

**C Medina** 9:43 PMto me ▾Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android

----- Forwarded Message -----

**From:** "[REDACTED]"

&lt;[REDACTED]&gt;

**To:** "councilmember.cedillo@lacity.org"

&lt;councilmember.cedillo@lacity.org&gt;,

"jose.a.rodriguez@lacity.org" &lt;jose.a.rodriguez@lacity.org&gt;

**Sent:** Tue, Sep 27, 2016 at 9:19 PM**Subject:** Lincoln Heights - ELA Park

Hello Councilmember Gilbert A. Cedillo,

My family and myself have been members of the Lincoln Heights community for many years. We are a family of 11 including my parents. Now that has expanded as now there are 16 nephews and nieces. My parents are homeowners in this community and some of my siblings as well. Several of the residents on our streets and cross streets have also been here for many years and are also homeowners.

I am seeking your assistance in returning play equipment and apparatus in our little community park located in the center of Minnesota Street and Eastlake Avenue. A long time ago, two sisters donated this little park for our community. We used to have play equipment such as swings and slides that I played on when i was a child. My siblings as well and the local children in the community. The play equipment was removed. I now would like my children and the other community children to have where to play. How can i begin the process of having play equipment placed there???

Also I would like signs for dogs to be on leashes and the poop to be cleaned up as now the park is also used for dogs. However, the poop is not being cleaned up and the dogs are running free. Some dogs do try to bite and it is scary. I am concerned for the safety of the children in the community as well as the adults.

Thank you in advance for taking time to read this and I am















Lincoln Heights Neighborhood Council  
3516 North Broadway  
Los Angeles, CA 90031  
FACEBOOK: "www.facebook.com/LHNCLA31"  
WEB: "www.LincolnHeightsNC.org"  
Vacant, President; BEN WADSWORTH, Vice President;  
Vacant, Secretary; VERA PADILLA, Treasurer



**MOTION TO APPROVE: MINUTES of the  
LINCOLN HEIGHTS PLANNING & LAND-USE COMMITTEE MEETING  
Wednesday, May 8, 2019 at 6:00 pm  
Lincoln Heights City Building 3516 N. Broadway, Lincoln Heights 90031**

- I. Welcome, Call to Order - Meeting called to Order by Richard Larsen at 6:00 PM.
- II. Roll Call – In attendance: 7 (7 voting) Gil Arevalo, Sheri Fierro, Armida Marrufo, Mario Marrufo, Miko Merced, Michele Rubio, and Richard Larsen. Stakeholders and/or presenters: Tom Williamson. Absent: Gillas Correa, Benny Madera
- III. Review and approve minutes of April 10, 2019. **MOTION to Approve: Larsen, Merced 2<sup>nd</sup>, 7-0-0, Approved**

IV. Public Comment: Miko Merced asked about the dog park on Eastlake Ave, the neighborhood park has support from local residents after a turbulent history. Also CD1's budget would have to pay for any new dog park.





**Lincoln Heights Neighborhood Council**  
**3516 North Broadway**  
**Los Angeles, CA 90031**

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Vacant, President; BEN WADSWORTH, Vice President;  
Vacant, Secretary; VERA PADILLA, Treasurer



**MOTION TO APPROVE: MINUTES of the**  
**LINCOLN HEIGHTS PLANNING & LAND-USE COMMITTEE SPECIAL MEETING**  
Wednesday, April 10, 2019 at 5:30 pm  
Lincoln Heights City Building 3516 N. Broadway, Lincoln Heights 90031

I. Welcome, Call to Order - Meeting called to Order by Richard Larsen at 5:37 PM.

II. Roll Call – In attendance: 7 (6 voting) Gillas Correa, Sheri Fierro, Benny Madera, Armida Marrufo, Miko Merced, Michele Rubio, and Richard Larsen. Stakeholders and/or presenters: Liliger Damasco. Absent: Gil Arevalo, Mario Maruffo

III. Review and approve minutes of January 9, 2018. Benny Madera mentioned that he saw the inclusion of USC in the route of the Lincoln Heights Streetcar as presented by Frank Villalobos at the Meeting in March. Later inspection revealed that the streetcar is planned to turn at Broadway at Griffin Ave and terminate at LAC+USC Medical Campus.

**MOTION to Approve: Marrufo, Fierro 2<sup>nd</sup>, 5-1-1, Approved**

IV. Public Comment: Miko Merced mentioned a dog park on East LA Park, but it might be a neighborhood park and Miko will check it out with CD1. Richard reported on the Lincoln Heights Modernization project that was presented recently by LA-USD, a \$220M project.



**MOTION**

In order to provide for a safe environment in our children's playgrounds, the City should limit access to children and parents or guardians accompanying a child. Other municipalities have adopted similar laws to enhance child safety and provide law enforcement officers and the public with clear regulations as to who may be present in a children's playground.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the Office of the City Attorney, with the assistance of the Department of Recreation and Parks, be requested to prepare and present a draft ordinance that limits access to a children's playground within a City park to children and parents or guardians accompanying a child.

I FURTHER MOVE that the Department of Recreation and Parks post signage at children's playgrounds subject to the new law.

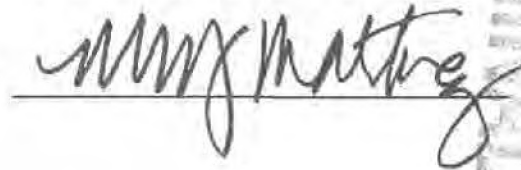
I FURTHER MOVE that the Board of Recreation and Park Commissioners be requested to consider and act on the proposed ordinance.

PRESENTED BY:



MITCH O'FARRELL  
Councilmember 13<sup>TH</sup> District

SECONDED BY:



RECEIVED  
CITY OF CHICAGO  
CLERK OF THE BOARD  
OF RECREATION AND PARKS  
DEC 14 2016

  
DEC 14 2016





Lincoln Heights Neighborhood Council  
3516 North Broadway  
Los Angeles, CA 90031  
FACEBOOK: "www.facebook.com/LHNCLA31"  
WEB: "www.LincolnHeightsNC.org"  
CESAR ROSAS, President; BEN WADSWORTH, Vice President;  
KENNETH YOON, Secretary; VERA PADILLA, Treasurer



January 19, 2017

Honorable City Council  
c/o Office of the City Clerk  
Los Angeles City Hall  
200 North Spring Street, Room 395  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

The Lincoln Heights Neighborhood Council requests that the following Community Impact Statement be attached/added to Council File 16-1456 regarding Limiting Access to Children's Playground.

### COMMUNITY IMPACT STATEMENT

The Lincoln Heights Neighborhood Council opposes the proposal because:

The Lincoln Heights NC is against the motion to include language to change the access of playgrounds to only children and their guardians. Limiting teenager and young adult access to swings and limited park space in areas where there is already limited access to green open space is unfair to our young adult population. If a 17 year old wants to swing on a swing or study in the grass under a tree, they should not be prevented from doing so. In Lincoln Heights, there is already limited activities for teenagers and denying them the use of park space is discriminatory. There is no differentiation between playgrounds and the grass that surrounds it. The language in the council file is too vague and therefore the policy should remain as is.

This Community Impact Statement is based on the action taken at the regularly scheduled Board of Directors meeting on January 19, 2017, when the Lincoln Heights Neighborhood Council adopted the following motion by a vote of 18 yes, 0 no, 0 abstaining and directed that a Community Impact Statement be filed reflecting its position.

