

# CITY OF LONG BEACH

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS, RECREATION & MARINE

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October 9, 2018

HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL  
City of Long Beach  
California

## RECOMMENDATION:

Receive and file a report on approaches to Park Equity in the City of Long Beach.  
(Citywide)

## DISCUSSION

On July 18, 2017, the City Council requested the City Manager work with the Parks, Recreation and Marine Department (PRM) and the Parks and Recreation Commission and return to the City Council with a report that addressed current recreation programming offerings and participant data, opportunities for enhanced and more equitable distribution of said programming, review of park entertainment permit and fee waiver policies, and updates to core Departmental planning documents, just to name a few. On February 20, 2018, the Department returned to the City Council with the requested information.

During the City Council meeting, more information was requested, and PRM staff was scheduled to return to the City Council for an update. With the call for further study of park equity, PRM convened a Park Equity Change Team including staff from the Office of Equity, the Innovation Team, Economic Development Department and Development Services Department. In addition to these efforts, the Parks, Recreation and Marine Director has begun to visit the City's parks and is working with groups and social networks that exist around each park, and will continue to brief the Parks and Recreation Commission on these and future efforts.

Striving for park equity will be an ongoing and long-term process that has begun with the new Department Strategic Plan, for which \$70,000 was approved by the City Council as part of the FY 19 budget, contingent on the availability of FY 19 General Fund surplus. This funding will help start the development of the Strategic Plan, which will offer PRM opportunities to engage with its users and stakeholders around service, programming, maintenance, and park/open space needs. This process will begin with a staff evaluation of the existing Strategic Plan, followed by a community process to provide input on goals, objectives, and recommendations for a long-term vision for the City's park system.

Additionally, PRM staff have embarked on a series of early action items that begin to address park equity and have identified future efforts that will continue this equity work. These efforts are informed by the Department Core Values, which include: *Access; Equity; Going Green; Inspiration; Community Engagement;* and, *Effective Communication.*

*"We create community and enhance the quality of life through people, places, programs and partnerships"*

PRM's efforts are highlighted below as well as in the attached Park Equity Progress Report, which details the Department's efforts. Since February 2018, PRM has done the following:

- Evaluation and Expansion of Recreational Contract Classes
- Updated RecConnect Contract Class Catalogue with Free Programming
- Established Professional Development and Job Skills Workshops
- Enhanced Department Partnerships with the Health and Library Departments
- Added Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math (STEAM)-Based Programming Incorporated into Be Safe Program
- Continued Arts Programming in Partnership with Musical Theater West
- Continued Outdoor Youth Connection Teen Leadership Program
- Developing Community Engagement Approach
- Elimination of Glyphosate for Weed Control in Parks
- Implemented Centralized Irrigation Automatic Control System

PRM will also follow up these initial efforts with additional work in the upcoming fiscal year that include:

- Enhancing Communication Through Updated Publications, Website and Signage Consistent with City's Language Access Policy
- Developing College and University Partnerships for Contract Classes
- Developing Long Beach Unified School District (LBUSD) Partnerships for Expanded Programming
- Expanding Professional Development and Job Skills Programs with Economic Development Department, Pacific Gateway, and local colleges and universities
- Partnering with City Departments in New Ways, bringing programs into Long Beach parks, creatively leveraging funding to support or expand park programs, and developing new revenue sources for park programs and services.
- Partnering with Professional and Collegiate Sports Organizations
- Collaborating with Partners of Parks to Support Park Programs
- Retooling the Partnerships to Enhance Park, Programs and Services (PEPPS) Program
- Participating in OneLB Community Equity Indicators Initiative

This matter was reviewed by Deputy City Attorney Linda T. Vu on September 24, 2018 and by Revenue Management Officer Geraldine Alejo on September 24, 2018.

TIMING CONSIDERATIONS

At the February 20, 2018 meeting, the City Council requested the item return in six months, which is August 21, 2018. Due to budget hearings and other City Council business, this item was moved to October 9, 2018 to dedicate the appropriate amount of time to the item.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal or local job impact to receive and file a report on the approaches to Park Equity.

SUGGESTED ACTION:

Approve recommendation.

