

POTRERO CANYON
COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

CITY OF LOS ANGELES
CALIFORNIA

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www.potrero.info

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January 21, 2008

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1200 West 7th Street -- Suite 748
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Gentlemen,

The Potrero Canyon Community Advisory Committee (PCCAC) is please to forward *Trail Uses and Facilities*, its adopted plan to guide the design and development of a passive park on 40 City-owned acres in Potrero Canyon extending from the Palisades Recreation Center to the Pacific Coast Highway. PCCAC has been meeting for nearly three years to obtain community input and develop this plan. This process also took into account the requirements and preferences of the California Coastal Commission, City officials and staff. Much of the funding for this project will be from the sale of homes and residential lots owned by the City along the canyon rim. The canyon is owned by the City, and will be operated and maintained by the Department of Recreation and Parks. We understand that Phase II grading and development will be completed under the control of the City Engineer and that the design of Phase III, final build-out, will be completed by Recreation and Parks.

As you know, the Coastal Commission permit must be amended to permit the sale of two lots on Alma Real to fund the completion of Phase II and begin the design of Phase III. The first step towards amending the Coastal permit has been the recent creation of the Potrero Canyon Trust Fund (LAAC §5.547) to safeguard funds received from property sales for completion of the project. Your committee urges the City to expedite all aspects of this long-awaited project.

Sincerely,

George Wolfberg
Chairman

attach – *Trail Uses and Facilities Document*
Background Summary

cc- Honorable Bill Rosendahl
California Coastal Commission, attn. Jack Ainsworth, Deputy District Director
Mike Shull
Pacific Palisades Community Council, attn. Steven R. Boyers, Chairman

Potrero Canyon Community Advisory Committee

Potrero Canyon Trails:

City of Los Angeles public green space and pathways
connecting Pacific Palisades village to the beach

TRAIL USES & FACILITIES

Adopted by the Committee on January 16, 2008

Introduction: This description of the proposed Trail Uses & Facilities for the Potrero Canyon Trails has been prepared by the Potrero Canyon Community Advisory Committee, a committee of sixteen Pacific Palisades community representatives chosen jointly by the Pacific Palisades Community Council and the office of Los Angeles City Council District 11 (West Los Angeles). The proposals outlined below are being recommended by the Committee after several years of monthly meetings, which were open to the public and often lively in the discussion of a variety of opinions.

This process took into account the requirements and preferences of the California State Coastal Commission and the City of Los Angeles officials and staff. Much of the funding for this project will be from the sale of homes and residential lots owned by the City of Los Angeles along the rim of Potrero Canyon. The canyon land is owned by the City of Los Angeles, and will be operated and maintained by its Department of Recreation and Parks.

Preamble: In making these proposals, the Committee expects the City of Los Angeles to consider the existing traffic and parking congestion in and around the Pacific Palisades Recreation Center and the adjacent residential and business districts, as well as the projected impact of the Potrero Canyon Trails project on those areas as estimated by traffic and parking studies the city will undertake. The Committee also expects that the city will take into account all applicable land use and environmental laws, including but not limited to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and all applicable permitting procedures in cooperation with state and local governmental agencies.

PROPOSALS

1. Bridge for Beach Access: The Committee's top priority is to ensure a safe crossing of Pacific Coast Highway and to prevent further pedestrian deaths. To achieve this goal, a majority of Committee members propose that a pedestrian over-crossing (bridge) be built over PCH's six (6) lanes of high speed traffic: to allow safe, direct and unimpeded access to the beach, canyon and village for walkers, runners and bicyclists, and to avoid interfering with the flow of traffic on PCH. Notwithstanding the foregoing,

in light of concerns that have been expressed by many residents, the Committee is not opposed to a further neutral assessment of the feasibility, safety and efficacy of an overcrossing as compared with other possible alternatives.

