

Quality and Productivity Commission
28th Annual Productivity and Quality Awards Program
"Los Angeles County: Ahead of the Curve"

2014 APPLICATION

Title of Project (Limited to 50 characters, including spaces, using Arial 12 point font):

NAME OF PROJECT: PRESERVING YESTERDAY FOR TOMORROW

DATE OF IMPLEMENTATION/ADOPTION: JUNE 2009
 (Must have been implemented at least one year - on or before June 30, 2013)

PROJECT STATUS: Ongoing One-time only

HAS YOUR DEPARTMENT PREVIOUSLY SUBMITTED THIS PROJECT? Yes No

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: Describe the project in 15 lines or less using Arial 12 point font. Summarize the problem, solution, and benefits of the project in a clear and direct manner.

1 If a chair once used by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., priceless Native American artifacts or
 2 an autographed photo of legendary Olympian Jesse Owens were in a precious
 3 collection that tells the story of your heritage, wouldn't you want to ensure they were
 4 properly catalogued and carefully preserved? In 2008, the Department of Parks and
 5 Recreation filled the newly-created position of Associate Curator, to conduct and
 6 maintain the first-ever inventory of historic and cultural resources in the Department's
 7 possession. This work has resulted in the creation of a web-based database that
 8 organizes, in a centralized location, the details on thousands of historic artifacts,
 9 photographs and other items of great interest and immeasurable value to the public.
 10 The database has already become a key component in securing educational resources
 11 that should be protected for future generations. Whether as a resource for researchers,
 12 helping ensure Department compliance with regulations for historic preservation or
 13 more efficiently tracking interpretive display and artifact loan agreements, the database
 14 ensures that everyone can benefit from the insight and knowledge contained in these
 15 irreplaceable pieces of County history.

(1) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED ANNUAL COST AVOIDANCE	(2) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED ANNUAL COST SAVINGS	(3) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED ANNUAL REVENUE	(1) + (2) + (3) = TOTAL ANNUAL ACTUAL/ESTIMATED BENEFIT	SERVICE ENHANCEMENT PROJECT
\$	\$	\$	\$	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

ANNUAL = 12 MONTHS ONLY

SUBMITTING DEPARTMENT NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS Parks and Recreation, Planning and Development Agency 510 South Vermont Avenue Los Angeles, CA 90020	TELEPHONE NUMBER (213) 351-5099
PROGRAM MANAGER'S NAME Ansley Davies	TELEPHONE NUMBER (213) 739-7340 EMAIL adavies@parks.lacounty.gov
PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME AND SIGNATURE <small>(PLEASE CALL (213) 893-0322 IF YOU DO NOT KNOW YOUR PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME)</small> Liz Mendez 	DATE 07/15/14 TELEPHONE NUMBER (213) 738-3040 EMAIL lmendez@parks.lacounty.gov
DEPARTMENT HEAD'S NAME AND SIGNATURE Russ Guiney 	DATE 7-16-14 TELEPHONE NUMBER (213) 738-2951

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1st FACT SHEET – LIMITED TO 3 PAGES ONLY: Describe the **Challenge, Solution, and Benefits** of the project.

Challenge

How do you maintain inventory of historic and cultural resources at 174 park facilities? Throughout the 174 facilities in the Department of Parks and Recreation, there is a sizable collection of valuable historic and cultural assets worthy of a reliable inventory. Included are collections of supervisorial memorabilia from Kenneth Hahn, Peter F. Schabarum, Deane Dana and Warren Dorn, some of which were beginning to show signs of age and wear.

Solution

In late 2008, as a proactive rather than mandated approach to this deficiency, the Department hired an Associate Curator, a newly-created position. The Associate Curator began visiting all of the 174 Department properties and inventorying historic and cultural resources. Research included site visits, as well as collecting and reviewing historic records internally at historical societies, libraries, online and at other County Departments. A database of historic and cultural resources was initially created with an Excel spreadsheet; but when the Department acquired management software, the web-based program called SharePoint, the information was transferred and became available Department-wide.