Respectfully submitted,



GERARDO MOUET  
DIRECTOR OF PARKS, RECREATION AND MARINE

GM:mr

Attachment: Park Equity Progress Report

APPROVED:

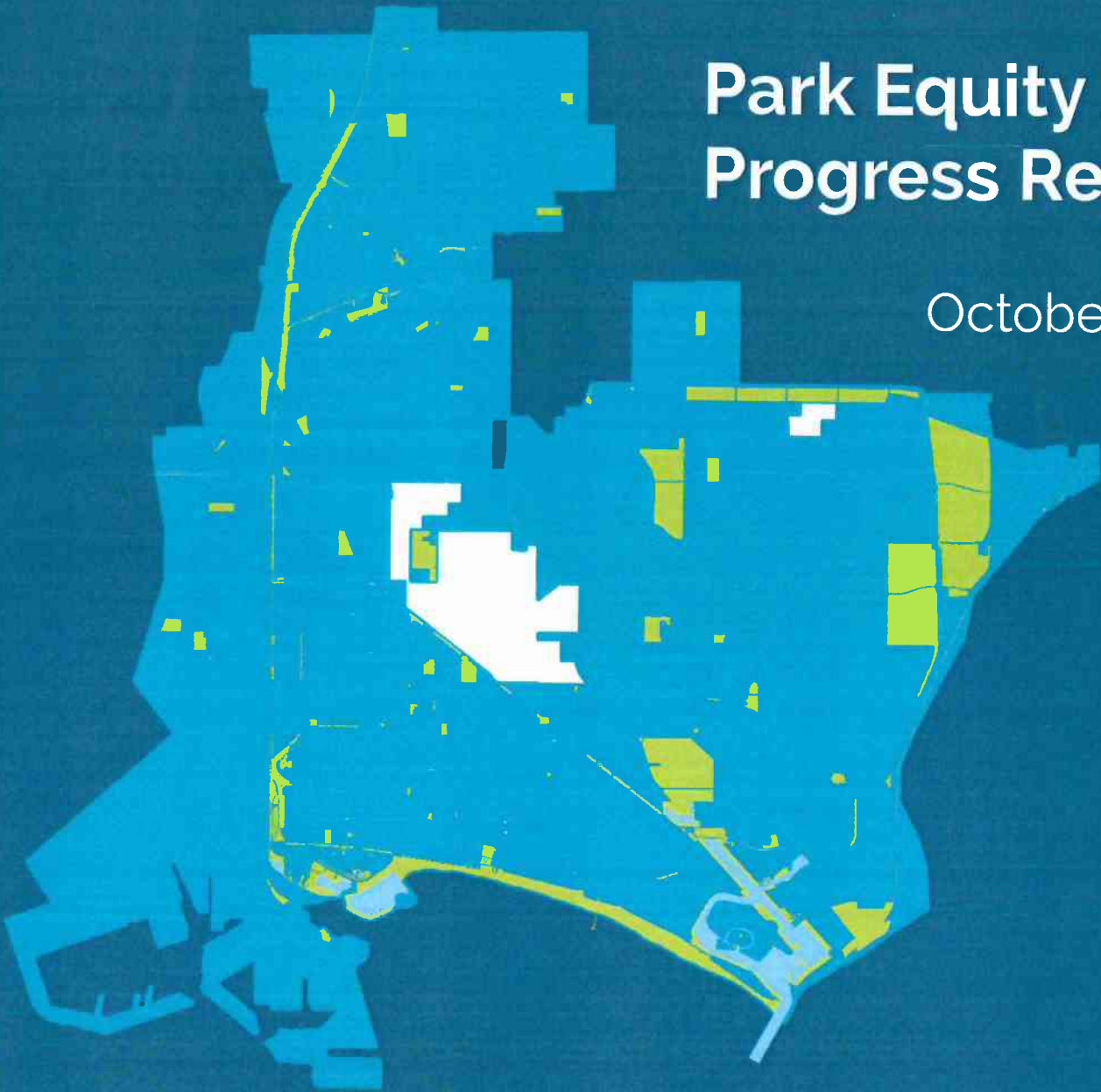
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
PATRICK H. WEST  
CITY MANAGER



CITY OF  
**LONG BEACH**

# Park Equity Progress Report

October 2018



# **PARK EQUITY PROGRESS REPORT**

October 2018

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

- 1. THE CHALLENGE AND THE OPPORTUNITY**
- 2. PARKS, RECREATION & MARINE CORE VALUES**
- 3. PROGRESS SINCE FEBRUARY 2018**
- 4. STRATEGIC PLANNING NEXT STEPS**
- 5. PARTNERSHIP NEXT STEPS**
- 6. APPENDIX A**

# PARK EQUITY PROGRESS REPORT

October 2018

## THE CHALLENGE AND THE OPPORTUNITY

Municipalities play a huge role in shaping and perpetuating the quality of life of their residents. Addressing equity ensures the inclusion of all residents, which strengthens our City and creates a vibrant place where people from all walks of life have the right to, and can participate fully in social, economic, political, and cultural life. Long Beach recognizes that it is our diversity that is a source of our strength and endeavor to reflect that in all that we do. The Department sees park equity as Step One toward a renewal process to further strengthen and develop a complete park system for all.

