

July 31, 2018

**Subject:** Endorsement of Health in All Policies (HiAP) Task Force Action Plan to Promote Parks and Healthy Tree Canopy

**Reporting Period:** July 2018

**Staff Lead:** HiAP Program Staff

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### **Recommended Action:**

Endorse the Health in All Policies (HiAP) Task Force Action Plan to Promote Parks and Healthy Tree Canopy.

### **Summary:**

Council endorsement confirms support from the SGC for the Health in All Policies (HiAP) Task Force Action Plan to Promote Parks and Healthy Tree Canopy and formalizes the Action Plan and its commitments. The Action Plan is summarized below, and the full text is included in Attachment A.

#### Background:

The HiAP Task Force Action Plan to Promote Parks and Healthy Tree Canopy reflects the Task Force's long-standing commitment to ensuring Californians have access to places to be active, including parks, green space, and healthy tree canopy. The Action Plan was formed in direct response to requests from HiAP Task Force members for additional resources, capacity building, partnerships, and institutional support to advance their work collaboratively and collectively.

#### Summary of HiAP Task Force Action Plan

This three-year Action Plan (2018-2020) articulates commitments from 15 departments and agencies to collaborate on efforts to increase park access and urban tree canopy and vegetation. This plan prioritizes communities with low access to parks, tree canopy, and open space and burdened by poverty, economic hardship, and health inequities. The actions identified in the plan are a collection of specific activities that met the following criteria: 1) reflect a Health in All Policies approach, 2) were identified as a priority by the Health in All Policies Task Force and agreed upon through a consensus process, 3) leverage existing partnerships and efforts, and 4) are aligned with the State's sustainability, equity, and health goals.

*Action Plan Goal:* Priority communities will benefit from optimized access to tree canopy, open space, and parks as well as maintenance of these essential community spaces as a result of increased state agency and department collaboration. Priority communities include those with low access to parks, tree canopy, and open space and burdened by poverty, economic hardship, and health inequities.

*Objective 1) Increase Park Access:* By 2020, California state departments and agencies will have incorporated health and equity priorities into park promoting plans, funding opportunities, communications materials, and stakeholder outreach.

- *Proposed Outcome: Increase park access in priority communities.*

*Objective 2) Increase Urban Tree Canopy and Vegetation:* By 2020, California state departments and agencies will have conducted outreach to, engaged, and created resources for, priority communities to promote urban tree canopy and vegetation.

- *Proposed Outcome: Increase the amount of current urban tree canopy and vegetation in priority communities by 10%.*

*Objective 3) By 2020, at least 3 state departments will incorporate data from other sectors on priority communities' urban tree canopy and park access.*

- *Proposed Outcome: Increase state department cross-sectoral data integration.*



# Health in All Policies (HiAP) Task Force Action Plan to Promote Parks and Healthy Tree Canopy

Projected Timeline: 2018-2020

Presented to the Strategic Growth Council (SGC) July 31, 2018

## Summary

HiAP Task Force Aspirational Goal: Every California resident has access to places to be active, including parks, green space, and healthy tree canopy.[1]

Trees, parks, and open space are essential community features, and support a range of state policy priorities including promoting the health, economic well-being, and climate resilience of Californians. Unfortunately, not all Californians have the same access to these community features. The Governor and legislature have made a clear commitment to equity, and departments are working to ensure that those burdened by economic hardship and health inequities can access resources for parks, open space, and tree canopy. The following Action Plan outlines a number of priority collaborative commitments that state agencies and departments will implement, as resources allow, to continue progress toward a healthy and equitable California.

**Action Plan Goal:** Priority communities will benefit from optimized access to tree canopy, open space, and parks as well as maintenance of these essential community spaces as a result of increased state agency and department collaboration. Priority communities include those with low access to parks, tree canopy, and open space and burdened by poverty, economic hardship, and health inequities.

**Objective 1)** Increase Park Access: By 2020, California state departments and agencies will have incorporated health and equity priorities into park promoting plans, funding opportunities, communications materials, and stakeholder outreach.

- *Proposed Outcome: Increase park access in priority communities.*

**Objective 2)** Increase Urban Tree Canopy and Vegetation: By 2020, California state departments and agencies will have conducted outreach to, engaged, and created resources for, priority communities to promote urban tree canopy and vegetation.

