



## **Griffith Park Advisory Board**

*Community Stewards of LA's Largest Park & Great Urban Wilderness*

Department of Recreation and Parks, City of Los Angeles

[www.laparks.org/griffithpark/advisory](http://www.laparks.org/griffithpark/advisory)

July 2, 2021

Matthew Rudnick  
Assistant General Manager  
Recreation & Parks Department

Re: Griffith Observatory Parking Revenue & Expenditures

Dear Mr. Rudnick,

Our board would like to thank you and the entire RAP executive team for your responsiveness to several recent requests. It was gratifying to see that input from our board and others in the community led to a reduction in parking rates at and near the Observatory. Further, we deeply appreciate the transparency shown by RAP's decision to release detailed historical revenue and expenditure figures for the Griffith Park paid parking program.

With that in mind, we would like to invite you to our next GPAB meeting at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, July 22<sup>nd</sup>. Your participation will aid us in better understanding the information that has been provided – and, crucially, will help to start a conversation about how we can best serve in our role as community stewards to aid RAP officials in future decisions related to Observatory parking revenue.

As you know, the paid parking program launched in 2016 with the intent of improving public transit and reducing the number of private vehicles in the park – and with the explicit understanding that all revenue would remain in Griffith Park, as stated in the [2016 board report](#). Community support largely hinged on that key point. At the time, a number of priorities were identified, some of which remain unfunded. We are hopeful that the improved post-pandemic budget situation will enable the following:

- Hiring a park biologist

Not only was this priority cited specifically in the 2016 board report that created the paid parking program, but it is also part of [A Vision for Griffith Park](#), adopted as department policy several years earlier. In fact, park advocates have stated that the goal of hiring a biologist dates to at least 2005 – and the need is greater than ever, both in Griffith Park and elsewhere.

*BOARD MEMBERS: Chair – Jason Greenwald; Vice Chair – Michelle Cramés; Secretary – Chris Laib;  
Past Chair – Ron Deutsch; Gene Gilbert; Mike Hain; Alex Phillips; Karen Thornton*

We understand that RAP is taking steps toward filling this essential need, and welcome any opportunity to be part of the process, in terms of helping to define the role, clarify resources that are needed, etc.

- Re-opening the Parkline Shuttle

It was an unfortunate quirk of timing that the Parkline Shuttle opened just a few months before the COVID-19 pandemic shutdown. Yet this free park-wide shuttle is an important outgrowth of the paid parking program – and a key pillar of RAP’s strategy to reduce private vehicles in Griffith Park. As such, it deserves sufficient funding to enable its long-term success. We understand that RAP is looking at resuming Parkline as part of a phase two transit re-opening, and look forward to any details you are able to share regarding the timing, extent and future expansion of this important shuttle service.

- Future allocation of Observatory Parking funds

Our board is fully aware of the emergency nature of the past year, and therefore understands RAP’s need to tap available revenue sources to prevent further layoffs and staff reductions. That being said, we would appreciate the opportunity to better understand the RAP General Fund diversions that have exceeded \$2 million in each of the last three fiscal years. Most essentially, we would welcome any commitment regarding the extent to which future Observatory parking revenue will remain in Griffith Park, as initially intended. Further, our board would appreciate the opportunity to help set priorities for the future use of funds – ideally in a manner that would become a routine part of the budget process.

In its first five years, the Observatory parking program has led to significant improvements in Griffith Park: transit solutions such as the DASH Observatory and Parkline Shuttle; capital projects that include the walkway from the Greek Theatre parking lot to the Observatory; better traffic control; and more. Moving forward, in our role as park stewards and community advocates, we would like to collaborate in identifying additional funding priorities. Together, we can ensure that funds are best used to support Griffith Park and its users, while moving toward our shared goals of fewer cars, more transit & better access for all Angelenos.

Sincerely,



Jason Greenwald  
Chair, Griffith Park Advisory Board

cc: LA Board of Recreation and Parks Commissioners  
RAP: Mike Shull, AP Diaz, Darryl Ford, Stefanie Smith  
CD4 District & Field Team