

Park Advisory Board

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**Park Advisory Board
Pacific Palisades Recreation Center**

Andy Starrels, Chair

January 31, 2023

Via Electronic Mail - cathie.santodomingo@lacity.org

Cathie Santo Domingo
Assistant General Manager, Planning
Maintenance and Construction
City of L.A. Department of Recreation and Parks
221 N Figueroa Street Suite 350
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: Palisades Recreation Center Park Advisory Board

Dear Ms. Santo Domingo:

At its first regular meeting of 2023 held last week, the Pacific Palisades Park Advisory Board heard community input regarding a number of issues that have impacted the Pacific Palisades community since the recent dedication of George Wolfberg Park at Potrero Canyon. The opening of this unique coastal resource marks a monumental event for the Palisades and all of Los Angeles, and reflects decades of tireless work by RAP staff, other City employees and officials and a great many community members. While we are thrilled for the entire community at the park’s long-awaited opening, the Palisades PAB has noticed already an increase in community concerns, complaints and operational issues arising from both Potrero Canyon and Palisades RC. Generally speaking, the issues the Palisades PAB currently encounters arise most frequently from matters of security, maintenance, public safety and enforcement of operating rules, at both facilities.

In light of these issues, the Palisades PAB suggests that a re-assessment of the Palisades’ classification within RAP’s inventory of facilities is now appropriate. Palisades RC has long been classified as a “neighborhood park” under RAP planning documents (although inexplicably, nearby RAP facilities of similar size, such as Rustic Canyon Park and Barrington Recreation Center, are classified as “community parks”). With the addition of Potrero Canyon, a nearly 50-acre resource long designated as a “regional park,” the Palisades PAB respectfully requests that Potrero and Palisades RC collectively be recognized as a single regional facility, and be afforded

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resources and funding that are consistent with such status. Of course, Palisades RC will continue to source its programmatic offerings on a self-sustaining basis, but the regional nature of Potrero and Palisades RC collectively have already brought to light issues of community concern that include after-hours vandalism and access, protection of park facilities and enforcement of operating restrictions and hours. Those concerns should be addressed by RAP and the City with a commitment of resources befitting a regional community resource – including, where appropriate, staffing allocations, safety and security measures (that might include Ranger or police services), and maintenance funding. Accordingly, along with the designation of the combined George Wolfberg Park at Potrero Canyon Park and Palisades Park as a regional park, the Palisades PAB specifically requests that RAP (or a combination of agencies) provide full-time Ranger allocation to patrol and help maintain this great amenity of the City.

The opening of Potrero Canyon represents a valuable expansion of open space and recreation opportunities that Palisadians, and all Angelenos, will long enjoy. The Potrero/Palisades combination will further combine with other nearby green spaces along Temescal Canyon Road, and on the Asilomar bluffs and El Medio bluffs, to form an important regional “green belt.” This green belt will be enjoyed by all community members as an important way to enjoy one of Los Angeles’ most iconic resources – its coast. Los Angeles’ coastal legacy represents a priceless aspect of citywide wealth that necessarily comes with the costs and risks associated with such a well-used resource. Palisades RC and its constituencies should not bear these burdens alone.

As a separate, but similarly important matter, the Palisades PAB remains committed to working with RAP to find ways to remedy the conditions of the restrooms at Palisades RC, which has been the subject of public comment and correspondence from the Palisades PAB for many years. The restrooms are not ADA compliant, and have suffered from frequent breakdowns and disruptions. In 2022, the Palisades PAB requested that RAP make ADA compliance for the restrooms and the recreation center’s playground a priority. Given the significant fundraising requirements of a new playground and limited capacity of Citywide funding, the Palisades PAB now suggests that focus be placed upon restroom upgrades alone, and that Quimby funds be allocated to this purpose.

We are eager to work with RAP to serve the needs of the overall parks community, and are appreciative of the efforts of all RAP staff to provide for the parks constituencies in our community.

Cordially,



Andy Starrels
PAB Chair

cc: Sonya Young-Jimenez - sonya.young-jimenez@lacity.org

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