

MOTION

The Jordan Downs redevelopment represents one of the most significant investments in the Watts community in decades, transforming a historically underinvested public housing community into a mixed-income neighborhood with new housing, infrastructure, open space, community facilities, and opportunities for residents. As part of this transformation, the Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles (HACLA), in partnership with community stakeholders and in collaboration with the Department of Parks and Recreation, is advancing plans for a new neighborhood recreation center at Jordan Downs. The proposed facility would provide critically needed recreational, educational, wellness, and community programming for residents of Jordan Downs and the surrounding Watts neighborhood.

This new park and recreation center will serve one of the most park-deficient communities in Los Angeles County. While the National Recreation and Park Association has long identified a goal of 10 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents, and comparable high-density urban communities provide a median of 6.8 acres per 1,000 residents, Los Angeles County offers only 3.3 acres per 1,000 residents. The Watts community has just 0.43 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents, demonstrating an extraordinary lack of access to safe, publicly accessible recreational space. This shortage of parks has had measurable consequences for community health. Approximately 35 percent of Watts residents are under the age of 18, yet children and families have extremely limited access to safe outdoor spaces for recreation, exercise, and social interaction. FitnessGram data further illustrates this disparity. In Census Tract 2421, where the park will be located, more than 58 percent of 5th-, 7th-, and 9th-grade students are not within the Healthy Fitness Zone for Body Mass Index (BMI). In the adjacent Census Tract 2422.02, that figure increases to 86 percent. These statistics underscore the urgent need for accessible recreational infrastructure that encourages physical activity and supports healthier lifestyles.

Resiliency is a central element of the design for the proposed recreation center and adjacent park, with plans to incorporate solar, battery backup, extra refrigeration, indoor and outdoor sheltering locations, and additional water and electrical connection points to allow for mobilization of food, shelter, and services during any community or citywide emergency. This is a critical project in a time when our most vulnerable communities are more susceptible to environmental impacts and natural disasters. This proposed neighborhood recreation center and park are designed as a critical public investment in environmental justice, neighborhood revitalization, and equitable access to the social, physical, and mental health needs of a historically underserved community.

HACLA anticipates beginning design development for the recreation center in Fall 2026 utilizing County Measure A funding and, concurrent with construction of the park component, completing Ready-to-Issue plans by Fall 2027 with the goal to begin construction of the recreation center in 2028. HACLA is actively pursuing State funding, as well as other public and private sources, to close the remaining construction funding gap.


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Given the importance of this project to the Watts community, its role in strengthening the City's recreation and park network, and its potential to serve as an important facility supporting the City's emergency preparedness and response capabilities, the City should take proactive steps to support the project's long-term success. This includes planning for the Department of Recreation and Parks (RAP) to assume long-term operations and management of the facility and working with HACLA to identify potential financing structures to support construction of the recreation center, including the potential use of Municipal Improvement Corporation of Los Angeles (MICLA) financing or another appropriate City-supported financing mechanism.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the City Council direct the City Administrative Officer (CAO), with the assistance of the Chief Legislative Analyst (CLA) and the Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles (HACLA), to report back in 15 days with information regarding the following:

1. The feasibility of utilizing Municipal Improvement Corporation of Los Angeles (MICLA) financing, or another City-supported financing mechanism, to support the construction of the proposed Jordan Downs Neighborhood Recreation Center, and the City budget and capital planning process for consideration of any potential MICLA request, including the timing for submission and consideration of the project;
2. The eligibility of the proposed project and its ownership, lease, and operating structure for MICLA or other City debt financing, including any requirements necessary to establish an appropriate financing structure;
3. Any applicable precedent involving City-supported financing of facilities located on property owned or controlled by HACLA or another public agency;
4. Whether a Tax Equity and Fiscal Responsibility Act (TEFRA) hearing or other public financing approval process would apply to any proposed financing structure; and
5. The estimated amount of financing that could potentially be supported, including the anticipated debt service, financing costs, administrative costs, and any other financial obligations that would be incurred by the City or another public entity.

I FURTHER MOVE that the City Council support HACLA's application for the State's Round 2 Resiliency Center Funding for this project in an amount up to \$10 million and prepare the Department of Recreation and Parks (RAP) as well as the Emergency Management Department (EMD) to provide key input for program planning and design features necessary for emergency and daily operations of this new neighborhood park and recreation center in Watts.

I FURTHER MOVE that the City Council direct the CAO, in coordination with the RAP and HACLA, to work collaboratively and report back in 15 days to identify potential City, public, philanthropic, and other funding mechanisms that could support the capital construction and ongoing operations of the proposed Jordan Downs Neighborhood Recreation Center, and to

develop a coordinated funding strategy to ensure the project meets its construction schedule and qualifies for State, Federal and private funding opportunities including the State of California Strategic Growth Council's Resiliency Centers Round 2 funding.

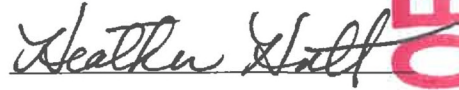
PRESENTED BY:



TIM McOSKER

Councilmember, 15th District

SECONDED BY:



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