- *Proposed Outcome: Increase the amount of current urban tree canopy and vegetation in priority communities by 10%.*

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- *Proposed Outcome: Increase state department cross-sectoral data integration.*



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# Health in All Policies Task Force

## Parks and Healthy Tree Canopy: Action Plan Table

**Projected Timeline: 2018-2020**

**Action Plan Goal:** Priority communities will benefit from optimized access to tree canopy, open space, and parks as well as maintenance of these essential community spaces as a result of increased state agency and department collaboration. Priority communities include those with low access to parks<sup>i</sup>, tree canopy, and open space and burdened by poverty, economic hardship, and health inequities<sup>ii</sup>.

*Implementation of the actions listed below is contingent upon available resources. The actions are a collection of specific activities that a) reflect the Five Key Elements of a Health in All Policies approach, b) were prioritized by the Health in All Policies Task Force and agreed upon through a consensus process, c) leverage existing partnerships and efforts, and d) are aligned with the State’s sustainability, equity, and health goals. Additionally, this Action Plan is a “living document” that allows for the Task Force to remain flexible and pursue opportunities as they arise.*

<b>Objective 1) Increase Park Access:</b> By 2020, California state departments and agencies will have incorporated health and equity priorities into park promoting plans, funding opportunities, communications materials, and stakeholder outreach.			<b>Proposed Outcome</b> Increase park access in priority communities. <sup>iii</sup>
Action	Participating Agencies	Deliverables & Outcomes	Metric <sup>iv</sup>
1A. Task Force members will provide input to State Parks during the development of the 2020 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Task Force members will inform the development of a survey to identify unmet needs, requests for improvements and programming, and perceptions of park and recreation services across the state. State Parks will share survey findings with the Task Force.</li> </ul>	State Parks, Task Force, CDPH, OPR	2020 SCORP development will reflect input from agencies across government.	Number of state departments and agencies that provide input to parks informing the 2020 SCORP

<sup>i</sup> California’s Statewide Park Program (Public Resources Code §5642) defines underserved communities as having a ratio of less than three acres of parkland per 1,000 residents.

<sup>ii</sup> Systemic differences in health status that are preventable and therefore unfair.

<sup>iii</sup> The Task Force will report progress on this objective using State Parks indicators for park access (Living within a half mile of a park or open space; Park acres per one thousand residents within a census tract).

<sup>iv</sup> HiAP staff will work with Task Force members and others involved in implementation to report annually to the SGC on the plan’s metrics.



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• State Parks will host a multi-agency focus group to inform the development of the SCORP.</li> <li>• OPR and CDPH will provide input on climate change adaptation activities and resilience and the role of parks.</li> </ul>			
<p>1B. State Parks and CDPH will fund a pilot program to increase physical activity in at least three un-programmed parks targeting Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – Education (SNAP-Ed) eligible populations.</p>	<p>State Parks, CDPH, DSS</p>	<p>SNAP-Ed population at pilot sites will have access to physical activity programs in a park setting. Community change will be documented through evaluation of the pilot.</p>	<p>Number of SNAP-Ed eligible people participating in a physical activity program in a park</p> <p>Percent of park facilities with physical activity programming</p>
<p>1C. Task Force members will review, provide multi-sector feedback on, and consider co-signing, a set of materials including a brochure for local park agencies communicating the important role parks play in public health.</p>	<p>State Parks, CDPH, Task Force</p>	<p>Local park agencies will have brochures that communicate the value of parks for health.</p>	<p>Number of local and regional park and public health partnerships</p>
<p>1D. Parks, CAC, and CDPH will identify opportunities to connect local and regional park agencies with flexible state funding, artists, and public health partners to support increased community activity in parks.</p>	<p>State Parks, CAC, CDPH, Task Force</p>	<p>Local, regional, and State Parks, artists, and public health entities will increase coordination, alignment, and collaboration.</p>	<p>Number of parks with health-promoting programming or art</p> <p>Increased number of California communities that benefit from flexible state resources to support park programs</p>
<p><b>Objective 2) Increase Urban Tree Canopy and Vegetation:</b> By 2020, California state departments and agencies will have conducted outreach to, engaged, and created resources for, priority communities to promote urban tree canopy and vegetation.</p>			<p><b>Proposed Outcome</b> Increase the amount of current urban tree canopy and vegetation in</p>



