

APPROVED

MAY 06 2021

BOARD OF RECREATION AND PARK COMMISSIONERS

BOARD REPORT

NO. 21-078

DATE May 06, 2021

C.D. 4

BOARD OF RECREATION AND PARK COMMISSIONERS

SUBJECT: GRIFFITH PARK – APPROVAL OF MEMORIAL PLAQUE INSTALLATION TO COMMEMORATE RANGER ALBERT E. TORRES AND RELATED IMPROVEMENTS – CATEGORICAL EXEMPTION FROM THE PROVISIONS OF THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA) PURSUANT TO ARTICLE III, SECTION 1, CLASS 2 [REPLACEMENT OF EXISTING STRUCTURES WHERE THE NEW STRUCTURE WILL BE LOCATED ON THE SAME SITE AS THE STRUCTURE REPLACED AND WILL HAVE SUBSTANTIALLY THE SAME PURPOSE AND CAPACITY], CLASS 4(3) [NEW GARDENING AND LANDSCAPING] AND CLASS 11(5) [SIGNS LOCATED ON CITY PROPERTY MANAGED BY A CITY DEPARTMENT WHICH HAS A SIGN POLICY ADOPTED BY ITS BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS] OF CITY CEQA GUIDELINES AND TO ARTICLE 19, SECTIONS 15302, 15304(b) AND 15311(a) OF CALIFORNIA CEQA GUIDELINES

AP Diaz _____ M. Rudnick _____
H. Fujita _____ fur * C. Santo Domingo DF _____
J. Kim _____ N. Williams _____

M. Shue
General Manager

Approved X Disapproved _____ Withdrawn _____

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1. Grant final approval for the installation of a memorial plaque in honor of Ranger Albert E. Torres at Griffith Park and related improvements, as described in the Summary of this Report and as depicted in Attachment 1 of this Report (Project);
2. Determine that the proposed Project, consisting of replacement of existing structures where the new structure will be located on the same site as the structure replaced and will have substantially the same purpose and capacity, new gardening and landscaping and the installation of a memorial plaque located on City property managed by a City department which has a sign policy adopted by its Board of Commissioners, is categorically exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Article III, Section 1, Class 2 [Replacement of existing structures where the new structure will be located on the same site as the structure replaced and will have substantially the same purpose and capacity], Class 4(3) [New gardening and landscaping] and Class 11(5) [Signs located on City property managed by a City department which has a sign policy adopted by its Board of Commissioners] of City CEQA

BOARD REPORT

PG. 2 NO. 21-078

Guidelines and to Article 19, Sections 15302, 15304(b) and 15311 of California CEQA Guidelines and direct Department of Recreation and Parks (RAP) Staff to file a Notice of Exemption (NOE) with the Los Angeles County Clerk;

3. Authorize RAP's Chief Accounting Employee to prepare a check to the Los Angeles County Clerk in the amount of \$75.00 for the purpose of filing an NOE;
4. Authorize RAP to issue the appropriate Right of Entry Permit for the installation of the Project; and,
5. Authorize RAP Staff to make technical corrections to carry out the intent of this Report.

SUMMARY

Griffith Park is located at 4730 Crystal Springs Drive in the Hollywood community of the City. This 4,281.73-acre park provides a variety of recreational programs and activities for the local community. Griffith Park contains unique amenities such as the Griffith Park Observatory, Pony Rides, Shane's Inspiration Playground, Ferraro Fields, the Greek Theatre, multiple golf courses, numerous hiking trails and much more. Approximately 18,155 City residents live within a one-half mile walking distance of Griffith Park.

In March 2021, RAP received a request from the Griffith J Griffith Charitable Trust (Trust) to install a memorial plaque commemorating Park Ranger Albert E. Torres. The Trust will provide funding, via the Los Angeles Parks Foundation, for the manufacture of the proposed plaque. The proposed plaque will be mounted on an already existing boulder at the Griffith Park Visitor's Center. A rendering of the plaque and proposed location are attached to this Report (Attachment 1).

RAP will be responsible for the installation of the plaques. RAP will also be providing improvements related to the installation, comprised of the placement of planters and native plants adjacent to the plaque as shown in Attachment 1 and the replacement of the flags on the existing flagpoles in the area of the visitor center. RAP already has the planters in its inventory and the flag replacement is being made at the request of the community.

