



DEPARTMENT of RECREATION and PARKS

[About](#)

[Implementation](#)

[Project Status](#)

[Map](#)

[Gallery](#)



49th Street Park Ribbon cutting. Councilwoman Jan Perry, 9th District; LA Housing Department General Manager, Mercedes Marquez; Mayor Antonio R. Villaraigosa; Recreation and Parks Commission President, Barry A. Sanders

PrevNext

1234

DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION AND PARKS NEW PARKS INITIATIVE

Background

One of the greatest challenges facing the City of Los Angeles is how to provide for the recreation and park needs of the diverse communities that make up the City. This challenge is complicated by ever-changing demands and expectations caused by population growth, increased urbanization and density, shifting community demographics, and a relatively large youth population.

The Department of Recreation and Parks recently completed its 2009 Citywide Community Needs Assessment. One of its key findings was that the City's over 420+ parks and facilities are not equitably distributed and many communities do not have parks within a reasonable distance. The Needs Assessment identified walking and biking trails, small neighborhood parks, and fitness facilities as the three amenities most needed in the City.

The Department recognizes the need to develop a coordinated long-term initiative to meet the recreation needs of current, and future, residents of the City. Implementing this initiative will require partnerships and collaboration between Federal, State, and Local agencies and organizations; community groups and non-profit organizations; and, private individuals, local businesses, and foundations.

The keys to the successful implementation of this initiative are; (1) the establishment of local partnerships; (2) the use of a community driven design process; and, (3) the strict use of low maintenance design standards. Each new park created through this initiative will be developed through an incremental process as resources, and funding are identified and secured.

Purpose

The purpose of this initiative is to substantially increase the number of parks and facilities available across the City, with a specific focus on densely populated neighborhoods and communities that lack sufficient open space and recreational services.

Benefits

The development of new public parks in neighborhoods where a large percentage of residents do not live in close proximity to a park or recreational

facility will provide innumerable physical, social, health, and environmental benefits to those communities - and the City as a whole. New parks will help stabilize neighborhoods - and property values - by providing needed public infrastructure improvements, removing blight caused by abandoned buildings and empty lots, and beautifying underutilized public property.

Green space provides substantial benefits to human health in terms of recreation/increased physical activity/reduced risk of obesity and healthcare/stress reduction.¹ In densely populated urban areas, green space located within walking distance is more likely to promote physical activity outside the home.² Green space can benefit communities in a variety of ways including increasing levels of social contact and social integration, particularly in underprivileged neighborhoods.³

1. "Benefits of Green Space –Recent Research" June 28, 2011 The Environmental Health Research Foundation
2. "International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity" 3 (19); 1-17
3. Sullivan WC, Kuo FE and Depooter SF (2004): "Environmental and Behavior" 36(5):678-700