

APPROVED

DEC 10 2014

BOARD OF RECREATION
and PARK COMMISSIONERS

REPORT OF GENERAL MANAGER

NO. 14-313

DATE December 10, 2014

C.D. 8

BOARD OF RECREATION AND PARK COMMISSIONERS

SUBJECT: 98TH STREET NEIGHBORHOOD PARK – RE-NAMING TO JACARANDA PARK

<i>for</i>	R. Adams _____	V. Israel _____
	*R. Barajas <u>CD</u>	K. Regan _____
	H. Fujita _____	N. Williams _____



 General Manager

Approved _____ Disapproved _____ Withdrawn _____

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Board:

1. Grant approval to name 98th Street Neighborhood Park as Jacaranda Park; and,
2. Authorize the installation of appropriate park signage.

SUMMARY:

98th Street Neighborhood Park is a linear property located between Avalon Boulevard and Wadsworth Avenue in Los Angeles that measures approximately 5.35 acres. The property is owned by the City of Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (DWP). On December 10, 2012, the Board, through Board Report No. 12-325, approved a lease agreement with DWP for the use of the property as a park. The park is being developed as part of the 50 Parks Initiative in partnership with the Los Angeles Neighborhood Land Trust (LANLT) who received grant funding through Proposition 84 for the development of the park.

On July 12, 2012, the Board, through Board Report No. 12-222, approved a Donation Agreement with LANLT for the acquisition, development, and construction of two new parks, including this site. The conceptual park design approved as part of the Donation Agreement includes features such as children's playgrounds, picnic areas, family game table area, basketball half-courts, multi-use open spaces and turf areas, walking/jogging trails with outdoor fitness stations, perimeter fencing and gates, and landscaping. LANLT will bid and award the project, as funds were awarded to LANLT.

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The completed improvements will then be donated to the Department of Recreation and Parks (RAP), subject to Board approval and acceptance.

LANLT has been instrumental in the creation of this park and, as part of the creation process, held several community meetings regarding the design and name of the park. Community members had expressed concern regarding the administrative name of the park, 98th Street Neighborhood Park, as there is a perceived association with the local "98th Street Gang." After reviewing the criteria in the Board adopted policy on park naming, several community meetings were held to discuss possible names for the park. Community members present voted overwhelmingly to request that the park be officially named Jacaranda Park in honor of the trees that exist on the site and in the surrounding neighborhood. Please see the attached letter of request from LANLT attached hereto as Exhibit A.

Staff has evaluated the proposed naming and finds it to be in compliance with the Board adopted Policy, Procedures and Guidelines for Parks and Recreational Facilities as the name Jacaranda Park is neutral in connotation and represents a geographical feature representative of the surrounding neighborhood.

Fabrication and installation of the sign will be included in the building process of the park.

Recreation and Parks management and staff are in support with the recommendations as set forth by the Department. This proposal was reviewed by the Facility Repair and Maintenance Task Force at their October 1st, 2014 meeting at which time it was recommended that the proposal be forwarded to the full Commission for consideration.

Staff has determined that the subject project is exempt from provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), pursuant to Article III, Section 1, Class 11 (1), of the City CEQA guidelines, which provides for placement of signs on park property as accessory structures to recreational facilities.

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT:

There shall be no fiscal impact to the Department for the naming of this park as the park signage will be paid for through the Proposition 84 grant funds.

This report was prepared by Melinda Gejer, City Planning Associate, Planning, Construction and Maintenance Branch.



July 21, 2014

Los Angeles City Recreation and Parks Department
Office of Board of Commissioners
221 N. Figueroa St. Suite 1510
Los Angeles, CA 90012

RE: Park Name Change Request for "98th Street Neighborhood Park"

Dear Commissioners,

The Los Angeles Neighborhood Land Trust formally requests a name change for a new park located along 98th Street between Avalon Avenue and Wadsworth Avenue in South Los Angeles. This request comes following a community meeting on Saturday May 3, 2014. At this meeting, the community voiced significant concerns regarding the name of the park "98th Street Neighborhood Park" and the association with the local "98th Street Gang". In our opinion, a name change according to Recreation and Parks (RAP) guidelines will better serve the long-term accessibility and community ownership of the park site.

