

## Communication from Public

**Name:** Friends of Griffith Park

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**Council File No:** 23-0653

**Comments for Public Posting:** Please see attached comment letter. Thank you.



**Friends of Griffith Park**

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November 26, 2024

Mehmet Berker  
City of Los Angeles Council District 4

Re: Wonder View Trail Extension  
Council File 23-0653

Dear Mehmet,

We appreciate Council District 4's dedicated outreach efforts. Friends of Griffith Park (FoGP) would like to provide comments, as requested, regarding the proposed Wonder View Trail Extension after reviewing the preliminary concepts by Bureau of Engineering. In general, we are supportive of any efforts that aim to increase accessibility of the park. We also encourage RAP and CD4 to continue bringing creative ideas to resolve issues related with Hollywood Sign tourism impacting western residential areas of Griffith Park.

We understand that this particular area has a lot of different voices with sometimes vastly different views on both the problems and how best to address them. This was quite evident at the October 24, 2024 GPAB meeting where BOE explained the proposed project. Wonder View Drive residents voiced support, while other nearby residents argued that the trail enhancement will only attract more people to an already-crowded residential area.

We do have a couple concerns after the preliminary presentation we saw at the GPAB meeting, which are largely environmental and include the following:

- Trails are not only expensive and challenging to make afresh, but even more so to maintain and repair - as we found with our efforts to revitalize the Bee Rock Trail.
- The hillside this proposed trail is hoping to traverse is very steep; over time that is going to lead to seasonal erosion and the need for continual maintenance or the potential for large sections being washed out.
- If we open up this section of LADWP land, will that accidentally lead to ghost trails popping up in this relatively untouched LADWP wilderness and riparian canyon nearby? And if a fence is proposed to reduce access into these wildlands, what would be the environmental cost of erecting this barrier all along the downhill side

of the proposed trail, such as loss of fauna connectivity? Aesthetics, as well as biological impacts, are concerns we also have.

- Collateral impacts from a potential increase in usage of the trails leading to Wisdom Tree and on the Cahuenga Peak ridgeline, as a consequence of the proposed project, also need to be seriously considered. Anthropogenic pressures since the Cahuenga ridgeline property became part of the Park in 2010 have been significant. These western wildlands host special species such as Blainville's horned lizard (now extirpated from the entire Park except here), and provide denning and breeding grounds for mammals such as Western gray foxes.

Ultimately, while we are not outright opposed to this idea, we do wonder if this is a solution in search of a problem. Hiker safety is cited as the major reason for the proposed project. Anecdotal polling of hikers and our board has revealed that no one has felt particularly unsafe on foot hiking up the current road to the new gate. In fact, we could cite other locations where park patrons are in far more danger than on Wonder View Drive.

Perhaps better parking signage on Lake Hollywood Drive and improved deterrent signage at the start of Wonder View Drive are easier solutions that should be considered. The ridesharing staging area has provided significant relief of vehicles entering dead end Wonder View Drive already. Also, due to apps such as AllTrails, hikers are being forewarned regarding parking and where to begin their hikes (trailhead).

Should the proposed project proceed with further review, we stand ready to provide input. At this time, we feel there are higher priorities where funding could be reallocated.

Sincerely,



Gerry Hans, President

About Friends of Griffith Park:

*Friends of Griffith Park is a non-profit 501(c)(3) charitable group that promotes the enlightened stewardship of Griffith Park so it can survive and thrive well beyond the 21st century. FoGP is committed to ensuring that Griffith Park, a public park and Los Angeles' largest Historic-Cultural Monument, remain open, natural, and free to all citizens of Los Angeles.*