Motion: The Lincoln Heights Neighborhood Council urges the City Council's Arts, Parks, and River Committee to not adopt the *Limiting Access to Children's Playground proposal*.

Sincerely,

Cesar Rosas, President  
Lincoln Heights Neighborhood Council

BOARD MEMBERS: BUSINESS REPRESENTATIVES: William Rodriguez Morrison, Mario Marrufo, (Vacant);  
COMMUNITY BASED ORGANIZATIONS REPRESENTATIVES: Selena Ortega, Benny Madera, Martha Sevin Riley,  
YOUTH REPRESENTATIVES: Brittney Rivera, Hugo Hernandez; AREA REPRESENTATIVES: Penelope Lopez, Theresa Vasquez, Martin S. Gomez, Vicente Gonzalez-Reyes Jr., Armida Marrufo, Maribel Hernandez, Vince Rosiles, (Vacant), José Lagunas, David Myers, (Vacant), (Vacant), Victoria Montes, Michael Montes.

# What's in a Name? The Origins of Lincoln Heights' Ela Park



Ela Park is the oval-shaped lawn in the foreground of this 1911 photo, courtesy of the USC Libraries - California Historical Society Collection.

Its three-letter name is almost as tiny as 0.38-acre park itself, but "Ela" -- as in [Ela Park of Lincoln Heights](#) -- is actually an acronym with big historical meaning.

The park first took shape around 1877 on the outskirts of

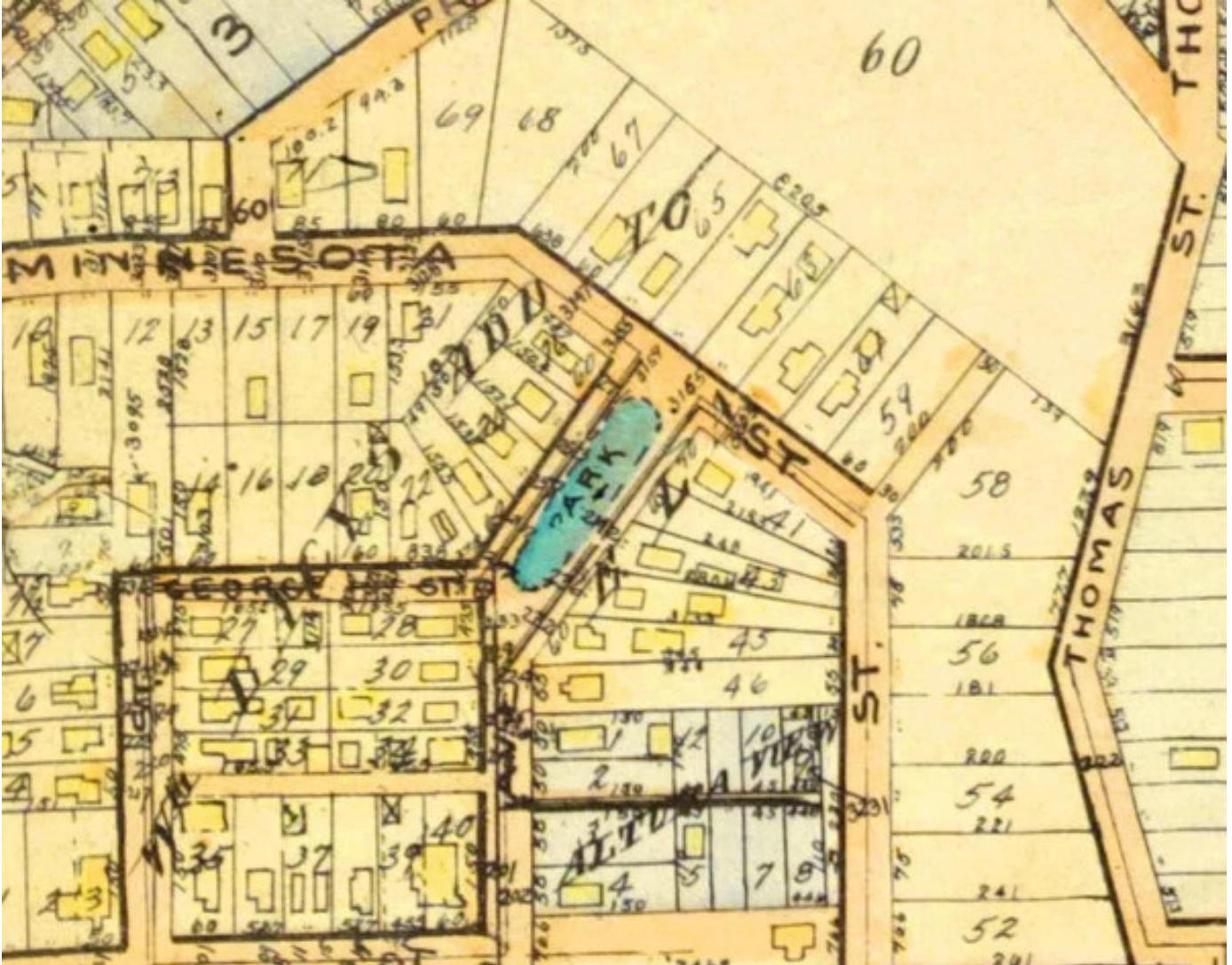


what was then [East Los Angeles](#), a booming streetcar suburb connected to the rest of the city by a [cable car](#) line. Foreshadowing changes to come, the park's creator, developer H.M. Johnston, thought he could improve upon the town's name.

"The initials of East Los Angeles suggested the concise and poetic designation of 'Ela' for that beautiful suburb," he told the Los Angeles Herald.

So Johnston built an oval-shaped racetrack nestled against the Repetto Hills and named it Ela Park.

In 1886, when William Lacy subdivided the land surrounding the racetrack ("High Elevation! No Fogs! No Frosts! No Malaria! No Asthma!" the advertisements boasted), he named the tract after the tiny park. Otherwise, Johnston's abbreviation never caught on.



A 1921 real estate map of Elia Park and the surrounding community. Courtesy of the USC Libraries.

Details of the park's history are sketchy -- its small size means it never attracted much notice -- but in 1889 the Los Angeles Times described it as "a very pretty little park... fenced with posts and chain, ready to be seeded down." It had become a municipal park by 1904, when the city park commission noted that it was "uncared for" and beseeched the city council to appropriate \$500 "for first aid to this little pleasure ground." Later, as seen in [this photo](#) from the New York Public Library's collections, the city planted fan palms along its perimeter.



The park's landscaping evolved, but its name remained the same -- even as residents of East Los Angeles moved to rebrand their neighborhood Lincoln Heights. Their proposed change became official in March 1917, and soon the names of businesses and civic installations were scrubbed of any reference to East Los Angeles. Yet somehow that tiny, oval-shaped parcel of land remained Ela Park, and today it's one of the few remnants of a time [when East Los Angeles was in Lincoln Heights](#).

## LA<sup>as</sup>SUBJECT

*[L.A. as Subject](#) is an association of more than 230 libraries, museums, official archives, cultural institutions, and private collectors. Hosted by the [USC Libraries](#), L.A. as Subject is dedicated to preserving and telling the sometimes-hidden stories and histories of the Los Angeles region.*



# Los Angeles: Lincoln Heights Rebels Demand Justice for Tony Gutierrez



Family, friends and neighbors of Tony Gutierrez at the memorial marking the place where he was shot by an LAPD cop.

