

REPORT OF GENERAL MANAGER

NO. 12-116

DATE April 18, 2012

C.D. 14

BOARD OF RECREATION AND PARK COMMISSIONERS

SUBJECT: 6<sup>th</sup> AND GLADYS STREET PARK – PROPOSED INSTALLATION OF A MURAL

R. Adams \_\_\_\_\_  
H. Fujita \_\_\_\_\_  
V. Israel \_\_\_\_\_

K. Regan \_\_\_\_\_  
\*M. Shull not for  
N. Williams \_\_\_\_\_

Not for  
\_\_\_\_\_  
General Manager

**MAY 02 2012**

Approved \_\_\_\_\_

Disapproved \_\_\_\_\_

Withdrawn \_\_\_\_\_

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Board grant conceptual approval for a mural at 6<sup>th</sup> and Gladys Street Park (Gladys Park).

SUMMARY:

Gladys Park is a 0.34 acre pocket park located at 824 East 6<sup>th</sup> Street, in the Skid Row community of Downtown Los Angeles. This park features outdoor basketball courts and a small outdoor stage. Gladys Park has been managed by the SRO Housing Corporation for over twenty-three (23) years.

The Los Angeles Poverty Department, a local non-profit arts organization, has proposed the installation of a mural within Gladys Park. A proposed sketch of the mural and the proposed location of the mural within the park are attached hereto as Exhibit A. The muralist is Mr. Brainwash, an internationally renowned pop artist. Mr. Brainwash is the moniker of Los Angeles based Thierry Guetta. Mr. Brainwash has had solo shows throughout the country including Los Angeles, New York, and Miami. The project proposed for Gladys Park features images of neighborhood residents, visionaries, and leaders whose actions contributed to re-knitting the social fabric of the Skid Row community. A biography of the featured persons is attached hereto as Exhibit B.

SRO Housing Corporation has offered a letter of support for this project which includes an offer to maintain the mural over time. That letter of support is attached hereto as Exhibit C. Should a conceptual approval for the proposed mural be granted the next step in the process would be to conduct the appropriate community outreach.

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Council District 14 and Metro Region management and staff have no objection to this project at Gladys Park.

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT:

Issues of maintenance, mural removal, and any associated costs will be identified, as will the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) clearance, in a subsequent report to your Board. It is anticipated that approval of this project would have no impact to the Department's General Fund.

This report was prepared by Melinda Gejer, City Planning Associate, Planning, Construction and Maintenance Division.



**Proposed Images**



**Proposed Location Within Gladys Park**

**Community Portrait Gallery Bio's**

3 rows, 12 portraits per row, each 24" x 24"

**1st row from left to right:**

**Exhibit B**

**1. Richard Fulton, (AKA) 5th St Dick**

Jazz advocate Richard Fulton became clean and sober on Skid Row, before opening "5th Street Dick's Coffeeshouse" in Leimert Park. He provided opportunities for young musicians to play and older musicians to make a comeback. "You could go to 5th Street Dick's at 2 AM and see Japanese tourists catching a jazz set inside, and outside see white chess players peeking over the shoulders of black chess players," said poet Kamau Daaood, a seminal figure in the Leimert Park arts movement.

**2. + 3. Catherine Morris and Jeff Dietrich**

In 1970, Catherine Morris and Jeff Dietrich joined the Los Angeles Catholic Worker. The Catholic Worker is a lay Catholic community of men and women, which operates a free soup kitchen, a hospitality house for the homeless, an AIDS ministry, a newspaper and a hospice for the dying. Jeff and Catherine have been active at all levels: from direct service to policy planning to the development of neighborhood amenities for people living in poverty. Their early involvement in the neighborhood has encouraged the involvement of many others, including the founding of Las Familias del Pueblo and Inner City Law Center.

**4. Officer James Rich**

An LA County Police Officer James Rich was a guard at the Department of Public Social Services 4th Place office serving Skid Row, from November 26, 1970 until his retirement in June 2010. The six foot six inch Rich, a former UCLA basketball player, was an imposing presence at the DPSS office. He was recognized by Department of Social Services staff and clients alike as a "gentle giant" who preferred to use reason and compassion, if at all possible, as his main enforcement tools. One way or another he maintained a safe environment in the office and because he was respected by all he was often able to contribute to resolving differences between workers and clients.

