

**APPROVED**  
AUG 08 2018

**BOARD OF RECREATION  
AND PARK COMMISSIONERS**

**BOARD REPORT**

**NO.** 18-179

**DATE** August 8, 2018

**C.D.** All

**BOARD OF RECREATION AND PARK COMMISSIONERS**

**SUBJECT:** REQUEST TO ADOPT A 5 YEAR DEPARTMENT STRATEGIC PLAN –  
the *PARK PROUD LA – STRATEGIC PLAN 2018-2022*

AP Diaz	_____	V. Israel	_____
R. Barajas	_____	S. Piña-Cortez	_____
H. Fujita	_____	*N. Williams	<u>Y/N</u>



General Manager

Approved   X        Disapproved \_\_\_\_\_      Withdrawn \_\_\_\_\_

RECOMMENDATIONS

Adopt a five year Department of Recreation and Parks Strategic Plan – the Park Proud LA – Strategic Plan 2018-2022, in accordance with this Report.

SUMMARY

In 2016, the City of Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks (RAP) began developing a Strategic Plan to help guide the application and investment of RAP’s resources and to provide institutional vision for the next five years. Support from the Los Angeles Parks Foundation (LAPF) enabled RAP to use the consulting firm NPO Solutions to facilitate and assist RAP’s executive management, staff, and the Board of Recreation and Park Commissioners (Board) with the strategic planning process. After significant refinement and input from the Mayor’s Office, council staff, park advocates and community stakeholders, the Park Proud LA – five year Strategic Plan 2018-2022 (Attachment A) is submitted for approval.

BACKGROUND

The Strategic Plan started with a discovery process which included an assessment of City park data, an evaluation of strategic plans from other similarly situated municipalities, and dozens of interviews with RAP staff, outside experts and city leaders.

Many of the specific strategies and objectives contained in the plan have been informed by data culled from thousands of park user and city resident surveys conducted by the Rand Corporation over a 12 year period; data collected by the 2017 City Controller park audit, and surveys conducted by RAP in 2013. The Strategic Plan also relies on Executive Directives from the Mayor, policy instructions from the Los Angeles City Council, and long-term goals established through the Mayor’s Sustainable City pLAN.

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Thereafter, RAP staff, the Board and the consultant team reviewed and revised RAP's Mission and Vision statements and articulated an overarching commitment to equity by acknowledging historical disparities in citywide park access and in park programs, which have disproportionately impacted low income communities. The Strategic Plan specifically sets RAP on a course to further develop equity based criteria from which to prioritize the investment of its resources. As referenced in the Strategic Plan, RAP is focusing efforts to increase park access in the most park deficient areas of the City as well as specifically increase recreational opportunities in underserved communities and among underserved demographic groups.

The strategic planning process described above resulting in the establishment of seven high priority goals. Each of these goals is accompanied by a specific vision for the park system, followed by specific outcomes for RAP to achieve. Under each outcome, specific and actionable objectives are presented, for RAP to implement within the next five years. For each outcome, a key metric is identified with a numeric baseline and an associated target intended to allow RAP to measure, evaluate and report on its progress toward meeting these specific objectives and outcomes.

Below is a snapshot of the Strategic Plan's seven high priority goals, with the specific outcomes RAP aims to achieve under each:

### **Goal One: Provide Safe and Accessible Parks**

- Every Angeleno has walkable access to a park in their neighborhood regardless of race, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status
- Safe and welcoming environments at all parks
- Increased public access and recreational opportunities along the Los Angeles River
- The health of young Angelenos, particularly children of low income families, is improved through greater access to regional parks

### **Goal Two: Offer Affordable and Equitable Recreation Programming**

- Improved health and social equity for young Angelenos
- Achieve and sustain gender parity in recreational program participation
- Park programs and amenities meet and reflect the needs of older adults
- Connect more Angelenos to the diverse cultural programs in the park system

### **Goal 3: Create and Maintain World Class Parks and Facilities**

- Newly developed open space park projects and the redesign of signature City parks
- Long-term park system planning is guided by community engagement, data, and a commitment to equity
- Increased park maintenance, with a focus on cleanliness
- Improved park system planning and management using technology solutions

### **Goal 4: Actively Engage Communities**

- The interests and needs of the City's diverse population better inform decision making about the park system

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- Create a Park Equity Working Group focused on the evaluation of data and standards related to social equity and park needs in communities of color
- Activated parks and increased use of new digital engagement tools
- Enhanced visibility and awareness of Department parks, programs, and projects

### **Goal 5: Ensure an Environmentally Sustainable Park System**

- Decreased energy consumption and a smaller overall carbon footprint
- A healthy urban forest across the park system
- The most well-maintained drought tolerant and resilient park system in the nation
- Increased opportunities for environmental education

### **Goal 6: Build Financial Strength and Innovative Partnerships**

- The Department's operating budget meets the needs of the park system for all Angelenos
- Improved management of Department rental facilities and concessions enhance the quality of services offered to the public
- In coordination with the Los Angeles Parks Foundation (LAPF), expansion and development of new partnerships, sponsorships and donations support the Department's programs and park facilities

### **Goal 7: Maintain a Diverse and Dynamic Workforce**

- Strengthened capacity of staff to promote public health and public safety while assisting individuals experiencing homelessness
- Development and retention of a workforce that meets the park system's public service and internal management needs
- Excellent customer service provided to all park users

Park Proud LA – Strategic Plan 2018-2022 should be approached as a living document, a blueprint RAP will actively work to refine with a wide variety of stakeholders over the course of its implementation. This plan should not be viewed as an exhaustive list of RAP's functions, but instead viewed as a framework to guide strategic investment of resources over the next five years.

This Report was prepared by Matthew Rudnick, Chief Management Analyst, Finance Division.

### **LIST OF ATTACHMENTS/APPENDICES**

Attachment A – Park Proud LA – Strategic Plan 2018-2022

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DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION AND PARKS

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# PARK PROUD LA

STRATEGIC PLAN 2018-2022



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DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION AND PARKS

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# PARK PROUD LA

STRATEGIC PLAN 2018-2022

**City of Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks**

221 North Figueroa Street, 3rd Floor, Suite 350

Los Angeles, CA 90012

[laparks.org](http://laparks.org)

**City of Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks Commissioners**

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Vicki Israel, *Assistant General Manager, Recreational Services Branch*

Sophia Pina-Cortez, *Assistant General Manager, Special Operations Branch*





Echo Park Lake

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MESSAGE FROM

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# MAYOR ERIC GARCETTI



**:: Los Angeles is blessed** with a vast park system that includes 446 parks, 184 recreation centers, and more than 16,000 acres of land — including iconic landmarks like the Greek Theatre, Griffith Observatory, and Venice Beach boardwalk.

Our city's Department of Recreation and Parks, which is one of the nation's oldest municipal parks agencies, maintains the world-class facilities and programming at our beautiful open spaces. Operating this extensive system requires extraordinary care, planning, and teamwork.

*Park Proud LA* is a five-year strategic plan that lays out the Department's vision and goals, and establishes metrics to help assess its progress. The plan will guide investments and encourage innovation that can maximize public resources and taxpayer dollars.

To increase visitorship and better serve the people of Los Angeles, *Park Proud LA* identifies seven priority areas — from developing equitable recreation programming to ensuring an environmentally sustainable park system.

We all have a stake in the success of our parks and we want to make sure they meet the needs of L.A.'s diverse neighborhoods. The Department and the Board of Recreation and Parks Commissioners are dedicated to ensuring that all Angelenos have access to our dynamic park system.

Through its facilities and programs, our park system plays a central role in helping us become a healthier city. In 2028, Los Angeles will host the Olympic and Paralympic Games. In the years leading up to the Games, we will continue to invest in our open spaces and park programs to ensure they are accessible to all Angelenos.

I am pleased to support *Park Proud LA* as a critical step forward in the Department's future. Together, we are making our parks into places that Angelenos will be proud to call their own for generations to come.

**Eric Garcetti**  
Mayor of Los Angeles

# MICHAEL A. SHULL GENERAL MANAGER



**:: On behalf the City of Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks**, I am pleased to present our Department's Strategic Plan for 2018-2022. In this plan, we have highlighted critical work that needs to be accomplished over the next several years to ensure that the City has an accessible, equitable, and first class park system that serves the entire Los Angeles community and the millions who visit Southern California and enjoy our parks and facilities each year.

