.

Due in large part to the efforts of the Citizens Committee to Save Elysian Park, improvements to the meadow fully returned the area to recreational use in 1988 and precluded the construction of the pumping station. The renovations compelled the Department of Water and Power to construct the station on the hillside lot for which they already held an easement. The meadow was preserved as an integral part of Elysian Park.

Dodger Stadium

Dodger Stadium has had the largest single impact on both the ambiance of Elysian park and its physical form. The Stadium's physical presence is that of a vast parking lot in the very midst of the Park. The Dodger's popularity draws a crowd from throughout the Los Angeles County region who arrive via a route, either freeway or surface street, that passes through Elysian Park. (The impacts of heavily-used roads running through the Park are addressed in a later portion of this chapter.) The Stadium has also had an enormous influence on the image of the Park. By becoming its central focus, the Stadium has become the landmark by which the Park itself is identified.

A prominent physical impact on Elysian park by Dodger Stadium was the loss of Park land. In 1959, the Los Angeles Dodgers, Inc. acquired approximately 315 acres of land in the area known as Chavez Ravine. Most of this area had previously been the location of a predominantly Chicano community, that included owner-occupied homes, schools and small businesses. In 1949 the Housing Authority selected Chavez Ravine as the site for a large public housing development; the Authority began accumulating land using its powers of eminent domain. Three years later the City canceled the project and the Housing Authority transferred the land to the City with the agreement that it would be used for a public purpose only.

The City chose to give the land to the Dodgers. The land grant included the site collected by the Housing Authority, an old State landfill, and acreage from Elysian Park. In exchange for the land the Dodgers agreed to give the City Wrigley Field and to build recreational facilities on 40 acres of their property to be maintained for twenty years at an annual cost of \$60,000. (Document 1. The Chavez Ravine Agreement, 1959)

The Dodgers fulfilled their commitment by building baseball diamonds in the northwest corner of their property and by maintaining them for eighteen years. (The park land lost to Stadium construction was located in the southeast corner of the site, north of Lilac Terrace and west of the Pasadena Freeway.) The annual \$60,000 for maintenance unfortunately flowed into the City's general fund. The Dodgers terminated their agreement two years early and the 40 acres reverted to the Dodgers' full ownership.

In the 1980s, in response to a recommendation in the Elysian Park Master Plan, the Dodgers acted to mitigate the impacts of their presence with a permanent proposal. They agreed to exchange a 20-acre site adjacent to Angel's Point, presumably for the 40 acres that had previously been committed to public use. The reasons for this exchange need further understanding: the Dodgers were under no obligation by their original agreement to relinquish any land to the city, they had, in fact, terminated that agreement two years early and the relinquished land had been owned personally by Walter O'Malley. The "new" park land is a grassy hill area that closely resembles the historic form of the Park. Its incorporation will help prevent development that is incompatible with Elysian Park.

The steep ravine form of the Park is one of its most rare and inspiring physical features. Photographs of Chavez Ravine taken in 1949 indicate that this area consisted of steep grassy hills and narrow valleys. A Housing Authority document from the same year described the site as: "hilly rather than rolling. Approximately 75% of the site is hillside land. An estimated 15% could be said to be unusable because of the steep hill slopes."²

Little of the ravines, as described in this document, exist today. Construction of Dodger Stadium and its surrounding parking lot demanded that the area be graded flat. To

INTRODUCTION

Elysian Park is a rare open space resource in Los Angeles of distinct character. The rugged terrain, deep ravines and steep hills offer a refuge to park-goers in the midst of a fully developed area of the city. Unlike other urban parks that often contain urban cultural activities and rolling land, Elysian Park offers dramatic open spaces appropriate for both passive and active outdoor recreation. The topography of the park creates spaces for enjoying monumental vistas and for playing in serene canyons. "You can ramble through dim, shady mountainside glades, a carpet of deodar needles underfoot. You can stroll green, canyon-bottom lawns past an avenue of rare and stately palms... Then you round a bend--and suddenly the grand sweep of the Glendale Narrows or the full profile of the monumental Civic Center stretches before you."¹ These unique topographical and environmental extremes demand that Elysian Park's integrity be protected.

Elysian Park's location next to downtown, its altitude, its adjacency to freeways, and its open space make it an attractive location for both City and private development. Unfortunately many organizations, including City agencies, conceive of Elysian Park as merely undeveloped land. They partake in a widely-accepted practice of ignoring the value of the Park as an open space and recreation resource. As a result, the Park's rare character is continually sacrificed to accommodate other interests.

At stake in the misuse of Elysian Park is the desecration of a native physical environment and public access to natural surroundings for recreation. Poor maintenance, obtrusive development and loss of land all diminish full use of the Park. Further, the integrity of the Park degenerates as parts are lost to unrelated development and limited access.

