

# APPROVED

NOV 17 2022

## BOARD OF RECREATION AND PARK COMMISSIONERS

BOARD REPORT

NO. 22-289

DATE November 17, 2022

C.D. 13

### BOARD OF RECREATION AND PARK COMMISSIONERS

SUBJECT: ELYSIAN PARK – RIVERSIDE DRIVE EXPANSION – RENAMING OF PARK AS “WALNUT HILL AT ELYSIAN PARK” – CATEGORICAL EXEMPTION FROM THE PROVISIONS OF THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA) PURSUANT TO ARTICLE III, SECTION 1, CLASS 11(5) [SIGNS LOCATED ON CITY PROPERTY MANAGED BY A CITY DEPARTMENT WHICH HAS A SIGN POLICY ADOPTED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OR, IN THE CASE OF A PROPRIETARY DEPARTMENT, BY ITS BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS] OF CITY CEQA GUIDELINES AS WELL AS TO ARTICLE 19, SECTION 15311 OF CALIFORNIA CEQA GUIDELINES

B. Aguirre	_____	M. Rudnick	_____
H. Fujita	_____	C. Santo Domingo	_____
B. Jackson	_____	N. Williams	_____

*for* *DF*

General Manager

Approved   X  

Disapproved \_\_\_\_\_

Withdrawn \_\_\_\_\_

### RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Approve the naming of the portion of Elysian Park known as the Elysian Park – Riverside Drive Expansion as “Walnut Hill at Elysian Park” as more fully set forth in this Report;
2. Authorize the installation of the standard Department of Recreation and Parks (RAP) wooden park signage in connection with the naming approved herein;
3. Determine that the project is categorically exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Article III, Section 1, Class 11(5) [Signs located on City property managed by a City department which has a sign policy adopted by the City Council or, in the case of a proprietary department, by its Board of Commissioners] of City CEQA Guidelines and Article 19, Section 15311 of California CEQA Guidelines and direct RAP staff to file a Notice of Exemption (NOE) with the Los Angeles County Clerk;
4. Authorize RAP’s Chief Accounting Employee to prepare a check to the Los Angeles County Clerk in the amount of \$75.00 for the purpose of filing a Notice of Exemption (NOE); and
5. Authorize RAP staff to make technical corrections as necessary to carry out the intent of this Report.

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### SUMMARY

Elysian Park is located at 929 Academy Road in the Elysian Park community of the City. Elysian Park is a 544.71-acre facility which provides open space and picnic areas, hiking trails, ball diamonds, children's play areas, a disc golf course, and tennis courts for the use of the surrounding community. Approximately 9,712 City residents live within a one-half mile walking distance of Elysian Park. Due to the size of the park, and the facilities and features it provides, Elysian Park meets the standard for a Regional Park, as defined in the City's Public Recreation Plan.

The portion of Elysian Park known as the Riverside Drive Expansion (also referred to as "Elysian Park – Riverside Park") is located at 1800 Riverside Drive in the Elysian Valley community of the City. On June 2, 1999, the Board of Recreation and Park Commissioners (Board) approved the acquisition of 18.44 acres of undeveloped land located at 1800 Riverside Drive for the expansion of Elysian Park (Report No. 229-99). This acquisition was part of the Proposition K specified project for Elysian Park that included "acquisition of additional land, improvements to athletic fields and trails, road refurbishment, lighting, restrooms". Elysian Park - Riverside Park provides walking trails, basketball court and restroom building for the community.

Currently, the park area is named "Elysian Park - Riverside Park" based on its geographical location, located along Riverside Drive. This current name of the park was assigned administratively by staff, and is consistent with RAP's policy of assigning administrative names based on geographic location. The current administrative park name has never gone through a community-driven naming process.

### NAMING REQUEST

On March 2, 2011, the Board approved Report No. 11-074, which granted RAP Staff the conceptual approval to begin the formal naming process for the Elysian Park – Riverside Drive Expansion. No proposed name for the park was included in Report No. 11-074.

