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CALIFORNIA



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WWW.DLANC.COM

EMAIL: DLANC@EMPOWERLA.ORG

January 9, 2024

Los Angeles Parks Department

VIA EMAIL

Subject: Recommendation to Rename San Julian Park to "Wendell Blassingame Park"

Los Angeles Parks Department:

The Downtown Los Angeles Neighborhood Council (DLANC) recommends a change in the name of San Julian Park to "Wendell Blassingame Park" located at 312 E 5th St, Los Angeles, CA 90013 (on the corner of San Julian and 5th Street).

Wendell Blassingame is a Skid Row resident, volunteer, and former board member of the Downtown L.A. Neighborhood Council. He has dedicated almost three decades of his life to helping people find housing and resources, without pay.

Once homeless himself, Blassingame has taken it upon himself to provide his insider's knowledge of resources to personally assist hundreds of people in their search for stable housing. By his count, he has guided several hundred people into permanent homes outside of Skid Row, with others finding shelter in single-room-occupancy hotels and affordable properties in Downtown Los Angeles.

We would like to memorialize Wendell Blassingame and believe that this renaming would reflect the spirit and identity of the park by honoring a local community hero.

Since Blassingame fell ill last year, he has been dearly missed by the entire Skid Row community. Thus we believe memorializing him by renaming San Julian Park to "Wendell Blassingame Park" will help keep his spirit alive.

The Downtown Los Angeles Neighborhood Council asks that City Council further investigate future actions to commemorate this site to include the following:

- An intersection designation process
- Memorialize an adjacent street lamp near the site, in a treatment similar to that of the Jonathan Gold memorial at Grand Central Market, with LED colored lighting
- A ground surface treatment, on the public right-of-way, adjacent to the site, with a memorial through the placement of a plaque, paint, bas-relief, and other interventions to recognize the significance of the adjacent site

Sincerely,

Claudia Oliveira President, DLANC

Damion Wagner, Urban Needs Committee Chair, DLANC

Cc: Kevin De Leon, Councilmember, 14th District

Cc: Jarvis Emerson, Director of Skid Row Strategies for the Mayor's Office