Los Angeles, Aug. 12—Two weeks after a killer cop murdered 14-year-old Tony Gutierrez, over 100 people marched from the Lincoln Heights neighborhood in East L.A. to Parker Center, the downtown police headquarters. The police mobilized a heavy presence against the march. But the people, mainly Latino/a youth, were determined and defiant. The signs they carried made clear the message they wanted to deliver: "Fuck the pigs"; "LA Pig Nazis Out. Basta ya!"; "Abajo con fascismo."

## Rebellion Shakes the Power Structure

As the RW reported last week, two nights of rebellion followed the LAPD killing of Tony Gutierrez in Lincoln Heights, a neighborhood of mostly Chicano/a and Mexican people. The righteous street-fighting by the people of Lincoln Heights against the police showed once again how the L.A. Rebellion of April 1992 brought in a "new day." And the response by the power structure revealed how afraid they are of the struggle of the oppressed people.

Rocks and bottles first started flying immediately after the cop shot Tony Gutierrez at 9:40 p.m. on Saturday July 29. He had been relaxing outside with his mother and

others when three police cars rolled up from different directions with their lights out. One cop, Michael Falvo, opened fire on Tony. People who were there have given slightly different accounts of what happened. But everybody—except the police—says that Tony was unarmed when he was gunned down, and that the cop shot him in the back without warning. People immediately began fighting the police, and more cops rushed to the area. There were reports of three arrests and two heavily damaged police cars.

The next day, a much larger battle took place when the police tried to break up a car wash being held to raise money for Tony's family. Hundreds of Lincoln Heights residents of all ages poured into the streets. Rocks, bottles, pieces of brick and anything else that was at hand were thrown at the police. Trash cans burned in the street. One cop was injured when something hit him in the face. Police cars had broken windows. Over 100 cops were sent in, including the SWAT team. "They acted like we killed one of them," a woman said.

The way the cops broke up the car wash shows the cold-blooded nature of this system's armed enforcers. But the actions of the people in Lincoln Heights also put

fear into the hearts of the ruling class—not just in L.A. but up to the top levels of the U.S. government.

The *L.A. Times* said the Lincoln Heights eruption "stands as a vivid reminder of the potential volatility of numerous neighborhoods in the city." And just 36 hours after Tony was killed, two U.S. Justice Department officials showed up at a community meeting in Lincoln Heights. Shortly afterwards, the FBI announced that it was launching its own "investigation" into the killing, separate from the one announced by the LAPD.

The FBI investigation is *not* about seeking justice for Tony. An article in the *Chicago Tribune* (Aug. 10) made clear what the real concern of the country's top political police agency is: "The abrupt FBI intervention underscored the close watch that federal officials have kept on Los Angeles over the last few strife-torn years—and the political importance of keeping the nation's second largest city calm." And it's not just L.A. that the rulers are worried about. The *Tribune* article quotes a "federal law enforcement official" who says: "It's not just L.A. It's across the country. Look at Miami right now." As the RW reported last week, youth in Miami and Indianapolis have also been out in the streets against the police in recent weeks.

## Police Clampdown

Nearly two weeks after the killing, large numbers of cops continue to prowl through Lincoln Heights. The police are stopping youth on the street, sweating them, checking for warrants. "They're trying to break us up, get us to forget it," one youth told the RW.

Meanwhile, the authorities are saying that what Lincoln Heights needs is *more* cops, and *more* police intrusion into the life of the community. They are especially pushing "community-based policing." L.A. Mayor Riordan said, "One of the first goals ought to be to get a substation in Lincoln Heights and get more officers as quickly as possible." L.A. City Council Member Mike Hernandez said the problem was "communication" with the police and said the solution is community-based policing. The *L.A. Times* says this means "close cooperation between police and residents and the early identification and resolution of problems." Translation: they want to organize groups of snitches in the neighborhood to act as eyes and ears for the police. And they want to organize a pro-police section of the people in order to chill people out in a situation like the police killing of Tony Gutierrez.

One of the things that scared the powers about the Lincoln Heights rebellion is the way many of the older residents actively supported the youth when they fought the police. The authorities are trying to counter this in various ways—including by trying to divide people around the question of gangs. The police and the mainstream media are trying to justify the murder of Tony by saying he was a gang member. There have been numerous stories quoting "unnamed residents" of Lincoln Heights who say the "biggest problem" they face is the gangs. L.A. newspapers and TV news recently ran a story about a "drive-by shooting" in Lincoln Heights. It turns out the shooting happened outside the neighborhood and had nothing to do with people in Lincoln Heights.

A series of revelations about the shooting has contributed to continuing anger at the police. Police said Tony had a gun, and was pointing it at the cops when one of them opened fire. But this cover-up story quickly began to fall apart. A pistol was found 10 to 20 feet away from Tony's body, on the other side of a chest-high wall. Tony's fingerprints were not on it. There's no way he could have dropped it there after being shot to death. Then, at the end of the week following the killing, a coroner's report showed that Tony had been shot four times in the back—just like people who saw the shooting had said.

Information also came out about Michael Falvo, the shooter. He had been identified in 1991 as one of 44 "problem officers" with a large number of brutality complaints. The list was compiled by the Christopher Commission, set up to investigate the LAPD after the beating of Rodney King. And after the Commission's report, Falvo faced internal LAPD charges for riding through the East L.A. Ramona Gardens projects and flipping off residents after one of their neighbors, Smokey Jimenez, had been killed by Sheriff's deputies. But rather than being fired, Falvo was assigned to the CRASH unit, an "elite," so-called anti-gang unit that gathers information and keeps files on thousands of youth in East L.A. and other areas. Falvo had made death threats to Tony days before he killed him, according to Tony's friends.

Tony Gutierrez was buried August 9. Four hundred people attended the ceremony. They were there to mourn for Tony, but they also made it clear they wanted justice. Many of the youth wore T-shirts that said, "In loving memory of Travieso [Tony's nickname]. Rest in peace. Fuck the LAPD." □



July 30—During the rebellion in Lincoln Heights after the police murdered Tony.





# LAPD Hollenbeck Riots

17,139 views • Aug 5, 2009

43 6 SHARE SAVE ...



**Bill Rhetts**

20.4K subscribers

Los Angeles, CA (HC News)

Back in 1995 I was working an LAPD patrol beat. Another officer involved shooting occurred in the Lincoln Heights section of Hollenbeck Division.

This is the story where the main-stream media claimed that a problem officer just gunned down and killed a cute little 14 year old by named Jose Antonio Gutierrez. However the truth is, that officer Michael Falvo only shot gangster Jose Gutierrez after Gutierrez pointed a Tec-9 machine gun at officer Falvo.

The Monday morning quarter-backs and the media then put more fuel onto the fire. Henceforth causing what became known as the LAPD Hollenbeck Riots.

In the first two days of the riots I was deployed into my trained position as a mobile field force squad leader. We always deployed a good block away from the main target(s) with the Airship above. LAPD is so large that when you responded to tactical alerts like this, supervisors may not even know you. They often have to rely on your skill levels based on hash-marks or more specifically, ribbons or metals on your uniform.

In the below video you will hear a Lieutenant tell me and my partner Grab a piece of curb and stand here until we get eight more guys. Then were gonna do business. Once my squad was gloved and helmeted, we did our job. I loved those 40mm less lethal munitions.