We consulted with RAP staff Tom Gibson and Craig Raines about the criteria for the selection of a new park name. We were directed that:

1. The name of park could not be named after a person who is still alive.
2. The park could be named after a deceased individual as long this person had a direct connection to the area/neighborhood.
3. The name of the park needed to be geographically significant and/or specific to the neighborhood.
4. Street names can be approved as long as the street names were not previously utilized for existing park names.

With this information in mind we conducted another design community meeting on Saturday May 31, 2014 and presented the community with RAP's criteria as listed above. We provided approximately 20 community members present with different examples such as street names immediately adjacent to the site. However, Avalon and McKinley are names already taken by other nearby parks. Community representatives at the meeting did not want their park named after the remaining streets, Wadsworth and Standard.

To provide inspiration for potential names, Land Trust staff presented community members with the names of existing tree and plant species that currently exist on the future park site. "Jacaranda Tree," "Pepper Tree," "California Sage," and "Agave" were all used as examples.



Despite significant discussion and consideration of all suggestions, community members overwhelming selected the name "Jacaranda Park" symbolizing the beautiful trees at the site and the time invested sitting under their beautiful canopies planning for the park. The community expressed happiness and relief with the neutral name. It was a proud moment for us to behold the power of the community to unite and make a decision that will affect their community in a positive way.

For these reasons, on behalf of the community we formally request the Department of Recreation and Parks Board of Commissioners to change the name of 98th Street Neighborhood Park to Jacaranda Park. Please feel free to contact Matilde Reyes, LANLT Project Manager, should you have any questions on the project: mreyes@lanlt.org or 213-572-0188 x215.

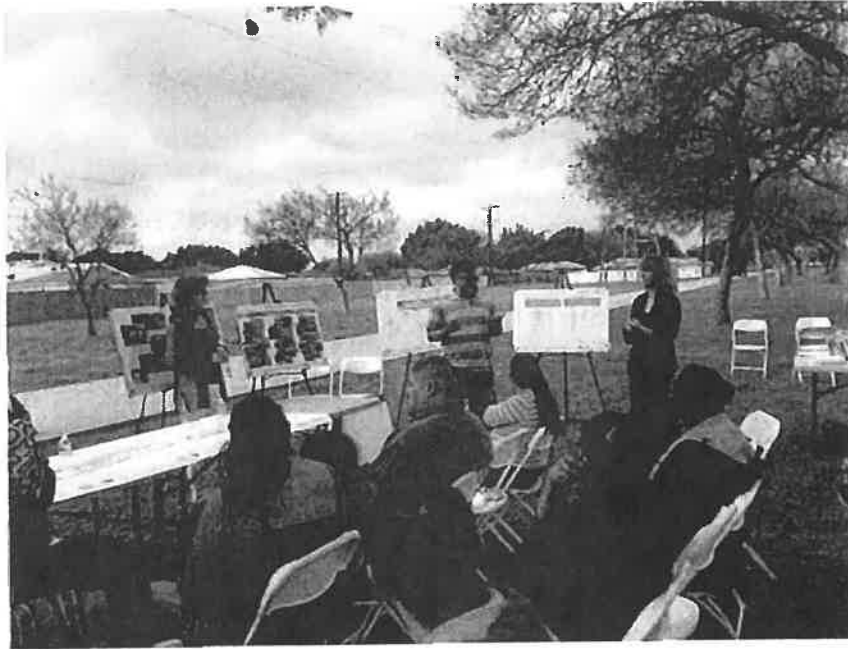
Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alina Bokde". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Alina Bokde
Executive Director
Los Angeles Neighborhood Land Trust



2nd Design Community Meeting Held on site Saturday May 3, 2014



3rd Design Community Meeting Held on site Saturday May 31, 2014



LOS ANGELES
NEIGHBORHOOD
LAND
TRUST
Voting on New Park Name

