



Park and Recreation Commission

City of Arts & Innovation

TO: HONORABLE COMMISSIONERS **DATE: AUGUST 18, 2025**

FROM: PARKS, RECREATION AND COMMUNITY SERVICES **WARD: 1**

SUBJECT: NAMING REQUEST FOR THE BORDWELL PARK GYMNASIUM IN HONOR OF LONG-TIME COMMUNITY LEADER ADRIAN DELL ROBERTS

ISSUE:

Consideration of a request to name the new gymnasium at Bordwell Park in honor of long-time community leader Adrian Dell Roberts.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Park and Recreation Commission discuss and determine their recommendation regarding the naming of the new gymnasium at Bordwell Park in honor of long-time community leader Adrian Dell Roberts, and forward their recommendation to the Safety, Wellness and Youth Community for review and consideration.

BACKGROUND:

According to Administrative Manual No. 01.021.00, the Park and Recreation Commission is responsible for the selection of names for park and recreation facilities, subject to City Council approval. The policy also provides that naming specific areas within a park (such as a gymnasium) is permitted but should be kept to a minimum to avoid confusion. All names selected should be acceptable and meaningful to the majority of the community in which the facility is located.

Resolution No. 18647, adopted by the City Council in February 1995, outlines that a park or recreation facility may be named for a person only in limited circumstances. Except in cases deemed extraordinary by the Park and Recreation Commission, individuals must be honored posthumously. Eligible individuals must be outstanding, long-time City leaders, nationally prominent figures, or individuals who have made a significant personal contribution to open space or recreation programs or directly contributed to the acquisition or development of a specific facility.

While the naming policy generally requires individuals to be honored posthumously, exceptions may be made for those whose extraordinary contributions have had a lasting impact on the community. Adrian Dell Roberts exemplifies such exceptional service through decades of dedication to youth education, social enrichment, and recreational programs in Riverside.

For decades, Adrian Dell Roberts has been a respected leader and mentor in Riverside's youth advocacy and community development. Starting in the 1960s with the Parks and Recreation Department as a lifeguard and weight trainer, his early dedication set the tone for a lifelong commitment. His professional career began at Poly High School, where he founded the Black Student Union and Multi-Cultural Council, and advanced to Special Assistant to the Principal overseeing discipline and student engagement.

By 1989, Dell led district-wide discipline and security for Riverside Unified School District, carefully building a team that shared his deep care for youth. Though he retired in 2003, his advocacy and impact have only grown stronger since.

DISCUSSION:

Ward 2 Councilmember Clarissa Cervantes submitted an application to name the new gymnasium at Bordwell Park in honor of long-time community leader Adrian Dell Roberts. The request is submitted with strong support from the Eastside neighborhood, including members of the Bordwell Park Advisory group, and Ward 1 Councilmember Philip Falcone.

The gymnasium naming request was presented to the Bordwell Park Advisory group on January 22, 2025. The group expressed unanimous support, and no concerns or objections were raised during the discussion. Members from the MLK Club were also present and shared strong support. A copy of the meeting minutes is attached to this report for reference.

For over 30 years, Adrian Dell Roberts has transformed Bordwell Park into a vibrant community hub. Through his leadership, he helped establish programs like the Black History Parade, Snow Day, and the Eastside Backpack Giveaway, which have strengthened community engagement, fostered pride, and united residents in a safe, welcoming space.

His work continues to empower student voices and celebrate cultural awareness throughout Riverside. Adrian Dell's community-driven advocacy is a blueprint for effective grassroots change. His recent recognition from the National Recreation and Park Association with the 2025 Robert Artz Award for Community Advocacy further underscores his profound influence.

As President of the Bordwell Park Advisory group, Dell has been a passionate advocate for the new gymnasium. His relentless efforts helped keep the project moving forward. This new facility stands as a reflection of his vision and commitment, a safe place for youth to engage in sports, mentorship, and leadership activities for generations to come.

Additionally, he founded The Adrian Dell & Carmen Roberts Foundation. The Foundation is committed to "bringing communities and opportunities together," rewarding academic achievement and excellence with scholarships, and nurturing an awareness of "giving back to the community" within today's youth.

Adrian Dell Roberts' enduring legacy is marked by his unwavering belief in young people, his devotion to community, and his vision of a Riverside where every child has the opportunity to thrive. Adrian Dell Roberts has been a vital presence in the Eastside community and is a great supporter of programs within the Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department.

While the City's policy generally reserves naming opportunities for individuals posthumously, Mr. Roberts' exceptional and ongoing service to the Eastside community, his direct involvement in

programs hosted at Bordwell Park, and his transformative impact on generations of youth make this a uniquely extraordinary case.

The Park and Recreation Commission is asked to consider this request under the policy's exception clause for extraordinary contributions.

The Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department fully support the request to name the new gymnasium at Bordwell Park in honor of Adrian Dell Roberts.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with receiving this report. Should the naming request be approved, associated costs such as facility signage, plaque installation, or branding materials will be allocated in the construction project account.

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Approved by: Noemi Lopez, Deputy Director
Approved by: Pamela M. Galera, Parks Recreation and Community Services Director

Attachments:

1. Presentation
2. Gym Naming Application
3. Bordwell Park Advisory Group, January 22, 2025 Minutes
4. Facility Naming Policy & Application