On September 8, 2015, the Los Angeles City Council approved a motion requesting that the RAP Board consider the renaming of the Elysian Park - Riverside Park to "Walnut Hill at Elysian Park". See motion as Attachment 1.

RAP staff conducted a preliminary review of Elysian Park – Riverside Park and determined that there are no grant deed restrictions or other restrictions that would prevent the renaming of park. However, given that the acquisition was part of a Proposition K specified project specifically for the expansion of Elysian Park, RAP staff has been advised that the new name should contain reference to "Elysian Park" to be consistent with the Proposition K specified project description.

The proposed named "Walnut Hill at Elysian Park" was presented to the RAP Facility Repair and Maintenance Task Force on July 21, 2022. The Task Force granted conceptual approval for the naming of the Riverside Park expansion property.

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On October 13, 2022, RAP staff held a community meeting via Zoom to discuss the renaming of Elysian Park – Riverside Park. RAP staff presented the proposed name “Walnut Hill at Elysian Park” in the presentation shown as Attachment 3. The community members that participated in public comment, including members of The Citizens Committee to Save Elysian Park (CCSEP), were supportive of the proposed name. A representative of the Office of Council District 13 also attended the community meeting and reaffirmed the Council Office’s support for the proposed name.

### BACKGROUND ON THE PROPOSED NAME “WALNUT HILL AT ELYSIAN PARK”

The Citizens Committee to Save Elysian Park, a non-profit volunteer organization since 1965, communicated to the Office of the Council District 13 that the property should be named “Walnut Hill at Elysian Park” due to the California Black Walnut Trees (*Juglans Californica*) located on the property. See the letter from CCSEP as Attachment 2.

RAP Forestry staff has confirmed that there are California Black Walnut Trees (*Juglans Californica*) located on the property. These trees are native to California.

RAP staff has evaluated the proposed name and find it consistent with RAP’s Naming Policy as it is neutral in connotation and represents a geographical feature representative of the surrounding community.

### BOARD NAMING POLICY

On June 5, 2013 the RAP adopted a Naming Policy, Procedures and Guidelines for Parks and Recreational Facilities (Policy) for the naming of parks, recreation facilities, park amenities, landmarks and other park assets (Report No. 13-161). This Policy enumerates the criteria and guidelines for use when evaluating proposed park names (Attachment 5). Several of the adopted guidelines applicable to this application are as follows:

- The Naming of parks after individuals shall be limited to those who are deceased and have made exceptional contributions to the park or community within which the park is located.
- The Naming engenders a positive public image which does not unduly commercialize the park or recreational facility.
- The proposed name for the park or recreational facility, and/or contributor, must be compatible with the Mission of RAP.

RAP staff has determined that the criteria and guidelines of the Policy have been met.

### CONCLUSION

For all the reasons stated in this Report, RAP staff recommends the approval of the naming of the Elysian Park – Riverside Park to “Walnut Hill at Elysian Park”.

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Upon approval of this Report, RAP will install the standard RAP wooden facility signage to memorialize the park's new name.

### ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

The proposed Project consists of installation of signs located on City property managed by a City department which has a sign policy adopted by its Board of Commissioners.

According to the parcel profile report retrieved On October 31, 2022, this area does not reside in a liquefaction coastal, methane, or historic zone, so there is no reasonable possibility that the proposed Project may impact on an environmental resource of hazardous or critical concern or have a significant effect due to unusual circumstances. No other known projects would involve cumulatively significant impacts, and no future projects would result from the proposed Project. As of October 31, 2022, the State Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) (Envirostor at [www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov](http://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov)) and the State Water Resources Control Board (SWCB) (Geotracker at <https://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/>) have not listed the Project site and listed RB Case #: 900310098 near the Project area (within 500 feet). The site was closed by the Regional Water Quality Control in 2013 and does not pose any threat to the public. According to the Caltrans Scenic Highway Map there is no scenic highway located within the vicinity of the proposed Project or within its site. Furthermore, the proposed Project is not located in proximity of a known historical resources and will not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of any historical resource.