- 2. Meadow Area:** Create meadow areas (trees and turf) on the two terraces immediately below the baseball mesa (the horseshoe from the Patterson development to the tennis courts) for passive uses, such as family picnics, reading, sunbathing and very informal play (playing catch, kicking a ball, frisbee, touch football, etc.), similar to some activities that take place on the front lawn of the Rec Center. Active and inappropriate uses, such as organized sports, lights, electricity, amplified or electronic sound, motorized equipment, noisy toys and airplanes, heaters, cooking, flames, and motor vehicles will be prohibited. Post signs stating what is and is not permitted in the meadow area.
- 3. Cistern:** Build a cistern under the meadow area, upstream from the riparian area, to collect storm water runoff, which will be treated and used for irrigation in the canyon (e.g., as a water source for the riparian area).
- 4. Police / Ranger Supervision:** Build a Park Ranger and/or LAPD substation at the Rec Center or in the canyon.
- 5. Riparian Area:** Move the proposed riparian area down the canyon (below the meadow areas). Include a natural seasonal stream (no standing water, no recirculating water, no exposed concrete dams), with wood bridge crossings to connect the trails. (See Los Lions Park, Pacific Palisades.) Use the cistern under the meadow area to assist with irrigation.
- 6. Trails:** Build several trails throughout the canyon, in addition to the fire road, for hikers, walkers, trail runners, disabled pedestrians and mountain bikers. Trails should be and can be compatible with the riparian and other planted areas of the canyon, for instance allowing for walks in the bottom of the canyon along side the seasonal stream. (See Temescal Gateway Park, north of Sunset.) Complete the partly built concrete fire road using decomposed granite or other surface material that discourages small wheels (skateboards, roller skates), but accommodates larger wheels (emergency and maintenance vehicles, bicycles, larger wheeled strollers and wheelchairs).
- 7. Fencing:** Build a fence between the city's canyon property and the neighboring residences. No fences will be used to separate the fire road and trails from the riparian and other canyon areas.
- 8. Landscaping and Views:** Plant new trees and maintain the existing slope trees. Use native trees, shrubs, ground covers and vines throughout the canyon. Provide a few picnic tables, benches, logs and real boulders. Loosely string out the picnic tables and other seating along the main trails through the canyon, one by one, rather than concentrate them in clusters. Protect the views from within the canyon (up, down and across, including the ocean view) for the park users. Details will be discussed and reviewed by the Landscape Subcommittee as part of the design process.

9. Educational and Interpretive Elements: Include signage and kiosks with photos and text on history, landslides, flora and fauna. This was the site where Henry Huntington built his Long Wharf for his railroad to exchange cargo with sailing ships. A few feet west is the killer landslide of 1958 that buried PCH and the beach, killing a CalTrans worker. And there's the history of this project, with topics on land use planning, landslides, and the long struggle to convert the canyon into a public green space and trails.

10. Overlook Trail: Create an overlook trail at the base of the baseball wall on the canyon side, accessible at either end of the wall by gates in the chain link fence (one gate exists now), to allow for panoramic views of the canyon and to better ensure the security of the canyon. Add screening landscaping as needed for the Patterson Place residents.

11. Arts Programs: Facilitate arts programs in the canyon, including painting, drawing, storytelling, talks and readings.

12. Community Oversight: Establish a Community Advisory Board for Potrero Canyon Trails to assist in advising and overseeing how the city manages and maintains the canyon.

13. Access to the Canyon:

a. Enhance All Entrances to Canyon: Provide entry landscaping, signage, and information kiosks. Post signs indicating permitted and prohibited activities and uses.

b. Rec Center Access (North Access):

1. From the Toyopa Parking Lot to the East Fork of the Canyon: Improve the existing walkway and ramp from the Toyopa lot and gyms to the beginning of the fire road (at the lower tennis courts), with new surfacing (new concrete replacing the old asphalt), signage, and brick wall repair.

2. From the Toyopa Parking Lot to the West Fork of the Canyon: Add a ramp or stairway from the existing gate in the west baseball fence down to the west fork of the canyon, with landscaping to screen the view into Patterson Place residences, and with a signed path from the Toyopa lot to the top of the stairs. The new ramp or stairway will cross the slope in a southern direction, to lead people walking down into the canyon away from the Patterson Place homes. Fence off the slope and drainage area between the southeast corner of the last Patterson Place home and the baseball diamond. Add a 10-15' deep planting screen along the south property line of the Patterson Place & Hampden Place homes (using vines, shrubs and small trees); fencing there, if needed, will be at the property line (as is the fence between the Rec Center and the Alma Real homes).