Dynamic partnerships were created with outreach to a number of institutions, including:

- The Natural History Museum
- The Getty
- The Huntington Library
- Autry National Center/Southwest Museum
- Altadena Historical Society
- Fernandeno Tataviam Band of Mission Indians
- California State University Northridge
- University of California Los Angeles/Getty Conservation Program
- County CEO Photo Unit

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Benefits

The benefits of this database include organizing information about the diverse historic and cultural assets owned by the County in a centralized resource. This allows the Department to plan ahead and request funding when objects are in need of maintenance and repairs. It also helps clarify object ownership. In some cases, objects had been on loan with no paperwork, or paperwork had been misplaced. This database also acts as a watch list to help the Department comply with the California Environmental Quality Act which contains language that protects historic and cultural resources.

For Counsel, researchers and others seeking historical information, the database enables Department staff to provide factual information at a glance.

The information contained in the database is also a tremendous resource for other departments that require asset information. Two examples emerged early on. The Arts Commission was in the process of inventorying the County's Civic Art collection at the same time this database was initiated - allowing for valuable exchanges of information that have resulted in consultation on strategies to conserve artwork in need of restoration; and development of approaches to civic art that will withstand the test of time and are less inclined to vandalism. And thanks to the comprehensive information contained in the database, Public Works can be notified of special conditions, such as archaeological sites, during management of construction projects at Department parks and facilities.

As for the future, with the County working on creation of a Historic Preservation Ordinance, the Historic and Cultural Resources database will be extraordinarily valuable in making the transition to new guidelines relatively seamless.

With the County's limitless potential for discovering historic (and perhaps prehistoric!) assets requiring cataloguing and preservation, the Historic and Cultural Resource database has proven itself vital in just five short years. It will continue to be in high demand for years to come, as park facilities age and themselves become historic resources for future generations of patrons to treasure.

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LINKAGE TO THE COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN (DETAIL IS REQUIRED FOR COUNTY DEPARTMENTS):

By compiling information and cataloguing historical artifacts at all 174 of our County parks, the Department was able to produce a readily available resource to provide members of the public as well as other County agencies with such information at a moment's notice. **OPERATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS (GOAL 1) AND INTEGRATED SERVICE DELIVERY (GOAL 3).**



Figure 1: Sandstone Fleur-de-lis from Depression-era Works Progress Administration at City Terrace Park

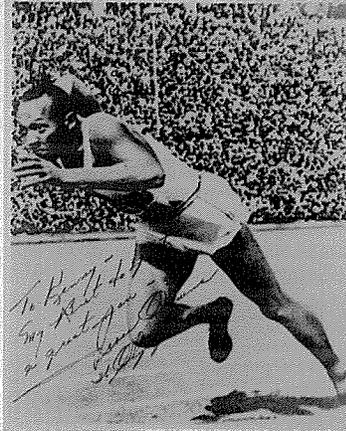


Figure 2: Autographed photo of Jesse Owens during Olympic race

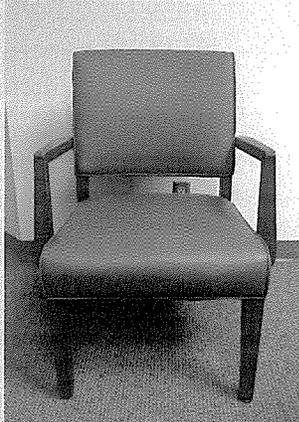


Figure 3: Chair used by Martin Luther King Jr. during a visit with Los Angeles County Supervisor Kenneth Hahn

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COST AVOIDANCE, COST SAVINGS, AND REVENUE GENERATED (ESTIMATED BENEFIT): If you are claiming cost benefits, include a calculation on this page. You must include an explanation of the County cost savings, cost avoidance or new revenue that matches the numbers in the box. Remember to keep your supporting documentation.

Cost Avoidance: Costs that are eliminated or not incurred as a result of program outcomes.

Cost Savings: A reduction or lessening of expenditures as a result of program outcomes.

Revenue: Increases in existing revenue streams or new revenue sources to the County as a result of program outcomes.

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