This Chapter discusses three methods used by various interests to alter Elysian Park's historic form: land exchanges, incompatible development on adjacent land, and construction of unrelated City services. A land exchange allows development to occur, but provides some restitution to the Park by "replacing" some portion of the land given up to development. Constant deletion and reattachment of lands, however, weakens the natural form of the Park to such a point that its original character is surrendered. Development on private, adjacent sites can easily harm or enhance Elysian Park. Ideally, outside interests would consider the sensitivity of the park and seek to develop compatible environments. City facilities in Elysian Park, such as the radio tower or Stadium Way, serve a public benefit, but detract from the park as a natural open space. The construction of these public services often preclude full use of the Park and detract considerably from the public image of the area as a space fully dedicated to open space.

LAND EXCHANGES

A land exchange, by its very name, seems to be an equitable proposal. But while it serves to mitigate the damaging impacts of unstoppable development, it can never truly compensate for losses to the Park as a whole. The following three case studies, regarding Dodger Stadium, the Department of Water and Power pumping station, and the Pasadena Freeway expansion, discuss the impacts of a land exchange on Elysian Park.

EVERYONE WANTS WHAT ELYSIAN PARK HAS
A History of Unrelated Development and Proposals

1869

Buena Vista Reservoir

1902

Barlow Hospital

1903

Elysian Park Reservoir

1925

Los Angeles Police Revolver
and Athletic Club Pistol Range

1930

Figueroa Street

1940

Radio Tower

1940

United States Naval and
Marine Corps Reserve

1940

Pasadena Freeway

1962

Stadium Way Highway

1962

Dodger Stadium

1965

Oil Drilling Proposal

1965

Convention Center Proposal

1966

Bishop Canyon Landfill

1970

Police Academy Heliport
Proposal

1984

Radio Hill Restaurant
Proposal

1986

Elysian Park Reservoir
Covering Proposal

1989

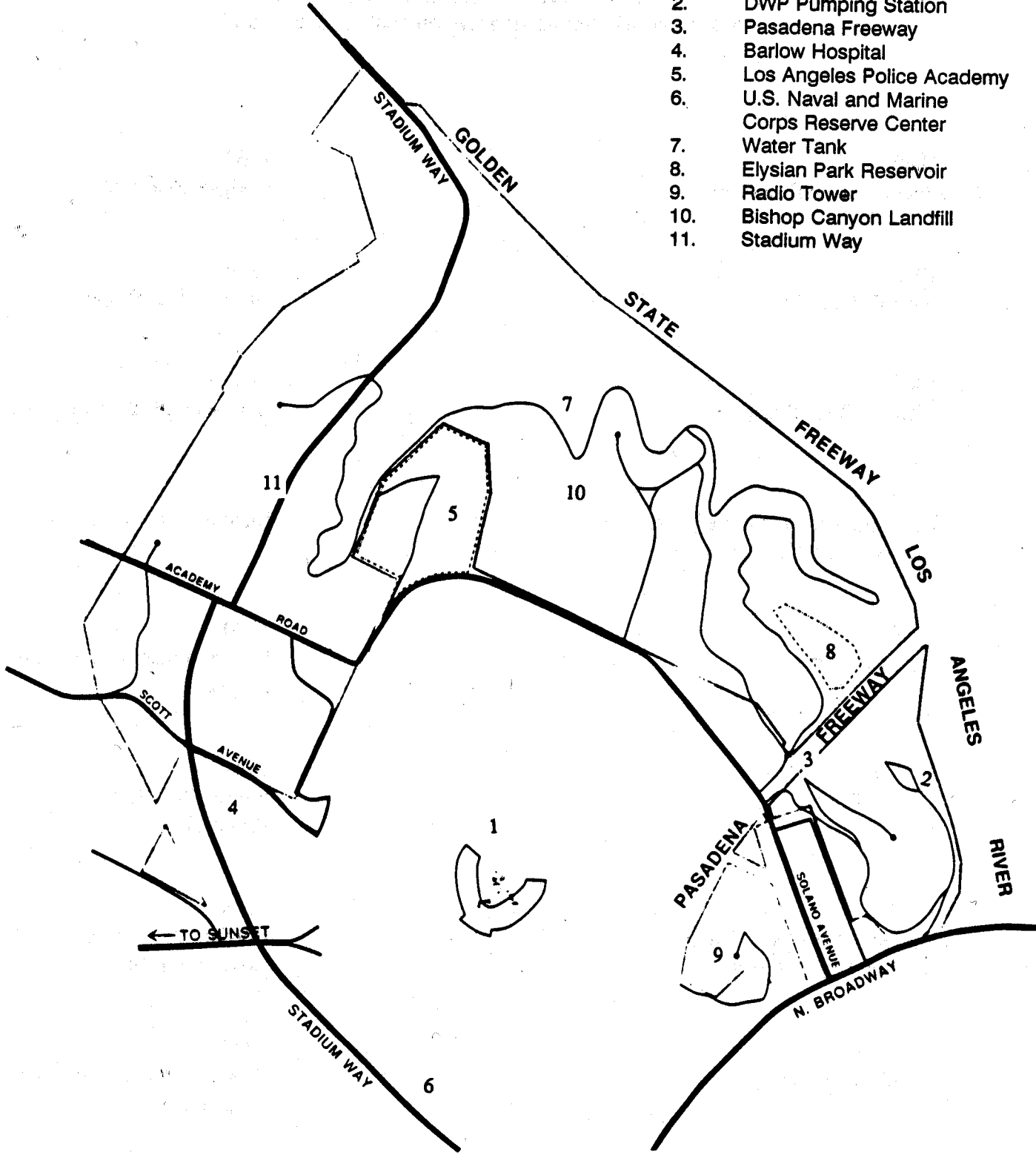
Police Academy Expansion
Proposal

1990

Department of Water and
Power Pumping Station

LEGEND

1. Dodger Stadium
2. DWP Pumping Station
3. Pasadena Freeway
4. Barlow Hospital
5. Los Angeles Police Academy
6. U.S. Naval and Marine Corps Reserve Center
7. Water Tank
8. Elysian Park Reservoir
9. Radio Tower
10. Bishop Canyon Landfill
11. Stadium Way



ELYSIAN PARK: Alterations to Historic Open Space

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ILLUSTRATIONS

Elysian Park: Alterations to an Historic Open Space

Everyone Wants What Elysian Park Has: A History of Unrelated Development and Proposals

Additions and Deletions to Elysian Park

AVAILABLE 2,740,000.00 TO CITY OF LOS ANGELES FOR PUBLIC APPROACH ROAD IMPROVEMENTS TO THE CHAVEZ RAVINE AREA AND INSTRUCTING CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER AND ROAD COMMISSIONER RELATING TO FUNDS REQUIRED.

On motion of Supervisor Hahn, duly carried by the following vote, to wit: Ayes: Supervisors Legg, Hahn, Chace, Dorn and Ford; Noes, none, it is ordered that the following resolution be and the same is hereby adopted:

