



REPORT TO PRESERVATION COMMISSION City of Sacramento

4

915 I Street, Sacramento, CA 95814-2671

REVIEW AND COMMENT
December 7, 2011

Members of the Preservation Commission:

Subject: Review of Cultural Landscape Survey and Evaluation of William Land Park (Draft) - (M11-022)

Location/Council District:

3800 Land Park Drive (017-0010-001)

City Park generally located between Riverside Boulevard on the west, Freeport Boulevard on the east, Sutterville Road on the south, and 11th Avenue on the north

Council District 4

Recommendation: Staff requests the Preservation Commission review and comment on the draft cultural landscape survey and evaluation of William Land Park.

Contact: **Mary de Beauvieres**, Principal Planner, (916) 808-8722
Roberta Deering, Senior Planner/Historic Preservation, (916) 808-8259

Owner: City of Sacramento, 915 I Street, Fourth Floor, Sacramento, CA 95814

Summary: The City has numerous historic districts that include some of the oldest parks. Until now a cultural landscape survey of a City of Sacramento park has never been conducted to determine if the park, on its own merits, would be eligible for listing as an historic district. As the centennial approaches of William Land's bequeath to the City to acquire and develop a park bearing his name, it seems appropriate that William Land Park is the first such park to undergo a cultural landscape survey and evaluation. William Land Park includes the William Land Golf Course, Fairytale Town and Funderland, managed by the City's Convention Culture and Leisure Department; and the Sacramento Zoo, operated by the Sacramento Zoological Society. The remainder of the park is managed by the Department of Parks and Recreation.

In order to gain a better understanding of the park's history and the significance of its improvements, consultant team Mead & Hunt and PGA design was selected to prepare a Cultural Landscape Survey and Evaluation (Survey) of the park. A copy of the draft document is available on the City's website at:

<http://www.cityofsacramento.org/parksandrecreation/>. The team was selected from a pool of qualified professionals through a Request for Proposals (RFP) process. Work started in mid-March and included archival research and interviews, research on park development of the era, field investigation, and photographic documentation of the park's existing conditions, along with compiling all findings into a draft report.

A technical advisory team, comprised of staff from the City's Community Development (Historic Preservation), Convention, Cultural and Leisure, and Parks and Recreation Departments, along with the Executive Director of the Sacramento Zoo, met with the consultant at strategic stages to discuss and review the consultant's findings prior to completion of the draft document.

William Land Park was evaluated for its eligibility for listing as an historic district in the Sacramento Register of Historic and Cultural Resources (Sacramento Register), the California Register of Historical Resources (California Register) and the National Register of Historic Places (National Register). The park was found to be eligible for listing as a district in all three Registers based on its association with local trends in the areas of *Community Planning and Development, Government, Entertainment/ Recreation* and *Landscape Architecture*. In addition, Fairytale Town and the entryway concession buildings at the Sacramento Zoo were determined to be eligible for listing individually on all three Registers in the areas of *Entertainment/Recreation* and *Architecture*.

Background Information: Discretionary public projects, which may include the approval of a master plan or a capital improvement project, require environmental review pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). One of the elements analyzed during the environmental review process is the presence of cultural resources and the impact a project may have on the resource. The Survey is intended to establish a baseline understanding of the park's cultural resources. The information enables the City to make quicker, more informed decisions about projects that may have an impact on the historic resources of the park. Projects that are consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties may be exempt from CEQA.

The Survey will assist the City in the pursuit of future grant funding for park improvements. Any federally funded grant program requires completion of a survey to identify historic resources within the project area and to help ensure that the project funded by the grant will not negatively impact cultural resources. With completion of the Survey, the City has completed the step of identifying historic resources in the park, should a federal grant opportunity arise. Some state grant programs have similar requirements.

Completion of the survey will assist with maintenance and capital improvement decisions. The recent decline in dedicated funds for maintenance, coupled with the community's love for William Land Park, has resulted in an increase in the number of proposed volunteer maintenance projects in the park. As long as the proposed work is consistent with the Secretary of Interior's Standards for the treatment of historic properties (if the project has the potential to impact the historic resource), it may be deemed exempt from CEQA. The same is true for capital improvement projects. This will save time for City staff and volunteer groups that are anxious to get underway with suggested projects.

Likewise, the proposed modification or removal of an improvement that is considered to contribute to the park's eligibility for listing or is a stand-alone feature that is eligible for listing will trigger a more in-depth analysis under CEQA. There is community interest in improving the functionality of the park amphitheatre for its modern day uses, and the Zoo Director has expressed an interest in modifying the zoo's entry. Project planners and designers for these projects would need to work closely with the City's Historic Preservation staff to avoid or mitigate significant impacts to these historic resources. Modification of an historic resource that is eligible for listing or a listed resource does not mean it cannot be modified or updated to serve modern uses. However, it does mean that the resource is worthy of special consideration to protect its original fabric and character defining features.