Based in this information, RAP staff recommends that the Board determines that it is categorically exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Article III, Section 1, Class 11(5) of City CEQA Guidelines and Article 19, Section 15311 of California CEQA Guidelines. Staff will file a Notice of Exemption with the Los Angeles County Clerk upon Board's approval.

### FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

Approval of this Report will have a minor fiscal impact on RAP's General Fund. The sign will be paid for by funds in account RAPX1900-304.

This report was prepared by David Lee, Management Assistant, Planning, Maintenance and Construction Branch.

### ATTACHMENTS

- 1) Attachment 1 – Naming Motion Approved by Los Angeles City Council (C.F.# 15-0384)
- 2) Attachment 2 – Letter of Support from the Citizens Committee to Save Elysian Park
- 3) Attachment 3 – Naming Presentation for October 12, 2022 Community Meeting
- 4) Attachment 4 – Community Meeting Flyer
- 5) Attachment 5 – RAP Naming Policy and Guidelines

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**ATTACHMENT 1**

ARTS, PARKS, HEALTH, AGING & RIVER

**MOTION**

In 1999, an 18-acre parcel which is part of Elysian Park was acquired by the City with Proposition K (LA for Kids) funds. Since that time, this portion of Elysian Park has not been named.

The Citizens Committee to Save Elysian Park (CCSEP), a non-profit volunteer organization since 1965, is committed to the preservation and protection of Elysian Park. CCSEP has communicated to the Council Office that the unnamed portion of Elysian Park is surrounded by California Black Walnut Trees (*juglans californica*) and has suggested that the parcel be named "Walnut Hill at Elysian Park."

With the support of CCSEP, a community organization dedicated to Elysian Park, the Board of Recreation and Park Commissioners should consider naming the parcel as suggested by the community.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the Board of Recreation and Parks Commissioners be requested to consider the name of "Walnut Hill at Elysian Park" for an 18-acre portion of Elysian Park.

PRESENTED BY

MITCH O'FARRELL  
Councilmember, 13<sup>th</sup> District

SECONDED BY

ORIGINAL

  
APR . . 1 2015



**Citizens Committee to  
Save Elysian Park  
a 501C4**

Daniel T. Reza, President

Christine Peters, Assistant President

CCSEP  
PO Box 26691  
Los Angeles, CA 90026

ccesp.org@gmail.com

March 5, 2015

Mr. Adam Bass  
Field Deputy  
Mitch O'Farrell, Councilmember 13th District  
City of Los Angeles  
1722 Sunset Blvd.  
Los Angeles, CA 90026

Re: 18 Acre Park - Name Recommendation

Dear Adam,

The 18 Acre park that is part of Elysian Park and acquired in 1999 with Proposition K Funds. As this parcel of the park has not been named yet and is surrounded by California Black Walnut Trees, we would like to recommend this area be named "Walnut Hill at Elysian Park".

The Citizens Committee to Save Elysian Park appreciates your support and looks forward to seeing this part of the park become unified with Elysian Park.

Sincerely,

Daniel T Reza  
President

cc: C. Peters, Assistant President

# Elysian Park - Riverside Drive Expansion Naming Presentation

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DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION AND PARKS

