

FOR INFORMATION ONLY

CITY OF LOS ANGELES  
DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION AND PARKS

TO: BOARD OF RECREATION AND PARK COMMISSIONERS

FROM: JIMMY KIM, General Manager 

SUBJECT: CITY OF LOS ANGELES DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION AND PARKS  
PROGRESS UPDATE: COMMUNITY SCHOOL PARKS PROGRAM  
SEPTEMBER 15TH, 2022

**Background:**

On Jun 2, 2022, the Board of Recreation and Parks Commissioners approved the Plan for The Phased Expansion of The Community School Parks Program, 2022 - 2026. The plan included opening 5 middle schools in the fall of 2022. This program would be supervised by the Senior Recreation Director overseeing the Departments Citywide, LA Kids and mobile recreation programs, under the leadership of the Pacific Region Superintendent.

**Hiring Update:**

The newly promoted Senior Recreation Director overseeing the program reported to this assignment on August 15, 2020. In anticipation of the part-time hiring needs, a part-time job announcement for CSP CAMP DIRECTOR's and RECREATION INSTRUCTOR's to operate these 5 new sites was released on August 10, 2022. Staff has also posted and contacted hiring services, local colleges, and current part-time staff. The posting has drawn 7 applications and staff are currently conducting interviews.

Each site will require at least 2 PT staff to oversee this weekend program. They will need to work with the school site manager to open/close and ready the site areas of use; provide programs and activities for the community; publicize the programs; and order and retain equipment and supplies.

Since the release of the job announcements to the public, interest has been slow. We have outreached through social media, on job placements sites - handshake and indeed, and at local college and Jr college job posting boards. However, the response rate has been low, so we will continue to outreach to specific majors and sports teams at colleges and Recreation organizations.

We have currently interviewed 10 Part-time candidates for both the onsite coordinator and speciality instructors and 4 are in the process of filling out an application for employment. We are hopeful to have these staff on payroll prior to Oct 1, 2022. Training of these staff will be onsite and continuously. The full-time Senior Recreation Director will conduct and plan the training for these staff.

We have another 4 interviews this coming week and are hopeful to find additional qualified candidates. Our efforts will continue so that we are ready to expand as schools are able to be opened.

### **School Site Selection**

Los Angeles Unified School District includes over 400 Elementary Schools and over 70 Middle Schools. Both elementary and middle school play yards and field space can provide multiple community benefits when open to the public during non-school hours. While most LAUSD elementary schools do not have large turf fields, many middle school campuses do have grass fields that are generally more conducive to structured recreational programs.

For the initial pilot program, RAP utilized GIS data to identify elementary schools that had the potential to most significantly increase the number of residents living within a 10-minute walk (1/2 mile) from open space. Based on feedback from assigned CSP staff, youth and community members, some of the primary challenges resulting in low visitation include a lack of awareness regarding CSPs being open for community use, the lack of green space and shade at existing school play yards, and the lack of structured recreational / cultural activities at the CSPs during times of public use.

Although the number of new residents served is a top priority for school site selection, it is important to note that RAP also considers other factors to final selection such as availability of programmable green space or turf (as opposed to only asphalt playards), strong community support, and strong support from LAUSD administration and staff to name a few.

As part of the RAP expansion of the CSP program, we wanted to look at LAUSD Middle Schools. because most have existing grass/turf fields. Grass or turf fields not only provide a more park-like environment for kids to play, it also has the benefits of providing a much cooler play yard during the hot summers as opposed to elementary school sites with only asphalt playards as an option, making it more attractive for patrons to use a CSP. In addition, it allows RAP programs to expand to sports and games that are better suited for grass/turf like soccer.

Similar to how we utilized GIS data to identify Elementary Schools, RAP utilized Trust for Public Land's Park Serve® mapping tool with updated census data to look at the priority areas in the city where a new CSP would make the most impact. We looked at how many new residents would be served through a community school park. We also used LAUSD data to determine existing green space. A list of 30 middle schools with existing green space, respective council districts, and the potential new residents served is part of this report as Table 1.

