



REPORT

THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO TO THE PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD

DATE ISSUED: April 8, 2026

REPORT NO.: 101

ATTENTION: Parks and Recreation Board
Agenda of April 16, 2026

SUBJECT: Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Park – Modification of park name to
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Park

SUMMARY

Issue – Should the Park and Recreation Board recommend approval of modifying the name Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Park to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Park

Department Recommendation – Recommend approval of modifying name Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Park to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Park

Other Recommendations – The following groups have reviewed and considered the proposed project. Actions taken and recommendations made by these groups are listed below, and in the Discussion Section.

Martin Luther King Community Recreation Group (CRG) voted unanimously to approve the naming of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Park to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Park on August 21, 2025.

Fiscal Impact – No impact to the General Fund.

Water and Energy Conservation Status – The proposed naming action would not have an impact on any water and energy conservation guidelines contained in Council Policy 200-14.

Climate Action Plan (CAP) Impact – No Impact.

Strategic/Tactical Equity Plan Impact – No Impact.

Environmental – No Impact.

BACKGROUND

Martin Luther King Jr. Community Park is located at 6401 Skyline Drive in the Encanto Community Planning Area and is under the purview of the Martin Luther King Jr. Community Recreation Group (CRG). The park was acquired by the City in 1968 and

dedicated in 1975. The park is 34.53 acres and contains a recreation center, comfort station, two playgrounds, outdoor hard courts, outdoor tennis courts, a community pool, a multi-use field and a ball field. In 2006, the George L. Stevens Senior Center was constructed and is also considered to be a part of the park.

DISCUSSION

City Council Policy 900-20 addresses the naming of City assets (Attachment A) and considers four criteria as follows:

1. Location
2. Significant Events, People and Places
3. Outstanding Individuals
4. Major Donations

Category 3 is designed to acknowledge individuals who have made substantial contributions to benefit the City, local community, park and recreation system, or public library.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was an American civil rights activist and Baptist minister who was a prominent leader of the civil right movement from 1955 until his assassination in 1968. He advanced civil rights for people of color in the United States through the use of nonviolent resistance and civil disobedience against Jim Crow laws and other forms of legalized discrimination, which most commonly affected African Americans.

A Black church leader, King participated in and led marches for the right to vote, desegregation, labor rights, and other civil rights. He oversaw the 1955 Montgomery bus boycott and was the first president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. King was one of the leaders of the 1963 March on Washington, where he delivered his “I Have a Dream” speech, and helped organize two of the three Selma to Montgomery marches during the 1965 Selma voting rights movement.

In 1951 King began doctoral studies in systematic theology at Boston University. King received his PhD on June 5, 1955, with a dissertation titled A Comparison of the Conceptions of God in the Thinking of Paul Tillich and Henry Nelson Wieman.

Dr. King won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964 for combating racial inequality through nonviolent resistance.

On August 21, 2025, the Martin Luther King Jr. Community Recreation Group (CRG) voted unanimously to name Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Park to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Park to acknowledge Dr. King’s obtainment of a doctoral degree. The meeting minutes documenting this action are included as Attachment B to the staff report.

Component parts of the park to be renamed include the park, the recreation center, and the pool. The George L. Stevens Senior Center will remain as currently named. Should this item be approved, staff will work with the CRG to identify and update existing signage to reflect the revised name.

ALTERNATIVES

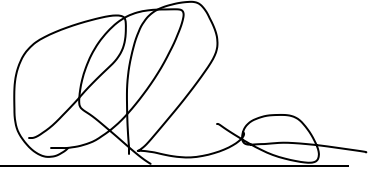
Do not approve the naming of Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Park to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Park.

Page 3
Martin Luther King Jr. Community Park
April 8, 2026

Respectfully submitted,



Tom Tomlinson
Asst. Director, Parks and Recreation Dept.



Prepared by: Carlos Rios
District Manager

Attachment(s): A: Council Policy 900-20
B: Martin Luther King, Jr. CRG Meeting Minutes

cc: Tiffany Harrison, Council District 4