Our Strategic Plan reflects our chief priorities, confronts new and existing challenges, and sets us on a course to pursue exciting new opportunities. What you will find in this plan is over two dozen outcomes organized under a set of seven high-level priority goals. Within each outcome, we have developed specific objectives aimed at ensuring that we serve Los Angeles residents and visitors at the highest level and offer great parks and programs throughout the City while meeting the challenges of a world class park system. These are your parks and it is our job to make sure they are safe and welcoming spaces.

The following seven high-priority goals will help us meet our mission over the next five years:

- + Provide Safe and Accessible Parks
- + Offer Affordable and Equitable Recreation Programming
- + Create and Maintain World Class Parks and Facilities
- + Actively Engage Communities
- + Ensure an Environmentally Sustainable Park System
- + Build Financial Strength and Innovative Partnerships
- + Maintain a Diverse and Dynamic Workforce

We remain committed to combatting park access barriers while providing high standards of maintenance and recreational programming so that all Angelenos have access to our parks, programs, and facilities, regardless of their income, ethnicity, gender, ability or age.

The Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks is one of the largest and most dynamic park systems in the world, and our staff is extremely proud of the work we do to serve Los Angeles. You deserve a park system worthy of this great city, and we are dedicated to exceeding your expectations and making you park proud.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Shull". The signature is fluid and cursive.

**Michael A. Shull**, General Manager

*Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks - Park Proud LA*

"I go to the park to play **basketball**, go to **summer camp**, and swim at the **pool**. I also go to **birthday parties** at the park with my family. I like the **playground** and I like being outside at my park."

William Burrall, Age 8

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Averill Park

# WHO WE ARE

**:: The City of Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks** (RAP) provides stewardship over more than 16,000 acres of land, and offers extensive recreational, social and cultural programs at 446 parks in every Los Angeles neighborhood. The Department maintains and operates 312 athletic fields, 423 playgrounds, 341 indoor and outdoor basketball courts, 321 tennis courts, 184 community and recreation centers, 72 fitness areas, 62 swimming pools and aquatic centers, 30 senior centers, 26 skate parks, 13 golf courses, 12 museums, 9 dog parks, 187 summer youth camps, and supports the Summer Night Lights Gang Reduction and Youth Development program. In addition, the Department oversees Griffith Park, one of the largest urban parks in North America, and a number of iconic venues and landmarks such as the Griffith Observatory, the Greek Theatre, the Hollywood Sign and Venice Beach, which continue to attract millions of visitors from around the world.

According to a recent study by the Trust for Public Land, the combined economic benefits of parks in the City of Los Angeles exceeds \$3 billion. Our parks also serve as critical green infrastructure and community assets that provide stormwater benefits, improve air quality, support increased physical health and promote social cohesion.

The Department is proud to be one of the City's most comprehensive social service providers, offering an array of diverse, interesting and enriching recreational, educational, and cultural programs that serve youth, adults and seniors. Our ability to meet the growing need for these programs, and park access in general, will continue to depend upon the dedicated work of our 1,400 full-time and 6,000 part-time/seasonal employees, 25,000 registered volunteers, and our amazing park partners and community-based organizations.

16K

acres of land

446

parks

312

athletic fields

12

museums

184

rec centers

26

skate parks



Youth at play, Unidad Park

# MISSION, VISION & EQUITY

**:: Public serving organizations are purpose-driven** and work best when they are guided by a clear mission and vision. To this end, the City of Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks is proud to present the organizational principles that drive our strategic direction and underpin our dedication to the residents and park users of the City.

## **Mission**

The Department of Recreation and Parks enhances the quality of life in Los Angeles by providing attractive, safe and well-maintained parks with diverse recreational opportunities to serve and enrich every community.

## **Vision**

The Department of Recreation and Parks envisions an accessible, dynamic and sustainable park system for all Los Angeles residents and visitors to play, enjoy and build community.

## **Equity**

The Department of Recreation and Parks understands that park development and investment patterns in Los Angeles have created lasting disparities in access to quality open space, recreation programs, and facilities. This Strategic Plan affirms our commitment to equity by specifically focusing our investments and strategy to close disparities in park programs and park access.

## **DID YOU KNOW?**

Created in 1889, the [City of Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks](#) is one of the oldest parks departments in the country.



Venice Beach Skate Park

# HOW TO READ THE PLAN



11 million +

number of annual visitors to the  
Venice Beach Boardwalk

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## :: Priority Goal Areas, Strategies and Objectives

The strategic plan is comprised of seven priority goals. Every goal is accompanied by a specific vision of the park system, followed by the outcomes we aim to achieve with each stated priority goal. Under each of these outcomes, specific and actionable objectives are presented, which the Department aims to implement within the next five years.

## :: Measuring Progress

The Department of Recreation and Parks will measure, evaluate and publicly report on our progress toward each of the seven priority goals and the specific objectives and outcomes of this Strategic Plan on an annual basis. For each outcome, a key metric is identified with a numeric baseline and an associated target. It should be noted that baseline figures represent the most recently available data.

Measuring our performance will drive our decision-making process and inform our ability to achieve a more equitable and accessible park system that better reflects community needs. If we face unexpected challenges, we will share what we learn. Our Annual Report will be available at [laparks.org](http://laparks.org).

# PRIORITY GOALS

**:: The City's park system faces a number of significant challenges. This five-year strategic plan confronts some of our primary challenges by establishing the following seven (7) priority goals. Our identified challenges in relation to our goals are described in more detail below.**

**Challenge:** Lack of park access, particularly in low-income communities, contributes to disparities in health outcomes throughout the City.

GOAL 1

## PROVIDE SAFE AND ACCESSIBLE PARKS

**Challenge:** Park use and participation in recreation programs is found to be disproportionately lower amongst females, seniors and underserved communities.

GOAL 2

## OFFER AFFORDABLE AND EQUITABLE RECREATION PROGRAMMING

**Challenge:** Limited resources have strained the Department's ability to meet a high standard of operation, which impacts the quality of life in communities.

GOAL 3

## CREATE & MAINTAIN WORLD CLASS PARKS AND FACILITIES

**Challenge:** In order for the City's parks and recreation programs to reflect the diverse needs of our communities, the Department must expand the ways in which it engages and communicates.

GOAL 4

## ACTIVELY ENGAGE COMMUNITIES

**Challenge:** Population growth, densification, water supply challenges and climate change place additional responsibility on the Department to advance environmental justice and educate future generations by being better stewards of the environment.

GOAL 5

## ENSURE AN ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE PARK SYSTEM

**Challenge:** Limited financial resources and projected increases in operating costs and utility expenses threaten the Department's financial sustainability.

GOAL 6

## BUILD FINANCIAL STRENGTH AND INNOVATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

**Challenge:** Over 39% of the Department's employees will be eligible to retire in the next three years, making it increasingly important to hire and train diverse, exceptionally-skilled employees who reflect the communities in which they serve.