			priority communities by 10%. <sup>v</sup>
Action	Participating Agencies	Deliverables & Outcomes	Metric <sup>vi</sup>
2A. CNRA and CAL FIRE will identify successful partnerships involving Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) to promote increased tree canopy and greening on K-12 school campuses through California Climate Investments (CCI) and related urban greening and forestry grant awarded projects. Information will be disseminated through a tip sheet, webinar, or other strategies.	CNRA, CAL FIRE, SGC, CDE	LEA's will have information about successful partnerships that resulted in increased tree canopy at schools.	Number of CCI-funded projects or applications that involve LEA's
2B. The Task Force will facilitate the development of maps that layer school parcel data over urban heat island, urban tree canopy cover, and Disadvantaged Community (DAC) designation to identify school campuses located within priority communities.	CAL FIRE, SGC, CDE	Urban area maps layering heat island, DAC, urban forestry, and school parcel data are used to promote LEA participation in CCI programs.	
2C. The Department of Education will provide input and guidance on greening related grant guideline development and serve as grant reviewers.	CNRA, CAL FIRE, SGC, CDE	CDE has increased opportunities to participate in the development of CCI guidelines and review CCI applications.	
2D. The Task Force will explore opportunities to incorporate workforce development strategies into CCI programs and guidelines by identifying best practices from greening and forestry-promoting grant programs.	SGC, WDB, Task Force, CAL FIRE, CNRA	CCI programs will incorporate best practices related to	Number of urban greening and forestry CCI-funded projects or

<sup>v</sup> This objective contributes toward the achievement of the May 2018 California Forest Carbon Plan goal: *By 2030, increase total urban tree canopy statewide by 10 percent above current levels, targeting disadvantaged and low-income communities and low-canopy areas, with a preference for planting species and varieties that provide substantial carbon storage and are resilient to climate-linked stressors* (Canopy cover is currently 15% of urban area). The Task Force will report progress on this objective using CAL FIRE Urban Tree Canopy data and CDPH's Healthy Community Indicators.

<sup>vi</sup> HiAP staff will work with Task Force members and others involved in implementation to report annually to the SGC on the plan's metrics.



		workforce development.	applications that include workforce development
2E. The Task Force will disseminate resources on California specific vegetation options for planting near-roadways as they become available.	CAL FIRE, HCD	Local agencies will have increased access to resources on near-roadway vegetation options	Number of disseminated resources
2F. Identify opportunities to increase urban tree canopy through California Green Building Standards Code.	GovOps, DGS-DSA	California Green Building Standards Code promotes urban greening through enhanced code updates	Number of adopted codes that promote urban greening
<b>Objective 3)</b> By 2020, at least 3 state departments will incorporate data from other sectors on priority communities' urban tree canopy and park access.			<b>Proposed Outcome</b> Increase state department cross-sectoral data integration
<b>Action</b>	<b>Participating Agencies</b>	<b>Deliverables &amp; Outcomes</b>	<b>Metric<sup>vii</sup></b>
3A. The Task Force will convene members to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify gaps in data resources.</li> <li>Explore aligning existing data resources and indicators including but not limited to: park access, urban tree canopy, and park usage.</li> <li>Collaborate on efforts to update indicators and report on the data.</li> </ul>	State Parks, Task Force, CDPH, OPR, CAL FIRE	Gap analysis, data resources and indicator inventory, and informal collaborative agreements between departments.	Number of informal collaborative agreements to share data

**Acronym Key:**

CAC: California Arts Council  
 CAL FIRE: California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection  
 CDE: California Department of Education  
 CDPH: California Department of Public Health

CNRA: California Natural Resources Agency  
 DOC: Department of Conservation  
 DGS: Department of General Services  
 DSS: Department of Social Services  
 GovOps: Government Operations Agency  
 HCD: Department of Housing and Community Development

OPR: Governor's Office of Planning and Research  
 State Parks: Department of Parks and Recreation  
 SGC: Strategic Growth Council  
 Task Force: California Health in All Policies Task Force  
 WDB: Workforce Development Board

<sup>vii</sup> HiAP staff will work with the Task Force and others involved in implementation to report annually to the SGC on the plan's metrics.





## Parks and Healthy Tree Canopy Action Plan Supporting Narrative

Following is a summary of the purpose and history of this Action Plan, research supporting this work, and a description of the objectives and actions highlighted in the preceding table.

