



The
City
Project

Fact Sheet

“healthy, livable communities for all”

The Vision of the City Project is to build a new sense of community, one that promotes environmental quality, economic vitality, democratic participation and a higher quality of life for the most underserved populations of Los Angeles.

We are building a “new green urban movement” focused on meeting the needs of people who traditionally have been bypassed: the poor, Latinos, and other diverse populations.

Our vision for Los Angeles will use land use planning, land conservation, policy and legal work, partnerships, and grassroots community organizing to:

- Increase park space, school fields and access to natural public places for underserved urban communities,
- Build healthy communities by focusing on active recreation and nutrition in the inner city,
- Promote transit to trails and transportation justice for the working poor.

This vision promotes environmental quality, human health and economic vitality *for all*, and reflects the diverse cultural urban landscape.

The Need for The City Project’s Work

If you are poor in Los Angeles, and especially if you are a child of color, you face a significantly greater struggle to access parks and schoolyards. Children of color and their families disproportionately live in communities of concentrated poverty without places for physical activity, with few cars or an adequate transit system to reach parks and schools.

Yet, Los Angeles is facing a historic confluence of opportunities to address these concerns. The following conditions provide opportunities for funding and community focus, especially for the most disadvantaged of our population:

- Voters have approved billions in open space, parks, schools, housing, infrastructure, and flood control bonds that can be directed to places for physical activity and community recreation.
- Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa has vowed to make Los Angeles the greenest big city in America.
- City Controller Laura Chick has published a blueprint calling for reforms and improvements for L.A.’s park system.
- There are multiple complementary efforts, such as new parks like Taylor Yard and the Cornfield, the Los Angeles River Revitalization Master Plan process, the plans for revitalizing the San Gabriel River, and the integrated resource water management plans for the region.

Our Track Record

By giving local grassroots organizations the advocacy tools and institutional support to have a strong voice for change in their community, The City Project helped create the **Los Angeles State Historic Park (Cornfield)** and the **Río de Los Angeles State Park (Taylor Yard)** as part of the **Greening of the Los Angeles River**. We helped save the Park in **Baldwin Hills**, the largest urban park in the U.S. in over a century. We helped create **Ascot Hills Park**, the next great urban park in East L.A.

Our **research publications** have been timely and well-received. **Recognition and awards** have come from City of Los Angeles, American Society of Landscape Architects, Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Board, and Cultural Landscape Foundation. These awards recognize the vital role that The City Project is playing in underserved communities throughout Los Angeles.

What Our Work Will Accomplish

The City Project's success can help our communities in many ways:

- Children playing in parks and schoolyards;
- New urban parks and open schoolyards;
- Stronger policies for physical activity in parks and schools;
- Programs for youth development and leadership through physical activity and sports;
- Improvements in health (especially obesity and diabetes);
- Equal access to public resources;
- Vital community empowerment programs that enable participation in local decision-making;
- Increased property values, local jobs, small business enterprises, and affordable housing; and
- **A new urban environmental movement, led by Latinos and people of color.**

Strategies for Success

The City Project will use many tools to accomplish its work. We will:

- Help community leaders to realize a collective sense of community;
- Develop partnerships and build diverse alliances;
- Promote sound policy and utilize legal advocacy;
- Carry out multidisciplinary research and analyses with academic institutions and practitioners in the field;
- Build strategic media campaigns; and
- Creatively engage opponents to find common ground.

Priorities for 2007 and Beyond ~ Our Projects

The City Project has identified critical needs in the most underserved communities in our region. Much remains to be done to achieve our vision for a "green urban movement." Our priorities include:

- Greening the Los Angeles and San Gabriel Rivers with partners like the Alianza de los Pueblos del Rio,
- Ensuring equal access to parks and recreation by implementing the City Controller's "Blueprint for Change,"
- Launching the Healthy Schools and Parks Campaign to promote programs and places for increased physical activity and play, eliminate junk food from these areas, thus reducing obesity and diabetes,
- Mobilizing grassroots efforts to create new parks and implement shared-use agreements for schoolyards,
- At Taylor Yard: celebrate our victory in creating this park on its opening on Earth Day 2007,
- At the Cornfield: work with the City and the community on the final park design to ensure it meets local needs for playfields and community space and does not become a grandiose scheme that assists developers,
- At Ascot Hills: work with the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy to design and open this new east L.A. park,
- At Baldwin Hills: continue working with residents to protect the future of the Park and community through environmental review of the oil fields--we previously stopped a power plant and garbage dump, and saved the funds and conservancy for this great urban park,
- Ensuring that billions in infrastructure bonds for parks and schools are spent fairly and prioritize underserved communities,
- Keeping public land open for all, including beaches and the Santa Monica Mountains,
- Diversifying access to the four national forests of Southern California,
- Promoting Transit to Trails to take people to forests, parks, beaches, lakes, and other green spaces,
- Supporting public art along the LA River and the Heritage Parkscape with Judy Baca and SPARC,
- Publishing *Healthy Parks, Schools, and Communities: Mapping Green Access and Equity for the Los Angeles Region*, and other leading reports for more healthy, livable communities for all.

Visit our website and blog at www.cityprojectca.org.

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