OCTOBER 12, 2022 AT 7:00PM



# Agenda

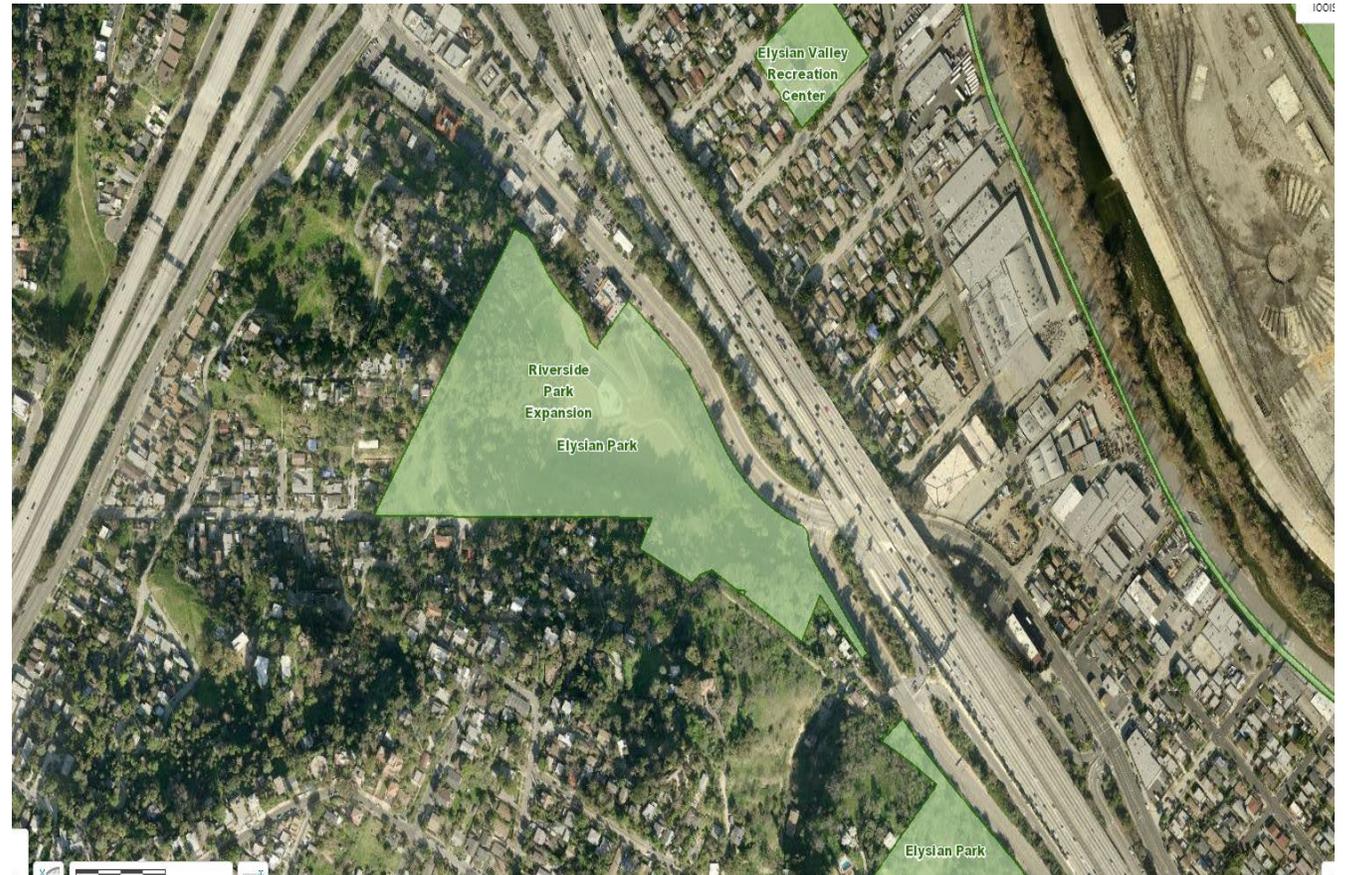
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- About Elysian Park - Riverside Drive Expansion
- Surrounding Parks in the Area
- RAP Naming Policy
- Current Elysian Park - Riverside Drive Expansion
- Proposed Names
- Naming Process Next Steps



