Transforming Underserved Communities

Vibrant Parks Help Create Healthy & Meaningful Communities!

www.parks.ca.gov/grants
The $368 million Statewide Park Development and Community Revitalization Program (SPP) is the country's largest park-related program.

- More than 100 new parks are being created and 20 existing parks are being renovated.
- A total of $2.9 billion in funding requests were received.

SPP Project Site Map
www.parks.ca.gov/SCORP/Tools/GrantAllocations

Each blue circle represents a cluster of park projects in that area.

Click on a cluster for a closer view of each project.

The vast majority of these new parks are either finished or on schedule for completion.

This report is available at www.parks.ca.gov/grants. Use the online version of this report to click on the underlined text, images, and logos to link to articles and videos.
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Before & After: From Vision to Reality
A partial list of parks created through SPP

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Parks are unique places where children play, families bond, seniors socialize, youth are mentored, people exercise, cultures celebrate, and everyone connects with nature.

Cover photo by Trust for Public Land
Benito Juarez Park—City of Maywood
“For 40 years my mother, then I, tried to have this lot full of weeds cared for. It was rodent infested and developers dumped here late at night. Everybody is excited waiting for the grand opening. We all fought for this. It brings me a lot of joy seeing the community look out for this park at all times of night while it’s being built.”

Ronald “Kartoon” Antwine Watts Resident

After

Photos by EPT Design unless otherwise noted

Photo by Gary McCarthy for LA Wave (2015)
Watts is a high-density neighborhood in South Los Angeles.

“A packed house for park’s debut in Watts” by the Trust for Public Land (2015)

Serenity Park’s design by EPTDESIGN

“Transforming Lots” by Gary McCarthy, Shawnte Passmore and Kevin Tsukii
Salud Park

Before the $4.58 million SPP grant to City of Paramount

After

“To Your Health” Salud Park is a Free Outdoor Gym for Residents
Paramount Pulse Beat (2013)

“I made it a goal to walk two miles each day on this park’s track with a group of retired friends. Then I use the outdoor gym equipment. I lost many pounds. It is a positive movement to a healthy lifestyle.”

Gale Swain Paramount resident

“Paramount Collaborates to Create A Unique Outdoor Fitness Facility” California City Solutions (2016)

Photos by California City Solutions unless otherwise noted.
Mercado Park

Before the $3.49 million SPP grant to City of Perris

After

Fabric Architecture includes information about the design of Mercado Park.

The California Park & Recreation Society (CPRS) Awards video.

“City Receives Award for Mercado Park”
City of Perris (2015)

“Mercado Park, Perris Ca.” by InPerris.com

Photos by City of Perris unless otherwise noted
Stanton Central Park

Before the $2.96 million SPP grant to the City of Stanton

Photo by Haire (2015)

After

“Stanton to begin building its own Central Park” Orange County Register - Haire (2015)

“Stanton unwraps its crown jewel - a sprawling park” Orange County Register - Agro (2016)

“Stanton provides refuge for monarch butterflies” Orange County Breeze (2016)
Stanton Central Park

"Your first impression is, ‘Wow, this is impressive!’"

Tom Adams  Stanton resident

Photos by Nick Agro unless otherwise noted
During

“I am really happy this is going up. As a community, we need to think generationally. A whole generation won’t have to hear they can’t go to a park because it is not accessible, that it will hurt our body.

Now we can socialize with kids like us. That is priceless.”

Danielle Ortiz Fresno Resident

“Inspiration Park Nearing Completion in Northwest Fresno”
ABC 30 (KFSN-TV Fresno)

Inspiration Park for people of all ages and abilities.

Photo by OGALS

Photo by Brian Baer
Inspiration Park

After

“A Day in the Park”
Friends of Inspiration Park (2015)

Photos by Flores - Fresno Bee (2015)

Photo from Inspiration Park Homepage

Photo by Flores - Fresno Bee (2015)

Photo by ablebodyadvocates.com
York Avenue Park

Before the $2.87 million SPP grant to City of Los Angeles

"Here's How Highland Park Turned a Gas Station Into a Park" - Barragan (2015)

"Highland Park welcomes a new park to the neighborhood" - Eastsider LA - Dibs (2015)
Boeddeker Park

Before the $4 million SPP grant to City of San Francisco

After

The California Park & Recreation Society (CPRS) Awards video.

