

Communication from Public

Name: Vivian Escalante, Boyle Heights Community Partners

Date Submitted: 08/28/2024 02:24 PM

Council File No: 24-0918

Comments for Public Posting: Good Afternoon, Budget, Finance, and Innovation Committee, My name is Vivian Escalante, and I am the founder, president, and CEO of Boyle Heights Community Partners, a nonprofit for historic preservation, education, and community participation, and I am submitting our comment to support item# 6, 24-0918 funding for our Historic Hollenbeck Park Lake, which was given to us by Elizabeth Hollenbeck and opened on August 5, 1899, 125 years ago this month. I would have preferred to be here in person, but due to losing my parking space in Boyle Heights, I am now held hostage and unable to leave. We are pleased to have participated with our colleagues Friends of Hollenbeck at the Parks and Recreation Commissioners some years back to finally address the funding that was promised by our previous councilmember which the funding had no longer been updated or applied and to have the support of our current councilmember and this committee to allocate the financing which is more than long overdue to our neglect and historic park lake in our underserved community of Boyle Heights.

BOYLE HEIGHTS COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Unity with Strength for History, Community and Historic Preservation

603 North Breed Street
Los Angeles, California 90033

BHCP

28 August 2024

Budget, Finance and Innovation Committee Meeting, Wednesday, August 28, 2024, 2:30pm
John Ferraro Council Chamber Room, City Hall
200 North Spring Street
Los Angeles, California 90012

Councilmember Bob Blumenfield, Chair
Councilmember Monica Rodriguez
Councilmember Tim McOsker
Councilmember Katy Yaroslavsky
Councilmember Traci Park

Good Afternoon, Budget, Finance, and Innovation Committee,
My name is Vivian Escalante, and I am the founder, president, and CEO of Boyle Heights Community Partners, a nonprofit for historic preservation, education, and community participation, and I am submitting our comment to support item# 6, 24-0918 funding for our Historic Hollenbeck Park Lake, which was given to us by Elizabeth Hollenbeck and opened on August 5, 1899, 125 years ago this month. I would have preferred to be here in person, but due to losing my parking space in Boyle Heights, I am now held hostage and unable to leave.

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The History of Hollenbeck Park Lake



Hollenbeck Park, was a twenty-one acre Los Angeles city park created in 1892, was the most photographed and publicized part of Boyle Heights from the 1890s onwards. Following national and international trends,

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the city began actively developing parks in the 1880s. Hollenbeck Park followed earlier parks such as Central (created as a public square in 1866 and known since 1918 as Pershing Square), Westlake (renamed MacArthur after the World War II general in 1942), Eastlake (first East Los Angeles before the community's name changed to Lincoln Heights and, from 1917, known as Lincoln), and Elysian (established in 1886 with no name change as of yet).

Indeed, Boyle Heights founder William H. Workman took an active interest in improving the growing city's parklands while mayor of Los Angeles in 1887-88. During that time, a new city charter was drafted, and a parks department and commission were created. In the 1890s, Workman was a member and chair of the parks commission, and during that tenure, Hollenbeck Park was added to the city parks system, Workman donated two-thirds of the property, with the remainder coming from Elizabeth Hatsfeldt Hollenbeck, and the two gave this gift to the city in honor of Mrs. Hollenbeck's husband, John.

In 1880, Hollenbeck worked with former California governor John G. Downey, nurseryman Ozro W. Childs, and others to convince the state to buy a section (or 160 acres) of land southwest of downtown. The land had been used as an agricultural exposition grounds and was known then as Agricultural Park. Later, the site became Exposition Park.

In addition to donating some land for the park, Elizabeth Hollenbeck willed the couple's home and surrounding grounds across Boyle Avenue for a senior citizens' home, dedicated in 1896 and now known as Hollenbeck Palms. After she died in 1918, Mrs. Hollenbeck was interred with her husband at Evergreen Cemetery at the east end of Boyle Heights.

Sincerely,



Vivian M. Escalante
Founder, President and Chief Executive Officer
Boyle Heights Community Partners, established in 2021

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