GOAL 7

## MAINTAIN A DIVERSE AND DYNAMIC WORKFORCE



Junior Ranger Program, Griffith Park

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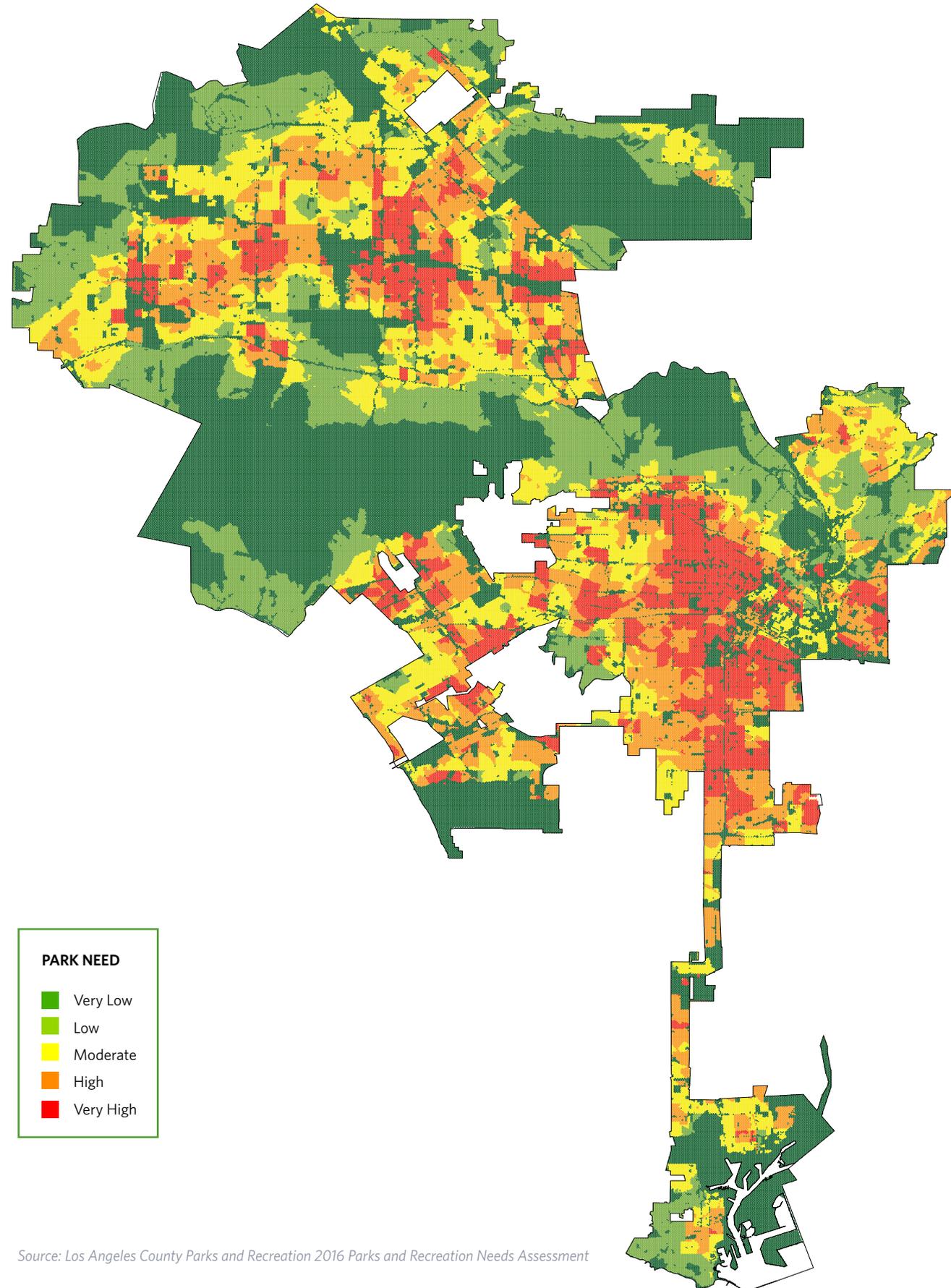
GOAL 1

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## PROVIDE SAFE AND ACCESSIBLE PARKS

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**:: Local parks are absolutely essential to Angelenos' social, environmental, and physical health.** So it is critical that our facilities are secure, resilient, and located in close proximity to residents and families across our City. Simply put, strong parks are key building blocks for stronger neighborhoods and communities — and they should be safe havens and welcoming destinations for everyone who lives and works in Los Angeles.



# PARK NEED & PARK ACCESS IN THE CITY OF LA

This park needs map, developed as part of the 2016 Los Angeles County Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment, incorporates three factors, weighted as follows:

**PARK LAND**  
Available acres of parkland per 1,000 people (Weight: 20%)

**PARK ACCESS**  
Percent of the population that lives within one-half mile of a park (Weight: 20%)

**PARK PRESSURE**  
Analysis of population density in conjunction with park size (Weight: 60%)

Park amenities and overall park condition are also included in the determination of need. However, this is just one of many methods used to identify park need. As part of this Strategic Plan, the Department will incorporate many different criteria to best evaluate park needs and guide decision making processes.

## Park Need in Los Angeles

Nearly seven in ten L.A. residents live in areas of high or very high park need. As shown in this map, geographic disparities in park need exist throughout the City and reflect historic investment patterns and land-use characteristics. Based on studies by non-profit organizations such as the Los Angeles Neighborhood Land Trust and The City Project, these disparities disproportionately impact low-income households and communities of color that would draw tremendous benefits from better access to parks and green space.

## A Commitment to Park Equity

The Department of Recreation and Parks recognizes that gaps in park equity are directly linked to disparate health outcomes. We are committed to closing these gaps by prioritizing investments in communities with the greatest park need. To this end, we will convene a Park Equity Working Group — comprised of community leaders and park advocates — to develop a system for prioritizing capital improvements through an equity-based criteria.

Source: Los Angeles County Parks and Recreation 2016 Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment



**WALKABLE PARK ACCESS  
IN LOS ANGELES**

Walkable park access is the ability to reach a publicly owned park within a half-mile walk on a road network, unobstructed by freeways, rivers, fences, and other obstacles. Currently, only 55% of Angelenos live within a half-mile of a park. As part of the Sustainable City pLAn, Mayor Eric Garcetti has established an aggressive goal of increasing walkable park access in Los Angeles to 65% of residents by 2025, and 75% of residents by 2035.

**OUTCOME 1**

Every Angeleno has walkable access to a park in their neighborhood regardless of race, ethnicity, or socio-economic status

- A )** Establish a new Community School Park program with the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) and other partners to increase access to playgrounds and open space for 200,000 Angelenos living in the highest park need areas
- B )** Develop new neighborhood parks, particularly in areas of the City that lack adequate open space through acquisition, lease, and/or partnership

**OUTCOME 2**

Safe and welcoming environments at all parks

- A )** Complete a multi-year plan to rebuild the City's Park Ranger Program
- B )** Employ standards, training, and surveys that focus on creating and maintaining a welcoming experience at all parks
- C )** Install new, and ensure 100% functionality of, outdoor security lighting
- D )** Install security cameras and other safety technology at parks based on needs identified by RAP staff, community members, law enforcement, and other park stakeholders



**REBUILDING THE CITY'S  
PARK RANGER PROGRAM**

Currently, the Department has 26 authorized park rangers assigned to Griffith, Valley, and Metro districts of the City. By 2022, the Department plans to have 65 park rangers deployed in six park ranger districts throughout the City with full dispatch and administrative support.

**KEY METRIC**

Percentage of Angelenos with park access within a 1/2 mile of their home.

**BASELINE**

55%

**TARGET**

60% by 2022

4

live within  
distance of  
angeles River  
er.org

**KEY METRIC**

Number of park rangers deployed

**BASELINE**

31

**TARGET**

65 by 2022



of the Arroyo Seco and LA River  
from the US Army Corps of Engineers  
system Restoration Study



**WALKABLE PARK ACCESS  
IN LOS ANGELES**

Walkable park access is the ability to reach a publicly owned park within a half-mile walk on a road network unobstructed by freeways, rivers and other obstacles. Currently, only 55% of Angelenos live within a half-mile of a park. As part of the Sustainable City pLAn, Mayor Eric Garcetti has established an aggressive goal of increasing walkable park access in Los Angeles to 65% of residents by 2022 and 75% of residents by 2035.

**KEY METRIC**  
Number of new miles of bike path

**BASELINE**  
9

**TARGET**  
24 by 2022



**REBUILDING THE CITY'S  
PARK RANGER PROGRAM**

Currently, the Department has 20 authorized park rangers assigned to Griffith, Valley, and Metro districts in the City. By 2022, the Department aims to have 65 park rangers deployed across six park ranger districts throughout the City with full dispatch and administrative support.

**KEY METRIC**  
Number of parks in low income areas connected to regional parks via free or subsidized transportation

**TARGET**  
20 by 2022

**OUTCOME 3**

Increased public access and recreational opportunities along the Los Angeles River

- A )** Link bike paths and green space to create an active transportation and recreation corridor along the Los Angeles River
- B )** Develop a master Plan for the Department's Central Service Yard (CSY) property, for the purpose of adding additional open space and increasing park access along the LA River
- C )** Provide planning and land use staff support for development along and near the Los Angeles River, for projects such as the G2 parcel in Taylor Yard, the Central Service Yard (CSY) Master Plan, 6th Street Viaduct Park, Ablion Park, Caballero Creek Park and Aliso Creek Confluence Phase II

**OUTCOME 4**

The health of young Angelenos, particularly children of low income families, is improved through greater access to regional parks.