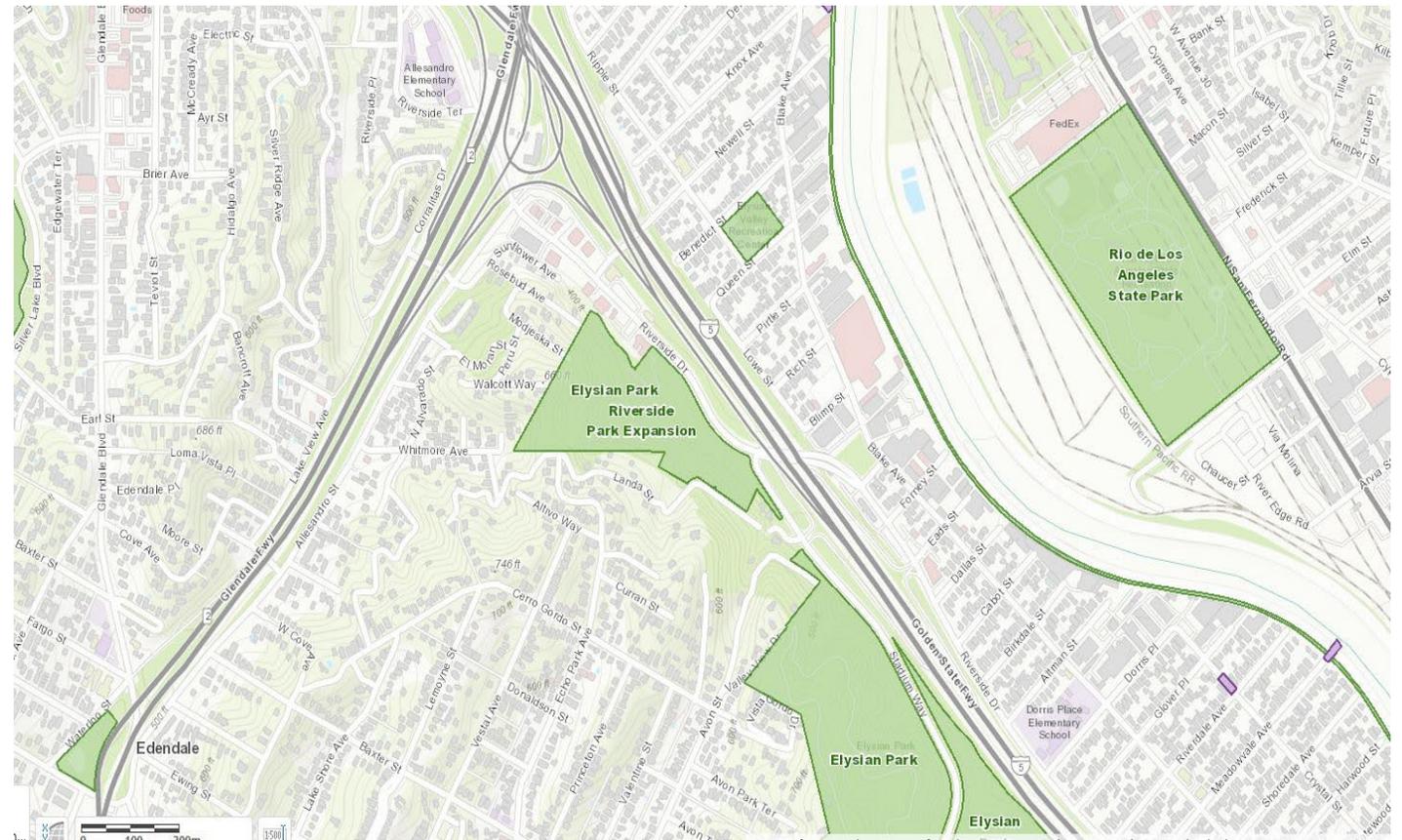
# About Elysian Park - Riverside Drive Expansion

- Located at 1800 Riverside Drive in the Elysian Valley community of the City.
- The 18.44-acre property was acquired by RAP in 1999.
- Classified as a Regional Park
- Current features of Elysian Park - Riverside Drive Expansion:
  - Walking Trails
  - Basketball Court
  - Restroom Building



# Surrounding Parks of Elysian Park - Riverside Drive Expansion

- Elysian Valley Recreation Center
- Rio de Los Angeles State Park
- Echo Park
- Tommy Lasorda's Field of Dreams
- Silver Lake Meadows Park
- Silver Lake Recreation Center
- Silver Lake Dog Park
- Glassell Park Recreation Center
- Cypress Recreation Center
- Albion Riverside Park
- Griffith Park



# RAP Naming Policy

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- The RAP Board adopted a Naming Policy in June 2013 (Report No. 13-161)
- The Naming of parks after individuals shall be limited to those who are deceased and have made exceptional contributions to the park or community within which the park is located.
- Parks shall only be named after living persons under circumstances requiring such naming as a condition precedent of a grant deed or covenant.
- The Naming of a park after a major historic event must be based on a direct connection between the park and such event.
- The Naming engenders a positive public image which does not unduly commercialize the park or recreational facility.
- The proposed name for the park or recreational facility, and/or contributor, must be compatible with the Mission of RAP.
- Initial Park Names shall be administratively assigned by RAP staff based on geographic features such as street and community names or prominent features.