Later in the last couple days I drove an unmarked dual-purpose car, and became a rear guard roving and watching the officers backs; as they moved forward for the final threat assessment and clean-up. In this riot we took lots of rocks and bottles and a few gun-shots. Youll see one suspect throw a rock which hits an officer in the back. Watch how the media swarmed around my partner and I, hoping that we would make a mistake that would move their film up to the top story on their big screen.

SHOW LESS



**Council File: 96-1386**



## Title

UNITY HOUSE

## Subject

Mo - The Los Angeles Housing Department requires authorization from the City Ccl and Mayor to obtain \$175,000 in additional rehabilitation funding for Unity House, located at 2516 Eastlake Avenue, Lincoln Heights. This request is an addendum to an earlier Rule 23 motion that authorized \$250,000 to purchase rehabilitate the site. This original amount has been expended due to a fire in May 1996. This infusion is needed immediately so that the site can host a July 27, 1996 grand opening / home ownership fair The Unity House Neighborhood Center was created in the aftermath of a fatal shooting, which caused considerable community unrest. Moreover, the subject property had been the site of gang activity, drug sales and other illegal activities which required immediate abatement. In November 1995, the Los Angeles Housing Department purchased the abandoned two story single family residence fronting Eastlake Avenue and the two story fourplex in the rear (the latter has a different address, 3211-3212 Altura Walk) One solution to community and site specific problems was to convert the home to a community center. LAHD would completely rehabilitate the front house - now called Unity House - for use by the non profit Soledad Enrichment Action, and the fourplex would have code violations repaired. SEA agreed to provide after school recreation activities, violence prevention training, adult education classes, and a neighborhood center. Additionally, space would be set aside for a police drop in center and for LAHD to promote its home ownership programs. This community service would only be temporary: LAHD hopes to resell in three years to an owner occupant The department had hoped to complete the work by May 20, 1996. The fire seriously damaged the front building a week before. At the time of the fire, rehabilitation was substantially completed. Due to fire and construction delays, the completion is behind schedule and more money is needed to complete the job. (The grand opening took place anyway with HUD' Assistant Secretary for Housing - FHA Housing Commissioner, Nic Retsinas, Mayor Riordan, Cclman Hernandez, and other dignitaries present) To date, LAHD has spent \$150,000 on rehabilitation. The Craftsman-style bungalow on Eastlake is being prudently restored to its original design - years of deferred maintenance, vandalism and poorly designed remodeling compelled the Department to do so. Fire damaged and architectural restoration alone require an additinal \$31,000 Because Unity House will serve the communtiy, it must adhere to reasonable access standards of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Therefore, LAHD must build a wheelchair lift from Eastlake to the house level, then to concrete work to allow access into the rear of the building. Extra costs were also incurred

# CITY OF LOS ANGELES

CALIFORNIA



RICHARD J. RIORDAN  
MAYOR

ELIAS MARTINEZ  
City Clerk

J. Michael Carey  
Executive Officer

When making inquiries  
relative to this matter  
refer to File No.

96-1354

Office of  
**CITY CLERK**  
Council and Public Services  
Room 395, City Hall  
Los Angeles, CA 90012  
Council File Information - (213) 485-5703  
General Information - (213) 485-5705

Pat Healy  
Chief Legislative Assistant

CD 1

July 30, 1996

Board of Public Works  
Bureau of Street Maintenance  
Department of Transportation,  
Traffic Section

Council Member Hernandez  
Council Member Alatorre  
Police Commission  
Housing Department

RE: GRAND OPENING OF THE UNITY HOUSE NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER AND REDEDICATION OF ELA PARK, SPONSORED BY THE CITY'S HOUSING DEPARTMENT AND COUNCIL DISTRICT 1 ON JULY 27, 1996 **sponsored by LA City Housing Dept and CD 1 Mike Hernandez**

At the meeting of the Council held July 24, 1996, the following action was taken:

Attached motion (Hernandez - Alatorre) adopted.....	<u>          X          </u>
Attached report adopted.....	<u>                          </u>
Ordinance adopted.....	<u>                          </u>
Motion adopted to approve attached report.....	<u>                          </u>
To the Mayor for concurrence.....	<u>                          </u>
FORTHWITH.....	<u>              X          </u>
Mayor concurred.....	<u>                          </u>
Appointment confirmed.....	<u>                          </u>
Findings adopted.....	<u>                          </u>
Negative Declaration adopted.....	<u>                          </u>
Categorically exempt.....	<u>                          </u>

*Elias Martinez*

City Clerk  
jv

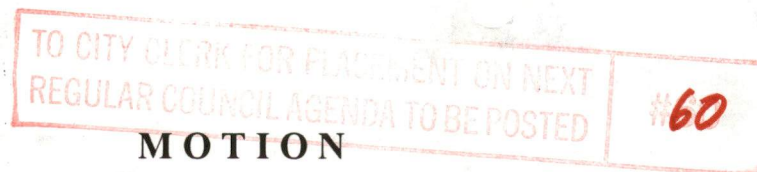
steno\961354

PLACE IN FILES  
AUG 02 1996  
DEPUTY





CD 134



## MOTION

JUL 17 1996

The Office of Council District One and the City's Housing Department are jointly sponsoring the grand opening of the Unity House Neighborhood Center and a rededication of Ela Park. The will take place on Saturday, July 27, 1996. To control vehicular traffic and ensure pedestrian safety, the temporary closure of certain streets will be required. In addition, a request has been received to authorize the Housing Department to install a street banner announcing the event.

I THEREFORE MOVE that in order to accommodate the July 27, 1996 grand opening of the Unity House Neighborhood Center and rededication of Ela Park and pursuant to Ordinance No. 150,567 relating to temporary street closures: (1) the 3100 block of Minnesota Street; (2) East Lake, between Minnesota Street and Altura Walk; and, (3) George Street, between Hancock and Eastlake, be closed on Saturday, July 27, 1996 during the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., subject to the supervision of the Director of the Bureau of Street Maintenance.

I FURTHER MOVE that the Board of Public Works be requested to issue a no-fee banner permit to the Housing Department for the installation of one "across-the-street" type banner announcing the event.

I FURTHER MOVE that the Bureau of Street Maintenance be directed to deliver and pick up the necessary traffic control devices.

I FURTHER MOVE that the Department of Transportation be directed to post "Temporary No Stopping" signs on the affected streets and provide traffic control personnel, as required.

I FURTHER MOVE that should unforeseen circumstances change the actual date of the Special Event, the aforementioned departmental instructions continue to apply.



**MOTION  
ADOPTED**

PRESENTED BY

Mike Hernandez

ITEM NO. (34)\*

**BANNER NOT**

96-1354 - MOTION (HERNANDEZ - ALATORRE) relative to the grand opening of the Unity House Neighborhood Center and rededication of Ela Park, sponsored by the City's Housing Department and Council District 1 on July 27, 1996.  
CD 1



# **FBI Joins Shooting Probe : Police: Parents file claim countering LAPD assertion that youth provoked Lincoln Heights incident by drawing gun.**

As the FBI announced that it has joined local law enforcement agencies investigating the fatal police shooting of a 14-year-old in Lincoln Heights, a wrongful death claim was filed Thursday by the youth's parents.

The claim, filed on behalf of Maria Ana Gutierrez and Jose Rodriguez, accused Los Angeles police of shooting Jose Antonio Gutierrez on Saturday night "without cause, provocation or justification." The filing of a wrongful death claim is generally a precursor to the filing of a lawsuit against the city.