- A )** Expand the Department's existing Transit to Trails programs and include education and interpretation materials about people, the environment, active living and healthy eating
- B )** Support efforts to increase mobility to parks, and within parks, through new transit services and bicycle infrastructure

1 in 4

Angelenos live within walking distance of the Los Angeles River [www.lariver.org](http://www.lariver.org)



Restoration of the Arroyo Seco and LA River Confluence from the US Army Corps of Engineers LA River Ecosystem Restoration Study



Natasha Watley Girls Softball Program

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**GOAL 2**

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## **OFFER AFFORDABLE AND EQUITABLE RECREATION PROGRAMMING**

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**:: Our City's parks should be anchors of every community and fixtures in every neighborhood — providing all Angelenos with access to open space, opportunities for healthy recreation, and a chance to connect with the natural world.** No barriers of income, race, ethnicity, gender, ability, or age should stand in the way of kids competing in youth sports leagues; seniors engaging in physical activity; families enjoying nature together; or people across Los Angeles participating in social, civic, and arts programs. Recreation and Parks facilities can and should play a larger role in improving the quality of life for the people of Los Angeles — and doing so must include everyone who calls this city home. L.A. can and will be a national leader in health and equity — and that calls us to do everything possible to link more Angelenos to the vast array of athletic, recreational, and cultural opportunities available at our parks.



## YOUTH SPORTS

**:: Los Angeles is reaching high in pursuit of our goal** to become the healthiest city in America — and we want to clear that bar by the time the Olympic torch arrives here in 2028. Even a decade away, the impact of the Olympic and Paralympic Games can, and should, begin this year. They will showcase the very best in sports, fitness, training, and preparedness — and their arrival can inspire and motivate our young people, girls and boys, to begin improving their health and athletic ability now.

### What Is Our Goal?

- 1) Increase youth sports participation;
- 2) Achieve and maintain gender parity; and
- 3) Ensure that participation reflects Los Angeles' diverse demographics

### How Are We Stepping Up?

Established strategies to improve overall health involve regular physical activity and well-balanced nutrition — and these lifestyle choices have a greater likelihood of being sustained if adopted at an early age. That is why we are focusing our initial efforts on increasing youth participation in sports and fitness programs. There are many factors that influence whether youth participate in sports. The Department is using data to implement strategies designed to make play more accessible and inclusive.

In a City where opportunities for outdoor recreation, and great weather abound, many young Angelenos are not engaging in healthy lifestyles. Children have a higher rate of obesity in communities where physical activity is low or exposure to health and wellness opportunities do not exist.

# 29%

of children (aged 6 to 17) engage in 60 minutes of daily physical activity



SwimLA launches in June 2018. SwimLA ensures that every young Angeleno, in every community, has an opportunity to learn to swim — by increasing the number of lessons offered, expanding the availability of swim scholarships, and promoting the importance of water safety.

**OUTCOME 1**

**Improved health and social equity for young Angelenos.**

- A )** Increase participation in youth sports, fitness and aquatics programs by removing barriers to enrollment, specifically in low income communities of color
- B )** Restore dedicated staffing resources for existing Clean and Safe Spaces (CLASS) Parks Program site, expand the CLASS Parks Program to 10 additional community parks, and offer new health and wellness programs for CLASS Parks program participants



**GIRLS PLAY LA PROGRAM**

Mayor Garcetti and First Lady Amy Wakeland’s commitment to gender equity led to the launch and growth of Girls Play LA. Girls Play LA, the Department’s signature gender equity program, is designed to increase girls participation in sports and fitness activities by helping support program costs for girls ages 6-15.

**OUTCOME 2**

**Achieve and sustain gender parity in recreational program participation.**

- A )** Expand Girls Play LA to increase girls’ participation in park programs including youth sports and other recreational, cultural, and educational activities
- B )** Expand the Women Officials Recruitment and Certification (WORC) program

**KEY METRIC**

Number of youth participants in sports and fitness programs

**BASELINE**

75,000

**TARGET**

150,000 by 2022

**KEY METRIC**

Percentage of female participation in youth sports programs

**BASELINE**

34%

**TARGET**

50% by 2020

**ADULTS AND PARKS** Only 4% of are older adults, despite the older adults make up 14% of the in Los Angeles. In addition, in 0 years, the number of people and over is expected to increase by % in Los Angeles. Under Mayor etti’s Executive Directive No. 17 ful Aging in LA, the Department o prepare for this significant hic shift by playing a key role in multi-year age-friendly initiative.

**EVENTS AND CULTURAL EVENTS** 55 festivals and cultural events in parks throughout the City these activities ranged in size ller holiday events at recreation large family festivals such as l Lotus Festival at Echo Park Department plans to activate s and expand the number of nd cultural events each year by y partnerships with non-profit d community stakeholders.

**KEY METRIC**

Number of senior centers renovated, including ADA, technology and capital improvements

**TARGET**

Ten (10) out of 30 centers by 2022

**KEY METRIC**

Number of festivals and cultural events offered in parks annually

**BASELINE**

155

**TARGET**

250 by 2022



**GIRLS PLAY LA PROGRAM**

Mayor Garcetti and First Lady Aisha Khan's commitment to gender equity led to the launch and growth of Girls Play LA. Girls Play LA, the Department's signature gender equity program, is designed to increase girls' participation in sports and fitness activities by supporting program costs for girls' sports.

**OUTCOME 3**

Park programs and amenities meet and reflect the needs of older adults.

- A )** Complete a physical inventory of the Department's senior centers and develop a capital campaign to improve these facilities, with a particular focus on ADA improvements and technology infrastructure upgrades
- B )** Increase the number of older adult wellness and/or therapeutic recreation classes offered at Department facilities
- C )** Restore dedicated senior center / older adult center full-time staff and expand Department's Senior Services Group

**OUTCOME 4**

Connect more Angelenos to the diverse cultural programs in the park system.

- A )** Increase the number of free and low-cost art exhibits and cultural events held at parks and other RAP facilities in partnership with the Department of Cultural Affairs
- B )** Create annual cultural arts festival to take place simultaneously at parks around the City



**OLDER ADULTS AND PARKS** Only 4% of park users are older adults, despite the fact that older adults make up 14% of the population in Los Angeles. In addition, in the next 20 years, the number of people aged 60 and over is expected to increase by nearly 50% in Los Angeles. Under Mayor Eric Garcetti's Executive Directive No. 17 – Purposeful Aging in LA, the Department will work to prepare for this significant demographic shift by playing a key role in the City's multi-year age-friendly initiative.



**FESTIVALS AND CULTURAL EVENTS** Roughly 155 festivals and cultural events were held in parks throughout the City in 2016. These activities ranged in size from smaller holiday events at recreation centers to large family festivals such as the annual Lotus Festival at Echo Park Lake. The Department plans to activate more parks and expand the number of festivals and cultural events each year by increasing partnerships with non-profit groups and community stakeholders.



The Hollywood Central Park is a proposed 38-acre street level park on top of the 101 Freeway in Hollywood. Concept design renderings provided courtesy of the Friends of The Hollywood Central Park and Campbell & Campbell.

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GOAL 3

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# CREATE AND MAINTAIN WORLD CLASS PARKS AND FACILITIES

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**:: Our parks can and should be the crown jewels of our communities -- sources of pride, centers for fitness and physical activity, and safe havens for local kids, seniors, and families.** To make this promise a reality, we are committed to building and maintaining world-class recreation facilities throughout this City. To ensure Los Angeles remains a vibrant place to live, work, and play, we are dedicated to creating a park system defined by clean, green, open spaces that residents use on a regular basis, that visitors utilize when they come to town, and that unite our neighborhoods.

# MAJOR PARK PROJECTS

**:: In the next five years**, the City will break ground on and/or complete new major park projects located throughout the City of Los Angeles. These major projects are either large scale new parks or the redevelopment of existing parks. The renderings and site plans shown here provide a snapshot of some of the exciting new or renovated parks being built in the near future.



