



Reimagining the Griffith Park Pony Rides Site Community Open House: Event Summary

March 6, 2024

Overview

On Wednesday, March 6, 2024, the City of Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks (RAP) hosted a community open house for the Reimagining the Griffith Park Pony Ride Site effort. At the event, RAP provided an overview of the planning and decision-making process to identify new uses that could be established at the Pony Ride site. Community members also had opportunities to meet with RAP staff to ask questions, share their ideas on the future uses of the site through ideas board and prioritization exercises, take an online survey (there were 35 submittals), and fill out comment cards detailing more input that the City should consider in its conversations about the future of the site. Approximately 125 community members participated in the event.

Event Date: Wednesday, March 6, 2024
Location: Friendship Auditorium (3201 Riverside Drive Los Angeles, CA 90027)
Event time: 5:30- 8:30pm



Key Takeaways from the Community Open House

Prioritization Exercise

Attendees were provided three “dots” they could place on boards listing ideas that were popular from the prior public input RAP received regarding the most desired uses people would like to see at the site. Attendees could put all of their dots on one option or split them among various uses they would like to see.

While not intended to be an official vote, the exercise revealed there were two clear standout experiences that participants at this workshop were most interested in: a) bringing back the pony rides for children and b) creating sport courts and fields (it should be noted that there was a group of about 6-8 representatives advocating for new pickleball courts in attendance that night). Other options that people showed almost equal but lesser interest in were animal-related such as a petting zoo, activities that allow for interactions with horses where visitors don’t ride the horses (e.g. for mental health therapy and education), and animal rescues. Non-animal uses such as a community educational programs such as a nature center, a museum and community gardens with education components also garnered similar interest.

Community members were also able to add to the list of activities as additional options in the prioritization exercise on a separate board; examples of ideas that were added included roller skating, a bike track, and goat yoga. Attachment A, *Reimagining the Griffith Park Pony Rides Community Open House – Prioritization Exercise*, shows the different options attendees had to choose from and their preferences.



Ideas Wall

Attendees were given the opportunity to look through a series of photographs to choose one and provide comments on what they liked (or disliked) about the image and what they would like to see at the site. The exercise was intended to provide a forum for dialogue for the community's various interests and provided a platform for attendees to visualize new uses and better understand the interests of others in the City.

The following provides a summary of the general community sentiments shared at this station. Detailed community feedback received on the ideas board can be found in Attachment B, *Reimagining the Griffith Park Pony Rides Community Open House - Ideas Wall*.

- ***A fun, inclusive, family-friendly, and well-designed space:*** Participants commented that the new site should be fun and inclusive for people of all incomes and abilities. It should be family-friendly, with an emphasis for children. It should also be well-thought-out and properly planned, and the design should be context-appropriate (e.g. if there are animals, the space should be designed to provide the most comfortable environmental for the animals).
- ***Opportunities to Interact with Nature:*** Community members shared that the new use(s) should allow children to interact with nature and offer nature-type experiences.
- ***Water features:*** Participants selected many photos with water features such as splash pads and play equipment with water components.
- ***Educational programs:*** Community members provided many educational program ideas such as opportunities for children to learn about the local wildlife, internships for children to learn to care for animals, and creating a science center.
- ***Community programs:*** People noted that the site should offer community programs such as group yoga, drawing, art, singing, dancing, gymnastics, and martial arts.
- ***Honor native peoples.*** Participants commented on the cultural value of the land, and their desire to honor the native people that used space.
- ***Active recreation facilities.*** Several participants shared their preference for active recreation facilities such as pickleball and tennis courts, miniature golf, roller skating rink, and biking trails. Meanwhile, a handful of community members noted their opposition to those active recreation facilities.
- ***Advocating for and criticism of pony rides and interactions with animals.*** Some community members shared their interest to bring the back the pony rides. Others commented that RAP should have



activities that allow people to interact with animals such as equine therapy and petting zoo; however, the animals should have a high standard of care. There were also open house participants that would like RAP to not offer pony rides or programs/activities that involve ponies or other animal models.

Comment Cards

Community members were also given the opportunity to fill out comment cards to provide additional information or to elaborate on specific ideas expressed on the ideas boards. RAP received 25 comment cards at the community open house. General ideas shared through the comment card submittal are briefly summarized below and the specific comments received can be viewed in Attachment C, *Reimagining the Griffith Park Pony Rides Community Open House Comment Cards*.

