Countywide Comprehensive Park Needs Assessment

Los Angeles County Department of Parks & Recreation

Summary Meeting Notes
Steering Committee Meeting #5 – October 29 2015

Steering Committee Members in Attendance:

Greg Alaniz	Belinda Faustinos	Michael McCaa
Jane Beesley	Norma E. Garcia	Sandra McNeil
Alina Bokde	Phil Hester	Martha Molina-Aviles
John Bwarie	Michael Hughes	Dave Perry
Scott Chan	Lacey Johnson	Barbara Romero
Kimel Conway	John Jones	Harry Saltzgaver
Cheryl Davis	Amy Lethbridge	Keri Smith
Reyna Diaz	Linda Lowry	Christopher Solek

County of Los Angeles Staff in Attendance:

Rita Robinson, Sheela Mathai, Warren Ontiveras, Clement Lau

PlaceWorks Staff in Attendance:

David Early, C.C. LaGrange, Tara Worden, Jessica Wuyek

Agenda Item: Welcome and Project Updates

1. *Question:* In regards to the Facilitator Trainings, do we need to register beforehand to attend or can we just show up?
   Response: Notification of attendance is requested. If you would like to attend, please let us know on what day and how many people you will be bringing with you.

Agenda Item: Regional Approach

2. *Question:* How does the Los Angeles River fit in to the Regional Approach?
   Response: In general, rivers are not included in the Needs Assessment. However, the LA River could possibly be included in the Addendum. This issue needs to be studied, especially as there are several agencies involved in the management of the river.

3. *Question:* How is a botanical garden/nature center dealt with?
   Response: If the facility is within a regional park it will have an optional park user meeting, otherwise it will go through a self-assessment to establish the need and then be included in the Addendum.

4. *Question:* The word *'addendum'* could imply that these facilities are not included in the Needs Assessment, causing them to get less attention. Is there another word that could categorize these facilities in the final report?
   Response: The focus of this project has been, since its inception, parks. The purpose of having the Addendum is to capture the facilities that do not qualify as true parks, and to provide a venue where these facilities can publish their needs and project list.

5. *Question:* Could the addendum items be included in the Main Body of the final report, as chapters?
   Response: We have yet to determine the framework of the final report, but we will look into ways that accurately convey the intent of the project.

6. *Comment:* What is the timeline for these regional facilities to report their need?
   Response: We intend to notify these regional facilities relatively soon. Their report will be due along the same time line as the local facilities, at the end of February 2016.

Agenda Item: Existing Conditions Analyses

7. *Question:* When new park sites were added to the Web Portal, were they entered as shapefiles or just pinpoints on a map.
   Answer: New park entries created a shapefile. That enabled us to gather acreage data and parcel orientation.

8. *Question:* In regards to the Park Needs Map on page 17 of the Toolkit, why does it show the need being greater in these pockets, yet right beside these pockets the needs is depicted as less severe.
   Answer: Under the advice of the Steering Committee, we accounted for physical barriers in the built environment. That seems to be the case in this map area, where industrial land uses and street grids cut access to nearby parks.
      Response from Steering Committee Member: The fear is that if this map is presented to the community in a large format and that information is incorrect, it undermines this entire process and the community will not trust the data.
    *ACTION ITEM: Clearly explain what data contributed to making the maps in the toolkit.

9. *Question:* During the last Steering Committee Meeting, we discussed having a threshold where if an ethnic group was large enough, the races would be broken down to represent the specific racial heritages of the study area.
   Response: Yes. We looked into doing that; however the Census data we used does not breakdown racial groups any further than what we originally had.

10. *Comment:* In the East LA neighborhood, the County Department of Park and Recreation found interesting ways to provide park space to residents. For example, Parque de Los Suenos. It's an important space to comment that there are dynamic ways to create opportunities for green space.
    Response: Yes. Facilitators will be trained to encourage community members to dream big and think creatively about what they envision for their parks priority list.

11. *Question:* In regards to the Parks Metrics page, there is not a much comparative data. Will additional information be added to that?
    Response: Yes. We are still working out how to convey the comparative data, whether to restrict the definition of park land to local facilities or to include regional facilities as well.

12. *Question:* Could you give context to how large an acre is? Like how many football fields are in an acre, or similar common comparable measurements?
    Response: Yes. That is a great idea, we will include that in the Toolkit.

13. *Question:* Could you help explain the maps on the Community Profile Snapshot page? Specifically, I'm wondering about the map that has the incidents pinpointed, and I'm concerned that city officials will start seeing that as an indication that the streets aren't safe and lose focus on the park needs.
    Response: Under the direction of the Steering Committee, we included this information to give context to how people access the parks, and give relevant background to the barriers that impede access to local parks. This data does not impact the Park Needs data, rather it is included to give context to the study area.

14. *Comment:* The data presented in the Community Profile Snapshot could help leverage other resources, wherein we recognize that parks should be designed for users to safely walk and bike to and from.
    Response: Yes, in addition to that, a good portion of the Community Profile Data is not intended for the public, rather it is up to the facilitator to divulge that information as they see fit.

15. *Suggestion:* The light green color should not be the footer, it is difficult to read.
    Response: Noted.

16. *Question:* Is the summary map actually viable? What does it actually tell you?
    Response: We think so. If you disagree, let us know. We think it's as good an average as we can get.

17. *Suggestion:* Maybe *summary map* is the incorrect title. Perhaps call it the Cumulative Impact of Key Community Characteristics?
    Response: We are happy to hear suggestions for a better title for this map. Please let us know if you have any additional ideas and we will consider them all.

18. *Suggestion:* In regards to the Opportunity Sites Map on page 20, could you overlay the Park Need map on top of it to display where the potential needs could be met?
    *ACTION ITEM: Overlay Park Needs Map with the Opportunity Sites Map.

19. *Comment:* Opportunity Sites that require a Joint Use Agreement are not identified on the Parks Prioritization List, as the city agency would need to sort that out with the school district.
    ACTION ITEM: PlaceWorks to add this information to the FAQs section of the toolkit.