“CPRS Awards of Excellence For Two Recent Park Projects”
San Francisco Recreation & Parks Boeddeker News - Curiel (2016)

“Tenderloin residents enjoying reborn Boeddeker Park”
John King (2015)

Image is also a video for “Boeddeker Park” by TPL
Several articles have been written about this corner lot’s transformation and revitalization of this neighborhood, including: “Together in the Park: How One Woman’s Vision reinvigorated A Neighborhood” by Radio Free Richmond (2015)

“Introduction to Pogo Park in Richmond” Pogo Park (2016)

“Richmond Pulse Story on Elm Playlot” by Pogo Park

Residents build Elm Playlot

All photos by Pogo Park
Pogo Park at Elm Playlot

After

“Healthy Neighborhoods for Children to Grow and Thrive”
Pogo Park (2016)

Pogo Park — “We drilled capital monies down, into the community, to hire and train local residents to design and build the park themselves.

Our motto is to lift up the people at the same time you lift up the place. And it worked.

This public project was a magnet that brought out all the goodness and talents of the neighborhood that are so often hidden.” Toody Maher, Executive Director, Pogo Park
Familias Corazones Verdes Park
Before the $3.52 million SPP grant to Latino Health Access

"Latina mom helps get city’s first park in 25 years" - Salud Today (2014)

After

"My grandkids love this park, they practically beg for me to bring them here everyday."
Graciela Medina
Santa Ana resident

Photo by OGALS

Photo by Brian Baer
Left to Right: Rosalia Vargas, Irma Rivera, and Reyna Artero

Photo by Latino Health Access

Photo by Vanessa Sandoval for Voice of OC (2015)
"It is so surreal to stand here knowing this will become a soccer park. It will build kindness in our community. Here, youth will learn pride-with-purpose and become fit. We have seen kids turn their lives around through sports."

Rafael Torres, Soccer Coach in San Pablo

During

"Rumrill Sports Park Grand Opening!" - Northern California Community Loan Fund (2015)
Lynwood Linear Lara Park
Before the $4.9 million SPP grant to City of Lynwood

Photo by OGALS

After

Photos by SWA Group unless otherwise noted
5.25 acres of vacant lots along an I-105 freeway embankment transformed into a mile-long park.

“In creating this beautiful new park, we’re bringing life into this vast piece of land that’s been sitting here empty all of these years.”

Sarah Magana-Withers City Manager
Noyo Headlands Park

Before the $4.84 million SPP grant to City of Fort Bragg

For over 100 years, miles of Fort Bragg’s coast was restricted and fenced off from the general public.

This former industrial site is now a 82 acre park with 4.5 miles of coastal trail in the heart of the City.

After

Photos by the City of Fort Bragg Community Development - Coastal Trail Homepage unless otherwise noted
Noyo Headlands Park

Coastal Trail article by the City of Fort Bragg includes the entire process and park amenities and pictures.

"Noyo Headlands Park Fort Bragg Coastal Trail" from the Mendocino County Northern California

The California Park & Recreation Society (CPRS) Awards video.

Walk or ride the accessible trails!

Rest on a bench and enjoy the view!

Beautiful restrooms!

Take the stairs down to the beach!
Artivio Guerrero Park

**Before** the $2.84 million SPP grant to City of Sacramento

Photo by OGALS

**After**

Photos by City of Sacramento Parks and Recreation

“Finally, a park blooms in Fruitridge Manor”
Sacramento Voices - Gutierrez (2014)

Photo by Francisco Gutierrez of Sacramento Voices
The Office of Grants and Local Services (OGALS) offers the nation’s first interactive geographic information system (GIS) mapping technology that identifies park deficient neighborhoods throughout the entire state.