**RANCHO CIENEGA SPORTS COMPLEX**  
This rendering shows an aerial view of the proposed improvements to the Rancho Cienega Sports Complex. Image provided courtesy of Studio Pali Fekete architects, Hollywood



**6TH ST PARC**  
As part of the 6th Street Viaduct Bridge Project, the City will be constructing park amenities below the bridge including sports fields, children's play equipment, a picnic area and dog park. Concept site plan provided courtesy of Tetra Tech, Hargreaves Associates and Michael Maltzan Architecture.



**FIRST AND BROADWAY PARK**  
This design rendering from Mia Lehrer & Associates shows a view of the park proposed for First and Broadway in Downtown Los Angeles, across the street from City Hall. The new park will include a two-story restaurant, events space and public art. Design rendering provided courtesy of Mia Lehrer & Associates.



**SOUTH PARK** This concept site plan depicts planned improvements for a master renovation of South Park Recreation Center, one of the City's oldest parks. Image provided courtesy of the City of Los Angeles Bureau of Engineering.

**OUTCOME 1**

Newly developed open space park projects and the redesign of signature City parks

- A )** Support the completion of six (6) major park projects, including 6th Street PARC, First and Broadway Park, Rancho Cienega Park, Slausen and Wall, South LA Wetlands and South Park
- B )** Support the addition of significant park system projects, such as the Hollywood Central Park project and the renovation of Pershing Square

**OUTCOME 2**

Long-term park system planning is guided by community engagement, data, and a commitment to equity

- A )** Develop a comprehensive Citywide Park Capital Improvement Plan with support from the Park Equity Working Group



**WHAT IS A CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN?**

A Capital Improvement Plan prioritizes and allocates funding for parks projects that build, replace or reconstruct major facilities and amenities. The Department's Capital Improvement Plan will align with the goals presented in this Strategic Plan and maintain a focus on addressing underserved communities and combating historic inequities.

**KEY MILESTONE**

Number of major park projects completed

**TARGET**

Six (6) by 2022

**KEY METRIC**

Complete capital improvement plan

**TARGET**

2018

**KNOW?**

A City Controller released a report which evaluated the state of 40 parks throughout the City. The parks evaluated received A grades for upkeep of children's play areas, sports fields, and gyms. However, the City received a C grade for the state of park restrooms. This grade does not reflect the City's commitment to providing resources for restroom maintenance, especially at high use parks.

**KEY METRICS**

Number of high-use restroom facilities cleaned twice or more daily

**BASELINE**

50

**TARGET**

150 by 2022

**KEY MILESTONE**

Deploy new asset management system

**TARGET**

2022



**WHAT IS A CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN?**

A Capital Improvement Plan prioritizes projects and allocates funding for parks projects that build, replace or reconstruct major facilities and amenities. The Department's Capital Improvement Plan will align with the goals presented in this Strategic Plan and maintain focus on addressing underserved communities and combating historic inequities.

**OUTCOME 3**

**Increased park maintenance, with a focus on cleanliness**

- A )** Expand the Park Restroom Enhancement Program (PREP) by increasing the frequency of cleaning and maintenance of restrooms in high-use parks
- B )** Conduct quarterly regional maintenance inspections to ensure a high-level of maintenance standards are met at parks in all areas of the City, with a particular focus on high-use parks and parks in low-income communities
- C )** Restore dedicated grounds maintenance staffing at all community parks

**DID YOU KNOW?**

In 2017, LA City Controller released a score card report which evaluated the condition of 40 parks throughout the City. Overall, the parks evaluated received A and B grades for upkeep of children's play areas, sports fields, and gyms. However, the Department received a C grade for the condition of park restrooms. This grade helps reaffirm the City's commitment to increasing resources for restroom maintenance, especially at high use parks.

**OUTCOME 4**

**Improved park system planning and management using technology solutions**

- A )** Deploy new asset management system to improve real estate, park acquisition, capital improvement and maintenance planning and integration
- B )** Evaluate smart lighting control technology to increase efficiency of electrical consumption and maintenance
- C )** Install automated real-time monitoring and maintenance systems in all new swimming pools

Needs Assessment Community Meeting,  
Woodland Hills Recreation Center



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GOAL 4

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## ACTIVELY ENGAGE COMMUNITIES

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**:: If the Department wants to knit our parks into the fabric of our communities, we have to ensure that our recreation facilities meet the needs and demands of local residents and families.** That means listening to what our communities have to say, ensuring their input informs our investments, engaging nearby households, and doing a better job of raising awareness about our programs. Only with a stronger community engagement process can the Department learn about and adapt to the aspirations of our diverse neighborhoods and our City as a whole.

# PARK EQUITY WORKING GROUP

**:: The Department of Recreation and Parks** will convene a Park Equity Working Group focused on the evaluation of data and standards related to social equity and park needs in communities of color. The Working Group will determine the need-based priorities that the Department will follow not only in its upcoming Capital Improvement Plan, but also in its day-to-day operations as well. By integrating participatory community voices prior to major capital improvement decisions, we can build long-term public trust, incorporate valuable cultural insights, and nurture the next generation of park stewards.

Our greatest assets are the 4 million Angelenos that use parks as places to play, learn, and dream. Crafting a system that meets these diverse needs and stretches 16,000 acres of parkland is an enormous task. Park stewardship is directly tied to continued public support of community parks, highlighting the importance of active outreach and equitable capital improvements. The Park Equity Working Group builds ongoing civic trust and reflects the desires and challenges posed by community members. The working group will further investments in communities with the greatest need for open space improvements.

The Park Equity Working Group will comprise of the following members:

- ▶ Community members and park users
- ▶ Park advocates
- ▶ City park service practitioners
- ▶ Park experts

The purpose of the Working Group is to (1) inform the Department’s upcoming Capital Improvement Plan prioritization criteria, (2) identify guiding standards related to social equity, park need, environmental justice, and public investment in historically underserved communities, and (3) allow for consistent stakeholder input on park equity before, during, and after park capital improvements. Working group presentations, minutes, and determinations will be made fully transparent to the public on the Department’s website.



**OUTCOME 1**

The interests and needs of the City's diverse population better inform decision making about the park system

- A )** In partnership with Community Based Organizations, Park Advisory Boards, and other partners, implement an annual park survey process to track usage, user and resident views on parks, and stakeholder priorities for the park system

**OUTCOME 2**

Create a Park Equity Working Group focused on the evaluation of data and standards related to social equity and park needs in communities of color

- A )** Collect, analyze and produce data and GIS maps related to inequities and disparities among demographic groups in the areas of park access, park need, health, and climate justice as it relates to parks and park programs and use this information to prioritize areas of highest need
- B )** Develop a set of prioritization criteria to ensure values around equity are reflected in project selection and park funding processes. The criteria must go beyond statistics and will reflect community feedback, land use patterns, and prior underinvestment and open space exclusion

**KEY METRIC**

Number of park user surveys collected

**TARGET**

5,000 annually

**KEY METRIC**

Establish park equity investment criteria

**TARGET**

2018

**KNOW?**

Department recently began a phased rollout of a new cloud-based recreation management system to make it easy for the public to go online and register for a dance class, sign up for a picnic table, rent a banquet hall. The new system will also provide the ability to track program usage data, generate financial reports and better communicate with park users.

**GET WITH US!**

If you're not enjoying the shade of a tree or swimming at one of our parks, let us know. Follow us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram @LACityParks and share with #LAProudLA.

[LACityParks](#)

[LACityParks](#)

[LACityParks](#)

**KEY METRIC**

Number of park users (unique email entries) in RAP's new customer relationship management system

**BASELINE**

40,000

**TARGET**

80,000 by 2022

**KEY METRIC**

Number of social media followers across Facebook, Instagram and Twitter

**BASELINE**

10,150

**TARGET**

30,000 by 2022

**OUTCOME 3**

Activated parks and increased use of new digital engagement tools

- A )** Utilize a customer relationship management system to collect, track and communicate with park users and community stakeholders

**OUTCOME 4**

Enhanced visibility and awareness of Department parks, programs, and projects

- A )** Increase the reach and engagement of the Department's social media
- B )** Develop an area of the Department's website to inform the public of upcoming meetings along with information on park improvement projects

**DID YOU KNOW?**

The Department recently began a phased roll-out of a new cloud-based recreation management system to make it easy for members of the public to go online and register for a dance class, sign up for a sports league, or rent a banquet hall. The new integrated system will also provide new tools to track program usage data, generate financial reports and better engage and communicate with park users.

