



Friends of Griffith Park

<http://www.friendsofgriffithpark.org/>

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**“Improper Backroom Deal” By City of Los Angeles
That Permanently Closed Public Access to World Famous Hollywood Sign
Via Popular Griffith Park Trailhead Legally Challenged by Motion to Intervene In Lawsuit**

Los Angeles, CA, May 1, 2017 – Friends of Griffith Park, together with the Griffith J. Griffith Charitable Trust, and the Los Feliz Oaks Homeowners Association, filed a Motion in Los Angeles Superior Court today challenging the City of Los Angeles’ decision to close the Beachwood Gate to the Hollyridge Trail in Griffith Park on April 18, 2017.

On March 13th, the City announced its decision to close permanently access to the Hollyridge Trailhead at the top of Beachwood Canyon, claiming that it acted in response to a ruling in the pending court case of *Sunset Ranch Hollywood Stables vs. City of Los Angeles*. The Hollyridge Trail accessed from this area has been used by hikers since the 1920s. The popular trail affords one of the easiest access points and best views of the world famous Los Angeles landmark, the Hollywood Sign. Nearby resident associations – Los Feliz Improvement Association, Oaks Homeowners Association, Beachwood Canyon Neighborhood Association, and Lake Hollywood Homeowners Association – were shocked to learn of the City’s decision especially since it directly contradicts the judge’s ruling.

The judge determined that Sunset Ranch does *not* have an exclusive right to the access road that leads to the trailhead and cannot exclude members of the public from that easement, and that the City must provide public pedestrian access to the Hollyridge Trail at a point close to the Beachwood Gate. Instead the City and Sunset Ranch entered into what petitioners charge was an “improper backroom deal” in which they decided to close the gate at Beachwood Canyon completely, giving control over a gate (paid for at taxpayer expense) and a trailhead (which belongs to the public) to a private party, forever.

The Motion to Intervene is an action taken so that entities not named in the original lawsuit become parties, to protect an important interest. The reasons for the Motion to Intervene include: the elimination of the access to Griffith Park, a public park, at a much-used access point; creation of a grave public-safety risk in adjoining communities; improper transfer of public land to a private party; and more. The petitioners claim the city misled the court and tried to stipulate away rights held by the public for the public good. The legal filing argues that, at a minimum, these actions violate the Los Angeles City Charter, the Los Angeles Municipal Code, the California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”), and