- ***Family-friendly and affordable.*** Several participants wrote that they would like the new activity to be family-friendly (particularly for children), affordable, engaging and fun, and be available to community members in different age groups.
- ***Positive memories of the pony rides.*** A number of community members shared positive memories of participating in the pony rides, and they would like future generations to have access to the activity. The pony rides were affordable and were a unique experience to interact with animals in the middle of a large city. They expressed their desire for RAP to bring back the activity.
- ***Desire for a non-animal model.*** Some participants providing written comments expressed their concern for the wellbeing of the ponies and the way the ponies were treated at the prior pony rides. They noted that activities that involve ponies or animals are inhumane, and therefore the City should not bring back the pony rides.
- ***Alternate uses.*** Community members shared many other ideas to reimagine the pony ride site through non-animal model uses. Examples include water splash parks, community gardens, pickleball courts, exercise equipment, and nature walkthroughs like the one at Disney California Adventure.
- ***Suggestions for managing future uses.*** A small handful of comment cards were related to the planning and decision-making processes. These include the request for a transparent decision-making process on the future use(s) of the site and clarification of existing documents available on the project website.



Attachment A:
Reimagine the Griffith Park Pony Rides
Community Workshop-Ideas Board Results

What activities and experiences are the most important to you?

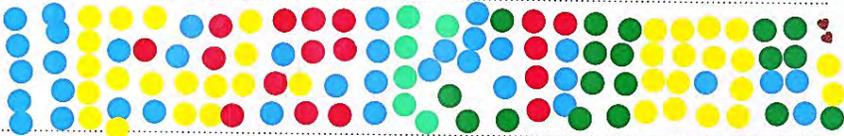
(Place the stickers next to the activities that you like the most)

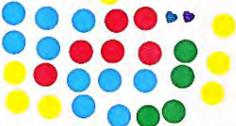
Playground and play structures for children 

Water play area for children with splash activities 

Expand the park's train rides 

Miniature golf course 

Sport courts and fields 

Indoor and outdoor adventure area with activities for children and adults, such as rope courses and rock walls 

Picnic and recreation space 

Bring back pony rides for children 

 **REIMAGINING THE GRIFFITH PARK PONY RIDE SITE**
<https://www.laparks.org/griffithpark/pony-rides>

What activities and experiences are the most important to you?

(Place the stickers next to the activities that you like the most)

Interactions with horses where visitors don't ride the horses (e.g for mental health therapy and education)



Petting zoo



Indoor-outdoor museum or nature center focused on environmental science education



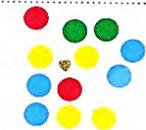
Community garden, (e.g.) education programs on farming, growing fruit and vegetables, and farm-to-table



Educational programs on the history of Los Angeles and Indigenous peoples



Animal rescue where visitors can see and learn about local native wildlife such as owls, raccoons, snakes, and deer



Animal rescue where visitors can see, learn about, and have limited contact with farm animals



REIMAGINING THE GRIFFITH PARK PONY RIDE SITE
<https://www.laparks.org/griffithpark/pony-rides>

¿Qué actividades y experiencias son las más importantes para ti?

(Pon las pegatinas al lado de las actividades que más te gusten)

Interacciones con caballos en donde los visitantes no monten los caballos, incluyendo interacciones diseñadas para dar terapia de salud mental para niños y adultos, así como educación en cómo cuidar a los caballos

Un zoológico de observación

Un museo en espacio cerrado o al aire libre o un centro para la naturaleza que se enfoque en la educación de las ciencias del medio ambiente

Un jardín comunitario, incluyendo programas educativos en agricultura, cultivo de frutas y verduras y desde la granja a la mesa

Programas educativos en la historia de Los Ángeles y los pueblos Indígenas

Un rescate de animales en donde los visitantes puedan ver y aprender sobre fauna nativa local como búhos, mapaches, serpientes y ciervos

Un rescate de animales en donde los visitantes puedan ver, aprender y tener contacto limitado con animales de granja como, vacas, puercos, pollos, borregos y cabras



Reimaginando el sitio de paseo en pony de Griffith Park
<https://www.laparks.org/griffithpark/pony-rides>

¿Qué actividades y experiencias son las más importantes para ti?

(Pon las pegatinas al lado de las actividades que más te gusten)

Un parque infantil y estructuras de juego para niños

Un área de juegos acuáticos para niños con actividades de chapoteo

Expandir las atracciones de tren del parque

Un campo de golf miniatura/minigolf

Canchas y campos deportivos



Áreas de aventuras en espacios cerrados y al aire libre con actividades para los niños y adultos, como circuitos de cuerda y paredes de roca

Espacios para días de campo y recreación

Volver a poner los paseos en caballito/Pony Ride para los niños



Reimaginando el sitio de paseo en pony de Griffith Park
<https://www.laparks.org/griffithpark/pony-rides>

SKATE PARK

FUNBOX

Roller Plaza (live at
venue
touch)

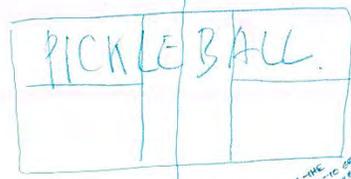
Ponies!
More Ponies!!