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors of the County of Los Angeles believes that Major League Baseball would be a recreational and economic asset to this community; and

WHEREAS, both the City and the County have entered into negotiations with the Brooklyn Dodgers, looking toward the transfer of that Club's franchise from New York to Los Angeles; and

WHEREAS, these negotiations contemplate that a site in the Chavez Ravine area will be made available for the construction by the Brooklyn Ball Club of a modern baseball stadium - with parking facilities for 25,000 cars; and

WHEREAS, the Brooklyn Ball Club is also proposing to develop on the site a regional sports center covering approximately 40 acres, these recreational facilities to be available for free public use; and

WHEREAS, if this total development is accomplished, there will be a major increase in vehicular traffic in the Chavez Ravine area because of the public use of the proposed facilities; and

WHEREAS, traffic engineering studies show that present access streets to the Chavez Ravine site are entirely inadequate to accommodate the public use thereof, as contemplated:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the County of Los Angeles determines that if the proposed improvements are located in the Chavez Ravine area as contemplated the public necessity and convenience will require approach road improvements to the area, and that such improvements will be of general county interest; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that if a site in the Chavez Ravine area is made available by the City of Los Angeles for these purposes - and concrete evidence of its contemplated or actual improvement in the manner and for the purposes referred to herein is presented to the County, the County of Los Angeles will make available in the manner provided by law a sum of money not to exceed \$2,740,000.00 or as much thereof as is needed, to the City of Los Angeles payable on demand by the City, for public approach road improvements to the Chavez Ravine area; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Supervisors

Road Commissioner to include within the Road Department 1958-59 budget (Motor Vehicle Fund) for the purposes recited herein an appropriation in an amount estimated to be required for expenditure in 1958-59, and in subsequent years as required, appropriations representing the balance required out of the total commitment of \$2,740,000.00, provided that such balance be further reduced by any funds which may be advanced during the current fiscal year by action of the Board of Supervisors.

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a full, true and correct copy of a resolution which was adopted by the Board of Supervisors of the County of Los Angeles, State of California, on September 17, 1957, and entered in the minutes of said Board.

HAROLD J. OSTLY, County Clerk of the County of Los Angeles, State of California, and ex officio Clerk of the Board of Supervisors of said County.

By /s/ VIRGINIA MULLENDORE
Deputy Clerk

(SEAL)