**5. Robert Chambers**

Nicknamed The Pit, the corner of 5th and San Pedro was long known as the nastiest place on Skid Row. There, a mural is inscribed with poetry courtesy of the Homeless Writers Coalition. The Coalition was founded in 1988 by Robert Chambers, Dino Lewis, London Wright, Southern Comfort and others as an outlet for other neighborhood literary talents. Chambers served as president of the Coalition for eight years, as the Coalition produced numerous readings, live theater, a CD and a newspaper. Chambers poetry was included in the nationally televised documentary "The United States of Poetry".

**6 + 7. Rosa Arzola and Jill Halverson**

In 1975, a social worker named Jill Halverson met Rose Arzola in the parking lot where she was temporarily living. Jill found Rose to be a bright, loving, interesting, persevering woman with a keen sense of humor. She also discovered that Rose was originally from El Paso, and had cleaned homes and cooked for several families in Los Angeles, until her twenties, when mental illness struck and she ended up hospitalized, and eventually homeless. Jill was so deeply moved by Rose's situation that she used her life savings to establish the Downtown Women's Center.

**Community Portrait Gallery Bio's**

3 rows, 12 portraits per row, each 24" x 24"

**8. Walter (Redd) Moore**

A veteran having lived for more than 20 years on Skid Row, including a decade on the corner of 5th and Crocker Street in a cardboard box, Redd eventually became a member of the recovery community in the late Nineties, when he began his life's work, serving others battling addiction. Redd's strength and presence has inspired other men and women in recovery. As a counselor with Volunteers of America, he has helped countless more veterans in need.

**9. Mark Holsinger**

Reverend I.L. Eldridge established the original Los Angeles Mission in 1936, and in 1949 it relocated to 443 South Los Angeles Street, where it operated until January 1992. The non-profit, faith-based organization has for decades served the immediate and long-term needs of countless homeless men and women. Under the direction of Mark Holsinger, the Mission opened its 156,000-square-foot facility, at 303 East 5th Street on January 21, 1992. The new facility fulfilled Holzinger's vision of providing not only emergency services but also comprehensive long-term spiritual, educational and vocational opportunities to men and women.

**10. Ted Hayes**

In January 1985, in the playground of the Catholic Worker, arose Justiceville, where under the leadership of Ted Hayes, a diverse population of more than 73 men, women and children became a hotbed of activism. Ted moved on to build Dome Village in 1993, where he and former Justiceville residents lobbied the government and businesses, held many demonstrations and succeeded in promoting the idea of transitional communities to help the homeless to help themselves.

**11. Scott Chamberlain**

Beginning as a volunteer with Union Rescue Mission's (URM) Youth Ministry in 1987, Scott's relationship with URM has continued in many forms. He soon became the founding pastor of Skid Row's Central City Church of the Nazarene and Executive Director of Central City Community Outreach where he fostered a sense of community, accountability and leadership among the Skid Row population from 1988-2003. Scott further partnered to create after-school programs for children, support groups for those struggling with addiction, and outreach programs, including a weekly Karaoke Coffee Club. From 2003-2005, Scott worked as a consultant for New Church Specialties, training pastors.

**12. Mollie Lowery**

In 1985, Mollie Lowery, along with Frank Rice started LAMP Communities as a safe drop-in center on Downtown L.A.'s San Julian Street. An oasis for homeless people living with a severe psychiatric illness, by 1990 LAMP had developed and implemented new cutting-edge programs including access to health care, a housing program, and substance abuse recovery programs supported by the County. Today LAMP achieves one of the highest success rates in the nation for ending homelessness.

**2<sup>nd</sup> row from left to right:**

**Community Portrait Gallery Bio's**

3 rows, 12 portraits per row, each 24" x 24"

**13. Pastor William Monroe Campbell**

Second Baptist Church, the first African-American Baptist Church in Los Angeles, partnered with Skid Row Housing Trust to purchase and renovate the St. Marks Hotel. Second Baptist and its Pastor William Saxe Epps started Project Open Door as a drop-in center for area residents. Pastor William Monroe Campbell ran the project, which while informed by a number of academic consultants, became a success because of Campbell's compassion and his ability to listen and shape programs in direct response to the community's needs.

**14. Harry Rogers**

Skid Row resident Harry Rogers organized members of the community to stand up for their own interests. He was a consistent presence in the Homeless Organizing Team, a grass roots organization that fought for an upgrade of the living conditions in Skid Row housing, and for welfare reforms to allow more people to be helped and fewer to be denied. Harry Rogers was murdered at 6th and Gladys in 1985.