"Given the fact that Michael A. Falvo, the LAPD officer who killed Jose Antonio Gutierrez, is one of the 44 problem officers listed by the Christopher Commission, the city of Los Angeles may be directly liable for the violation of civil rights in this case," Antonio H. Rodriguez, the parents' attorney,

said at a morning news conference at the site of the slaying.

The claim also accuses officers of intentionally inflicting emotional distress on the victim's mother. "Mrs. Gutierrez witnessed the killing of her son and was beaten by officers when she came to his aid," Rodriguez said.

Police have said that Falvo shot Gutierrez four times in the upper torso after the boy pointed a semiautomatic pistol at him. The weapon, they said, was found in the grass on the other side of a small fence a few feet away. It contained no identifiable fingerprints.

The county coroner's office has yet to release information on where the bullets hit Gutierrez. Coroner's spokesman Scott Carrier said Thursday that no specifics will be made public while the case remains under investigation for about seven to 10 days.

But attorney Rodriguez said Thursday that the youth was shot from the rear, which he said runs counter to the police version.

"If the officer shot him from behind, how could he be pointing a gun?" asked Rodriguez, who added that he examined the body Wednesday with a private pathologist, Richard Ziegler. "He was shot in the back," Rodriguez said.

According to the lawyer, one bullet pierced the youth's left

armpit at an angle and exited through the upper right rib cage. The other three bullets pierced the back of Gutierrez's left shoulder, he said. There was also what appeared to be a scrape from a bullet on the youth's lower right back area, Rodriguez added.

Ziegler did not return a call for further explanation.

According to Carrier, the private report would have to have been conducted after the teen-ager's body was released from the coroner's office to an Eastside mortuary Wednesday. Carrier said he could not comment on the findings.

"The [official] documents have not been completed yet so there's nothing I can confirm or deny," Carrier said. "There's nothing I can clarify at this time and there's nothing we can add until the documents have been signed, completed and finalized by our department."

Toxicology tests will determine whether there were drugs or alcohol in Gutierrez's body, the coroner's spokesman said.

The weekend slaying sparked two days of unrest in the Eastside neighborhood, heightening tension between some residents and the police. Some residents who say they witnessed the killing have disputed the police version, saying the officer fired on an unarmed Gutierrez, handcuffed him



and shot him again. Others contend that Gutierrez did have a gun but that he tossed it over the fence when police arrived.

At this point, inquiries are being conducted by the LAPD's robbery-homicide unit, the district attorney's office, the FBI, attorney Rodriguez, the coroner's office and the City Council.

The FBI launched its preliminary probe into allegations of civil rights violations Monday at the request of Department of Justice officials in Washington, said FBI spokesman John Hoos.

Results of the FBI's study will be forwarded for review to the Justice Department's civil rights division in Washington and the U.S. attorney's office in Los Angeles, according to Hoos.

Federal officials in the 1994 fiscal year investigated about 2,230 cases of alleged civil rights violations nationwide by law enforcement officers, according to Justice Department statistics. That year, 34 federal cases were filed against 46 law enforcement officers, 12 defendants were convicted and 25 accepted plea agreements.

Rodriguez said he welcomed the FBI probe, considering what he termed the "dismal" record of the LAPD and district attorney's office in investigating and prosecuting officers.

"That might be the only way this family gets a measure of

justice," he said.

County prosecutors said they have filed charges against law enforcement officers twice in the past five years as a result of on-duty shootings. Both prosecutions, one on manslaughter charges and the other for second-degree murder, resulted in mistrials when juries could not reach a verdict, spokeswoman Sandi Gibbons said.

\*

The City Council, which met in closed session with LAPD officials Wednesday morning, is due to reconvene its closed-door inquiry this morning. Councilman Mike Hernandez, who represents the area, has asked Police Chief Willie L. Williams to discuss the shooting and the LAPD's efforts to increase safety in the Lincoln Heights neighborhood.

Williams, who was out of town when the shooting occurred, returned to Los Angeles on Wednesday but did not appear before the council, police authorities said, because he was still on vacation.

An LAPD spokesman confirmed Thursday that Williams will appear before the council today and update members on the investigation.

Intensifying the inquiry was the revelation Wednesday that the fatal shots were fired by Falvo, who is assigned to the

department's gang detail. The 12-year veteran was one of 44 officers referred to in the Christopher Commission report--prepared after the Rodney G. King beating--as having been the subject of six or more complaints of excessive force or improper behavior between 1986 and 1990.

The parents' wrongful death claim states that the city is further liable in the case because Falvo "had a documented history of violent acts against community members and had demonstrated contempt for the residents of the Latino community to which he was assigned."

Police Protective League Director Dennis Zine said he met with Falvo two hours after the shooting and insists that the officer fired only in self-defense.

"He feels remorse for the fact that he shot a 14-year-old boy," Zine said. "It bothers him."

But Zine said Falvo told him that "at the time he fired his weapon, the [youth's] gun was pointed at him."

Zine also dismissed suggestions that Falvo was too dangerous to patrol the streets.

"This was a simple matter of self-defense. I pledged to him that we are not going to let him be the next scapegoat for the LAPD."



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Zine said Falvo received the Police Star for saving a woman who was about to leap from a building with her 18-month-old child in 1986. He also was named officer of the year while working in the LAPD's Wilshire Division.

The family's claim did not list any monetary damages, but attorney Rodriguez said they would be substantial.

The city attorney's office has six months to respond to the claim, either by denying it, which would send the case to court, or by negotiating a settlement.

A rosary service for the teen-ager, who was believed to be a member of a neighborhood gang, is scheduled for 7:30 p.m. Monday at Sacred Heart Church in Lincoln Heights.

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Funeral services at the church are planned for 8:30 a.m. Tuesday.

# **Officer Who Shot Boy Was 'Problem' Cop : LAPD: As City Council opens inquiry into Lincoln Heights killing, it is announced that Michael A. Falvo was on Christopher Commission list of 44 policemen who had history of alleged brutality incidents.**

By JOHN SCHWADA, ROBERT J. LOPEZ and JEFF  
LEEDSBDTIMES STAFF WRITERS Aug. 3, 1995 12 AM PT

As the Los Angeles City Council opened its inquiry into the fatal wounding of a Lincoln Heights teen-ager, police on Wednesday identified the anti-gang officer who fired the shots as Michael A. Falvo, one of the 44 "problem officers" cited in the Christopher Commission report on Police Department operations.

The disclosure that Falvo was the shooter stunned the council members, who were briefed in closed session by

LAPD brass about the Saturday night incident, Councilman Mike Hernandez said. They "were shocked," he said. "They realize that we've got a problem."

Police officials, however, continued to maintain that the officer acted properly, firing only after the 14-year-old youth pointed a gun at Falvo.

And Robin Kramer, chief of staff to Mayor Richard Riordan, said, "The focus should be on the facts" of the shooting, not on Flavo's record.

The slaying sparked two days of unrest in the Eastside neighborhood and has heightened tensions between some residents and the police.

Hernandez, who represents the area, urged the Police Department to expedite its official probe of the death to accelerate the "process for healing." But he also said the latest disclosure only makes efforts to keep the peace more difficult. "I am concerned about the potential flare-ups," he said.

In addition, the Eastside councilman said he was angry that Assistant Chief Ron Banks, in the closed session, identified Falvo as having been one of the 44 "problem officers" only in response to Hernandez's question.