**CONNECT WITH US!**

When you're not enjoying the shade of a park tree or swimming at one of our pools, follow us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram @LACityParks and share with us at #ParkProudLA.





Youth Tree Planting, Stetson Ranch Park

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**GOAL 5**

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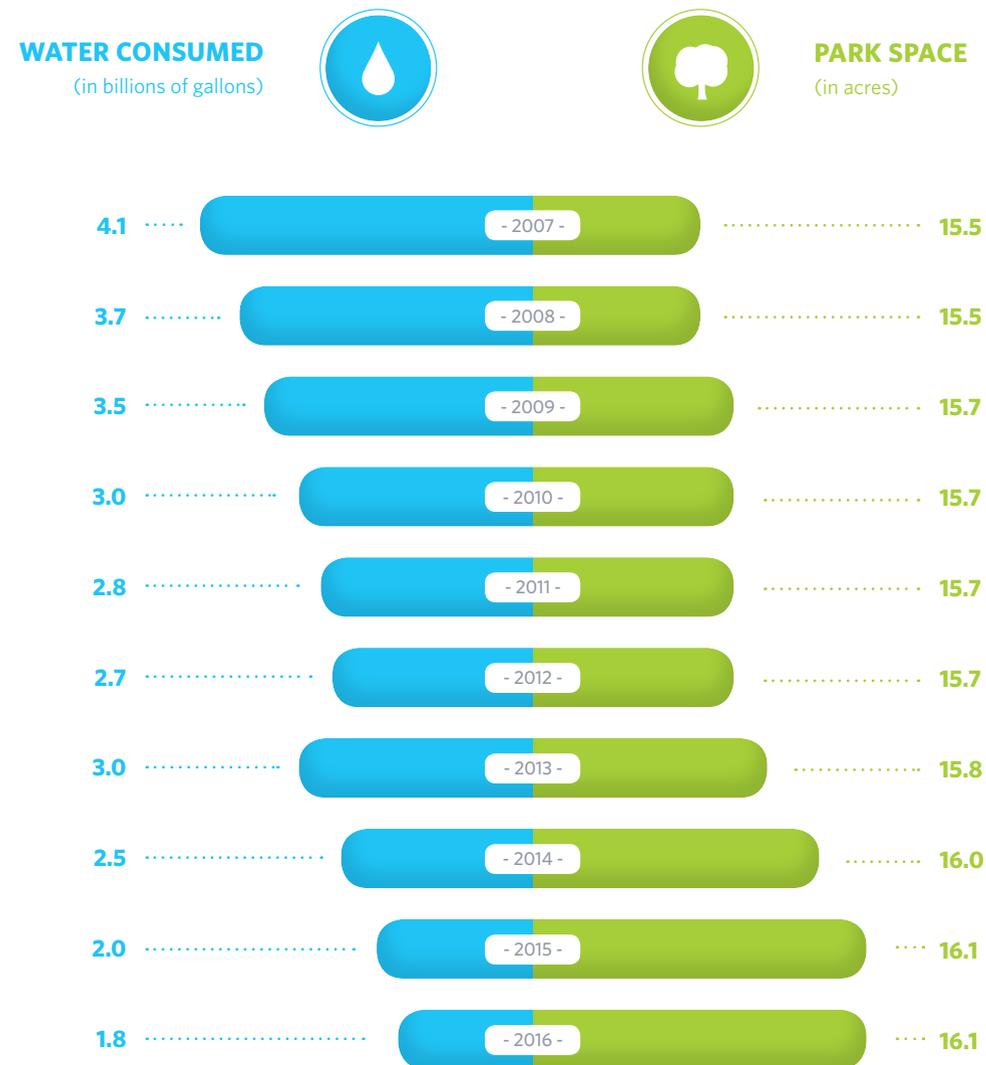
## **ENSURE AN ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE PARK SYSTEM**

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**:: As stewards of Los Angeles' parks and open spaces, our Department has a responsibility to lead the charge toward a more sustainable future.** To that end, we will take clear and concrete actions to reduce our carbon footprint as an agency; strengthen the resilience of the park system; conserve water; and ensure that as many facilities as possible capture and reuse stormwater. With new technology coming online, we will also expand the greening of our fleet and accelerate the retrofitting of indoor and outdoor lighting. While we meet each of these objectives, our Department will do everything in our power to advance climate justice, communicate with the public, and grow opportunities for environmental education.

# COMMITTED TO SAVING THE DROP

**:: The Department** has made great progress on our water conservation efforts over the course of the last decade. Even while the City's park system has grown, and open space acreage has increased, the Department has been able to reduce its potable water consumption by over 50% since 2004. This represents a savings of roughly 2.4 billion gallons annually. Part of our efforts have included working with the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power to increase the amount of recycled water we use to irrigate our parks. Today, one third of all our water use comes from recycled sources.



The Department of Recreation and Parks continues to implement and explore new ways of conserving water while maintaining a healthy park system. Below are a few examples of the Department's ongoing water conservation efforts.



## RECYCLED WATER

In partnership with the Department of Water and Power, park irrigation systems across the City have been converted from potable to recycled water. Today over one third of all water used at parks comes from recycled sources and about 76% of golf course acreage is irrigated using recycled water.



## SMART TECHNOLOGY

In recent years the Department has deployed smart technology solutions to assist with water conservation efforts. In 2015, the Department entered into a pilot program with the Department of Water and Power to install and evaluate the use of 100 smart water meters at 28 parks. The smart water meters capture real time water consumption data and provide alerts when leaks or breaks are detected. The Department has also converted a significant number of park irrigation controllers to smart irrigation controllers that utilize weather measurements to control watering schedules.



## TURF REPLACEMENT AND REGIONALLY COMPATIBLE TREES AND PLANTS

The Department has expanded turf replacement efforts in appropriate park areas and continues to incorporate Southern California native and drought tolerant plant and tree species in park landscapes. Turf removal strategies include replacement with organic and hardscape materials such as drought tolerant plants, mulch, decomposed granite, gravel and permeable pavers. It is estimated that every square foot of turf removed will save up to 32.4 gallons of water per year.



## SYNTHETIC TURF FIELDS

The Department has been a national leader in the development and installation of synthetic turf fields. Synthetic fields offer various advantages over natural turf fields, including less maintenance, greater durability, no required chemicals or fertilizers, and significant water savings. To date, the Department has installed 44 synthetic turf sports fields citywide, which are estimated to save about 64 million gallons of water annually!

**OUTCOME 1**

**Decreased energy consumption and a smaller overall carbon footprint**

- A )** Incorporate electric vehicles (EVs) into RAP's fleet and increase the number of publicly available EV charging stations at parks and RAP facilities
- B )** Convert additional indoor and outdoor lighting to LED fixtures at park facilities
- C )** Retrofit recreation centers to serve as resiliency hubs during emergencies
- D )** Evaluate zero-emission electric maintenance equipment for use in the park system

**OUTCOME 2**

**A healthy urban forest across the park system**

- A )** Inventory every tree in the park system
- B )** Convene a committee of urban forest experts and develop a multi-year plan for coordinated reforestation efforts and strategies to address the serious threats posed by new invasive beetles and other challenges
- C )** Increase reforestation efforts in tandem with park tree inventory process



**PARK TREES** Urban Tree Canopy cover in the City of Los Angeles is 21%, lower than the national average of 26%, making the health and sustainability of the City's park trees critical. The Department's Forestry Division cares for and oversees a vast urban forest in our parks, estimated at 350,000 individual trees.

**KEY METRIC**

Number of new publicly available EV charging stations at parks and facilities

**BASELINE**

12

**TARGET**

100 by 2022

**KEY METRIC**

Percentage of park trees inventoried

**BASELINE**

17%

**TARGET**

100% by 2022



**A WORLD OF NATURE** is an education- mobile gaming app that uses move- technology to encourage families ate in outdoor activities and th their environment. In 2016, ix (6) park-specific place-based s on this platform encouraged engage in topics such as local and water conservation.

