



ANAHEIM - ORANGE - CHERRY - 7TH

July 18, 2017

Honorable Mayor and City Council  
333 W Ocean Blvd,  
Long Beach, CA 90802

**RE: Support for Agenda Item R-29: Park Equity**

Dear Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council:

It is with great enthusiasm that we at **AOC7 Neighborhood Association (Anaheim, Orange, Cherry and 7<sup>th</sup> Street)** fully support, Item 29 on the July 18<sup>th</sup> Council Agenda titled "Park Equity", authored by Councilwoman Gonzalez.

The City of Long Beach is one of the most diverse cities in the entire nation. One can witness this diversity first hand when visiting the 162 different parks within the City. While these parks are held dear to our hearts for the over 3,000 acres of open space they provide, certain parks have not had an equitable level of attention and programming as others. The Open Space and Recreation Element of the General Plan, which was adopted in 2002, observed that "populations in the north, central and western areas of the City are underserved." Although certain objectives and policies were set in place to address this inequity, the problem, as this item points out, still remains 15 years later.

Many community organizations, like ourselves, have attempted to fill the gap in programming by providing residents in these underserved neighborhoods with the classes, activities and programs they deserve, such as **dance, gymnastic, karate, computer skills, coding**. However, we continue to face a multitude of challenges when attempting to program these parks. The strenuous permitting processes, the various permit fees, and at times, the outright denial of our efforts places these families and residents at a disadvantage.

No words can describe the love we have for Long Beach and its residents. We wish to see everyone have the opportunity to experience the amenities our wonderful city has to offer in **their** neighborhood, regardless of where they live. With your assistance and affirmative vote for Item 29, we can make that wish a reality and work together to create a fair and equitable system.

In Service,

Rocio Torres

**AOC7 Board Member**