GOAT YOGA

Water Tort

INDOOR PICKLEBALL FACILITY



THIS IS THE
INDOOR PICKLEBALL FACILITY
FOR THE TAMU SYSTEM
OPEN TO ALL TAMU STUDENTS
AND STAFF. THE FACILITY IS
LOCATED IN THE TAMU
SPORTS CENTER. THE FACILITY
IS OPEN FROM 8:00 AM TO
6:00 PM. THE FACILITY IS
FREE OF CHARGE. THE
FACILITY IS OPEN TO ALL
TAMU STUDENTS AND STAFF.

Combine - Horse/Giraffe Care + Petting Zoo + Environmental
w/ Golf + Indigenous People + Native Plants Funbox

Sports Area - Not Natural Not Native

Bring back
Pony rides +
better
zoo and
add
more
fun
to
the
area
and
make
it
more
fun
for
everyone
to
enjoy
and
bring
back
the
fun
to
the
area

Bike track! a place where folks of all ages ^{and abilities} can learn to ride and ride safely.

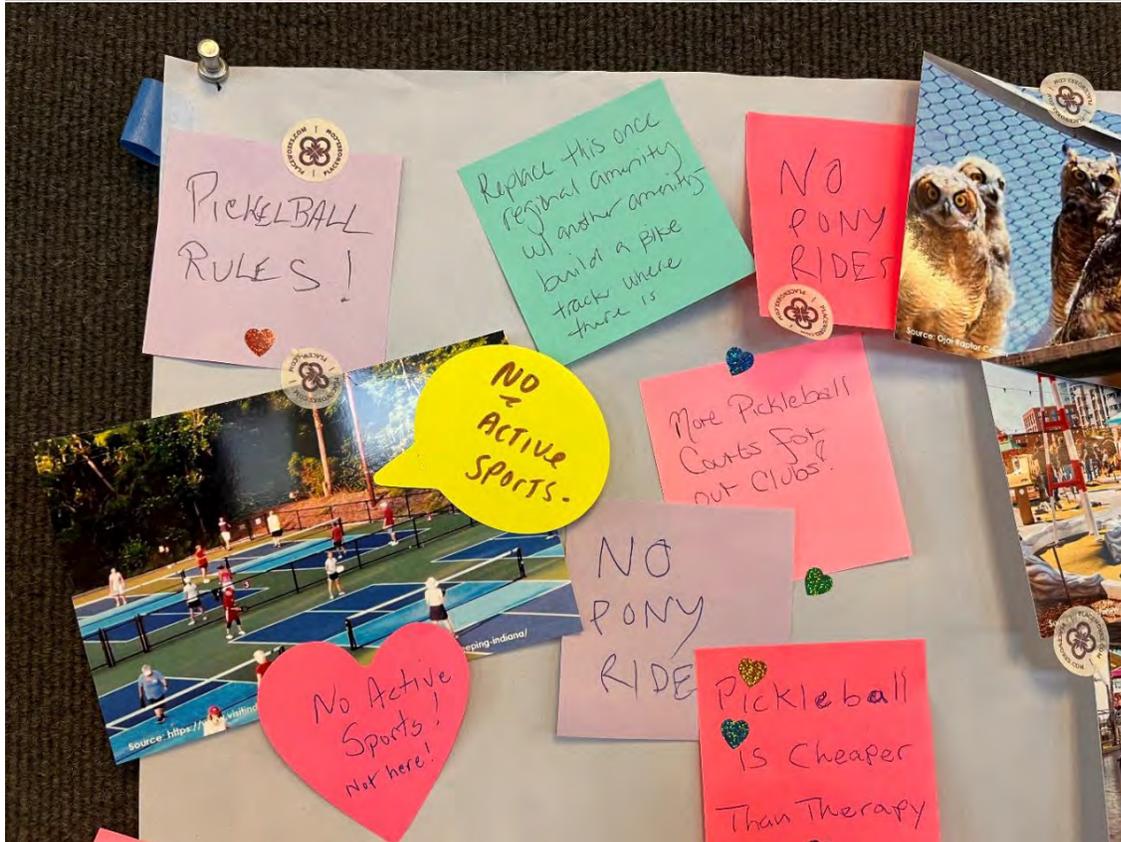
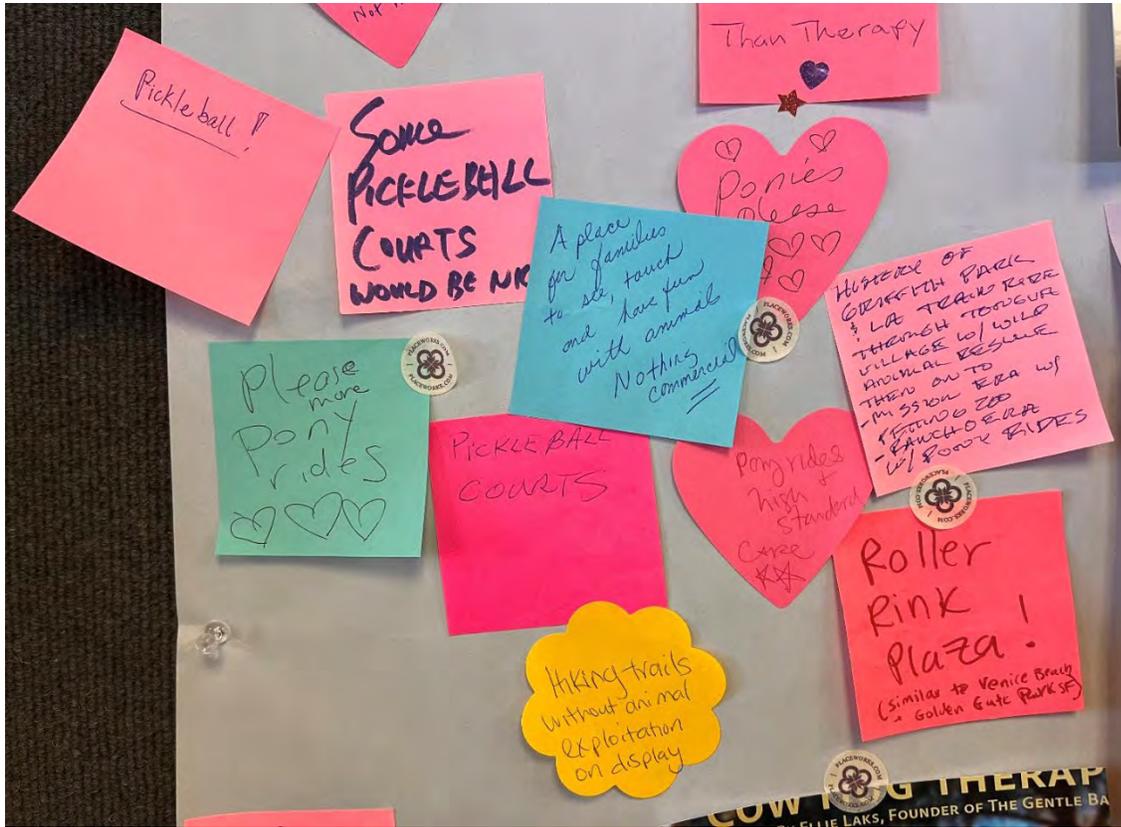