## PARKS, RECREATION & MARINE CORE VALUES

The Department of Parks, Recreation and Marine strives to be a leader and partner in this work, by engaging in many promising practices and programs that make a difference and perpetuate equity. The Department strives to understand the needs of those who are underserved or the most vulnerable of our community.

To do this, the Department follows the beacon of the following core values:



# PARK EQUITY PROGRESS REPORT

October 2018

## PROGRESS SINCE FEBRUARY 2018

### Park Equity Change Working Group

Following City Council's direction at the February 20, 2018 meeting, the Department immediately convened an interdepartmental working team with colleges performing equity work throughout the City organization to learn about best practices and other City equity efforts. The 'Park Equity Change Working Group' includes participants from the Office of Equity, Innovation Team, Economic Development, Development Services, and Parks, Recreation and Marine. Over the course of several meetings and information exchanges, this Group has shared best practices from other municipalities and research organizations, which are included in Appendix A. It is the Department's intention that this Working Group continue to collaborate on furthering Department equity initiatives, such as the One Long Beach Community Equity Indicators Initiative.

### Investment in Parks

In the FY19 Budget, the City Council approved the following:

- \$100,000 added to enhance Senior Programming
- \$192,000 to continue Be Safe Program at 11 sites Citywide
- \$70,000 to begin Department Strategic Plan
- Pilot program for innovative teen programming at Houghton and McBride Parks
- New part-time Volunteer Coordinator position
- New Community Engagement & Partnerships Bureau

### Evaluation and Expansion of Recreational Contract Classes

The Department assessed community programming needs and available park programming locations and identified additional contract classes and additional park locations where classes were offered. These classes are currently available at the following locations and include:

- Youth Sports Enrichment Karate Class at Cesar E. Chavez Park
- Professional Development Classes at Cesar E. Chavez and Drake Parks
- Teen Bootcamp - Interview Skills at Cesar E. Chavez Park

### Updated RecConnect Class Catalogue

Starting in Fall 2018 issue, the RecConnect class catalogue features free City recreation programming and classes available to the community. References to free classes were removed from the catalogue several years ago to reduce the number of pages to save money as the Department faced budget cuts. Returning this information to the RecConnect class catalogue will ensure the catalogue provides the full complement of offerings to the community, comprehensively in one publication. In FY19, the cost to provide the additional pages of City programming is \$19,200.



# PARK EQUITY PROGRESS REPORT

October 2018

## Professional Development and Job Skills Workshops

The Department identified opportunities to prepare teens for the job market through professional development and job skills workshops. These workshops have included resume and interview skills class offered at Cesar E. Chavez Park.

## Enhanced Department Partnerships

The Department recently partnered with other City Departments, including the Health Department and Library, to bring health and library programs into Long Beach parks. Power Up Program and Crop swaps sponsored by the Health Department and TinkerCad 3D printing classes and Paper Airplane Miniature Golf activities facilitated by the Library are just a few examples of ways the Departments have provided new experiences to park visitors. Programs and activities took place at the following sites:

- Admiral Kidd Park
- Bixby Park
- Cesar E. Chavez Park
- Craftsman Village Park
- Drake Park
- Gumbiner Park
- Houghton Park
- Long Beach Senior Center
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Park
- Peace Park
- Seaside Park
- Scherer Park
- Silverado Park
- Veterans Park

## STEAM-Based Programming Incorporated into Be Safe Program

STEAM-based classes focused on science and experiential learning trips were incorporated for the first time during the 2018 Be Safe Program season. The Department partnered with the Mad Science, which provided science curriculum-based teaching and activities for youth during Be Safe events, and the Department facilitated a field trip to the Los Cerritos Wetlands to provide experiential learning opportunities to expose youth to local environmental resources.

