

REPORT OF GENERAL MANAGER

NO. 05-109

DATE May 4, 2005

C.D. 15

BOARD OF RECREATION AND PARK COMMISSIONERS

SUBJECT: NORTH WATSON AVENUE, WILMINGTON: ACQUISITION OF A VACANT PARCEL

* K. Chan	<u>kc</u>	J. Kolb	_____
J. Combs	_____	F. Mok	_____
H. Fujita	_____	K. Regan	_____
B. Jensen	_____		

Robert H. Jensen (fa)
General Manager

Approved _____ Disapproved _____ Withdrawn _____

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Board:

1. Adopt the Resolution, on file in the Board Office, authorizing the acquisition for \$95,000.00, plus escrow and title insurance fees, of a vacant triangular parcel at the intersection of Watson and Drumm Avenues in the Wilmington area of Los Angeles, having a street address of 1148 N. Watson Avenue; and
2. Upon completion of escrow, authorize the Board Secretary to accept the grant deed to the parcel, which is to be set aside and dedicated as park property in perpetuity.
3. Direct staff to request the Bureau of Engineering's assistance in designing and implementing a plan to develop the site with the customary review and approval of the design plans by the Department, the Mayor's Office and the local community

SUMMARY:

On August 11, 2004, the Board gave conceptual approval through Report No. 04-252 to the acquisition of a vacant parcel at 1148 N. Watson Avenue (APN 7425-015-016). The parcel is 0.06 acre or 2,526 square feet. It is anticipated that the parcel's development into a pocket park will complement the recreational uses already existing or that are planned for the southern part of the adjacent East Wilmington Greenbelt. Moreover, the Wilmington Neighborhood Council and other stakeholders have consistently identified increased park space as a priority for local planning. The parcel will be developed for passive recreational use in order to benefit the surrounding, park-poor residential neighborhood.

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The Mayor's Office has obtained \$250,000.00 in funding for the acquisition and development of the parcel, which is within the boundaries of the Neighborhood Block Grant Program for East Wilmington. This funding is still available even though the project will occur in a program year that is later than originally planned. Landscape architectural staff in the Bureau of Engineering believes that the funding is sufficient for both the acquisition and the development of the parcel.

At the time of the Board's conceptual approval, General Services considered that one could not legally build on the lot and gave a Class "C" estimate of \$50,000.00. Staff had also determined that the owner was willing to sell to the City but wanted \$95,000.00 in the expectation that one could, in fact, legally build on the lot. Subsequently, General Services obtained a formal appraisal. As of the March 22, 2005, date of value, the lot was assessed at \$136,000.00. Therefore, Asset Management staff of General Services is prepared to meet the owner's price.

A Phase I site assessment was performed in January 2005 that concluded there was no contamination on or near the parcel and therefore recommended no further investigation. With respect to compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the proposed acquisition and development of the parcel as a pocket park was determined to be exempt from the provisions of CEQA pursuant to Article III, Section 1, Class 3(6) and Class 16 of the City CEQA Guidelines.

The Assistant General Manager of Operations East, the Superintendent of Pacific Region and the Office of the Fifteenth Council District concur with staff's recommendations.

This Report was prepared by Joan Reitzel, Senior Management Analyst in Real Estate and Asset Management.