Attachment B:
Reimagine the Griffith Park Pony Rides
Community Workshop- Ideas Board



Top: The community provided a wealth of insights about the things that were important to them and the things that they'd like to see changed through the use of images and notes explaining what features were most appealing to them.

Bottom: There were several comments placed on the Image Board by one individual on behalf of a handful of participants at the workshop that shared similar interests.. These comments centered around the desire for a non-animal model and the preference to not see the pony rides return. Uses they preferred included outdoor recreational activities and educational activities for children such as train rides, picnics, and arts and crafts.



Ideas Board Details





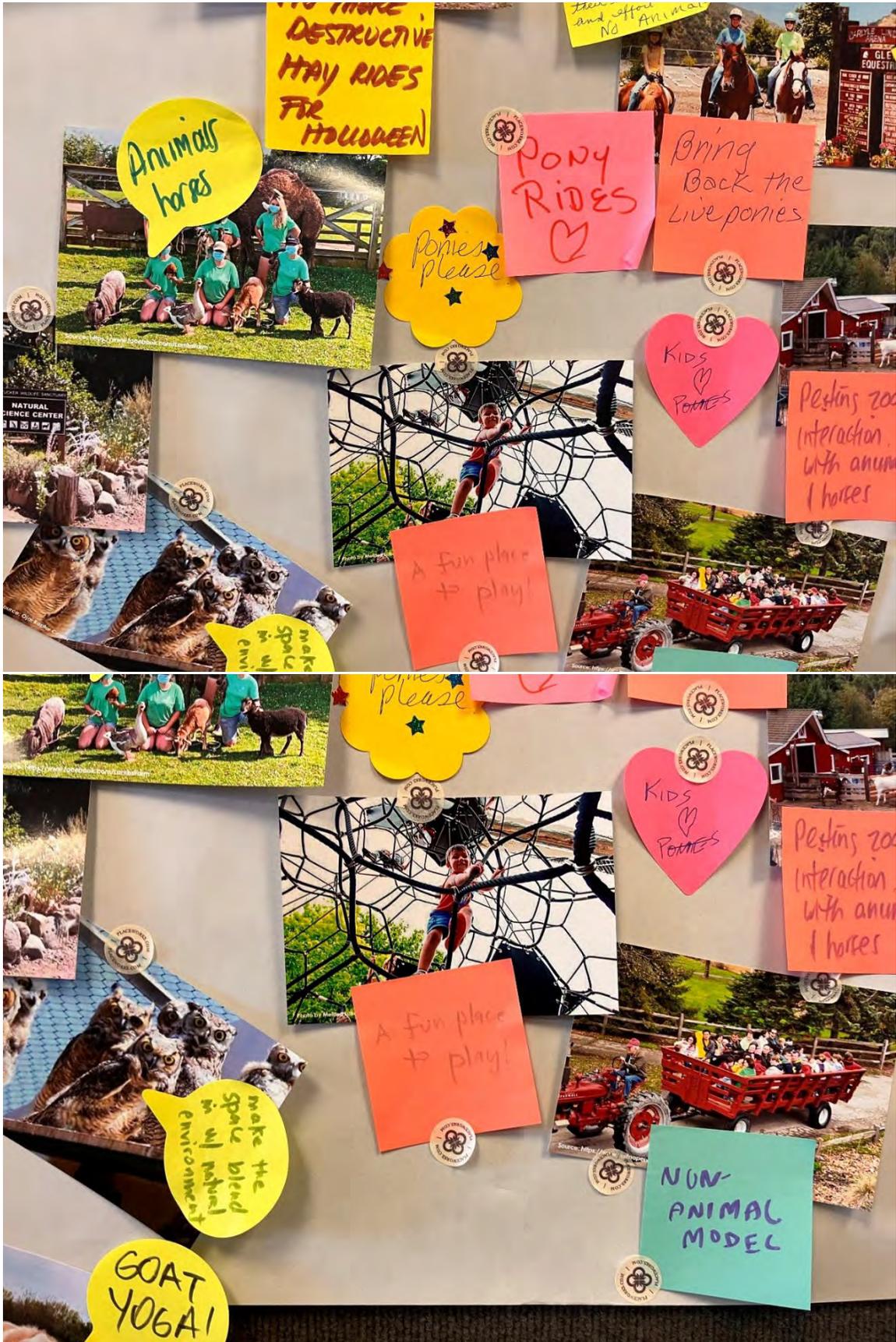


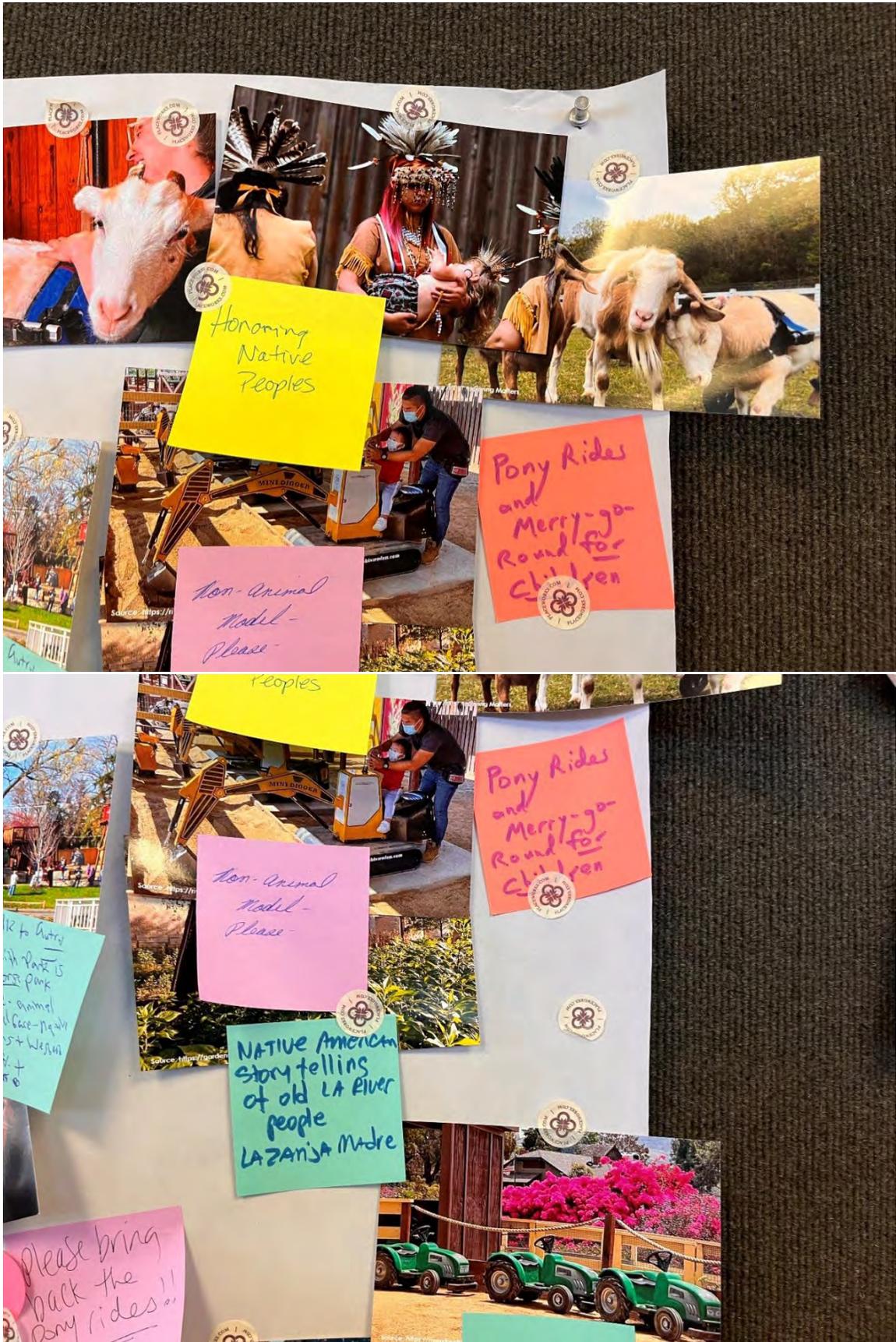


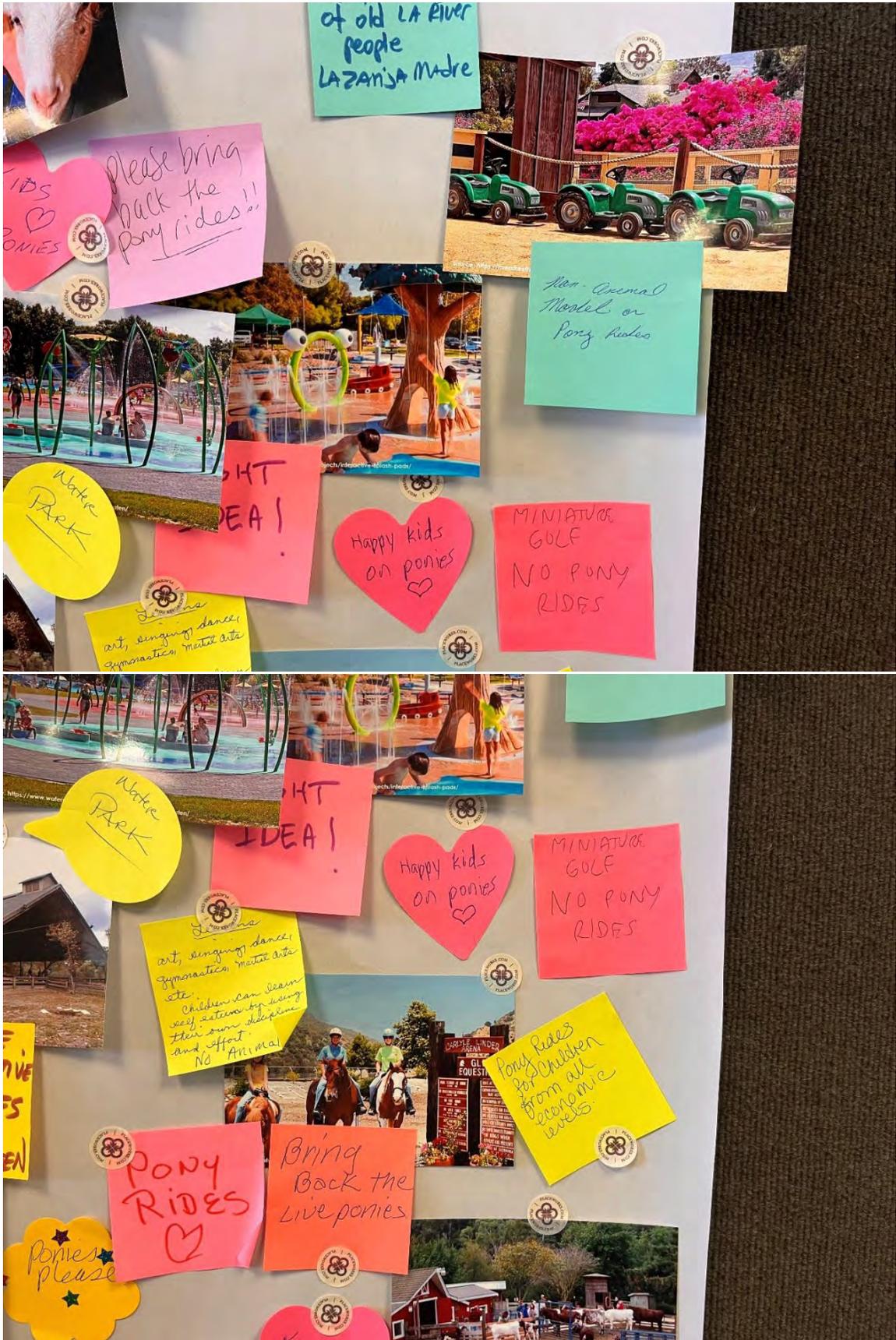




















Attachment C:
Reimagine the Griffith Park Pony Rides
Community Workshop-Comment Cards

Reimagining the Griffith Park Pony Ride Site



PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

Name: _____

Date: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Comment:

I'm hoping the Pony Rides are put back in place ASAP. They are part of the Park Heritage. Children-Families are needing this opportunity to enjoy, experience, learn from. Many great values learned from life long promoted love-respect of a horse-pony. Been an Equestrian All my life. Only positive to absorb from it. Very unique exp. we had^d had for our community. Especially in our in come.