## Arts Programming in Partnership with Musical Theater West

The Department continued a long-standing partnership with Musical Theater West in which youth and seniors are exposed to theater, dancing and singing. This summer, over 900 kids and seniors attended a robust theater production at Musical Theater West. The following sites attended the presentation:

- Admiral Kidd Park
- Bixby Park
- Burbank Elementary
- Cesar E. Chavez Park
- Coolidge Park
- Craftsman Village Park
- Drake Park
- Edison Elementary
- Lafayette Elementary
- Long Beach Senior Center
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Park
- Pan Am Park
- Peace Park
- Ramona Park
- Seaside Park
- Scherer Park



# PARK EQUITY PROGRESS REPORT

October 2018

- El Dorado Park West
- Garfield Elementary
- Grant Elementary
- Gumbiner Park
- Houghton Park
- Hudson K-8
- Silverado Park
- Somerset Park
- Starr King Elementary
- Stearns Park
- Veterans Park
- Whaley Park

Additionally, the Department worked with Musical Theater West who produced a traveling theater production that was presented at 20 park locations, including the 4<sup>th</sup> Street Senior Center. The following sites enjoyed a presentation of You Are A Good Man Charlie Brown:

- Admiral Kidd Park
- Bixby Park
- Cesar E. Chavez Park
- College Estates Park
- Cherry Park
- DeForest Park
- Drake Park
- El Dorado Park West
- Houghton Park
- Long Beach Senior Center
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Park
- McBride Park
- Orizaba Park
- Ramona Park
- Silverado Park
- Somerset Park
- Stearns Champions Park
- Veterans Park
- Wardlow Park
- Whaley Park

## Outdoor Youth Connection Teen Leadership Program

The Department continued offering the Outdoor Youth Connection program, which takes teens to Castaic Lake to learn teamwork and leadership skills in an outdoor camp setting. This year's program trained 55 Long Beach teens on team building, goal setting, leadership and personal development while camping with program leaders. This transformative experience allows teens the important space for self-development, confidence building, relationship building without technological devices and builds life-long friendships.

## Developing Community Engagement Approach

The new Department Director has begun to visit the City's parks and is learning the groups and social networks that exist around each park. These networks will become an important cornerstone in the Department's community engagement approach.

The Department has established this new approach to be tuned into the community and boost participation in park partnerships, planning and advocacy with the aim to develop productive community, business, academic and non-profit partnerships to provide park funding, programs, and services to the community. This new focus is to create a stronger focus on engagement and partnerships that supplement park/recreation programs, park planning and projects for the Long Beach

# PARK EQUITY PROGRESS REPORT

October 2018

community; develop new grant and revenue for programs, projects or maintenance; and manage partnership relationships, contracts and agreements.

## Elimination of Glyphosate for Weed Control in Parks

The Department has committed to eliminating the use of glyphosate for weed control in parks and staff are currently working on a plan to phase out this use and shift to other weed control methods. While this will have budgetary impacts that will require additional resources for alternative weed control methods, the discontinuation of glyphosate will align with community safety priorities and will be implemented in all parks citywide.

## Implementation of Centralized Irrigation System

The Department has begun to roll out new irrigation control boxes that have a cellular modem that connects to a centralized irrigation control computer system. This system streamlines the control of irrigation systems in Long Beach parks, allowing Department staff to control irrigation timers and watering schedules remotely and on handheld devices. This strategy means staff do not have to manually turn on and off park irrigation and provides the flexibility to shift staff time to other critical needs. It also automatically notifies the Department if there are breaks or other irrigation issues, and saves the Department money on water and staff time.

## **STRATEGIC PLANNING NEXT STEPS**

### Department Strategic Plan

The Department has been provided \$70,000 in FY19 to begin the update to the 2003 Department Strategic Plan. This process will begin with a staff evaluation of the existing Strategic Plan, followed by a community process to provide input on goals, objectives and recommendations for a long-term vision for the City's park system. This new Strategic Plan will serve as a foundational approach to Park Equity.

### Enhancing Communications

In the upcoming year, the Department will begin an evaluation of Department methods of communication, from our publications, websites, and signage. A focus will include how to incorporate the City's four languages for language access, and will include a series of community surveys designed to hear from the community about how best to communicate with residents, park visitors and participants and community groups.

## **PARTNERSHIP NEXT STEPS**

### College & University Partnerships for Contract Classes

Department staff have explored additional opportunities to expand contract classes, specifically with local colleges and universities where many adjunct and part-time

# PARK EQUITY PROGRESS REPORT

October 2018

professors could be offering enrichment courses through the contract class program. Enrichment courses offered by professors, capitalize on existing curriculum with no grading, and is an opportunity for professors to make additional money amidst their teaching schedule. This makes college course material accessible to a wider audience in the community, and provides another link to the path to college. Department staff is preparing promotional materials for the professor audience, which will be provided through an updated one-stop webpage where professors and others can learn about becoming a contract class instructor.