**15. Darlene Berry**

Darlene got clean and sober in Skid Row after many years of addiction. She started working for Single Room Occupancy (SRO) Housing Cooperation and became the first female hotel manager and then the manager of the two SRO parks. In that role she assumed responsibility for producing the yearly San Julian Park, "Recovery on the Frontline Cocaine Anonymous Marathon," started by Mike Dolphin, in 1989, who passed it on to her.

**16. + 17. Mr. and Mrs. Lee**

A musician who plays the bamboo flute, Mr. Lee came from Korea to the U.S. 40 years ago, and served on the faculty at UCLA for more than 20 years as a professor in Ethnomusicology, teaching Korean traditional music. Since 1997 when he and his wife opened D+D Deli, a convenience store on Skid Row, they have seen the neighborhood change and clean up. Family pictures rest on the top shelf at the shop. Mr. Lee has said "I love it here because there are so many nice people."

**18. Andy Raubeson**

An ex-cop from Portland, Andy Raubeson came to Skid Row to salvage the single room hotels as housing for the poor. He became the first executive director of the Single Room Occupancy (SRO) Corporation, whose first project was the purchase and renovation of the 60 room Florence Hotel in 1984. Andy knew everybody who was living in his hotels, and when he walked through the streets, everybody would yell "Hey Andy!" With a series of subsequent SRO makeovers, clustered around 2 vest pocket parks and the planting of 400 trees on Skid Row sidewalks Raubeson followed his vision that the properties' proximity to one another would form a small community and help humanize Skid Row.

**19. Orlando Ward**

After 17 years as an addict, Orlando Ward had hit bottom. The former Stanford basketball player, who grew up in Orange County and had at one time led a successful business career, was sitting on a cardboard box in front of St. Vincent's Cardinal Manning Center and began to speak to God. "I thanked him for all that he had shown me: graduating from Stanford,

**Community Portrait Gallery Bio's**

3 rows, 12 portraits per row, each 24" x 24"

good jobs at Fortune 500 companies, travel to Europe and my family. People would give their right arm to have just a tip of the things that I've had." he recalled. That was his turning point and he moved on to become public affairs director for the Midnight Mission, which he now considers the best job in the world. "It's more satisfying than anything I did at Xerox or anywhere else I worked, because I represent something that, obviously, I believe. And I've got evidence that it can work."

**20. Nancy Mintie**

"The poorest among us should have the same access to justice as the richest and most powerful." This is the belief of Nancy Mintie, the founder of Inner City Law Center, which has been serving the most vulnerable individuals and families in Los Angeles County since 1980. Inner City Law Center has helped hundreds of immigrant families living in substandard housing, by taking up the fight and winning habitability cases against slumlords.

**21. Clyde Casey**

On the corner of Wall and Boyd Streets, on the site of a former gas station and parking lot, Clyde created "Another Planet" an outdoor cultural space, where you could find poetry, ping pong, TV, live music and jam sessions by and for people in the community, twenty-four hours a day. The spot also offered storage for belongings and free clothing. Another Planet flourished for a year, before burning down in a fire in 1989.

**22. + 23. Lucy and Tony Stallworth**

The Karaoke Coffee Club, begun by Lucy and Tony Stallworth, was founded in 1997 on the belief that joy and laughter are as essential to life as food and water. The Club has been hosted for more than a decade at Central City Community Outreach, which opens its doors to more than 300 people weekly. The spirited shows feature song and dance and a warm cup of coffee, and allow one's troubles to be forgotten, if only for a moment.

**24. Wendell Blassingame**

At the James Wood Community Center since 2004, on Saturdays and Sundays from 3 PM until 10 PM, Wendell has shown movies for free, every week, without fail. With "Movies on the Nickel" Wendell provides a safe haven free of drugs and alcohol where one can learn to respect others and more importantly, oneself. He's also provided free medical cards to community members every Wednesday, enabling them to see a doctor and receive treatment. Wendell is a Skid Row representative on the Downtown Neighborhood Council.

**3<sup>rd</sup> row from left to right:**

**25. Adam Bennion**

In January 1987 a group of 80 people living in tents on Towne Avenue, between 4th and 5th streets organized themselves into a commune-type living arrangement with shared cleanup and cooking duties. They called it Love Camp, and its success stemmed from the

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homeless themselves deciding what rules to impose. A Los Angeles native with a college degree who worked as a printer, Adam became one of the leaders of Love Camp. Love Camp leaders, representatives from Justiceville and others met with the City with hopes of establishing a self-run shelter.