Reimagining the Griffith Park Pony Ride Site



PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

Name: _____

Date: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Comment:

We need the pony rides back. My siblings & cousins all enjoyed these growing up. Future generations need this experience.

Reimagining the Griffith Park Pony Ride Site



PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

Name: _____

Date: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Comment:

WE SHOULD HAVE LEARNED VALUABLE LESSONS FROM THE PREVIOUS PONY OPERATOR. THE PONIES DID NOT RECEIVE ADEQUATE CARE.

PONIES, HORSES ARE EXTREMELY UPSET BY THE SOUND OF THE FREEWAY. A SOUND BARRIER MUST BE CONSIDERED FOR THEIR MENTAL → PHYSICAL HEALTH + WELLBEING →

Reimaginando el sitio de Paseo en Pony de Griffith Park



POR FAVOR ESCRIBE CLARAMENTE

Nombre: _____

Fecha: _____

Teléfono: _____

Dirección: _____

Correo electrónico: _____

Comentario:

The Background Fact #2 Needs to be removed. It is false. Wendy from Placworks said staff approved copy. Nov 2022 Matt from RAP staff sent letter to Steve Weeks APPROVING extension to contract. (Thank you files) Dec 2022 Jimmy Kim - BY Himself - no public meet - RAP Commission meet - Closed DOWN PONY RIDES!

Reimagining the Griffith Park Pony Ride Site



PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

Name: [REDACTED]

Date: [REDACTED]

Phone: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

Mailing Address: [REDACTED]

Comment:

An engaging, recreational model would fit into the established structure and existing concept of Griffith Park.

Adding any animal models will increase costs in maintenance and liability fees, and is therefore not desirable or effective for the community.

Reimagining the Griffith Park Pony Ride Site



PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

Name: [REDACTED]

Date: [REDACTED]

Phone: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

Mailing Address: [REDACTED]

Comment:

I am totally against the abuse of ponies & pony rides. The area can be reimagined by creating community gardens teaching children about climate. There are ~~so~~ many areas to explore that are better for children.

Reimagining the Griffith Park Pony Ride Site



PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

Name: [REDACTED]

Date: [REDACTED]

Phone: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

Mailing Address: [REDACTED]

Comment:

Thanks for the presentation.
It is important to i for kids -
- to get physical & mental stimulation
- exercise
- good for diff. ages
- affordable
Teach kids kindness, not cruelty!

No Animals!
Thanks

If it ain't broke, don't break it!

Reimagining the Griffith Park Pony Ride Site



PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

Name: [REDACTED]

Date: [REDACTED]

Phone: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

Mailing Address: [REDACTED]

Comment:

Poor families have few, if any opportunities to allow their children to connect with horses and ponies. The pony rides provides a unique environment that's affordable for introducing young children to animals in the middle of a big city. The pony rides is nothing but positive for the city for the ponies and for the humans!

Reimagining the Griffith Park Pony Ride Site



PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

Name: [REDACTED]

Date: [REDACTED]

Phone: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

Mailing Address: [REDACTED]

Comment:

Please consider looking at the nature walk through in Disney California Adventure. This could be the perfect type of educational enrichment that Griffith Park needs. Thank you! ☺

Reimagining the Griffith Park Pony Ride Site



PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

Name: [REDACTED]

Date: [REDACTED]

Phone: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

Mailing Address: [REDACTED]

Comment:

Riding on the backs of sentient beings as a means of entertainment is inhumane and damaging to the collective consciousness of human beings and detrimental to the wellness and physical health of ponies. Ponies suffer from hoof ailments, saddle sores, and mouth and teeth



Reimagining the Griffith Park Pony Ride Site



PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

Name: [REDACTED]

Date: [REDACTED]

Phone: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

Mailing Address: [REDACTED]

Comment:

Whatever choice is made, please be transparent both now & in the future. Losing the pony rides was very disconcerting due to the lack of transparency regarding why the permit was not renewed. It appeared that the owners made the necessary fixes and were lost their permit without an explanation. As part of the community it is frustrating to hear unsubstantiated claims of animal mistreatment and see a facility closed without documenting whether the

in addition to horse ride

Reimagining the Griffith Park Pony Ride Site



PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

Name: [REDACTED]

Date: [REDACTED]

Phone: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

Mailing Address: [REDACTED]

Comment:

I want a non animal model for the site due to the past abuses being inevitable. Disease, injuries and poor old animals. Pickleball seems like a great solution!