# Elysian Park - Riverside Drive Expansion

- Property was acquired by RAP in 1999.
- The current name is consistent with the RAP Board’s naming policy
- “Elysian Park - Riverside Drive Expansion” shall remain unnamed until action has been taken by the RAP Board to rename the park.
- Any new name for this property should include reference to “Elysian Park” to be consistent with the Proposition K specified project description.



# Proposed Names for Elysian Park – Riverside Expansion

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RAP is currently considering the following names for Elysian Park - Riverside Drive Expansion:

- Walnut Hill at Elysian Park - Proposed by the Office of Council District 13 & Citizens Committee to Save Elysian Park (CCSEP)

Please note: this discussion is not limited to these previously submitted names. Additional naming proposals may be submitted to RAP staff for consideration at [rap.commissioners@lacity.org](mailto:rap.commissioners@lacity.org)

# About “Walnut Hill at Elysian Park” Name

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- The Elysian Park – Riverside Drive Expansion is surrounded by California Black Walnut Trees (*Juglans Californica*).
- California Black Walnut Trees are native to California.
- RAP Forestry staff has confirmed the presence of Black Walnut Trees on the property



California Black Walnut Tree

# Actions Taken Thus Far...

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- On March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2011, the Board of Recreation and Parks Commissioners (Board) approved Report No. 11-074, which granted RAP Staff the conceptual approval to begin the formal naming process for the Elysian Park – Riverside Drive Expansion.
- On September 8<sup>th</sup>, 2015, the Los Angeles City Council approved the motion requesting the RAP Board consider the renaming of the Elysian Park - Riverside Drive Expansion to “Walnut Hill at Elysian Park”.
- RAP staff has reviewed the proposed name and determined that it is within the RAP Naming Policy.
- Presented the proposed name “Walnut Hill at Elysian Park” to the RAP Facility Repair and Maintenance Task Force on July 21, 2022. Conceptual approval of the name was granted.

# Next Steps...

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- Determine if there is a consensus in the Community on a new name for Elysian Park - Riverside Drive Expansion.
- If/Once a consensus name is identified, a Report will to be presented to the RAP Board of Commissioners recommending approval of the renaming of Elysian Park - Riverside Drive Expansion.



Join the City of Los Angeles and The Department of  
Recreation and Parks for the

# **Elysian** Park, **Riverside** Drive

Expansion Site Naming Discussion

**Wednesday,**  
**October 12, 2022**  
**7pm**

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85407336826?pwd=OUREK1JNOXYxSGFSSTZiVkrBUldrdz09>

Meeting ID: 854 0733 6826

Passcode: 477618



## **ATTACHMENT 5**

### **City of Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks Naming Policy, Procedures and Guidelines for Parks and Recreational Facilities**

The mission of the Department of Recreation and Parks (“RAP”) is to enrich the lives of the residents of Los Angeles by providing safe, welcoming parks and recreational facilities and affordable, diverse recreation and human services activities for people of all ages to play, learn, contemplate, build community and be good stewards of our environment.

One of RAP’s objectives under the Mission is to enhance and expand recreational programs, services, and significant financial support and contributions through public and private collaborations.

#### **Policy:**

RAP recognizes that parks and recreational facilities are an essential and integral part of the communities they serve, and that the names of parks and recreational facilities, and park amenities within them, play a significant role in fostering identities in the surrounding communities. This Naming Policy (“Policy”) establishes the criteria and requirements, and sets forth the guidelines and procedures, for the naming and renaming (collectively, “Naming”) of parks, recreational facilities, landmarks and any other assets determined appropriate by RAP (collectively referred to herein as “Park Assets”), which are owned, managed or controlled by RAP.