**26. Tanya Tull**

For more than 25 years, Tanya Tull has played a significant role in the development of innovative solutions to the crisis of homelessness, both in Los Angeles and nationwide. In 1980, she founded Para los Niños (For the Children), a nonprofit agency located in L.A.'s Skid Row, which operates family support programs for a primarily immigrant population. In 1983, in response to the increasing number of homeless families on LA's streets, she co-founded L.A. Family Housing Corporation, which develops emergency, transitional and permanent housing. Since 1988, her work has focused primarily on the development of new methodologies to promote systemic change. That year, she created A Community of Friends, which develops supportive permanent housing throughout L.A. County for the chronically mentally ill and other special needs populations. Also in 1988, she founded Beyond Shelter, to develop affordable permanent housing for families living in shelters. In 1996, Dr. Tull served on the U.S. National Preparatory Committee for the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements. She is currently a member of the Board of Trustees of the National Housing Conference and serves on special advisory groups for the National Alliance to End Homelessness, the National Low Income Housing Coalition, and the National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty, all based in Washington, D.C. In Los Angeles she chairs the LA City/County Coordinating Council on Homeless Families.

**27. Mike Neely**

In 1989, Mike Neely founded the Homeless Outreach Program, with the idea of recruiting formerly homeless people to help their brethren find their way through the bureaucratic maze of social service programs they're entitled to. The idea held such appeal for the Community Redevelopment Agency and its Chairman, Jim Wood because it reminded him of Alcoholics Anonymous, where recovering alcoholics talk to current alcoholics, that CRA/LA decided to fund the innovative program. From that initial \$50,000 grant HOP grew into an organization with 65 employees, a \$5,500,000 budget, providing services in downtown and South Los Angeles at the time of Mike Neely's retirement. Mike is currently a commissioner of the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA).

**28. Florence Hawkins**

Painter and author Flo Hawkins worked on the skid row mural "What I See Can Be Me" created by SPARC, Social and Public Art Resource Center in 1993. Flo's intent was to inspire with images of positive persons of color. A portrait artist Flo explains: "I chose what I liked. And some of them were Hispanic, some were white, some were black." Her images for the mural include: MC Hammer, Flo Jo, Billy Eckstein and Ray Charles. The mural has since been featured in the new ABC's hit TV series Secret Millionaire with John Ferber & OG Man of 3 on 3 Street ball Leagues of Skid Row. In 2000, Flo Hawkins collaborated with another Skid Row artist to produce the winning entry for the national "We All Count" campaign. The poster was the US census Bureau's official poster to publicize their first ever census count of the nation's homeless.

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**29. Robert Sundance**

Robert Sundance, a Sioux Indian from the Rosebud reservation who had been arrested for public drunkenness on Skid Row hundreds of times, sued the city and county, demanding better treatment. The long-standing police practice had been to arrest public inebriates, and transport them to jail. When sobered, they were put out on the street and the cycle repeated itself. During his sober periods, he'd amassed reams of yellow legal pads tracking his experiences while arrested, which he brought to the Los Angeles County Superior Court when The Center for Law in the Public Interest took his case. Based on his testimony, and Judge Hupp's ruling, intoxicated people were no longer taken to jail, but to treatment centers.

**30. Judge Harry Hupp**

In 1975, Judge Harry L. Hupp presided over a landmark case, Sundance vs. Municipal Court that changed how those arrested for public drunkenness were treated in Los Angeles. After an eight-week trial, Hupp ruled that public drunks on Skid Row should be treated the same as anyone else arrested for a misdemeanor. In his opinion, Hupp ruled that alcoholism is a disease, not a crime. He ordered that those arrested for drunkenness should receive a medical screening, a bed and food, and be directed into civil detox instead of jail. Respected as a legal scholar, Hupp was a valuable resource for new judges. He was named to the Superior Court by then-Gov. Ronald Reagan in 1972, was appointed to the U.S. District Court bench by then-President Reagan in 1984.

**31. Alice Callahan**

After becoming an ordained Episcopal priest, Alice Callahan started a day center for children of garment center workers, Las Familias del Pueblo. 'Las Familias' has dedicated itself to moving families into better and more appropriate housing. Alice has consistently advocated for enforcement of the Single Room Ordinance and the preservation of the SRO housing stock in downtown. Consequently Alice started the non-profit, Skid Row Housing Trust, to renovate and save the single room occupancy low income housing stock. Today, Skid Row Housing Trust owns and manages over 20 hotels in the Skid Row area. No longer on the board of Skid Row Housing Trust, Alice continues to run 'Las Familias' and remains committed to preserving low income housing.