**KEY METRIC**  
 Number of additional acres of parkland irrigated with recycled water

**TARGET**  
 190 acres by 2022

**KEY METRIC**  
 Number of parks with interactive mobile environmental education technology

**BASELINE**  
 6

**TARGET**  
 20 by 2022



**PARK TREES** Urban Tree Canopy the City of Los Angeles is 21%, lower than the national average of 26%, making the health and sustainability of the City's trees critical. The Department's Forest Management Division cares for and oversees an urban forest in our parks, estimated at 350,000 individual trees.

**OUTCOME 3**

The most well-maintained drought tolerant and resilient park system in the nation

- A ) Aggressively continue park and golf course conversion to recycled water
- B ) Partner with the Department of Water and Power, the Bureau of Sanitation and the Bureau of Engineering to expand the number of parks that support storm-water best management practices

**OUTCOME 4**

Increased opportunities for environmental education

- A ) Facilitate development efforts for the Griffith Park Urban Environmental Center
- B ) Expand the number of urban agriculture sites and community gardens at appropriate parks
- C ) Expand the number of parks offering environmental education opportunities



**AGENTS OF NATURE** is an education-based mobile gaming app that uses move-to-play technology to encourage families to participate in outdoor activities and engage with their environment. In 2016, a total of six (6) park-specific place-based challenges on this platform encouraged players to engage in topics such as local ecology and water conservation.



Pershing Square Ice Rink in Downtown Los Angeles

GOAL 6

# BUILD FINANCIAL STRENGTH AND INNOVATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

**:: The City is the driving force behind developing, maintaining, and expanding our park system, but its strength grows out of diverse partnerships throughout Los Angeles.** Simply put, everyone has a stake in seeing our Recreation and Parks facilities succeed and thrive, and we want Angelenos of every stripe to take ownership over their future. That is why we are focused on collaborating with charitable groups and local businesses; expanding our base of revenue by increasing investments from philanthropic organizations; developing consistent policies to support smart contracting with vendors; and identifying opportunities to employ our parks' assets for the benefit of the public.

# PRESENTING THE GREEK

**:: Located within Griffith Park**, and owned by the City of Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks, the historic Greek Theatre stands as one of the nation's most beloved and recognized outdoor entertainment venues.

Throughout its history, the Greek has played host to some of the biggest legends in music - from Sir Elton John to Frank Sinatra, Bruce Springsteen to Carlos Santana and many more in between. This iconic venue has also served as a site for numerous high school graduations, community events and backdrops for television shows and motion pictures.

The iconic venue recently underwent much needed refurbishments and structural enhancements, while ushering in a new era of public entertainment management. In 2015, the City of Los Angeles, through the Department, began operation of the Greek as an open venue allowing artists, promoters and the public to book acts directly with the City to provide Angelenos with continued world class musical entertainment, public and professional performances.

The 5,900 seat outdoor venue continues to be one of the City's most cherished public sites while also serving as an important revenue generator for Griffith Park.



Record Setting 2017 Greek Theatre Season. Highest attendance in more than a decade!

2017 Net Revenue to the Department

**\$5,500,000**

vs

10 year historical average

**\$1,562,000**

2017 gross revenue

**\$36,585,000**

vs

10 year historical average

**\$21,518,000**

**PARK SPENDING** According to the Trust for Public Land, the City of Los Angeles spends about \$64 per resident on recreation and parks, significantly less than that of other large US cities like New York (\$174), Chicago (\$173) and San Francisco (\$194).

**OUTCOME 1**

The Department’s operating budget meets the needs of the park system for all Angelenos

- A ) Build a significantly larger base of revenue to support the equitable distribution of recreation services, maintenance and capital improvements

**KEY METRIC**

Annual spending on recreation and parks per resident, adjusted to reflect price of living

**BASELINE**

\$64 per resident in Los Angeles

**TARGET**

Reach median per capita spending on parks for the 100 largest US cities by 2022 (currently \$83 per resident)



**CONCESSIONS** The Department has over 50 concession contracts with a variety of small business owners and private partners for the operation of snack shops and cafes, golf and tennis professionals, museum stores, equestrian offerings, rentals, and other activities benefitting the public. Some unique concessions include the Griffith Park Pony Rides, Sherman Oaks Castle Park Arcade and Batting Cages, and the Echo Park Pedal Boats.

**OUTCOME 2**

Improved management of Department rental facilities and concessions enhance the quality of services offered to the public

- A ) Evaluate, monitor, and competitively bid current and expired concession contracts, with a focus on enhanced bidder outreach, improving services to the public and increasing revenue sharing opportunities
- B ) Increase the number of weddings and special event bookings at the Department’s banquet halls and rental facilities through improved marketing and outreach strategies

**KEY METRIC**

Annual revenue generated by top 10 rental facilities

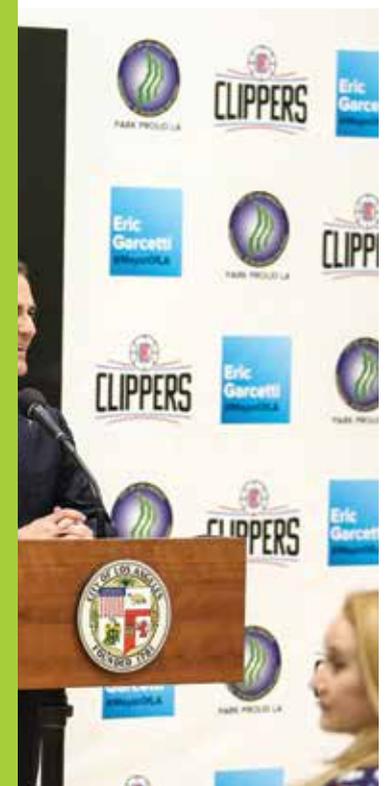
**BASELINE**

\$1,460,000

**TARGET**

\$3,000,000 by 2022

Mayor Garcetti announcing the major gift from the L.A. Clippers and Steve and Connie Ballmer to renovate nearly 350 public basketball courts in the city.



**PARK SPENDING** According to the Trust for Public Land, the City of Los Angeles spends about \$64 per resident on recreation and parks significantly less than that of other large US cities like New York (\$113), Chicago (\$173) and San Francisco

**KEY METRIC**

Amount of annual funding received through donations and sponsorships to support recreational programs

**BASELINE**

\$3.5M

**TARGET**

\$5M annually by 2022



**CONCESSIONS** The Department has 50 concession contracts with a variety of small business owners and private partners for the operation of snack stands and cafes, golf and tennis professional museum stores, equestrian offerings, rentals, and other activities benefiting the public. Some unique concessions include the Griffith Park Pony Rides, Sheboygan Oaks Castle Park Arcade and Bat Cages, and the Echo Park Pedal B

**OUTCOME 3**

In coordination with the Los Angeles Parks Foundation (LAPF), expansion and development of new partnerships, sponsorships and donations support the Department's programs and park facilities

- A ) Maximize current revenue strategies and renew/establish new partnerships, sponsorships and donations aimed at reducing the cost of recreation programs and increasing program participation

Mayor Garcetti announcing the major gift from the L.A. Clippers and Steve and Connie Ballmer to renovate nearly 350 public basketball courts in the city.





Department Maintenance Staff, Sylmar Park

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GOAL 7

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## MAINTAIN A DIVERSE AND DYNAMIC WORKFORCE

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**:: A safe and welcoming environment at our parks begins with the people who staff our facilities and lead our programs: the diverse and dynamic workforce of the Department of Recreation and Parks.** Our teams always strive to deliver services more efficiently, which is why our operations will be supported more and more by well-trained, customer service-oriented professionals committed to engaging the City's diverse communities. Together with local stakeholders, labor unions, and other departments, we will maintain and expand a strong pipeline of talent to ensure our parks are operating at peak capacity each and every day, across L.A.