Captain Albert E. Torres

Albert E. Torres was born on December 8, 1951, in Denver, Colorado. He was appointed to his position with the Park Ranger Division on November 1, 1974, where he worked in every park in the City, serving people of Los Angeles for over 40 years. Highlights of Captain Torres's career include creating a citywide unit of rangers that focused on homelessness outreach and cleanup, helping countless individuals experiencing homelessness get into shelters and receive needed services. He was also a dedicated naturalist who had a deep knowledge and appreciation for the parks' diverse flora and fauna. A prominent figure in both the community and City Hall, Captain Torres often attended meetings to represent the Rangers and RAP.

Captain Torres passed away on October 12, 2019 while patrolling the 8,000-acre Saddlebridge Fire in the San Fernando Valley. He is the first Ranger to pass away in the line of duty.

BOARD REPORT

PG. 3 NO. 21-078

Captain Torres served the City of Los Angeles selflessly and with honor and distinction for over forty years. This proposed Project has the support of several Griffith Park related agencies. The memorial plaque will also have a positive impact by promoting visitor awareness of RAP parks, programs, and projects, particularly the Park Ranger Program and their service and dedication to the City of Los Angeles.

The proposed Project has been presented to, and received support from, the Griffith Park Advisory Board and the Friends of Griffith Park. Letters of support from these organizations are attached hereto as Attachment 2.

The proposed Project was presented to the Facilities Repair and Maintenance Task Force (Task Force) on April 1, 2021, at which time the Task Force recommended the proposal be forwarded to the Board of Recreation and Park Commissioners (Board) for consideration.

The Office of Council District 4 is in support of this proposed Project.

TREES AND SHADE

No trees or shade will be impacted by the installation of the proposed plaque.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

The proposed Project consists of replacement of existing structures where the new structure will be located on the same site as the structure replaced and will have substantially the same purpose and capacity; new gardening and landscaping, and installation of signs located on City property managed by a City department which has a sign policy adopted by its Board of Commissioners. As such, RAP Staff recommends that the Board determines that it is categorically exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Article III, Section 1, Class 2, Class 4(3) and Class 11(5) of City CEQA Guidelines and Article 19, Section 15302, 15304(b) and 15311(a) of California CEQA Guidelines. RAP Staff will file a Notice of Exemption with the Los Angeles County Clerk upon the Board's approval.

FISCAL IMPACT

The cost of the plaque manufacture and installation will be paid by the Griffith J Griffith Charitable Trust. There will be minimal impact to RAP's General Fund for ongoing maintenance of the plaque, planters, and flag replacement.

STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVES AND GOALS

Approval of this Board Report advances RAP's Strategic Plan by supporting:

Goal No. 1: Provide Safe and Accessible Parks

Outcome No. 2: All parks are safe and welcoming

Result: An installation that honors Park Ranger Albert E. Torres will enhance the park's welcoming environment and enrich the park users' experience.

BOARD REPORT

PG. 4 NO. 21-078

This Report was prepared by Ligaya Khennavong, Management Assistant, Planning, Maintenance and Construction Branch.