## LBUSD Partnerships for Expanded Programming

The Department will continue partnering with LBUSD to provide summer aquatics programs to students at pools citywide. Providing access to pools and aquatic programming develops swimming skills critical for water safety. Additional opportunities to partner with LBUSD can also be identified through this existing relationship.

## Professional Development and Job Skills Expanding

Professional Development and Job Skills program offerings will continue and the Department plans to partner with the Economic Development Department, Pacific Gateway, and local colleges and universities to expand these offerings and develop new partnerships and class offerings to build skills that prepare teens for additional pathways to the workforce.

## Partner with City Departments in New Ways

The Department will continue to explore new partnerships with other City Department, including bringing programs into Long Beach parks, creatively leverage funding to support or expand park programs, and develop new revenue sources for park programs and services. Such examples include:

- Continue using CDBG funds to support additional participants in the Senior Meals Program
- Working with the Economic Special Events office to ensure events in the Coastal Zone who must contribute to a community cause as a part of their Coastal Zone permit direct this funding to local park programs.
- Partnering with Economic Development staff to connect Contract Class providers to existing small business programs and tools, such as business planning, business development workshops, loan programs, etc.

## Partner with Professional and Collegiate Sports Organizations

The Department will continue to foster relationships with the Dodgers, Clippers and LA Kings, and looks to expand partnerships with the LA Rams, LA Chargers, LA Galaxy, LAFC, and the Lakers. Other possible partnerships or programs with collegiate sports teams also exist and the Department plans to connect with CSULB, CSU Fullerton,

# PARK EQUITY PROGRESS REPORT

October 2018

UCLA, UCI, USC and others to determine where programs and interests align to benefit Long Beach youth.

## Work with Partners of Parks to Support Park Programs

The Department and Partners of Parks (POP) have an existing arrangement where POP funds scholarships to local youth for participation in recreation programs. The Department is excited to work with POP to expand these number and value of these scholarships, made possible by generous donations from businesses and community. Discussions have begun with POP to determine what other partnership opportunities exist, including funding internships, and sponsoring youth and senior enrichment classes and programs.

## Retool PEPPS Partnership Program

The Department's Partnerships to Enhance Parks, Programs and Services Program (PEPPS) provided a way for community organizations and groups to propose partnerships in Long Beach parks. The PEPPS program will undergo an robust evaluation, with feedback from existing and potential partners, and several upgrades are anticipated, including, revised paperwork and instructions, a new interactive engagement portal where Department needs and partnership opportunities will be published, an 'Adopt A Park' program and volunteer opportunities will be developed.

## OneLB Community Equity Indicators Initiative

The Long Beach Office of Equity has launched "One Long Beach", a community-wide initiative to develop a common set of measures that will be used by the City of Long Beach to inform decision-making and the development and delivery of future City policies, programs, and services from an equity perspective. This initiative will help define equity in Long Beach, and will result in community-informed and supported indicators that will be used to measure factors that all Long Beach residents need to thrive. The Department of Parks, Recreation and Marine will participate and support the One Long Beach initiative, and as a part of citywide policies shall incorporate the results into Department decision-making.



# PARK EQUITY PROGRESS REPORT

October 2018

## APPENDIX A

### Philanthropic & Research Resources

- *Complete Parks: Creating an Equitable Park System*, ChangeLab Solutions  
<https://changelabsolutions.org/publications/complete-parks>
- *Racial Equity Resource Guide*, Produced by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation  
<http://www.racialequityresourceguide.org/>
- *A Race for Results*, Case Study Produced by the Annie E. Casey Foundation  
<http://www.aecf.org/m/resourcedoc/AECF-ItsTimetoTalk-2015.pdf>
- *Ten Lessons for Taking Leadership on Racial Equity*, Produced by the Aspen Institute  
[https://assets.aspeninstitute.org/content/uploads/files/content/images/rcc/Lessons\\_final.pdf](https://assets.aspeninstitute.org/content/uploads/files/content/images/rcc/Lessons_final.pdf)

### Municipal Best Practices

- City of Tacoma Park, MD  
<https://takomaparkmd.gov/initiatives/project-directory/racial-equity/>

### City of Long Beach Resources

- Economic Equity Study  
<http://www.longbeach.gov/globalassets/city-manager/media-library/documents/memos-to-the-mayor-tabbed-file-list-folders/2018/june-29--2018---economic-equity-study-update>