Tools for Future Park Planning

Parks for All Californians offers three tools to assist local park agencies and other interested organizations and individuals to assess park needs.

- **PARK ACCESS** → Explore the data used in the SCORP report
- **COMMUNITY FACTFINDER** → Learn more about the demographics of any California neighborhood
- **GRANT ALLOCATIONS** → Find out where OGALS’ projects are located

With each of these tools we:

- **provide**
- **inform**
- **analyze**

All of the tools offer: data downloads, interactive maps and data analysis, summary statistics, methods and data sources

What Californians Say

In surveys by State Parks, 72% of Californians say they walk to parks they most frequently use. This underscores the SCORP focus on the importance of nearby community parks, and is a key factor in how parks can help address health needs.
Tools for Future Park Planning

Park Access Tool

The Park Access Tool (PAT) - Provides an overview of park acreage and income thresholds for each city, county, and in legislative and congressional districts.

PAT also allows a user to identify neighborhoods lacking a park within a half mile. You can also generate a report.

Simply click SEARCH and select the location to start.

[www.parks.ca.gov/SCORP/Tools/ParkAccess](http://www.parks.ca.gov/SCORP/Tools/ParkAccess)
Tools for Future Park Planning

Community Fact Finder

The Community Fact Finder provides site specific information including ratio of park acres per 1,000 residents and other demographic data within a half mile radius surrounding the selected site, for any area of the state.

The system can also generate a report.

Simply enter the location and click Go!

www.parks.ca.gov/SCORP/Tools/CommunityFactFinder
Recognizing that neighborhood residents are experts about their community needs, meetings to promote a group dynamic where participants build upon the ideas of one another, were encouraged through the program.

The SPP guidelines prioritized these community based planning goals:

1. **Meet with residents near the project**: Hold at least five park design meetings with residents at convenient locations near the project site for residents lacking transportation. Also schedule meetings at various times for employment and family schedules.

2. **Invite residents to provide their ideas**: Use at least three methods to invite residents and consider language, cultural and physical needs, as well as child care and food. Encourage neighborhood youth, seniors, and parents to be a part of the design process so that the needs of different generations are met.

3. **Engage in dialogue during meetings**: Ask residents to identify their needs and design ideas focusing on these key factors:

   a. Selection of the recreation features and their design.
   b. Most practical location of features within the park.
   c. Safe public use and park beautification such as landscaping or art.

   “**Sidewalk meetings**” at the proposed project site worked well. Applicants or a partnering community group set up a banner, easels, and tables on a Saturday morning and knocked door-to-door inviting residents to join neighbors to discuss park design ideas. They also invited motorists and pedestrians.
Empowering Residents to Create Healthier Communities

.urlopen_list
tick
- Project designs represent creative ideas that reflect the residents’ needs and interests.
tick
- Local agencies told OGALS that residents’ ideas were effective and they will replicate this process for other projects.
tick
- Residents said that they felt more connected with their local government and their neighbors.

The SPP guidelines prioritized native drought tolerant landscaping, bio-swales, water and energy conservation, and use of recycled materials. Projects that included additional sustainable techniques were more competitive.

- SPP projects are transforming blighted land into vibrant, healthy places.
- Artistic details on pathways, walls, and seating areas were encouraged to reflect and celebrate the history and diverse cultures of surrounding neighborhoods.

- Each park became a unique representation of its surrounding community through this design process.

Sidewalk meeting at project site to design Whitewater Park in Cathedral City
Photo by MVR Consulting
Office of Grants and Local Services (OGALS)

OGALS addresses California’s diverse recreational, cultural and historical resource needs by developing grant programs, administering funds, offering technical assistance, building partnerships and providing leadership through quality service.

♦ Since 1964, over 7,400 parks have been created or improved through 20,000 grants administered by OGALS.

♦ Since 2000, OGALS has administered over $2 billion in grants, including the Statewide Park Development and Community Revitalization Program (SPP).

OGALS also develops the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP).