



Kevin de León
Councilmember, Fourteenth District

August 5, 2021

Historic Highland Park Neighborhood Council
Post Office Box 50791
Los Angeles, CA 90050

Dear Historic Highland Park Neighborhood Council,

I want to take a moment to update you on my office's ongoing work related to your request for an environmental site assessment at York Park in Highland Park.

As you know, my staff has been assisting you with this specific concern since it was raised at the Historic Highland Park Neighborhood Council (HHPNC) meeting on April 1, 2021. Since that time, I have made certain that staff dedicate attention to getting to the bottom of these safety concerns. Below is a bulleted chronology of our efforts.

- On April 22, 2021, my staff arranged a meeting between Emily Spokes, your Sustainability/Environmental Chair and Recreation & Parks (RAP) Staff. During that meeting, they discussed the test results of the sample collected from York Park on April 7, 2021, by an environmental geologist from the community. The information she shared about the sample was that they found detectable levels of chemicals typically associated with diesel fuel; however, the amounts were found to be well below the level designated as safe. At this meeting, my staff and RAP advised Ms. Spokes to convene with the HHPNC Environmental Committee (HHPNC EC) Task Force on York Park so the community could specifically request the kind of testing it wanted to see.
- On April 27, 2021, I, along with other government officials, received a letter with a request for a full Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) witnessed by the HHPNC EC Task Force. My staff then contacted Ms. Spokes to again request specifics on the ESA so RAP could respond to the request.
- On May 10, 2021, the HHPNC sent a letter to RAP with these specifics. On May 15, 2021, RAP sent an email to Emily Spokes to inform her that RAP was evaluating the request.
- On May 24, 2021, RAP briefed my staff on their progress, letting them know that they had visited the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (LARWQCB) to review the LARWQCB's files on the site's remediation and environmental assessments conducted prior to the construction of York Park and that RAP staff was still in the process of compiling and reviewing these and other relevant documents.
- On June 3, 2021, my staff provided this update at HHPNC EC's monthly meeting.

- On June 4, 2021, RAP informed my staff they were close to discussing their findings with management and my staff continued to check in regularly to monitor their progress, ultimately updating HHPNC EC at their July 1, 2021 meeting.
- On June 23, 2021, RAP informed my staff that they were sufficiently certain that the site was safe based on their internal documents and those from the LARWQCB and that the safe levels of chemicals associated with diesel fuel detected by the community member were not sufficiently high for RAP to initiate an additional ESA at this time. RAP recommended that HHPNC make their request for the additional ESA directly to the LARWQCB, the regulatory agency in question and agency that certified this site in 2011-2012 as safe before it was purchased by LA City's in 2013.
- On August 2, 2021, my staff shared this information with the HHPNC at the neighborhood council's meeting.
- This morning, my staff confirmed the appropriate points of contact at the LARWQCB to receive HHPNC's request and have connected Ms. Spokes and HHPNC President, Duncan Gregory to them. I am including their information here for the use of our concerned stakeholders:
 - Susana Lagudis - *Public Participation, Environmental Justice, & Tribal Coordinator*
 - +1 (213) 576-6694
 - susana.lagudis@waterboards.ca.gov
 - Dr. Yi Lu - *Senior Engineering Geologist*
 - +1 (213) 576-6695
 - yi.lu@waterboards.ca.gov
 - Mr. Arman Toumari - *Water Resource Control Engineer*
 - +1 (213) 576-6708
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I have asked my staff to remain in close communication with members of the HHPNC, their Environmental Committee, and the York Park Task Force on this matter to ensure that our community is getting the information they need to feel safe at York Park.

The health and safety of our children, families, immediate neighbors and community members who frequent this park on a daily basis is of utmost importance to me and to my staff. I would like to assure everyone that we are working to have all questions answered and keep this entire process transparent.

If you require further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact Alice Roth, my Northeast LA Area Director, at (323) 254-5295.

Sincerely,



KEVIN DE LEÓN
Councilmember
City of Los Angeles

CC:

Michael Shull,
General Manager,
Department of Recreation & Parks,
City of Los Angeles

Susana Lagudis,
Public Participation, Environmental Justice, & Tribal Coordinator,
Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board,
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Dr. Yi Lu,
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