LIST OF ATTACHMENTS/EXHIBITS

- 1) Plaque Rendering and Proposed Location
- 2) Letters of Support

LA PARKS FOUNDATION

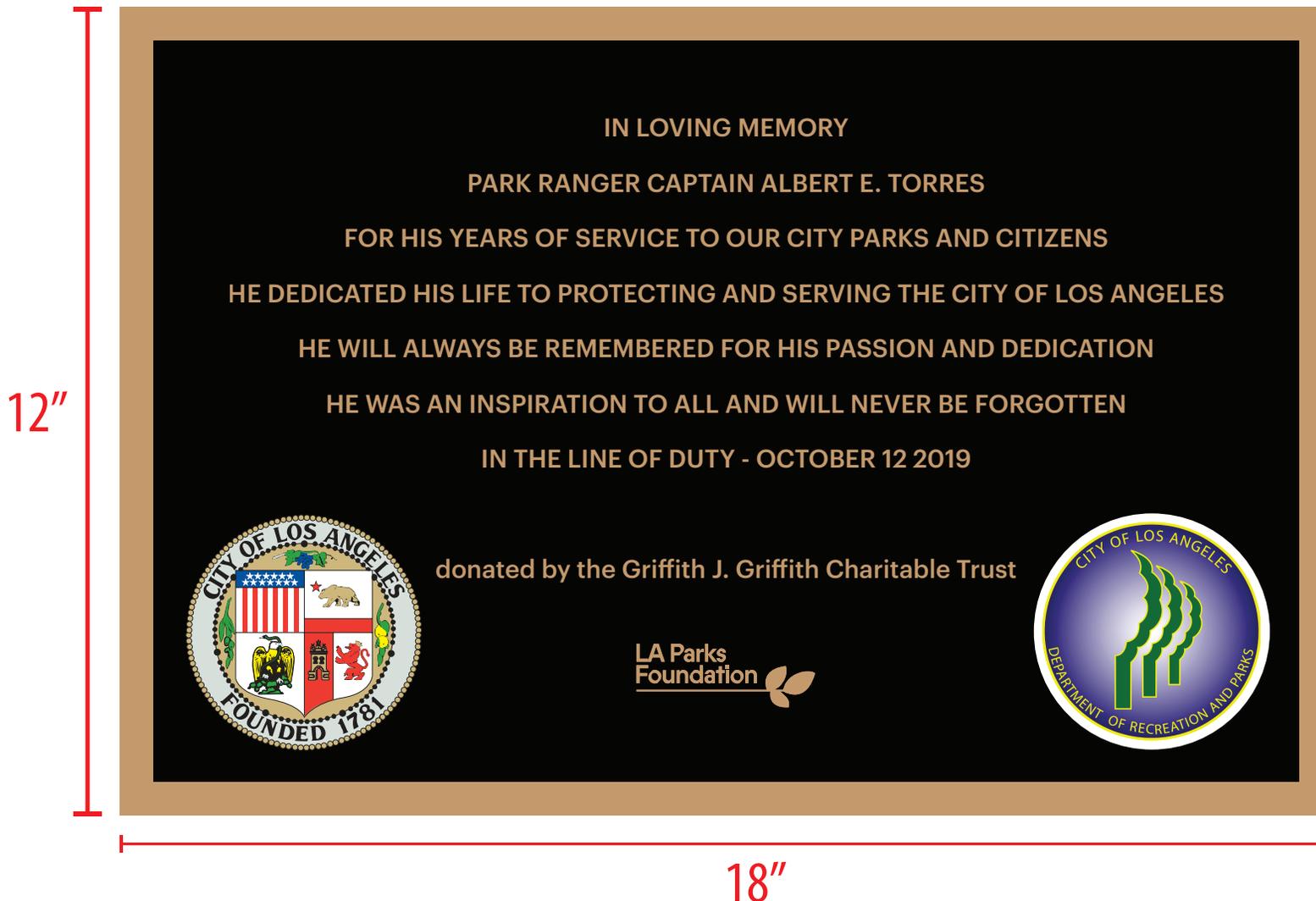
DESCRIPTION: BRONZE BENCH PLAQUE - ALBERT E. TORRES
MATERIAL: 1/4" THICK SOLID BRONZE PLAQUE, WITH DURANODIC BRONZE BKGD AND LEATHERETTE TEXTURE
SIZE: 12" x 18"
COLOR: BRONZE CONTENT/ BORDER
QUANTITY: 01
NOTE: BLIND STUD MOUNTING, RAISED CONTENT/BORDER
PROOF: 01

