

MOTION BY SUPERVISORS JANICE HAHN
AND KATHRYN BARGER

Addressing Accessibility and Inclusion at LA County Parks

Parks and open spaces are important public spaces for promoting health, well-being, and social interactions. Parks and open spaces create places for community members to congregate safely and enjoy nature. Whether you are enjoying a walk through your local nature center, going for a swim at a public pool, playing a sport, or gathering with family for a picnic, public parks should have activities for everyone. Parks can reduce the prevalence of social isolation, provide opportunities for intergenerational interaction, and create a sense of place and attachment for all ages.

Our County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) has taken great strides, within its resources, to expand access and engage all members of the public. DPR operates 182 parks, which offer over 475 sports amenities. These parks include: a network of 9 regional parks; 39 neighborhood parks; 20 community parks; 15 wildlife sanctuaries; 8 nature centers; 4 botanic gardens; 37 public swimming pools; 2 world-class performance venues; the largest municipal golf system in the nation, consisting of 20 golf courses; and more than 240 miles of multi-use trails for hiking, biking,

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and horseback riding. DPR operates a dynamic and diverse array of parks and amenities such as playgrounds, skateparks, gyms, recreation centers, athletic facilities, and much more for Los Angeles County residents and visitors to enjoy.

To expand access and engagement, DPR has proactively engaged in developing an adaptive sports program in county parks. Through its *Let's Play Outside* campaign, which celebrates the Board of Supervisors approval of the Los Angeles County Outdoor Children Bill of Rights and DPR's 80th Anniversary, DPR has partnered with community-based organizations to provide free adaptive sports clinics in July 2024. In addition, DPR received additional one-time ARPA funding from the Board of Supervisors through December 2024 to establish adaptive sport programming for youth and adults in every Supervisorial District.

For all our community members to fully reap the benefits of parks and recreation, our parks must adopt a Universal Design approach. Universal Design is functional design that is usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialization. It provides accessibility regardless of age, size, ability, or disability. Many people, including people with disabilities and older adults, face challenges when accessing parks due to physical, social, and economic barriers. The way we design our parks, the amenities we include and the programming we provide should be centered around creating a more equitable and inclusive parks system for all. Accessibility should expand beyond compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and welcome all. By taking steps to make parks more universally accessible, we can truly create healthy, vibrant community spaces for everyone to enjoy.

WE, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors direct the County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) to do the following:

1. Partner with the Department of Aging and Disabilities and the Los Angeles County Commission on Disabilities to develop universal design guidelines for DPR's Project Design Guidelines to include accessible design recommendations for future projects, including new parks and existing park renovations;
 - a. Establish a temporary Parks Accessibility Task Force for the period of one year and hold meetings once every two months to work with DPR and the Department of Aging and Disabilities staff to develop guidelines and recommendations. The Task Force should be comprised of 1 appointed Commissioner from each Supervisorial District from the Los Angeles County Commission on Disabilities and 2 Commissioners from the Los Angeles County Parks Commission;
 - b. Partner with the Department of Aging and Disabilities, create a joint MAPP Goal to develop and adopt the Universal Design Guidelines for Parks;
 - c. Upon the completion of the Universal Design Guidelines for Parks, DPR will present the Universal Design Guidelines for Parks to the Park and Recreation Directors in Los Angeles County; and
2. Partner with Board of Supervisors' offices to identify funding opportunities to establish one gym in each Supervisorial District, with inclusive programming, providing adaptive equipment for "Inclusive Gym Time".

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