### California Health in All Policies Task Force Background

The California HiAP Task Force was created under the auspices of the SGC as a multi-agency effort to identify priority programs, policies, and strategies for state action to improve health, equity, and sustainability in California. Recognizing that health and mental health are largely shaped by the environments in which people live, work, learn, and play, the Task Force works across policy fields that fall outside of the traditional realms of public health and health care. Task Force membership includes 22 State agencies, departments, and offices, working together to establish multi-agency goals, leverage co-benefits, and implement win-win solutions to some of California's greatest challenges such as growing inequities, chronic disease, environmental degradation, and climate change. The Task Force is facilitated by staff at the California Department of Public Health and Strategic Growth Council, through a partnership with the Public Health Institute, and with funding from multiple sources including The California Endowment and Kaiser Permanente Community Benefit.

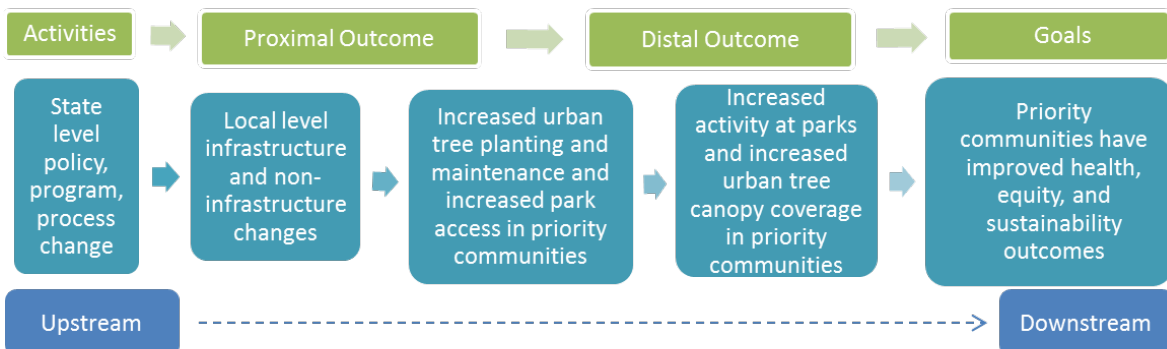
### The 5 Key Elements of Health in All Policies

Five Key Elements[2] have been identified as essential for ensuring success of Health in All Policies efforts. All objectives and action steps in the Action Plan reflect some, if not all, of these elements:

1. Promote health, equity, and sustainability
2. Support intersectoral collaboration
3. Benefit multiple partners
4. Engage stakeholders
5. Create structural or procedural change

### Theory of Change

Health is largely shaped by social and environmental factors, often referred to as the “social determinants of health,” which include parks, open space, and trees, as well as education, jobs, housing, transportation, and health care.[3] While much of the work of building healthy communities takes place at a local and regional level, state government provides policies, guidance, and funding that support healthy decision-making in local communities. The Task Force focuses on State government actions that have been identified as local priorities. The diagram below illustrates the connection between the Task Force’s “upstream” State-level activities and “downstream” community-level goals.





## Plan Development & Stakeholder Engagement

This Action Plan was developed over an eighteen-month period through an in-depth collaborative process, with participation and input from the California Arts Council, Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, Department of Education, Department of Public Health, Natural Resources Agency, Department of Conservation, Department of Social Services, Department of Housing and Community Development, Governor's Office of Planning and Research, Department of Parks and Recreation, Department of Justice, Strategic Growth Council, and the Workforce Development Board, as well as stakeholders from outside of state government. Task Force members and staff held one-on-one and small group meetings with individuals from government and non-government stakeholder groups to gather information on current priorities related to parks and urban greening, facilitate connections between government agencies, and identify opportunities for collaboration. In 2017, Task Force members finalized proposed Action Plan activities and agreed to a narrative and metrics for measuring impact. SGC key staff gave input in Spring 2017, and the Task Force endorsed the actions at the June 2017 quarterly meeting.

Action plan approval signals agreement from a broad group of state government entities, as well as support by non-government and local and regional partners. Approval requires: 1) sign-off from involved state government agencies, 2) sign-off from the Task Force membership, and 3) endorsement by the SGC, following public posting, presentation at a public SGC meeting, and public comment.