Pursuant to this Policy, the initial name of a new park or recreational facility, which may be temporary for purposes of administration and accounting, shall be administratively assigned by RAP staff in the traditional manner utilized prior to the establishment of this Policy, based on geographic features such as street and community names or prominent features. In addition, the Naming of existing Park Assets, pursuant to a RAP recommendation relevant to a Naming proposal received from a private or public entity, shall be subject to the approval of the Board of Recreation and Park Commissioners (“Board”), as described herein. In accordance with this Policy and pursuant to RAP recommendations, the Board shall consider the following two types of Naming proposals. The first type encompasses situations in which RAP receives or is offered a donation, gift, sponsorship, and/or other contribution from an outside entity that presents a decisive benefit and shows a direct connection to a Park Asset and serves the interests of the City and its residents. This type of Naming proposal would require a Naming Agreement to summarize the terms and conditions necessary to effectuate the financial or other benefits connected to the Naming proposal with a term (time period) recommended by the GM and approved by the Board, depending on the scope or nature of the agreement, and value, visibility, and lifespan of the donation, gift, sponsorship and or other contribution. The second type comprises Naming proposals to use a major historic event and/or unique significance of a specific place or person, as the basis for the proposed Name; again with the requirement that there be compelling and impressive substantiation demonstrating how the interests of City and its residents were served or impacted. The key in both types of Naming proposals is the importance of demonstrating direct connections to the Park Asset and clear community benefits as a foundation for considering any Naming proposal.

For purposes of this Policy, and with the exception of the temporary Naming of new Park Assets, the authority to approve the Naming of existing Park Assets shall be solely with the Board. Any exceptions to this Policy shall be subject to the prior approval of the Board.

### **Criteria and Guidelines for Evaluating Park Asset Naming Proposals:**

For purposes of this Policy, the following shall be considered when evaluating the appropriateness, feasibility, and implementation of Naming proposals:

- The Naming of parks after individuals shall be limited to those who are deceased and have made exceptional contributions to the park or community within which the park is located.
- Parks shall only be named after living persons under circumstances requiring such naming as a condition precedent of a grant deed or covenant.
- The Naming of a park after a major historic event must be based on a direct connection between the park and such event.
- The Naming engenders a positive public image which does not unduly commercialize the park or recreational facility.
- The proposed name for the park or recreational facility, and/or contributor, must be compatible with the Mission of RAP.
- Park Assets that are held by RAP through a lease or use agreement may be considered for Naming under this Policy, subject to any requirements or restrictions contained in such document.
- RAP reserves the right to limit the duration of time a Name will be in place and/or in effect.
- No specialized signage or advertisement containing a commercial message to purchase a good or service shall be authorized for use on park property.
- All forms of signage placed on or within a Park Asset shall meet RAP's graphic and sign standards.
- There shall be no religious symbols included on Naming signage.
- Park Assets not under the operation of RAP (shared or exclusive), although under the ownership or jurisdiction of RAP, shall not be subject to this Policy; such as for example, the Los Angeles Zoo in Griffith Park.
- Parks should not be subdivided for purposes of Naming, unless there are readily-identifiable physical divisions in the park (major roads, waterways, hillsides, etc.) which facilitate or warrant a subdivision; or there exist other compelling reasons for having more than one name connected to a park. This should not prevent independently Naming a recreational facility or amenity located within a park, as long as the selected name will not cause confusion for park patrons.
- RAP shall seek to inform the public with regard to the Naming of a park in their community.
- Any exception to the above shall be subject to the Naming criteria contained herein, and the Board's prior approval.

**Procedures:**

The Board retains the authority to name or rename Park Assets situated on park property. The following shall be the protocol for evaluating, considering and denying or approving Naming proposals:

1. A written proposal for the Naming of a Park Asset must be initially submitted to the RAP Board Office, to the attention of the Board Secretary. In accordance with this Policy, the Board Office shall forward the proposal to the RAP General Manager (“GM”) for consideration.
2. Prior to any form of Naming Policy being implemented, sponsorship proposals shall be evaluated by RAP staff, with recommendations to the GM for possible consideration.