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More Magic on Its Way to Willowbrook’s Magic Johnson Park

Acting on [a motion](#) by Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas, the Board of Supervisors voted to move forward with the next phase of a master plan that will offer additional new amenities to Magic Johnson Park, a 126-acre park that is on the verge of becoming a community oasis in Willowbrook.

“More magic is on its way to Willowbrook’s Magic Johnson Park,” said Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas. “Our next phase of improvements will focus on outdoor amenities that create inviting gathering space for a host of activities...ranging from a dog park to a place for a community concert. At Magic Johnson Park, our goal is to make sure there is an amenity for everyone.”

In addition to a dog park, the \$7 million being invested in the second phase of improvements will predominantly be used to transform the former Ujima Village housing site, 16 acres of land adjacent to the Park, which has sat vacant since the housing development was demolished in 2013. The investment will be used to incorporate the land into the park with the construction of open green spaces that can be used for concerts and other programming. There will also be new walking paths, landscaping and seating areas.

The LA County Department of Parks and Recreation developed the [2019 Revised Master Plan](#), which amends the original Master Plan adopted in 2016 by incorporating

the dog park, adding two recreational fields, and expanding the size of a future nature lab into the Master Plan. The 2019 Master Plan also shifts a proposed future cultural complex to the western side of the park, as an alternative to the previously proposed equestrian center.

“For almost 25 years, the Magic Johnson Park has been used for daily exercise, family outings, and celebrations,” said Johnson, after whom the park was named in 1994 following his retirement from the NBA. “I’m excited about this significant investment by Los Angeles County which provides a safe, scenic space for Willowbrook residents and increases the community’s engagement with the park.”

The initial improvements at the park, which are slated for completion in Fall 2020, include a 20,000-square foot state-of-the-art community events center for holding weddings, conferences and other large gatherings; an outdoor wedding pavilion; a splash pad and children’s play areas; improved walking paths with security lighting; and acres upon acres of new landscaping that will give the park an entirely fresh look.

The lake that is currently the centerpiece of the park will be getting an innovative feature that will help address both water conservation and water quality goals. It will divert storm runoff from surrounding neighborhoods and the nearby Compton Creek, clean it and then use it to fill the lower lake and irrigate 30 acres of the park, creating a wetland experience for park goers.

County Parks and Recreation Director John Wicker ensured that there was a comprehensive and community-driven process to prioritize new amenities for Magic Johnson Park. “We are grateful to Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas and partners that are committed to developing and investing in this new, state-of-the-art and LEED Gold facility,” he said. “As a collective, we will build a park for the Willowbrook community to be active and participate in the year-round programs, as well as come together to make memories that will last a lifetime.”

The Magic Johnson Park renovation is only the latest of many investments that have transformed the community of Willowbrook. Over the last several years, Supervisor Ridley-Thomas has championed a building boom that included the Martin Luther King Medical Campus, Willowbrook Library and Senior Center, AC Bilbrew Library, the development of hundreds of units of affordable housing, and upgrades to Metro’s Rosa Parks Station.

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