Police say Falvo shot Antonio Gutierrez four times in the



upper torso after the boy pointed a semiautomatic pistol at the officer, who was responding to a report that several youths were passing around a handgun. But police disclosed Wednesday that there were no identifiable fingerprints on the gun the youth allegedly pointed.

Some residents who say they witnessed the killing have sharply disputed the LAPD's version, saying the officer fired on an unarmed Gutierrez, handcuffed him and shot him again. Others say that Gutierrez did have a gun but that he tossed it over a fence when police arrived.

Falvo, 39, a 12-year-veteran, was referred to in the Christopher Commission report as among officers who had been subjects of six or more complaints of excessive force or improper behavior each between 1986 and 1990. The report was commissioned to review LAPD policies and practices after the beating of Rodney G. King.

According to transcripts of disciplinary hearings reviewed by The Times in 1992, Falvo had a history of alleged brutality and insensitive behavior dating back at least eight years:

\* In 1991, a police Board of Rights unanimously concluded that Falvo flashed offensive hand gestures at residents of an Eastside housing project who were outraged that a sheriff's deputy had killed a man there the night before.

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"Your actions were so egregious, so inflammatory, so unthinking and so likely to result in serious consequences, that this single incident requires the most severe of penalties," an LAPD commander told Falvo during the disciplinary hearing.

The disciplinary board strongly recommended that Falvo be fired; but then-Chief Daryl F. Gates, in one of his last personnel actions as chief, reduced the penalty to a 44-day suspension.

The penalty, according to court documents, was overturned by a Superior Court judge in 1993, who ruled that the evidence against Falvo was insufficient. The judge ordered the city to change Falvo's personnel file and to reimburse him for back pay and court costs.

\* In 1989, Falvo pleaded guilty in a Board of Rights hearing to unnecessarily kicking a man, then omitting the incident from subsequent police reports. He received a 20-day suspension.

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\* In 1987, a disciplinary board found Falvo guilty of striking two narcotics suspects with his baton while they were kneeling in front of him, their hands behind their heads. One

of the suspects later said Falvo “started beating us like we were animals or something.” The officer received a 22-day suspension.

Falvo was unavailable for comment Wednesday. A lieutenant at the Hollenbeck Division, where Falvo has been temporarily assigned to a desk job pending the outcome of a police investigation into the shooting, declined to let the officer come to the telephone.

Police spokesman Cmdr. Tim McBride said Falvo’s recent record has been free of problems. Falvo has undergone counseling and additional training since being found guilty of using excessive force and was pronounced fit for duty by a police board in 1992, McBride said.

He said that he did not know how many of the 44 officers cited by the Christopher Commission are still with the LAPD, but that they all have been retrained.

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Hernandez questioned why Falvo is still on the force. “I don’t understand why he was in the field in the first place,” the councilman said.

Hernandez said he asked Police Chief Willie L. Williams to report to the council Friday to discuss the shooting and the LAPD’s efforts to increase safety in the Lincoln Heights



neighborhood. Williams returned Wednesday from out of town and was still on vacation, Banks said.

"I'm willing to state that I think the credibility of the Police Department is on the line as much as it was when we had the Christopher Commission," Hernandez said. "And the chief has to deal with this, and his credibility is on the line."

Hernandez said he was also unhappy that the LAPD did not quickly notify him of the shooting or inform him about plans to put a tactical alert in place over the weekend.

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He added, however, that he continues to believe that, overall, the department acted properly in its response to two days of rock- and bottle-throwing at officers.

McBride said police officials are expediting their probe of the shooting, but he declined to say when it would be completed.

"We know that this is clearly something of tremendous public interest," he said. "We are doing it as fast as we can."

He said an analysis of the fully loaded 32-shot Tec-9 semiautomatic pistol recovered in the grass a few feet from the shooting shows there were no fingerprints of "identifiable quality" on the weapon. He said that was not an

unusual finding, noting that fingerprints are often hard to obtain.

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Asked how the gun ended up on the other side of a four-foot concrete wall, McBride said: "That is not uncommon, for people to be moving at the time when they encounter police." Investigators will try to determine whether the gun was thrown over the fence, he said.

Earlier, moments after the closed session of the City Council broke up, Banks briefly answered questions from reporters.

He said Falvo's record does not necessarily mean that he should not have been assigned to the busy anti-gang unit that covers the LAPD's turbulent Hollenbeck area.

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"Obviously," Banks said, "this will be looked at very closely, as well as other situations that we might find ourselves in in a similar vein."

Hernandez announced that a community meeting originally scheduled for Wednesday night at Lincoln High School to discuss the shooting had been canceled.

He said he feared that the meeting, instead of providing an opportunity to quiet nerves, would only “fan the flames” being spread by some community activists who believe Eastside residents have been the victims of police abuses.

But at an afternoon news conference, community leaders said they wanted to hold smaller meetings with residents. They voiced optimism that the meetings would begin a healing process but acknowledged that police have a long way to go in building bridges with the community.

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“Much is being said, and much is being done,” said Father Juan Santillan, a respected community leader and police liaison. “But for us as a community, this will put to a test community policing.”

Times staff writer Paul Feldman contributed to this story.



# **Coroner Releases Autopsy on Youth Slain by Officer : Probe: Chief says report backs LAPD version of Lincoln Heights incident. But victim's family disputes account.**

By JOHN SCHWADA and JEFF LEEDS Aug. 5, 1995 12 AM PT

Police Chief Willie L. Williams said an autopsy report released Friday supports LAPD accounts that a Lincoln Heights teen-ager was shot to death as he pointed a gun at a police officer, while the attorney for the youth's family continued to dispute the police version of the shooting.

The coroner's office report found that Jose Antonio Gutierrez, 14, was hit four times, with one shot striking him on the side, just under his left armpit and toward the front of his body. Two others, striking close to each other, hit Gutierrez in the left rear shoulder area. Another shot grazed Gutierrez on the back.

Coroner's office spokesman Scott Carrier said Gutierrez was

not shot directly in the back, as some Eastside police-abuse activists and the Gutierrez family attorney have maintained.

"We don't want the public to think this young boy was completely turned around and shot in the back," Carrier said.

The report was widely anticipated in the wake of the shooting death last weekend, which triggered disorder in the Eastside neighborhood and prompted city officials to question the LAPD's practices and leadership.

The autopsy found no traces of gunpowder on Gutierrez's body, "which would indicate that he was shot at a distance," Carrier said. Some witnesses have said Gutierrez was shot after being handcuffed, and while he was lying face-down.

Instead, investigators said, the information suggests that the youth was shot, then hunched over and spun around by the force of the bullet.

After a two-hour private briefing of Los Angeles City Council members, Williams told reporters the coroner's report was "consistent with being shot with a gun in your hand [and] having basically begun to turn."

But Williams also found himself having to explain to council members why he was not in the city to personally take command of the LAPD after Gutierrez's killing and why the officer involved in the shooting--cited in the 1991

Christopher Commission report as a "problem officer"--was still on the force.

## Mayor Urges Calm

Meanwhile, Mayor Richard Riordan urged the public to await the final results of the LAPD probe of the matter and not assume that Officer Michael A. Falvo--because of his record--had acted improperly.

"It's important that facts get out exactly as they were, but equally important . . . that we keep peace in the community. We should make this tragic incident the start of a healing process," Riordan said at a late afternoon news conference.

The shooting prompted two days of street unrest by rock- and bottle-throwing youths last weekend and a tactical alert by the LAPD.