External stakeholders that provided input include The Davey Tree Expert Company, Prevention Institute, Tree Fresno, Sacramento Tree Foundation, California ReLeaf, California Urban Forest Council, Pogo Park, ChangeLab Solutions, and the Recreation Department at California State University, Fresno. In the Fall of 2016, the CDPH Office of Health Equity Advisory Committee held an input session at their public meeting, and in Spring 2017, staff presented and gathered input at the San Joaquin Valley Recreation Summit. A UC Davis graduate student supported further progress on this project as part of her practicum in Winter 2017.

## Rationale for Task Force Action

Trees, parks, and open space are essential infrastructure and contribute to the health equity, economies, and climate resilience of Californians. Not only are trees and green space critical for carbon sequestration, but they provide places for physical activity, shade, and relief from the hot sun, and exposure to trees has been found to improve mental health. As discussed in the 2017 draft Safeguarding California Plan, parks- and forestry-related sectors provide local non-exportable jobs, in addition to bolstering community resilience.[4] These benefits can be maximized through coordination and collaboration between sectors such as urban forestry and natural resources, parks and recreation, education, transportation, land use planning, and community safety. The Task Force can add value by implementing collaborative activities to increase access and maximize benefits.

Safeguarding California also calls for a climate justice framework, which elevates the imperative for prioritizing investments in communities with inequities, and otherwise vulnerable from the impacts of institutionalized racism, poor living conditions, and health inequities such as chronic physical and/or mental health conditions.[5] The discussion below outlines equity issues related to trees and parks, and the actions in this plan prioritize equity-oriented investments.



**Figure 2: A sample of ecosystem benefits provided by parks, green spaces and urban tree canopy.**



### **Access to Parks**

Unfortunately, parks and their benefits are inequitably distributed, with low-income households and people of color at a disadvantage.[7] The State Parks' Park Access Tool[6] finds that 24% of California residents live further than a half mile from a park and 62% of California residents live in areas with less than 3 acres of parks or open space per 1000 residents. A study carried out in Los Angeles County showed that African-Americans and Hispanics were more likely than Asians and Whites to live in communities with less park space per capita.[8] A California study of teenagers living in neighborhoods with high poverty, high unemployment, low educational attainment, and crowding found they had less access to parks and engaged in less physical activity than their wealthier counterparts.[9] In addition, institutional practices and constraints (e.g., cultural relevance of park programming, staffing demographics and capacity, transportation options, user fees, funding levels) contribute to non-use and low access to parks.[7]

1. (2016). Parks and Public Health in Los Angeles County: A Cities and Communities Report. Los Angeles County Department of Public Health: 1-18.  
2. Konijnendijk, C. C., et al. (2013). *Benefits of urban parks: a systematic review. A report for IPFRA, IFPRA.*  
3. Schwarz, K., et al. (2015). "Trees grow on money: Urban tree canopy cover and environmental justice." *PLOS ONE* 10(4): e0122051.  
4. Hartig, T., et al. (2014). "Nature and health." *Annu Rev Public Health* 35: 207-228.  
5. Lee, A. C. and R. Maheswaran (2011). "The health benefits of urban green spaces: a review of the evidence." *Journal of public health* 33(2): 212-222.  
6. Kuo, F. E., & Sullivan, W.C. (2001). "Environment and crime in the inner city: Does vegetation reduce crime?" *Environment and Behavior* 33(3): 343-367.  
7. McPherson, E. G., et al. (2016). "Structure, function and value of street trees in California, USA." *Urban Forestry & Urban Greening* 17: 104-115.  
8. David Nowak, et al. (2014). "Tree and forest effects on air quality and human health in the United States." *Environmental pollution* 193: 119-129.  
9. Coder, R. D. (1996). "Identified benefits of community trees and forests." University of Georgia 7.  
10. Wolf, K. L. (2003). "Public response to the urban forest in inner-city business districts."



Access to parks is a priority of both the Parks Forward Initiative (PFI), which is an advisory board developing a long-term plan for a financially sustainable State Park System, and the State Parks and Recreation Commission (SPRC).<sup>[10],[11]</sup> With over 14,000 parks, California has a rich opportunity to increase access to and use of this public infrastructure, and maximize the benefits of parks investments to support other state goals.

