

REPORT OF GENERAL MANAGER

NO. 05-133

DATE May 18, 2005

C.D. 15

BOARD OF RECREATION AND PARK COMMISSIONERS

SUBJECT: NORTH WATSON AVENUE, WILMINGTON: ACQUISITION OF A VACANT PARCEL

J. Kolb	_____	J. Combs	_____
F. Mok	<u>SM</u>	H. Fujita	_____
*S. Huntley	_____	B. Jensen	_____
K. Regan	_____		

Robert Jensen  
General Manager

Approved \_\_\_\_\_ Disapproved \_\_\_\_\_ Withdrawn \_\_\_\_\_

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Board:

1. Adopt the Resolution, on file in the Board Office, authorizing the acquisition for \$95,000.00, plus escrow and title insurance fees of \$1,600.00 for a total acquisition cost of \$96,600.00, of a vacant triangular parcel at the intersection of Watson and Drumm Avenues in the Wilmington area of Los Angeles, having a street address of 1148 North Watson Avenue;
2. Direct the Chief Accounting Employee to expedite the processing of a demand to the City Controller's for the amount of \$96,600.00 in the Neighborhood Block Grants funds, payable to Stewart Title from Fund No. 205, Account No. WC02, and to transmit the payment check to the Real Estate and Asset Management Section for deposit into Escrow Account No. 05110299;
3. Upon completion of escrow, authorize the Board Secretary to accept the grant deed to the parcel, which is to be set aside and dedicated as park property in perpetuity; and,
4. Direct staff to request the Bureau of Engineering's assistance in designing and implementing a plan to develop the site with the customary review and approval of the design plans by the Department, the Mayor's Office and the local community.

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### SUMMARY:

On August 11, 2004, the Board gave conceptual approval through Report No. 04-252 to the acquisition of a vacant parcel at 1148 North Watson Avenue (APN 7425-015-016). The parcel is 0.06 acre or 2,526 square feet. It is anticipated that the parcel's development into a pocket park will complement the recreational uses already existing or that are planned for the southern part of the adjacent East Wilmington Greenbelt. Moreover, the Wilmington Neighborhood Council and other stakeholders have consistently identified increased park space as a priority for local planning. The parcel will be developed for passive recreational use in order to benefit the surrounding, park-poor residential neighborhood.

A Phase I site assessment was performed in January 2005 that concluded there was no contamination on or near the parcel and therefore recommended no further investigation. With respect to compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the proposed acquisition and development of the parcel as a pocket park was determined to be exempt from the provisions of CEQA pursuant to Article III, Section 1, Class 3(6) and Class 16 of the City CEQA Guidelines.

At the time of the Board's conceptual approval, General Services considered that one could not legally build on the lot and gave a Class "C" estimate of \$50,000.00. Staff had also determined that the owner was willing to sell to the City but wanted \$95,000.00 in the expectation that one could, in fact, legally build on the lot. As a means of deciding the issue, General Services obtained a formal appraisal, which on March 22, 2005, yielded a value commensurate with the owner's asking price.

### FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT:

The Mayor's Office has obtained \$250,000.00 in funding for the acquisition and development of the parcel (Fund 205, Account No. WC02), which is within the boundaries of the Neighborhood Block Grant Program for East Wilmington. This funding is still available even though the project will occur in a program year that is later than originally planned. Landscape architectural staff in the Bureau of Engineering believes that the funding is sufficient for both the acquisition and the development of the parcel. The assessment of the future operation and maintenances costs are unknown at this time.

The Assistant General Manager of Operations East, the Superintendent of Pacific Region and the Office of the Fifteenth Council District concur with staff's recommendations.

This Report was prepared by Joan Reitzel, Senior Management Analyst in Real Estate and Asset Management.

RESOLUTION NO. \_\_\_\_\_

WHEREAS the Mayor's Office has obtained funding under the Neighborhood Block Grant Program for the acquisition and development of a 0.06 acre vacant parcel located at the intersection of Watson and Drum Avenues in the Wilmington area of Los Angeles, having a street address of 1148 N. Watson Avenue (APN 7425-015-016), as is more clearly shown in the attached map; and

WHEREAS in April 2004 the Mayor's Office asked for the Department's assistance in obtaining and developing the site as a public park in response to the community's wish to increase public open space in the vicinity of the East Wilmington Greenbelt; and

WHEREAS on August 11, 2004, through Report No. 04-252, the Board of Recreation and Park Commissioners gave preliminary approval to the acquisition;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Recreation and Park Commissioners of the City of Los Angeles that the acquisition of the parcel at 1148 N. Watson Avenue is to be completed in accordance with the provisions of Charter Section 594 (a); and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board President and Secretary accept, when prepared, a grant deed representing the transfer of ownership of this parcel to the City; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this parcel is to be set aside and dedicated as park property in perpetuity; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that staffs are authorized to seek the assistance of the Bureau of Engineering in developing the site into a park for public recreational use, employing a design approved by the Department, the Mayor's Office and the local community.

I HEREBY CERTIFY, that the foregoing is a full, true, and correct copy of a Resolution adopted by the Board of Recreation and Park Commissioners of the City of Los Angeles at its meeting held on \_\_\_\_\_, 2005 (Board Report No. 05-\_\_\_).

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mary E. Alvarez, Board Secretary

Resolution No. \_\_\_\_\_