

City Council Memorandum

City of Arts & Innovation

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL DATE: NOVEMBER 18, 2025

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

SUBJECT: PROPOSED NAMING OF THE NEW BORDWELL PARK GYMNASIUM IN HONOR OF LONG-TIME COMMUNITY LEADER ADRIAN DELL ROBERTS, TO BE FORMALLY KNOWN AS THE DELL ROBERTS GYMNASIUM

ISSUE:

Approve the proposed naming of the new gymnasium at Bordwell Park in honor of long-time community leader Adrian Dell Roberts, to be formally known as the Dell Roberts Gymnasium.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the City Council support the naming of the new gymnasium at Bordwell Park in honor of long-time community leader Adrian Dell Roberts, to be formally known as the Dell Roberts Gymnasium.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

The Safety, Wellness and Youth Committee met on October 15, 2025, with Chair Perry, Vice Chair Conder and Member Mill present, to consider naming the new gymnasium at Bordwell Park in honor of long-time community leader Adrian Dell Roberts. After discussion the Committee unanimously voted to recommend that the City Council support the recommendation to name the new Bordwell Park gymnasium in honor of Adrian Dell Roberts.

COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION:

On August 18, 2025, the Park and Recreation Commission with Chair Friedlander, Vice Chair Barlogio and Commissioners Forbes, Young, Dawson, Schaefer, Kopp and Johnson present, unanimously voted to support the naming of the Bordwell Park gymnasium in honor of long-time City leader Adrian Dell Roberts.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY:

According to the established protocol for naming of parks and recreation facilities all names selected shall be acceptable and meaningful to a majority of the neighborhood/community where the park or recreation facility is located. Resolution No. 18647 (attachment 1) adopted by the City Council in February 1995 further stipulates as follows:

“A park or recreation facility can be named for a person only in limited situations. Such a person, except for cases deemed extraordinary by the Park and Recreation Commission, should be honored posthumously. The person for whom a park or recreation facility is named must be an outstanding, long-time City leader or a person of national prominence or historic interest who has supported or contributed to open space and/or recreation activities and concepts, or a person who has made a significant personal contribution toward the acquisition and/or development of a specific park or recreation facility. A donor whose contribution represents a major portion of a planned park or recreation facility may designate a name as a condition of the donation, providing it conforms to the naming criteria set forth above.”

BACKGROUND:

For decades, the Eastside community has rallied for a much-needed gymnasium at Bordwell Park, with Mr. Adrian Dell Roberts consistently at the forefront of these efforts. While funding was initially allocated for the gym, the City of Riverside reallocated those resources to construct the Nati Fuentes Centro de Niños preschool on the campus, providing critical early childhood services to the community. As a result, Bordwell Park remained the only community center in the parks system without a gymnasium. On several occasions, the project seemed within reach, and each time, Mr. Roberts continued to advocate tirelessly for the community's needs, earning strong support from both long-time Eastside residents and the next generation.

In 2023, the City of Riverside secured additional funding for the Bordwell Park gymnasium through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). This funding includes \$5 million designated for the gymnasium, which is now under design and construction, bringing the long-standing vision closer to reality.

On January 22, 2025, the gymnasium naming request was discussed by the Bordwell Park Advisory Group. Mary Welch, a member of the group, expressed unanimous support, with no concerns or objections raised during the discussion. Members of the MLK Club were also present and voiced strong support. Those in attendance included small business owners, pastors, community members, representatives from City Council, the Park and Recreation Commission, Cocher Car Club, REAL Group, Musicians Hall of Fame, the Greater Inland Empire Black Nurses Association and Little Seeds Matter, among others - reflecting the broad range of community involvement (sign-in sheet – attachment 2).

On July 28, 2025, Ward 2 Councilmember Clarissa Cervantes formally submitted an application to name the new gymnasium at Bordwell Park in honor of long-time community leader Dell Roberts. The request was submitted with strong support from Ward 1 Councilmember Philip Falcone (attachment 3).

On August 28, 2025, the Department hosted the groundbreaking for the Bordwell Park gymnasium. Construction is scheduled to begin in late October or early November with completion anticipated in Winter 2026.

DISCUSSION:

For decades, 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.

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.

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.

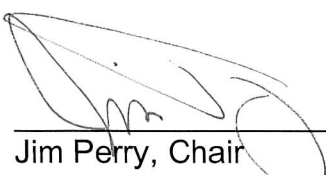
The Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department fully support the request to name the new gymnasium at Bordwell Park in honor of Mr. Roberts, it will be formally known as the DELL ROBERTS GYMNASIUM.

FISCAL IMPACT:

If approved, the fiscal impact of the naming request is approximately \$5,000 for facility signage, plaque installation and branding materials. Sufficient funds are budgeted and available in the Capital Outlay Fund, Bordwell Park Project account 9276910-440301.

Prepared by: Noemi Lopez, Deputy Director
Approved by: Pamela M. Galera, Parks, Recreation and Community Services Director
Certified as to
availability of funds: Kristie Thomas, Finance Director/Assistant Chief Financial Officer
Approved by: Kris Martinez, Assistant City Manager
Approved as to form: Rebecca McKee-Reimbold, Interim City Attorney

Concurs with;



Jim Perry, Chair
Safety, Wellness and Youth Committee

Attachments:

1. Resolution No. 18647
2. Bordwell Advisory Meeting, minutes with sign-in sheet
3. Gym Naming Application
4. Facility Naming Policy & Application
5. Presentation