3. Between the Frontera Parking Lot and the East Baseball Field: Add a stairway from existing opening in the east baseball fence down to the Frontera parking lot.

4. Possible Access from the Frontera Parking Lot to the East Fork of the Canyon: Improve the sidewalk along the driveway from Alma Real to the beginning of the fire road (at the lower tennis courts), with a new concrete sidewalk and new signage (path-finding signs and tow away no parking signs) as part of the widening of the driveway.

c. West Rim Easements: No new walkway/stairway easements for West Rim public access. The existing status quo will prevail, though this issue may be considered again much later in the process of lot sales and park construction if there is public support. This does not affect any existing public utility easements or any future lot sales or other transfers.

d. South Access at PCH:

1. Bridge Over PCH: See Paragraph 1 at the top for the pedestrian over-crossing connecting the main canyon trail to the beach and to the existing and newly improved beach parking lot and restrooms.

2. Potrero Canyon / Temescal Canyon Trail: Create a walking trail to Temescal Canyon at PCH. Separate and screen the maintenance yards used by Cal Trans and the L.A. Department of Public Works.

14. Parking and Restrooms:

a. Existing Parking Lots and Restrooms: There already exists a huge newly improved parking lot on the beach side of PCH (which is rarely if ever full), and the Rec Center has its two lots at the Toyopa entrance and at the Frontera entrance. There already exist multiple restroom facilities at the Rec Center buildings and at the beach parking lots (brand new in 2007). No new parking at PCH and no new restroom is needed or desirable for the Potrero Canyon Trails. Discourage or prohibit parking on the bluff-side shoulder of PCH.

b. New Parking and Improvements to the Toyopa Parking Lot:

1. Add 10 to 15 new parking spaces to the Toyopa lot by adding a row of parking spaces next to the east side of the pine tree circle and moving the aisle and existing spaces opposite the circle closer to the maintenance yard.

2. Restripe and make minor curb adjustments that do not infringe on recreational green space, in order to add a few parking spaces.

3. Install a driveway gate and park ranger booth at the Toyopa entry to greet Rec Center and Potrero Canyon Trails visitors and to turn away non-park users.

c. Improvements to the Frontera Parking Lot:

1. Widen the Frontera driveway for emergency vehicles, and paint the curb and post signs for tow-away no parking.
2. Restripe and make minor curb adjustments that do not infringe on recreational green space, in order to add a few parking spaces.
3. Move the designated tennis employee parking (3 spaces now) from the Toyopa lot to the Frontera lot. Add handicapped parking in the Frontera lot. Restrict all other parking at Frontera to two hours seven days a week.

POTRERO CANYON COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (PCCAC)
BACKGROUND SUMMARY

Creation of PCCAC. On October 27, 2004, The Los Angeles City Council adopted recommendations of its Budget and Finance Committee (Council File 04-1587), including to,

AUTHORIZE the creation of a Trust Fund to capture proceeds from the sale of City-owned lots adjacent to Potrero Canyon to fund completion of Phases II and III and attendant projects of the Potrero Canyon Park restoration (the Project), subject to further input from the affected community regarding design and planning of Phase III, and

AUTHORIZE the Councilmember of Council District 11, in conjunction with the Pacific Palisades Community Council to appoint a "Potrero Canyon Community Advisory Committee" to work with the City to ensure community participation in the future development of the Potrero Canyon Park.

The Mayor concurred in the City Council action on November 4, 2004.

PCCAC Gets to Work. Subsequently, the PCCAC, consisting of 16 members, was appointed and held its first meeting on February 16, 2005. The committee has met in public about once a month since that time. The PCCAC is subject to the Ralph M. Brown Act (Act) and has assiduously followed the requirements of the Act. Agendas are posted at the Palisades Recreation Center where all meetings are held. The community newspaper, The Palisadian Post, is notified, so meeting announcements may be published six days prior to each meeting. In addition, an extensive email list of over 200 names of residents, the press, and government representatives is notified of meetings and copied on all community correspondence. After requests from community members, the PCCAC created a pro bono web site with a search feature to centralize all information on the Project. All agendas, and reports as well as history, permit requirements and public comments are posted on the web site, www.potrero.info. The committee received no funding from government or other outside sources.