### Park Types

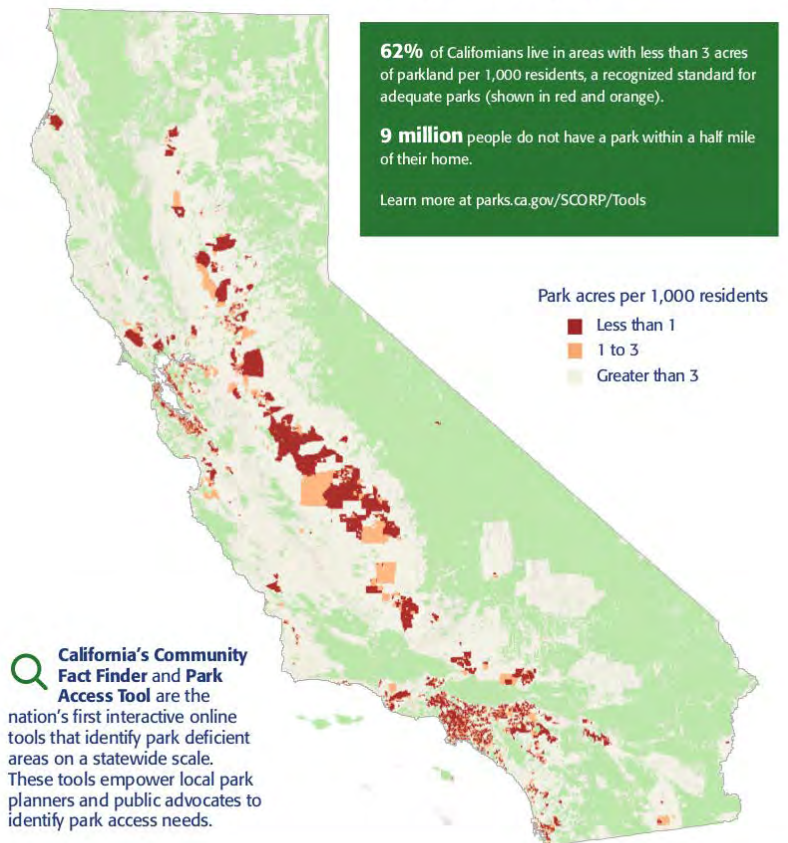
California's State Park System includes State Parks, State Natural Reserves, State Historic Parks, State Historic Monuments, State Beaches, State Recreation Areas, State Vehicular Recreation Areas, State Seashores, and State Marine Parks.<sup>[12]</sup> State Parks also funds local efforts that support regional, neighborhood, community, and pocket parks through the Office of Grants and Local Services. For example:

- The Outdoor Environmental Education Facilities Grant Program supports public outdoor structures and exhibits that facilitate Outdoor Environmental Education learning.
- The California Youth Soccer and Recreation Development Program funds new youth soccer, baseball, softball, and basketball recreation opportunities in heavily populated, low-income urban areas with high rates of youth crime and unemployment.
- In partnership with the National Park Service, the Land and Water Conservation Fund assists states in planning, acquiring, and developing recreation lands.
- FamCamp, Outdoor Youth Connection, and the Outdoor Recreation Leadership Training programs focus on non-traditional park users and under-served communities, such as children and families who may not have the awareness, opportunity, or ability to use state park resources, and creates opportunities to overcome barriers that may prevent access to the benefits that outdoor recreation provides.

**Figure 3: Data Source, California Community Fact Finder and Park Access Tool, California Department of Parks and Recreation.**

## Park Access in California

Where are Park Deficient Communities?



Percent of the Population Within 1/2 Mile of a Park, Open Space, Beach, or Coastline\*, California, 2010



**Figure 4: Parks greater than 1 acre with “Open Access” designation, by county, Data source: CALANDS (2016), U.S. Census Bureau (2010), Analysis by Healthy Communities Data and Indicators Project (HCI), CDPH.**

### Urban Tree Canopy

Urban forestry is an essential sector for climate adaptation and public health. Not only do trees positively impact cognition, stress, mental health, neighborhood violence, physical activity, and childhood obesity, but trees also cool urban and surrounding areas, mitigate excessive heat and air pollution, reduce heat islands and energy demand for cooling, improve conditions for pedestrians and bicyclists, and sequester carbon.[13-16]

