



Healthy Parks, Schools, and Communities for All: Park Development and Community Revitalization Program

The City Project working with diverse allies supports the distribution of park funds to achieve healthy, livable communities for all the people of California. We look forward to working with the California Department of Parks and Recreation to ensure that park funds reach the most park poor and economically poor communities through the proposed guidelines, the implementation of AB 31, and compliance with equal justice laws. This will fulfill the intent of the legislation and meet the needs of the voters who have passed park resource bonds for the past ten years.

Park funds should be allocated based on need not greed, Under a standard that targets communities with the greatest need first, need should be measured in terms of park poverty *and* economic poverty *combined*. Park poverty is less than three acres of parks per thousand residents, under the draft guidelines. Economic poverty is under \$45,316 median household income, under the draft guidelines. Targeting park poverty and economic poverty *combined* will help achieve equal justice in access to public resources for the most underserved communities, based on race, ethnicity, and income under civil rights and environmental justice laws.¹ People of color and low income people throughout California disproportionately suffer from unfair disparities in access to park, school, and health resources, and suffer disproportionately from child obesity and other diseases related to the lack of places for physical activity and healthy eating. Investments in parks and schools in the most underserved communities is an important part of any green economic stimulus, public works and infrastructure program. Map 2001 shows the communities that are park poor and economically poor, and are disproportionately populated by people of color, in the hatched red hot spots. Using park poverty *alone* without economic poverty will not accomplish these important public policy goals of improving the quality of life, health, and environment for the most underserved communities.

We support other provisions of the guidelines and AB 31 including multibenefit green space and water projects. AB 31 calls for joint use of schools and parks. The guidelines do not, but must.

The Department of Parks and Recreation and the people of California have an important opportunity to define and implement standards for equity to measure progress and hold officials accountable through the guidelines and AB 31 and to achieve equal access to public resources including urban parks for all. See Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and its regulations, California Government Code 11135 and its regulations, 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. We look forward to working with the Department of Parks and Recreation to meet these goals.

Anahuak Youth Association • California Center for Public Health Advocacy • California Pan Ethnic Health Network (CPEHN) • César E. Chávez Institute, San Francisco State University • The City Project • Concerned Citizens of South Central Los Angeles • PolicyLink • Prevention Institute • SPARC (Social and Public Art Resource Center)

¹ Robert García and Aubrey White, *Healthy Parks, Schools, and Counties: Mapping Green Access and Equity for California 8-9* (The City Project Policy Report 2007); Robert García and Aubrey White, *Healthy Parks, Schools, and Communities: Mapping Green Access and Equity for Los Angeles* (The City Project Policy Report 2006); *Support Fair Distribution of State Park Funds and AB 31* (The City Project Policy Brief 2008); all available at [available at www.cityprojectca.org](http://www.cityprojectca.org).

The City Project, 1055 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 1660, Los Angeles, CA 90017 (213) 977-1035.

Visit our web site and *blog* at www.cityprojectca.org.

Donations are tax deductible.



Park Acreage, Median Household Income and People of Color