# HOMELESSNESS IN THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES

**:: The City of Los Angeles** has seen a dramatic increase in the number of individuals experiencing homelessness. According to the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority, more than 34,000 people were considered homeless in the City, an 80 percent increase from 2009. According to estimates, over 25,000 of these individuals are living in unsheltered spaces, including in cars, on sidewalks, underpasses, abandoned buildings and in parks.

## HOMELESSNESS IN PARKS

The recent rise in homelessness in Los Angeles is the result of a variety of factors, including the shortage of affordable housing, poverty, domestic violence, mental illness, disabilities, addiction, and unemployment, among others. A symptom of homelessness and these numerous issues is the increasing number of families and individuals experiencing homelessness living and/or seeking shelter in City Parks.

## STAFF TRAINING ON “NO WRONG DOOR” POLICY

Staff of the Department of Recreation and Parks interact with the public and with individuals who experience homelessness on a daily basis. In an effort to better prepare Department staff to connect homeless individuals with available resources when and if appropriate, the Department trained over 600 front-line staff on the City’s “no wrong door” policy and related topics.

## NATIONAL RECREATION AND PARKS ASSOCIATION (NRPA) INNOVATION LAB ON HOMELESSNESS IN PARKS

In January 2017, the Department hosted an NRPA lab related to homelessness in parks. Recreation and Parks representatives from across the United States gathered to speak with policy experts, stakeholders and Department staff to discuss strategies, procedures and best practices to address homelessness in parks.



# 600

front-line Recreation and Parks staff trained on City’s “no wrong door” policy



NRPA Innovation Lab on Homelessness in Parks



**COMPREHENSIVE HOMELESS STRATEGY**

In April 2016, Mayor Garcetti issued Executive Directive No. 16 aimed at organizing the City’s resources to implement a Comprehensive Homeless Strategy. All City Departments, including Recreation and Parks, will play a role in the City’s goal to end chronic homelessness. This coordinated effort will ensure that there will be “no wrong door” for a homeless person to connect to services regardless of which department’s door the person enters.

**DID YOU KNOW?**

As a result of the 2008 recession, one third of the Department’s full time workforce has been eliminated over the last decade. Staffing levels have dropped from 2,117 authorized positions in 2008 to 1,421 authorized positions in 2017, significantly impacting Department operations. In order to meet the needs of the City’s park system, the Department is working to grow its workforce and restore service levels.

**OUTCOME 1**

Strengthened capacity of staff to promote public health and public safety while assisting individuals experiencing homelessness

- A )** Train Department field staff on the City’s “No Wrong Door” policy and Coordinated Entry System to ensure that homeless individuals at parks can connect to available services
- B )** Train front-line staff and volunteers on topics pertaining to supporting mental health, de-escalation of conflict, cultural competence, and community engagement

**OUTCOME 2**

Development and retention of a workforce that meets the park system’s public service and internal management needs

- A )** Retain and grow the Department’s workforce to restore recreation and maintenance service levels
- B )** Introduce new employee recognition programs to encourage innovation and dedication
- C )** Provide ongoing training to the Department’s field staff on leadership, management, and customer service

**KEY METRIC**

Number of full-time field staff trained on the City’s “No Wrong Door” policy, mental health and other related topics

**BASELINE**

600

**TARGET**

1,000 full time staff by 2022

**KEY METRIC**

Number of authorized full-time employees

**BASELINE**

1,421

**TARGET**

1,720 by 2022



Ms. Elizabeth Narvaez, Facility Director, Mrs. Geysell, and Mr. Phillip, Recreation Assistant, and Mr. Phillip, Recreation Coordinator at Hazard Center, received the Excellence Award from General Manager, for their role in helping to the reunion of an elderly missing his family during a storm on January 12, 2017.



**COMPREHENSIVE HOMELESS STRATEGY**

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**DID YOU KNOW?**

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**KEY METRIC**

Average letter grade assigned to Department staff by park user survey respondents

**BASELINE**

A-

**TARGET**

A+

**OUTCOME 3**

**Excellent customer service provided to all park users**

- A )** Provide regular, ongoing customer service and cultural competency training to Department staff
- B )** Provide park users ongoing opportunities to offer feedback to the Department about staff, programs, grounds, and the condition of parks and facilities



**RAP HEROS** Ms. Elizabeth Narvaez, Recreation Facility Director, Mrs. Geysell Tse, Recreation Assistant, and Mr. Phillip Gonzalez, Recreation Coordinator at Hazard Recreation Center, received the Excellence in Service Award from General Manager, Michael Shull, for their role in helping to facilitate the reunion of an elderly missing person with his family during a storm on Thursday, January 12, 2017.



Elysian Park and view of downtown Los Angeles skyline

# STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

**:: The Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks'** Strategic Plan offers a roadmap to guide the investment of the Department's resources and institutional energy over the next five years.

The Department's Strategic Planning Steering Committee oversaw a discovery process that included a review of information and data on the City's parks, an evaluation of strategic plans from similar cities, and dozens of interviews with Department staff, outside experts and city leaders. Many of the specific strategies and objectives contained in the plan have been informed by Executive Directives from the Mayor, policy instructions from the Los Angeles City Council, and long-term goals established in the Mayor's Sustainable City pLAn. This Strategic Plan also relies on data culled from surveys of thousands of park users and city residents conducted by the Rand Corporation over a 12 year period, surveys conducted by the Office of the City Controller in 2017, and surveys conducted by the Department in 2013. The Department worked in close cooperation with the Los Angeles Board of Recreation and Parks Commissioners, which provided important input on strategic priorities, and the Los Angeles Parks Foundation, which provided input and guidance as well as resources to support the development of this plan.

This Strategic Plan should be approached as a living document, a blueprint the Department will actively work to refine with a wide variety of stakeholders over the course of its implementation. This plan should not be viewed as a list of all the Department's functions, but instead a framework to guide the strategic investment of resources over the next five years. The Department will also actively track the progress of the plan, providing regular updates on its activities over the next five years.

## 1886

the year Elysian Park was established, making it one of the oldest parks in the City of Los Angeles

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**“Los Angeles has a wealth of assets in public parks and an excellent climate that encourages people to spend time outdoors. Compared with many cities across the country, Los Angeles city parks are used more frequently, and they have more facilities, amenities, and organized activities.”**

Dr. Deborah A. Cohen, RAND Corporation

# RESEARCH & SURVEYS

**:: For more than a decade**, the Department of Recreation and Parks has partnered with the Rand Corporation as part of ongoing research it is conducting into the health benefits associated with public parks. Rand has collected information about Angelenos’ perspectives on city parks that have helped shape this Strategic Plan. Rand’s research includes surveys of more than 28,000 park users and city residents between 2003 and 2015, including more than 5,000 individuals over the last two years, as well as data from thousands of hours of observations at 83 parks throughout the City. As part of this research led by Dr. Deborah Cohen, Rand developed a nationally recognized method of assessing parks and park use, which identified many key data points – such as the underutilization of our parks by senior citizens and the value walking trails and loops can contribute to the health of residents. Rand’s research has helped inform our Strategic Plan to better target our priority goals and strategy to achieve them.

In addition to the insights and findings stemming from Rand’s research, this Plan incorporates findings from a Department-led survey focused on service restoration conducted in 2013, which included 18 community meetings and 3,200 survey responses. This Plan is also guided by a 2017 Parks Score Card Report developed by the Office of the Los Angeles City Controller, which included over 4,000 survey responses from park users and community members.

These surveys and data sets along with meetings and interviews conducted in 2016 and 2017 helped to generate this actionable blueprint for investing in the park system of the future.

660,000

Number of estimated weekly visits to neighborhood and community parks\*

1.1 million

Estimated number of hours people spend at neighborhood and community parks per week\*

\*Includes parks 2-20 acres in size

## THANK YOU TO ALL CONTRIBUTORS!

:: The City of Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks would like to extend deep gratitude to the individuals who have participated in the strategic planning process and to the Los Angeles Parks Foundation for funding the strategic plan.

[laparksfoundation.org](http://laparksfoundation.org)



### PHOTOGRAPHY

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Staff Photographer,  
Recreation and Parks

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Patrick Condo

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**Matthew Rudnick**  
Recreation and Parks

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[nposolutions.org](http://nposolutions.org)



**City of Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks**

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