

CITY OF LOS ANGELES
Department of Recreation and Parks

December 13, 2001

TO: BOARD OF RECREATION AND PARK COMMISSIONERS
FROM: ELLEN OPPENHEIM, General Manager *Marjorie Matthews for*
SUBJECT: FORMATION OF THE "FRIENDS OF THE KOREAN FRIENDSHIP BELL" COMMITTEE

The Korean American Museum has established a Friends of the Korean Friendship Bell Committee. It is the intent of the Department to establish a Memorandum of Understanding with the Korean American Museum to provide stewardship for the refurbishment and ongoing care of the Korean Friendship Bell and its surrounding areas through donations.

The Korean Friendship Bell is part of the Angels Gate Park Complex. It was given to the United States of America by South Korea in 1976 as a bicentennial gift to symbolize the strength of the existing friendship between the two countries. Mayor Tom Bradley chose to place the monument in San Pedro on Department of Recreation and Parks' property. The Korean Bell and Belfry of Friendship were declared Historic-Cultural Monument No. 187 in 1978 by the City of Los Angeles, Cultural Heritage Commission and Cultural Affairs Department.

At the time of its placement at Angels Gate Park, funding for the Bell's maintenance was not provided, and no clear discernment was in place as to who was responsible for maintaining the bell and its structure. In May 1998, the Korean American Cultural Center funded craftsmen and supplies from Korea to touch up some areas of the belfry. Before and since then, the Bell and belfry have been deteriorating, and no funding has been available to refurbish this Historic-Cultural Monument. Because of the uniqueness of this monument, Department craftsmen do not possess the necessary skills to work on this monument.

For this purpose, various people from the community and government have come together to form a "Friends of the Friendship Bell" committee. Some of the members are from organizations such as the Korean-American Coalition, the Korean American Museum, Council District 15, 47th District of California Legislature, Sculpture Conservation Studio, the Department of Recreation and Parks, the Korean Cultural Center, and the Angels Gate Complex Park Advisory Board.

To broaden the appeal for funding of this project, the committee was established under the Korean American Museum to take advantage of the Museum's 501(c)3 non-profit status. The committee will operate under the by-laws of the Korean American Museum (see attached) and will establish its accounts through the Museum.

The committee has met regularly since October 2000. It plans to raise funds through private and corporate sponsors, individuals in the community, and fundraisers. At this time the committee has established a member and donor list, informational cards and small brochures, and there are many companies which have expressed a desire to donate money. The committee is awaiting official support from the Department in order to move forward with major fundraising efforts. The committee will work closely with the Department and local community to accomplish its goal to refurbish, restore and maintain the bell for years to come.

Prepared by Deanne Dedmon, Senior Recreation Director II