Still to come is a final report on the shooting by the LAPD's officer-involved shooting team, an independent review of that report by the citizen-members of the Los Angeles Police Commission and an FBI investigation.

The LAPD has promised to expedite its own final report on the shooting.

Complicating the LAPD's credibility in the incident has been the fact that Falvo, 39, was identified in the Christopher



Commission report as one of 44 officers with a record of using excessive force.

But Williams said Falvo has had "no significant disciplinary history since 1991. . . . His history would indicate that his work habits have changed."

Falvo, a gang unit officer, has been assigned to a desk job pending the outcome of the investigation, a standard practice.

"I have great confidence in the Police Department," Riordan said as he urged full disclosure of the facts surrounding the shooting.

But Riordan also warned that outside, radical groups, "like the Brown Berets, the Communist Party and others" have been identified as trying to exploit the situation. These groups, the mayor contended, "have only one motive in mind--that is to rile up the people, and that is not in the best interest of Lincoln Heights or the city."

Some community activists and observers have charged that Gutierrez was not, as police accounts have maintained, pointing a weapon at Falvo when he was shot four times. Police found a Tec-9 semi-automatic weapon near Gutierrez's body, but subsequent tests found no identifiable fingerprints on the gun.

## Another Side

Antonio Rodriguez, attorney for the Gutierrez family, said the autopsy squared with another interpretation of what happened after Falvo was summoned to a darkened Eastlake Avenue to check on a 911 call that a group of youths were handling a weapon.

"I don't think the community is going to believe he was shot as he was spinning around," Rodriguez said. "He was not armed. He was shot in the back."

Rodriguez sarcastically compared the police account of Gutierrez spinning around upon being first shot, with the subsequent bullets striking him in the back and the gun flying out of his hands, to a Hollywood movie. "That happens in the movies a lot," Rodriguez said.

"Most experts say if you're shot holding a weapon . . . it will fall somewhere around the body," he said. "In this case, we're looking at a gun that was found by estimates 10 to 15 feet away, on the other side of a fence."

According to diagrams and notes contained in the documents released by the coroner's office, one bullet penetrated the back of the youth's left shoulder, with a slightly upward trajectory.

Another bullet struck the same shoulder, an inch closer to

his spine, passed through his body, and grazed his chin. A third bullet struck under his left arm, ripped through major organs at an upward angle, and exited the right side of his chest. A fourth bullet grazed the middle of his back, moving upward.

The report did not make a conclusion as to the order in which the bullets struck Gutierrez.

Information in the report about Gutierrez also contradicts comments made by his family, which insists that he was not in a gang. Gutierrez, who had several tattoos, on his finger, wrist and upper back, was found wearing a green knit glove on his left hand. It reads "LAKE" in "cryptic gang writing," according to the coroner's investigation. The gang based in the neighborhood in which the shooting occurred is called the "Eastlake Boys."

A coroner's spokesman said Gutierrez had "minuscule" traces of cocaine in his blood but added that he did not know when the youth had used the drug or whether he was under the influence when he died.

The youth, 5 feet, 3 inches and 110 pounds, was found lying on the sidewalk next to a short wall marking the boundary of a neighbor's yard.

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An account of the shooting given to a coroner's investigator by two robbery/homicide detectives probing the incident claims "the officers ordered him to drop the weapon . . . he instead pointed at the officers." Police spokesmen have said this week that Falvo did not have a chance to communicate before firing.

"We will probably want to look at that discrepancy," Cmdr. Tim McBride said.

In addition, the account given to the coroner's investigator indicates that Gutierrez was holding the fully loaded Tec-9 semiautomatic pistol with both hands. Police have not released statements of the officers who witnessed the shooting and have not disclosed how they believe Gutierrez was holding the weapon.

Police investigators are still trying to determine how the Tec-9 ended up a few feet away from Gutierrez, on the other side of a wall. They are looking into whether Gutierrez tried to fire the weapon or whether it might have jammed.

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### **Williams Questioned**

Councilman Mike Hernandez, in whose district the shooting occurred, continued to urge the LAPD to fully disclose its findings as soon as possible. "At least it should state that the

guy was not lying on his front and shot in the back," he said.

Several lawmakers, including Councilman Richard Alatorre, said they were troubled that Williams did not return immediately to the city from a vacation to personally oversee the volatile situation.

Williams told lawmakers he was in the Caribbean on vacation when he learned of the shooting and that it took him 25 hours to catch a return flight home, arriving in Los Angeles Wednesday at midmorning.

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A controversial Police Commission performance report, obtained in May by The Times, criticized the chief for his work habits.

Council members such as Hernandez also questioned Williams about the status of the 44 officers identified in the Christopher Commission report. Hernandez said he expected a full report at a future meeting with the chief.

Responding to Riordan's statement about troublemakers, David Cid, a Brown Beret member, said his group is a "registered nonprofit organization" but that an offshoot of the group is out to make trouble.

The other Brown Berets in Lincoln Heights "are just an

organization trying to create disorder and division in the community," Cid said. "They're just a bunch of guys who have no solutions but just rant and rave."

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The original Brown Berets were organized in the late 1960s as part of the Chicano movement.

Times staff writers Robert J. Lopez and Jean Merl contributed to this story.

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The Lincoln Heights Shooting

## **Advertisement**

Jose Antonio Gutierrez, 14, was shot and killed by Los Angeles Police Officer Michael A. Falvo on July 29. Police say Falvo acted properly because Gutierrez had pointed a semiautomatic pistol at the officer. The family, which has filed a wrongful death claim against the city, says Gutierrez was unarmed. The incident, which heightened tension in the community near Downtown, is being investigated by various law enforcement agencies.

## **WHAT POLICE SAY**

Sequence of events, according to Los Angeles police

officials:

- \* Officer Michael A. Falvo and two partners in a police car respond to a report that six or seven youths are passing around a gun on Eastlake Avenue at 9:40 p.m. Saturday.

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- \* As they approach the intersection of Eastlake Avenue and George Street, the officers observe a teen-ager crossing the street and carrying a handgun at his side.

- \* Falvo, the driver, stops the police car to investigate.

- \* As Falvo opens the door, the youth raises the Tec-9 pistol and points it at the officer.

- \* Without having a chance to order the youth to stop, Falvo, with one foot out of the car door, fires six shots, hitting Gutierrez four times.

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### WHAT OTHERS SAY

- \* Neighborhood youths and residents say Gutierrez did, in fact, have a gun, but that he threw it over a fence when officers arrived.

- \* Seven people who say they witnessed the shooting told



The Times that the youth was shot, handcuffed and shot again.

## WHAT THE FAMILY SAYS

### **Advertisement**

This is the response from Antonio Rodriguez, attorney for the Gutierrez's family:

- \* Gutierrez was not armed and was not a threat to the officers when they arrived at the scene.
- \* The youth was carrying a flashlight in his hand when he was shot.
- \* Gutierrez was shot in the back, indicating that Falvo did not fire in self-defense.

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## POINTS OF CONTENTION

Officer Falvo:

Police: All shots fired from car

Witnesses: More shots after Gutierrez was handcuffed

### **Advertisement**

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Antonio Gutierrez:

Police: Had gun

Witnesses: Had gun

## **Advertisement**

Family: Had flashlight

\*

Gun found behind wall:

Police: Gun pointed at officers

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Witnesses: Gun thrown over wall when police arrived

Family: Gutierrez was not armed

## **AUTOPSY REPORT**

Jose Antonio Gutierrez was struck by four bullets, according to an autopsy released Friday. Two of the entry wounds--described in the autopsy report as fatal or potentially fatal--were in the upper left area of Gutierrez's back, near his shoulder. Another bullet entered through his left side, in the

area of his armpit, and passed through his body, producing wounds described in the report as fatal. The fourth bullet produced a grazing, nonfatal wound on Gutierrez's left back.