However, the Survey is not a panacea. It does not contain specific suggestions on the treatment of the historic resources, nor does it contain the in-depth documentation required for the process to list the park as an historic district on any of the Sacramento, California or National Registers. Additional work would be required if that information is needed in the future. However, in the meantime, the Survey is an excellent baseline document to identify the park's resources. With the information contained in the document, the City's Historic Preservation Staff, Preservation Director or Preservation Commission (in the City's Community Development Department) can assist in suggesting treatments or making determinations on suggested treatments where the park's resources are involved.

City staff has not formulated a recommendation on whether or not to list William Land Park as an historic district, or Fairytale Town, or the Zoo entryway concession structures on the Sacramento, California or National Registers. Should the Commission have questions concerning listing, Parks, Convention Culture & Leisure, Zoo, and Preservation staff will be in attendance at the December 7th meeting.

The *Cultural Landscape Survey and Evaluation of William Land Park* will have been considered by the Parks Commission at its regular December meeting on December 1st. This Survey would only be part of City Council action if listings in the Sacramento, California or National Registers were recommended.

Several public comments have been received on the document at the date of writing this report. The comments are minor in nature and will be considered for inclusion in the final document, along with any comments from the Parks and Recreation Commission meeting, the Preservation Commission meeting or additional public comments that are received.

Financial Considerations: The Land Park Fund financed the cost of preparing the Survey. The consultant's work will be complete upon delivery of the final report. The Survey will benefit City staff and Land Park community groups by providing a comprehensive list of contributing and non-contributing park elements and their features and characteristics in the district, and the identification of the individually-eligible properties and their features and characteristics. Elements that contribute to, or work on non-contributing elements that may impact the park's eligibility for listing as an historic district will require special consideration during planning and implementation to ensure compliance with the Secretary of Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. The Survey gives volunteer groups and City staff an early awareness of which park elements and park features and characteristics require special consideration or treatment so planning and implementation can proceed accordingly.

Environmental Considerations:

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA): The Environmental Services Manager has determined that the proposed project is exempt from CEQA under Section Number 15306 of the CEQA Guidelines. Exemption 15306 consists of basic data collection and resource evaluation activities which do not result in a serious or major disturbance to an environmental resource. Any activity as a result of the study and evaluation will be brought back to City Council for authorization to proceed with actual construction/development of the proposed project improvements. At the time of final action, appropriate CEQA environmental review documentation will also be completed for each specific project and brought forward to Council.

Sustainability Considerations: The William Land Park Cultural Landscape Survey and Evaluation is consistent with the goals, policies, and targets of the City's Sustainability Master Plan (SMP).

Public/Neighborhood Outreach and Comments: At onset of project a flyer explaining the project was forwarded to all neighborhood associations in the City by Neighborhood Services. The Land Park Community Association (Parks Committee) was of great assistance, providing the results of their own park research – pertinent parts were incorporated into the document. This Draft document was posted on the City's website as soon as it was available for public review.

Policy Considerations: Completion of the survey is consistent with the City's General Plan 2030. The General Plan contains policies to require that the City identify, study and protect cultural resources, including those that are city owned and operated.

Subject: William Land Park Historic Cultural / Landscape
Survey (M11-022)

December 7, 2011

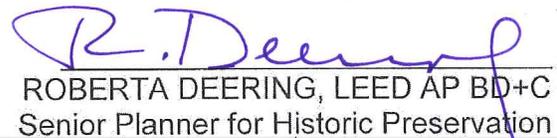
Consistency With Goals Of The City Of Sacramento Greenprint: The goals of the Greenprint are to optimize the benefits of trees throughout our region, to create sustainable urban forests, and to build community-wide appreciation for our urban forests. This survey and evaluation recognizes the contribution that the mature urban forest makes to character defining features of the park.

ESBD Considerations: Not applicable.

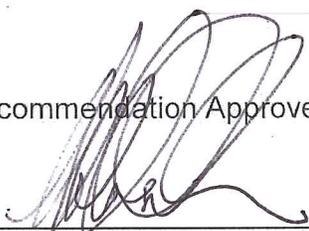
Conclusion: Staff recommends the Preservation Commission review and comment on the draft cultural landscape survey and evaluation of William Land Park.

Respectfully submitted by:


MARY DE BEAUVIERES
Principal Planner


ROBERTA DEERING, LEED AP BD+C
Senior Planner for Historic Preservation

Recommendation Approved:


WILLIAM CROUCH, AICP, AIA, LEED AP
Urban Design Manager

Attachments:

Page #

| | | |
|--------------|---|---|
| Report | | 1 |
| Attachment 1 | Project Location Map | 6 |
| Attachment 2 | On-Line Link to Cultural Landscape Survey of William Land Park (Draft) | 7 |

Attachment 1: Project Location Map



Subject: William Land Park Historic Cultural / Landscape
Survey (M11-022)

December 7, 2011

Attachment 2: On-Line Link to Cultural Landscape Survey of William Land Park (Draft)

<http://www.cityofsacramento.org/parksandrecreation/>