

**MOTION BY SUPERVISORS MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS AND
HILDA L. SOLIS**

August 6, 2019

Establishment of a Countywide Mobile Recreation Pilot Program

The Los Angeles County (County) Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) strives to provide residents and visitors with quality recreational opportunities across its 182 parks. However, the 2016 Countywide Parks Needs Assessment (PNA) identified over fourteen underserved unincorporated communities in the County that have a high or very high need for recreation and open space. In these communities, residents do not have access to parks within a 10-minute walk or have limited access to park amenities and quality programming. For example, there is only one basketball court in the community of West Athens-Westmont with a population of 44,414. This is staggeringly below the national average of 63 basketball courts per 100,000 people. Additionally, the community of Walnut Park, with a population of 16,023, has one baseball field. The national average for baseball fields is 14.6 per 100,000 people, meaning that Walnut Park would need 5 additional baseball fields to meet the national standard. Furthermore, there are currently no skate parks or other similar special recreational opportunities in many underserved communities.

Access to parks and affordable recreational offerings is linked and vital to an improved quality of life. Thriving parks contribute to public health, create a sense of place, increase community cohesion, improve the environment, and boost the

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surrounding economy. Therefore, it is important to look at innovative, nimble and cost-effective ways to bring the benefits of parks to communities that do not have access to park-related amenities.

Mobile recreation programs provide a viable solution to increase recreational access and community gatherings in neighborhoods where community members have limited access to traditional parks and programming. A mobile recreation program could include pop-up activities at existing and future pocket parks, commercial space, parking lots, and other venues to creatively transform idle space into park-like environments offering health and wellness, fitness, arts and culture, and sports programming.

DPR is actively exploring grant opportunities to fund the one-time costs of implementing a mobile recreation pilot program in high and very high need areas as identified in the PNA. Grant resources are anticipated to fund equipment and supplies needed to initiate the pilot program.

The innovative use of mobile recreation programs to bring “parks to people” builds upon both nationally-recognized models as well as County innovation, such as the County Public Library Department’s “MakeMo” Program. A pilot program will enable DPR to validate the efficacy of the mobile recreation program, and gain an accurate assessment of the equipment, supplies and staffing support needed to expand it to other high and very high need areas located throughout the County.

WE THEREFORE MOVE THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:

- 1) Instruct the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to work with the Director of the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) to report back in writing in 30 days on the potential scope and proposed cost for a countywide Mobile Recreation Pilot Program (Pilot) in high and very high need park areas; and

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- 2) Direct the CEO as part of the 2019-20 Supplemental Budget to provide a budget recommendation regarding funding for the Pilot. This will allow recommendations to be made within the context of the overall budget and numerous competing funding priorities and requests.

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(LJ/KK/KJ)