



## Support Fair Distribution of State Park Funds: Comments on AB 31

The City Project supports AB 31 and looks forward to a public process to work with Assemblymember Kevin DeLeon and the California Department of Parks and Recreation to ensure that the guidelines for implementing AB 31 and for allocating urban park funds fulfill the intent of the legislation. AB 31 is a significant measure to achieve healthy, livable communities for all.

**The City Project has long advocated that state park bond funds should be allocated under a standard that targets communities with the greatest need first. Need should be measured in terms of park poverty and economic poverty. Park poverty should be defined as less than three net acres of parks per thousand residents. Economic poverty should be defined within a specific range that falls between the federal poverty line up to three times the federal poverty line. Targeting park and economic poverty will also help achieve equity for the most underserved communities.<sup>1</sup>** The accompanying Map shows in red the eight California counties with the greatest green access need, measured in combined terms of the fewest acres of parks per thousand residents, and the highest levels of child obesity, youth, poverty, and people of color.

The guidelines and implementation process should seek to ensure that the provisions of AB 31 for allocating funds are read together to target the most park poor and economically disadvantaged communities. For example, Sec. 9 section 5645 is the heart of the bill for awarding grants. “Critically underserved communities” under Sec. 9 section 5645b should be read in conjunction with Sec. 5 section 5642(b)(1) and (2). The standard of “less than three acres of parks per thousand residents” should apply to all clauses of Sec. 9 section 5645b. In addition, under Sec. 9 section 5645b, the primary service area for a regional park should include significant numbers of residents of critically underserved communities. “Critically underserved communities” should be read in conjunction with Public Resources Code section 75005(g) to mean a median household income less than 60% of the statewide average. “A disadvantaged community” under Sec. 5 section 5642(b) (2) should be read the same way in conjunction with Public Resources Code section 75005(g) to mean a median household income less than 60% of the statewide average.

Sec. 10 section 5646 should be read in conjunction with the three acres of parks per thousand residents standard under Sec. 5 5642(b)(1). The Department of Parks and Recreation should attach the highest priority to projects in communities that have both less than three acres of parks per thousand residents, and a median household income less than 60% of the statewide average.

The City Project supports other provisions of AB 31 including multibenefit green space and water projects, and joint use of schools and parks.

AB 31 is a significant measure to achieve equal access to public resources for all including urban parks. See Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and its regulations, California Government Code 11135, and the California statutory definition of environmental justice.

Maximizing public access to parks and recreation while ensuring the fair treatment of people of all colors, cultures, and incomes can transform California into a more livable, democratic, and just place to live and raise children.

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<sup>1</sup> Robert García and Aubrey White, *Healthy Parks, Schools, and Counties: Mapping Green Access and Equity for California 8-9* (2007), *Support Fair Distribution of State Park Funds and AB 31* (2008), both available at [www.cityprojectca.org](http://www.cityprojectca.org).



# Green Access and Equity for California

## Child Obesity, Poverty, People of Color, and Green Space by County

This Map shows in red the counties with the combined highest levels of child obesity, fewest acres of parks per thousand residents, highest levels of poverty, and most children and people of color. The counties with the lowest combined levels are shown in yellow-green. The counties in orange are in between. The Map also shows 37 public school districts that do not enforce physical education requirements of 200 minutes of instruction every 10 school days.