The committee provided guided tours to interested persons and a well-attended public workshop was held. A public survey was taken. Petitions were received from canyon neighbors to the East and West. A letter was received signed by the tennis-playing community. Many other letters and emails were received. Public comment was taken at every meeting. The meetings included testimony by former Councilwoman Cindy Miscikowski, former project manager Kathleen Chan, local historian Randy Young and from numerous government officials. The committee applied for a Proposition "O" grant to fund construction of a cistern below the proposed meadow area to store and filter storm runoff to irrigate the canyon and riparian area, cleaning up the runoff and saving precious drinking water which otherwise will have to be used. This application was turned

PCCAC Background Summary

down after an unfavorable review by Heal the Bay. The committee contacted the Fire Chief to gain a clear understanding of fire safety issues relating to the project. A Public Records Act request was filed with the Board of Recreation and Park Commissioners to gain information on the status on some West Rim properties. Decision-making was delayed for approximately 18-months at the request of Bill Simon on behalf of some residents living in the Huntington neighborhood East of the project.

The PCCAC took guidance from the following motion unanimously adopted on May 27, 2004 by the Pacific Palisades Community Council:

The following motion of Norman Kulla, seconded by Ted Mackie passed unanimously:

The Pacific Palisades Community Council

1. Opposes the sale of 33 residential lots as presented in the draft motion received by the Board on May 27, 2004, under signature of Councilperson Miscikowski;
2. Supports the sale of a sufficient number, but no more, of the City owned developed (improved) lots in Potrero Canyon to fund the completion of Phase II, but not Phase III;
3. Supports the sale of such additional City owned lots in Potrero Canyon, incrementally and sequentially taking into account the environmental impact upon the surrounding neighborhood, as is necessary to fund Phase III only after further input from the community is sought by the City regarding the design and plan of Phase III, the PPCC Board approves such design and plan, and such design and plan includes, but is not limited to, the following particulars:
 - a) Entrance to the park
 - b) Permanent funding for park maintenance
 - c) Restoration of riparian habitat
 - d) Parking
 - e) Bathrooms
 - f) Recreational pads
 - g) Construction of a walk bridge from the mouth of Potrero Canyon over PCH to beach parking
 - h) EIR of project upon abutting neighborhoods
 - i) Landscaping
 - j) Permissible uses
4. All funds raised by such lots sales shall be deposited into the proposed escrow account and all such deposits shall be used exclusively for the Potrero Canyon Project until completion of all phases.

PCCAC Background Summary

Trust Fund Created. The PCCAC is delighted that the Potrero Trust Fund Ordinance was adopted by the City Council on December 11, 2007 and will be effective February 4, 2008.

Adoption of Plan. Finally, at its meeting of January 16, 2008, the committee adopted its plan by a vote of 14-0 with one member abstaining.

Summary of Plan Elements. The plan addresses many of the bullet items in the May 27, 2004 PPCC motion.

The status, with cross reference to the PPCC bullet items, may be summarized as follows:

Item	Status
Entrance to the park	See paragraph #13.
Permanent funding for park maintenance	To be considered by Land & Finance Subcommittee.
Restoration of riparian habitat	See paragraphs #5, 6, &7. Landscaping will be considered by Landscape Subcommittee.
Parking	See paragraph #14.
Bathrooms	See paragraph #14.
Recreational pads	Passive recreation as described in paragraph #2.
Construction of a walk bridge from the mouth of Potrero Canyon over PCH to beach parking	Safe access to beach is the top priority and a majority of committee members propose a walk bridge. See paragraph #1.
EIR of project upon abutting neighborhoods	See preamble.
Landscaping	See paragraph #8 and will be considered by Landscape Subcommittee.
Permissible uses	Passive park. Uses discussed throughout the document.