Reimagining the Griffith Park Pony Ride Site



PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

Name: _____

Date: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Comment:

PONY RIDES AND OTHER ANIMALS FOR ENTERTAINMENT DON'T FIT WITH THE LOS ANGELES HUMANE ETHIC. POOR WELFARE IS LIKELY TO COME BACK WITH A SIMILAR BUSINESS MODEL OF HIGH VOLUME OF KIDS WITH A LOW TICKET PRICE. PICK A HUMANE ATTRACTION EVERYONE CAN ENJOY.

Reimagining the Griffith Park Pony Ride Site



PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

Name: _____

Date: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Comment:

Water Parks for the kids They love it
"NO ANIMAL CRUELTY"

We the parents have to teach the kids
Compassion.

Reimagining the Griffith Park Pony Ride Site



PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

Name: _____

Date: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Comment:

I strongly oppose animal-mad at Griffith park pony ride site. Any attraction where there is a high volume of visitors, animal's lives, welfare & overall well-being will be at risk and compromise High volume means animals will likely be exploited ~~and~~ exactly like how ~~the~~ the ponies were abused, neglected and worked to death from before

Reimagining the Griffith Park Pony Ride Site



PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

Name: _____

Date: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Comment:

Let's think out of the box!
Youth at Risk, Equine Education for kids
Adopt a pony, affordable "mini lesson" programs
therapy programs, w/ ponies

Reimagining the Griffith Park Pony Ride Site



PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

Name: _____

Date: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Comment: _____

BRING BACK THE PONIES

- ① CREATE A TRAINING MANUAL TO ENSURE PROPER TREATMENT OF THE HORSES
- ② DISPLAY THE EMPLOYEES CERTIFICATIONS (Picture No Name)
- ③ GET SUGGESTIONS FROM NO ANIMALS ON WHAT THEY WANT IN ORDER TO HAVE A SAFE OPERATION

Reimagining the Griffith Park Pony Ride Site



PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

Name: _____

Date: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Comment: _____

Send animal abuse at the ponyrides -
NON-animal model

Reimagining the Griffith Park Pony Ride Site



gmail.com

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

Name: [REDACTED]

Date: [REDACTED]

Phone: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

Mailing Address: 5050 Sepulveda Blvd, S.O., CA 91403

Comment:

GOLDEN RULE APPLIES TO ALL LIFE FORMS
No pony rides & No Animal Model
Please, because any animal use
is animal abuse because animals
do not consent nor do they want
us to ride, use or abuse them. To ride
an animal, we need to kill their free spirit by
abuse. because animals don't give away freedom

for anyone as we don't either!

Reimagining the Griffith Park Pony Ride Site



PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

Name: [REDACTED]

Date: [REDACTED]

Phone: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

Mailing Address: [REDACTED]

Comment:

Non animal model - no pony rides -
- Pickleball courts -
- Water-splash park for kiddos -

Reimagining the Griffith Park Pony Ride Site



PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

Name: _____

Date: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Comment:

There are so many entertaining and esteem building opportunities for children & families in the Griffith Park space. It's time to evolve out of using animals. Watching the pony rides for over a year, I saw next to no interaction between children & ponies - in fact the children didn't even look the ponies in the face or relate to them in any way - many screamed and wobbled off!

Reimagining the Griffith Park Pony Ride Site



PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

Name: _____

Date: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Comment:

If animals, horses and ponies can talk, they would probably tell us that they don't want to walk around in circles, or work as entertainment in extreme heat. Please consider what animals want ~~and~~ into your decisions. There are so many options, you don't have to stick with pony rides.

Reimagining the Griffith Park Pony Ride Site



PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

Name: _____ Date: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Comment: _____

please bring back a non-animal model
to the former pony ride site

children should learn that animals are not
here to entertain us or for us to use them
They are here with us - not for us

Reimagining the Griffith Park Pony Ride Site



PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

Name: _____ Date: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Comment: _____

PLEASE CONSIDER THE "GRIFFITH PARK PONY
EXPERIENCE" - A NEW WAY TO INTEGRATE
PONIES INTO THE HISTORICAL AREA &
STRUCTURES WITH AN UP-TO-DATE,
COMPASSIONATE STYLE & A GOLD
STANDARD OF CARE FOR THE PONIES

Reimagining the Griffith Park Pony Ride Site



PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

Name: [REDACTED]

Date: [REDACTED]

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Mailing Address: [REDACTED]

Comment:

The document w/ the purpose of
the open house ~~is~~ needs a correction.
The pony rides permit was VALID
and extended to March 2023,
when Jimmy Kim unilaterally made
the decision to not renew the
contract. He did this under pressure →