* **FONT USED:** Graphic Medium



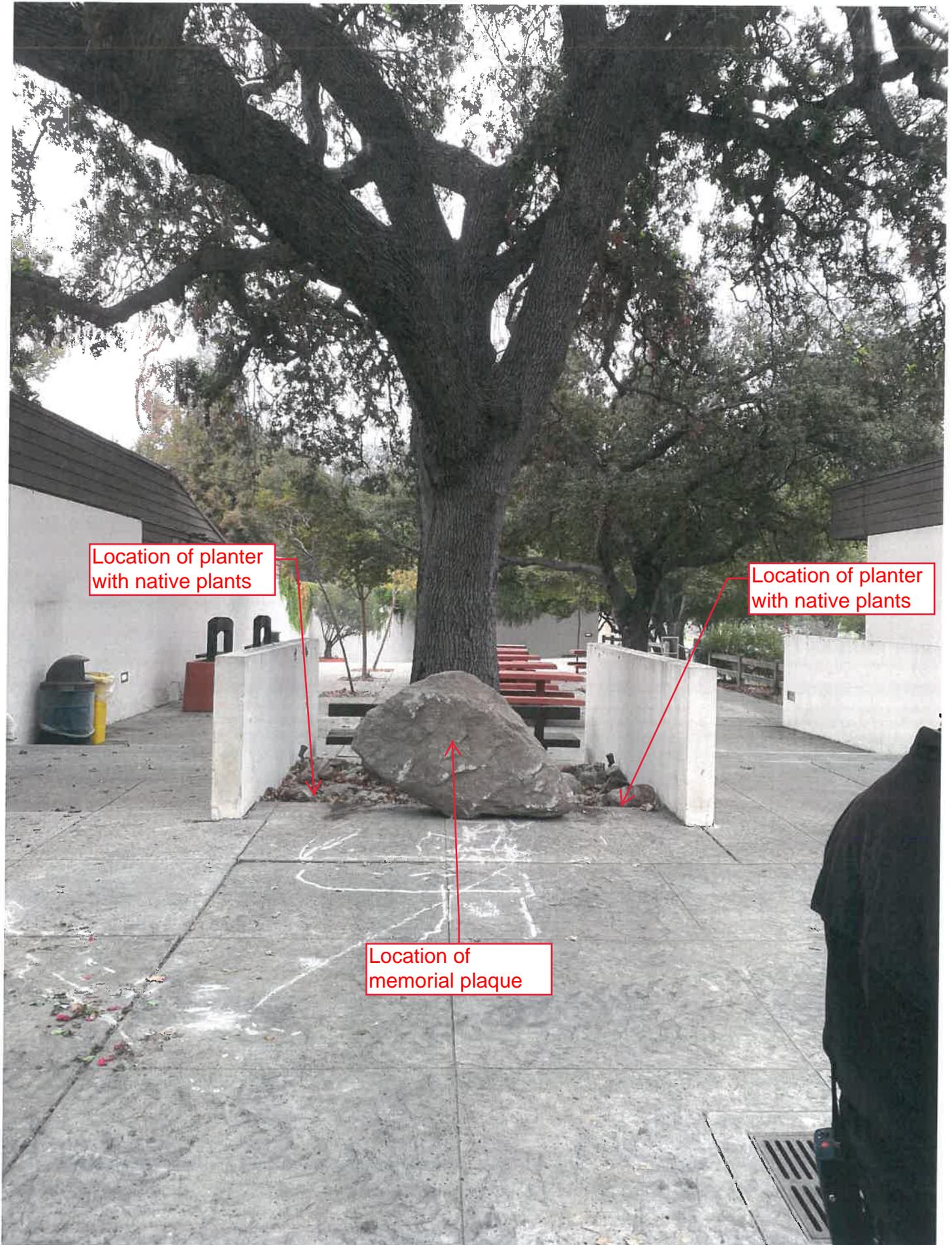
**COLORS & SCALE SHOWN ARE APPROXIMATE.
 ACTUAL COLOR & SCALE WILL VARY.**

**** CITY SEAL & REC AND PARK LOGOS NOT
 PRODUCIBLE AT THESE DIMENSIONS ****



NO CHANGES ARE PERMITTED ONCE PROOF IS APPROVED WITHOUT INCURRING ADDITIONAL COSTS.

****ATTENTION: PROOF ALL DRAWINGS CAREFULLY! CUSTOMER IS RESPONSIBLE FOR APPROVAL OF ALL DETAILS OF GRAPHICS, LOGOS, AND TRADEMARKS (INCLUDING SPELLING, SIZE, STYLE, ETC).**



Location of planter with native plants

Location of planter with native plants

Location of memorial plaque



Griffith Park Advisory Board
Community Stewards of LA's Largest Park & Great Urban Wilderness
Department of Recreation and Parks, City of Los Angeles
www.laparks.org/griffithpark/advisory

December 2, 2020

LA Board of Recreation and Park Commissioners
Via Email

Re: Captain Torres Memorial

Dear Commissioners,

We are writing to express our enthusiastic support for the RAP staff proposal to honor LA City Park Ranger Captain Albert Torres with a memorial at Park Center. This memorial, placed in a prominent location, is a fitting tribute to a man who was beloved by so many members of the park community. The Griffith Park Advisory Board voted unanimously in support of this proposal at our October meeting, and a number of our members were visibly moved by the RAP staff presentation.

Again, we offer our full support for this proposed memorial. Please don't hesitate to call on us if we may be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

Jason Greenwald
Chair, Griffith Park Advisory Board

cc: Mike Shull
AP Diaz
Stefanie Smith

*BOARD MEMBERS: Chair – Jason Greenwald; Vice Chair – Michelle Cramos; Secretary – Bryan Mercke;
Past Chair – Ron Deutsch; Gene Gilbert; Mike Hain; Chris Laib; Alex Phillips; Karen Thornton*