## **Advertisement**

# **Community Profile: Lincoln Heights : Making Peace in Small Ways : Anger over youth's killing has deepened some longstanding strains. But residents are working to keep communication going.**

By IAN JAMES Aug. 15, 1995 12 AM PT

One week after the killing of 14-year-old Jose Antonio Gutierrez, his friends gathered at a Lincoln Heights gas station to raise money for his funeral with a carwash. As they scrubbed vehicles for \$4 apiece, police stood across the street with arms folded--only to make sure, they said, that things stayed peaceful.

Neither side spoke to the other, until Brother Modesto Leon led an envoy of gang leaders across the street to chat.

"It's all about getting people to talk," said Leon, who has worked with gang-involved youths on the Eastside since 1972 and lives several houses away from the corner where a Los Angeles Police Department officer shot and killed the



youth July 29.

Leon sought to avoid a repetition of the violence that had broken out in the neighborhood shortly after the shooting and the next day after a carwash. Young residents reportedly hurled bottles and insults at police in riot gear.

Lincoln Heights residents are working to maintain peace in the same way they have in the past: through communication and cooperation. They did it successfully during the 1992 riots, when a group of community leaders met to discuss ways to keep unrest to a minimum; residents offered food and their homes to weary patrol officers. They also do it on the streets, where gang members prevented looting during the unrest after Gutierrez was killed. When the gang members discovered a newcomer from outside the neighborhood stealing a bag of potato chips from a local store, they turned him around and told him to give the chips back.

"Lincoln Heights is almost like a small town in the middle of Los Angeles because there's a real sense of community," said Steve Kasten, president of the Lincoln Heights Chamber of Commerce.

But the community on the sloped plain that stretches northeast from the Los Angeles River to the bald hilltops of Montecito Heights is struggling to bridge gaps widened by

last month's violent outbursts. Some witnesses in the neighborhood said the boy was unarmed and killed unjustly. Police maintain that the youth was shot when he pointed a semiautomatic pistol at an officer.

The debate isn't solely between police and the community; there also are visible divisions in Lincoln Heights along racial and age lines.

Frustrated youths from Gutierrez's neighborhood continue to express anger. One evening, they joined other peaceful protesters in a candlelight vigil at the corner where the boy was slain and chanted, "We want justice! We want justice!"

"We need to protest, man," said Robert Dominguez, a 26-year-old member of the Eastlake Boys gang. "We know we can't beat the police, but we want justice. We want the cop who did it to pay for it."

At the other end of the opinion spectrum, a man who works in Lincoln Heights and asked not to be named for fear of retribution said the police might have been justified in shooting the boy, who often spent time with the Eastlake Boys.

"These guys think they own the community," he said.

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All around Lincoln Heights, gang members and taggers have left their marks on turn-of-the-century-homes, walls and street signs.

\*

Several times, the vandalism apparently has been targeted toward Asians, who make up nearly a quarter of the population. Large numbers of Chinese and Vietnamese immigrants began entering the neighborhood, which is across the Los Angeles River from Chinatown, during the 1980s, coming into contact with the established, largely Mexican American population. A Buddhist temple constructed several years ago on the main thoroughfare of North Broadway was spray-painted repeatedly before its owners decided to put up a spiked-bar fence, police say.

Residents say that generally, Latinos and Asians don't mix, either in life or in death. Lincoln Heights' two mortuaries sit next door to each other among North Broadway's mishmash of fast-food restaurants and mural-walled stores. One mortuary is for Latinos, the other for Asians. They have an informal agreement to refer customers to each other.

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The LAPD's senior lead officer for Lincoln Heights, Robert Acosta, said the lack of interracial communication leads to

misunderstanding and suspicion. He said Asian residents are afraid.

"They don't trust police or anybody," he said. But fear isn't limited to the Asian population.

\*

Esther Rodarte, a 47-year resident of Lincoln Heights, says it's no longer the aspired-to suburb where she and her husband walked past the stores at night and participated at a "community sing" at the local grammar school. One month ago, the 72-year-old retired payroll clerk found a boy collapsed and bleeding on the street next to her house. She said the boy had been hit in the back of the head with a crowbar, and she urged him to see a doctor. At first he refused, saying he didn't want his mother to find out; then he gave in.

## **Advertisement**

Gang violence in Lincoln Heights has increased dramatically during the past decade. Gang-related killings have risen from an average of two to three a year in the mid-1980s to nine in 1994, police say, and community leaders attribute the increase to the creation of the Eastlake Boys from a disgruntled group of the Clover gang about 10 years ago.

In the gas station, Leon, the gang/police go-between, helped



direct traffic to keep cars out of the street between conversations with the boys. Police had said that the earlier carwash blocked traffic. But Leon said he thinks one major reason for the violence at the previous carwash was the lack of communication between police and frustrated residents. The community's healing will continue.

"The neighborhood has to do it for themselves," Leon said, "because when the press is gone, there are still going to be drive-bys."

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Lincoln Heights Inside Out

PEOPLE

Population: 27,354

Households: 6,643

## **Advertisement**

Average household size: 4.04

Median age: 26.7

ETHNIC MAKEUP

Latino: 72%

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Asian: 24%

White: 3%

Black: 1%

## **MONEY AND WORK**

## **Advertisement**

Median household income: \$21,438

Median home value: \$140,800

Employed workers (16 and older): 10,155

Self-employed: 412

## **Advertisement**

Car-poolers: 1,953

Source: Claritas Inc. household expenses are averages for 1994. All other figures are for 1990. Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

**ALLIGATOR YEARS:** Early this century, Lincoln Heights was a weekend getaway destination for Angelenos weary of city life. They crossed wooden bridges over the Los Angeles River to visit newly-developed suburb's three big tourist attractions: an ostrich farm, an alligator farm and Selig Zoo, owned by movie producer William Selig, who is said to have used animals from the zoo for jungle scenes.

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**SCHOOL DAYS:** At first, the area was known simply as east Los Angeles. Then, in 1914, came one of the biggest institutions in the community: a high school, named after Abraham Lincoln. Within 15 years, residents were referring to their area with a name derived from the school.

**POST-SCHOOL DAYS:** Lincoln High School did more than give a name to a neighborhood. It also is alma mater to several who gained fame in show business, including actors Robert Preston and Robert Young. Movie producer Frank Capra and actor Carmen Zapata also have lived in Lincoln Heights.

**ZOOT START:** More than 50 years ago, the so-called Zoot Suit Riots were sparked on the edge of Lincoln Heights, according to historian John D. Weaver, during a period when anti-Latino sentiment ran high. On June 3, 1943, 11 sailors walking down North Main street said they were provoked by

a group of young Mexican Americans whom they described as "zoot-suiters." The young men who wore loose-fitting coats and pegged pants called themselves "pachucos." The next night, enraged sailors invaded the east side in a fleet of taxicabs, and days later a mob of several thousand enlisted men and civilians gathered downtown, dragging "pachucos" from theaters and street cars into the streets, where some were stripped naked and beaten. The 1978 play titled "Zoot Suit" was based on these riots.