

## Communication from Public

**Name:** Gerry Hans  
**Date Submitted:** 05/12/2026 04:58 PM  
**Council File No:** 26-0489-S2  
**Comments for Public Posting:** Please see attached letter regarding adequate Charter funding for City Parks without raising taxes. Thank you!



## Friends of Griffith Park

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May 12, 2026

Council President Marqueece Harris-Dawson  
Chair, Los Angeles City Council Rules Committee

Re: Charter Funding Increase for Recreation & Parks

Dear Councilmember Harris-Dawson,

We join park supporters throughout Los Angeles in strongly supporting the proposed funding increase for Recreation and Parks (RAP). This plan, with a four-year phase-in, follows the wildly successful model that turned around our libraries. We urge you and your colleagues to make a similarly smart investment in parks by voting to put this Charter amendment on the ballot.

By now you are familiar with the key facts and statistics: How low LA ranks in per-capita parks funding. How far we lag our peer cities. And, crucially, how many staff positions have been cut since the Great Recession, as a direct consequence of newly required reimbursements to other city departments. What we would like to offer, then, is a closer look at our city's most beloved open space, Griffith Park, with a few examples of both the need and the opportunity as you considering putting forth this essential funding measure.

### Historic Merry-Go-Round Restoration

The historic Spillman “four-horses-abreast” carousel, one of only a handful worldwide, was an early inspiration to Walt Disney. It has also been a joyful and affordable gathering spot for local families since the 1930s. Yet when the previous co-owner, Julio Gosdinski, died in 2022, the attraction closed, depriving Angelenos of this one-of-a-kind destination. Thanks to the heroic efforts of RAP staff, the City of Los Angeles is on the verge of acquiring this merry-go-round. Yet the cost of rehabilitation and restoration is estimated at \$2 million. Imagine if RAP had capital funding in-hand, rather than requiring a massive fundraising campaign to bring back this much-loved family attraction.

### Lack of Sufficient Restrooms

Along with public safety, providing sufficient, clean restrooms is among the chief requirements for any public gathering spot. Yet Griffith Park has long suffered a shortage, and it has reached crisis levels. Take Fern Dell, a beloved spot for locals and visitors alike, which once boasted four public restrooms. Now there is only one, plus a slew of portables. (When the most significant of the four restrooms burned, it emerged that RAP was “self-insured” – and the structure has not been re-built, years later.) Similarly, Bronson Canyon, a popular spot for hikers, has only two portables that are routinely so dirty that people do not use them. Finally, Lake Hollywood Park, which is part of Griffith Park and draws tourists from around the world, has no bathroom facilities whatsoever. As a city, we can – and must – do better. Funding is badly needed.

## Protecting the Wilderness with Best Management Practices

Griffith Park's 4,000 acres require constant upkeep. And RAP's maintenance team does tremendous work despite woefully inadequate numbers. Yet the wilderness area needs something else, too: Best management practices to protect the park's ecological health, its habitat and wildlife. Formerly, attention to invasive plants was taken seriously, controlling these invaders before they had the chance to spread far and wide. Deferred action has had serious impacts on diversity of the many plant community types across the park. Some slopes, for example, have been totally consumed by fire-prone fountain grass, where native scrubland once firmly held the slopes. With sufficient funding, priority and focus, these issues can successfully be addressed, resulting in benefits for the park's wild lands and the city's overall biodiversity.

In sharing the above examples, we haven't even touched on the remarkable job our Park Rangers do with severely limited resources. Shouldn't a city as great as Los Angeles have sufficient numbers of rangers to provide a safe and welcoming presence at parks and recreation centers city-wide? We can say from experience they are over-worked and stretched thin. Safety is a city's first need, and the rangers should have the resources to do their jobs most effectively.

Finally, Griffith Park, like so many public park and recreation facilities, suffers from tremendous deferred maintenance. In the long run, deferred maintenance costs much more – particularly given the park's historically significant elements, some of which are many decades old.

For all of these reasons, and so many more, we urge you to join the groundswell of park advocates and ordinary Angelenos alike: Place the RAP funding measure on the November ballot, and give our city a chance to provide adequate funding for parks without raising taxes.

Sincerely,



Gerry Hans  
President



Jason Greenwald  
Executive Director

cc: City Council Rules Committee: Councilmember John Lee, Councilmember Hugo Soto-Martinez, Councilmember Nithya Raman, Councilmember Katy Yaroslavsky

RAP: Jimmy Kim, Matthew Rudnick, Brenda Aguirre, Stefanie Smith

CD4: Mehmet Berker, Hannah Jaeger

### 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.*