**Table 1 - List of potential LAUSD Middle Schools to serve as Community School Park**

<u>Name</u>	<u>CD</u>	<u>RESIDENTS NOT SERVED,2022, Park Serve (approx)</u>
<b>Pio Pico Middle School</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11,564</b>
Sun Valley Magnet: Engineering Technology	2	9,857
Palms Middle School	5	8,768
<i>Robert Fulton College Prep Communication Arts/Music Magnet (6th-12th grade)</i>	6	8,476
Northridge Middle School	12	8,197
Francisco Sepulveda Middle School	7	7,322
Pacoima Middle School	7	6,848
Virgil Middle School	13	6,681
Emerson Middle	5	6,342
<b>Barack Obama Global Preparation Academy</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>6,175</b>
Mark Twain Middle School	11	5,604
Patrick Henry Middle School	12	5,185
Millikan Middle School	4	5,162
Orville Wright Engineering and Design Magnet	11	4,833
Ernest Lawrence Middle School	12	4,764
James Madison Middle School	2	4,746
<i>Sylmar Leadership Academy (TK-8)</i>	7	4,630
George K Porter Middle School	12	4,624
Thomas Starr King Middle School Magnet: Film and Media	4	4,354
Daniel Webster Middle School	11	4,200
John Burroughs Middle School	4	3,656

<b>Samuel Gompers Middle School</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>3,505</b>
Wilmington Middle School STEAM Magnet	15	3,200
Van Nuys Middle School	2	3,156
Vista Middle School	6	3,013
<b>John Muir Middle School</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>2,733</b>
Christopher Columbus Middle School	3	2,705
Walter Reed Middle School	2	2,290
Robert Frost Middle School	12	2,215
<b>Mary McLeod Bethune Middle School</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>2,085</b>

**Red** - denotes schools that has existing permits for other uses

Identified in **BOLD** - *Pio Pico, Barack Obama, Samuel Gompers, John Muir, and Mary Mcleod Bethune* have been identified as the 5 priority middle schools that would potentially serve between 20- 26K new residents. We intentionally focused on one geographic region of the city for this phase of the expansion in order to focus our hiring and training efforts.

**LATEST UPDATE WITH LAUSD:**

LAUSD Facilities team has been working in setting up meetings with Principals of the 5 aforementioned middle schools. Out of the five priority schools, only the principal of Pio Pico Middle School responded with a meeting date. Obama Middle School, and Bethune Middle School were unresponsive. Principal from Gompers Middle school responded, but a meeting has yet to be scheduled. Principal from John Muir middle school declined having the program at their school. This lack of responsiveness from LAUSD principals poses a challenge for implementation of the program to have 5 schools open in the Fall of 2022.

On September 1, 2022, RAP Staff, Mayor’s office, LAUSD Facilities Staff, and Interim Principal of Pio Pico Middle School met to discuss potential use of Pio Pico Middle School’s outdoor play area as part of the Community School Parks program. Principal responded positively and is amenable to having Pio Pico be our first Community School Park Middle School. We are looking to do an opening launch event in October to re-start the Community School Park program with the Mayor’s office and LAUSD.

Each school launch will consist of the following:

Opening Welcome; Morning activities; Lunch break; Afternoon Activities. We will also provide a calendar of classes and the ability to register onsite.

Activity times would vary depending on the availability of instructors; we currently have instructors for soccer, ultimate frisbee, kickboxing, origami fidget toys, skateboarding, and martial arts.

### **PROPOSED ROLL OUT OF EXPANSION:**

RAP staff is looking at creative ways to engage the local schools hesitancy of the Community School Parks Program. The idea is to provide principals the opportunity to see the programs in action on the weekends through Demonstration days. RAP Staff will schedule a demonstration of clinics or classes we can offer on weekends at the 4 additional targeted middle schools where the principal is still unsure about the program. RAP can also combine the demo day with a job opportunity event so that our efforts can double as a way to recruit potential CSP instructors and site coordinators from the local community. The extra benefit of these demonstration days is to allow principals and facility staff the ability to see the impact to the school, to garner interest from the community, and give RAP time to recruit and hire additional staff. RAP is hopeful to have these demonstration days in the Fall of 2022 and to be able to open the additional 4 schools in January of 2023.

As we continue to operate and hire more staff, RAP would need to expand its annual CSP budget requesting for additional full-time staff oversight, part-time site coordinators and instructors, and begin to look into security measures to continue to expand. RAP would like to continue to meet with additional LAUSD schools, do additional demonstration days, and be at 10 school sites in Fall of 2023.

### **Equipment**

Each LAUSD site will need a minimum of a 10x20 secured storage container with shelving and stocked with canopies, tables, chairs, wagons, signage (welcome, restrooms, enter/exit, classes), sound system, first aid supplies, PPE's and cleaning supplies, seasonal sports equipment and art supplies. All of these supplies can be obtained through existing City contracts and accessible within 4 weeks of ordering.

### **Mobile Recreation Units**

RAP's mobile recreation program has 2 vehicles that are used for events, pocket parks and at our CSP locations to bring specialized one-time programs and clinics to a site. This program is also scheduled and staffed by the Senior Recreation Director that is overseeing the CSP and RAP's LA Kids program.

The Mobile units will be used for all of the proposed Demonstration Days at the new LAUSD sites. Both vans are being equipped with WiFi and have tablets so we would be able to offer technology classes and also use the public WiFi for class registration.