**32. Manuel Compito (aka OG Man)**

An L.A. native and artist, OG Man has devoted his creative energy to spreading a self-help philosophy. His OG's N Service Association dedicates itself to uplifting the men and children of Skid Row with events like a Father's Day in the Park celebration of responsible parenting, and a beautification program that brings painted trash cans to the neighborhood which the City's Sanitation Bureau has difficulty maintaining. In 2007 OG Man launched the highly successful 3-on-3 Basketball League at Gladys Park.

**33. Lillian Abel Calamari**

Lillian Abel Calamari is a talented painter who exhibits her work in many gallery shows each year. She is also an intuitive and remarkable social worker with SRO Housing Corporation.

**Community Portrait Gallery Bio's**

3 rows, 12 portraits per row, each 24" x 24"

When she started working at SRO in 1992 she initiated an art workshop open to all Skid Row residents. The long-lived workshop initially took place at the Saint Vincent de Paul shelter and later at SRO's James Wood Community Center. Currently the workshop has a dedicated atelier provided by SRO at the Rivers Apartments. Lillian was a graduate of Ohio University, and attended the Art Institute of Chicago, the Art Students League of New York and the New York Studio School of Drawing, Painting & Sculpture. She also attended the Santa Reparata Graphic Art Center and Il Bisonte International School of Graphic Arts in Florence, Italy. Exhibitions have been in New York, N.Y.; Los Angeles, CA; Krakow, Poland; as well as numerous Galleries and Exhibitions across the country.

**34. Pete White**

While working for the Coalition to End Hunger and Homelessness Pete White saw the need for an organization of people on Skid Row who could themselves articulate and advocate resident's issues and concerns. White founded Los Angeles Community Action Network in 1999, to ensure that people living in poverty have voice, power and opinion in the decisions that impact their lives. LA CAN, comprised of neighborhood residents has been a persuasive voice in preserving low income housing downtown, and in ensuring compensation for displaced residents. LA CAN also has a variety of programs focused on individual wellbeing, including, exercise programs, a community roof top garden and the production of community cultural events.

**35. Dr. Dennis Bleakley**

Dr. Dennis Bleakley has seen a great deal in his years as a practitioner of the healing arts at the JWCH Clinic of The Weingart Center, recently renamed the John Wesley Clinic. He feels that if he prevents one person from suffering the ravages of tuberculosis, high-blood pressure and other diet-related and contagious diseases then his years of service will not be in vain. Dr. Bleakley has found a professional home at the clinic, since 2000, because of the clinic's commitment to advancing and providing the highest level of medical care.

**36. S.S. Jones**

In 2000, professional blues guitarist, S.S. Jones and Bill Edwards, also a musician and at that time a housing manager for SRO Housing, organized the Skid Row Musicians Network. Edwards secured a basement rehearsal space for the Network, which offered neighborhood musicians a safe place to gather, rehearse and to keep their equipment. The Network produced monthly free concerts at San Julian Park and the Leonide Hotel, with members performing in exchange for rehearsal space. The Network produced CDs' including "Live at the Leonide" with a dozen participating neighborhood bands. Network bands performed throughout Los Angeles.

Exhibit C



SRO HOUSING CORPORATION

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September 21, 2011

Susan Gray  
Cultural Arts Planner  
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CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER  
ANITA U. NELSON

Dear Ms. Gray:

It is truly a pleasure to write this letter of support for the Community Portrait Project of The Los Angeles Poverty Department. This project features images of neighborhood residents, visionaries, and leaders whose actions contributed to re-knitting the social fabric of the Skid Row community.

Internationally renowned artist, Mr. Brainwash, designed the portraits which will be proudly displayed in Gladys Park. Gladys Park is the perfect place to showcase this invaluable tribute to our community. The park is centrally located, open seven days a week, and provides the community with a variety of options that address their recreational and social needs.

SRO Housing Corporation has managed Gladys Park for over 23 years and we would be honored to maintain this invaluable contribution to the Skid Row community. The artwork will add to the park's luster and be a constant reminder of the trailblazers that paved the way.

I stand firmly in support of this effort to document and commemorate the talents and achievements of these community visionaries. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or need further assistance (213) 229-9640 ext. 17 or email AnitaN@SROHousing.org.

Sincerely,

Anita Nelson, M.B.A.  
CEO/Executive Director

AN/tc

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