Expanding tree canopy in urban areas, establishing local tree canopy cover targets, and maximizing the use of urban trees as infrastructure are key strategies recommended for adaptation[17] and for healthy communities. While planting new trees is important, efforts to maintain and preserve existing tree canopy are essential. Tree mortality resulting from drought and bark beetle infestations is a serious concern. For example, in Southern California’s most populated areas, 38% of all trees are at risk of mortality. [18]

Trees and their benefits are not uniformly distributed across communities. Statewide average urban tree canopy was 15.1 % in 2015[19] and 2012 data estimated that there were 173.2 million trees in urban areas of California.[20] A 2015 study examined the distribution of urban tree canopy cover for several major cities and found a strong inverse relationship between tree canopy and Black and Hispanic populations in Los Angeles and Sacramento.[21] Studies have also found that tree planting occurs less frequently in non-white neighborhoods, communities of color generally have lower levels of tree canopy cover, and lower-income neighborhoods have less access to urban tree canopy and its benefits than wealthier neighborhoods. [22]



Government agencies have increasingly considered health in greening and forestry related grant programs. For example, the 2015 Urban Forestry Grant Guidelines have been lauded for including clear and specific language for targeting benefits to disadvantaged communities and including a granting structure that enabled state investments to reach organizations that historically have struggled to qualify for funding.[23] The 2017 Urban Greening Grant Program will fund green infrastructure projects that reduce greenhouse gas emissions by decreasing energy consumption and reducing vehicle miles traveled. Projects must benefit disadvantaged communities and provide multiple benefits such as fostering job creation.

CDPH's California Building Resilience Against Climate Effects (CalBRACE) Project echoes the findings of academic studies that demonstrate unequal and/or uneven distribution of tree canopy coverage (See Figure 2.).

### **Workforce Development**

Investments in parks, green space, and healthy tree canopy can support important workforce development opportunities. Urban and community greening investments require workers to plan, plant, and maintain urban greening, and can create jobs for arborists, landscape architects, urban foresters, and more. Approximately 60,000 jobs and \$3.3 billion in individual income are supported through urban forestry.[24]

Task Force members in the fields of greening and forestry have indicated that it is difficult to hire staff that are reflective of the communities they serve. In addition, environmental organizations and agencies across the country lack equitable representation in their staff from the communities most in need of environmental investments.[25][26] As discussed in the 2017 draft Safeguarding California Plan, parks- and forestry-related sectors provide local, non-exportable jobs.[4] Task Force members can promote a pipeline to employment for people of color, people with lived experience in economic hardship and poverty, and others underrepresented in the field.

Efforts to promote job training and apprenticeship programs for priority populations can be incentivized in grant guidelines, for example, by including requirements for workforce development and employment policies. This focus can create pathways into stable employment, support individuals and families, and increase the number of environmental stewards and climate change mitigation and resilience leaders in the communities that are impacted the most.

### **Schools as Greening Sites**

California has over 10,000 schools, which can serve as venues for implementing efforts to achieve sustainable communities and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Schools are particularly appealing sites to implement improvements that produce health co-benefits, because of their use by children and their families, faculty, and staff on a regular basis, and their role as community spaces. Schools already participate in many climate mitigation and public health efforts like Safe Routes to School, zero emission school buses, recycling and reducing food waste, tree planting, creating green schoolyards, and asphalt removal to reduce heat island effects. Schools have been largely underrepresented in discussions about climate mitigation and adaptation, and there are many opportunities to engage the education sector more deeply in this work, particularly in considering opportunities to improve conditions in disadvantaged communities.



## Indicators

State Parks indicators for park access include:

- Living within ½ mile of a park or open space
- Park acres per 1,000 residents within a census tract

The California Department of Public Health has created the Healthy Communities Data and Indicators Project (HCI) to provide data, a standardized set of statistical measures, and tools to plan healthy communities and evaluate the impact of plans, projects, policies, and environmental changes on community health. The indicators are linked to the Healthy Community Framework, which was developed by the Health in All Policies Task Force based on input from community stakeholders and public health organizations.

CDPH's Healthy Community Indicators within the domain "Green and Open Spaces, Including Agricultural Lands," include:

- Percent of residents within ½ mile of a park, beach, open space, or coastline
- Acres of parkland per 1,000 residents
- Acres of cropland converted to developed land
- Tree canopy coverage (urban areas)<sup>ix</sup>

## Agency Commitments: Description of the Action Plan Table

**Objective 1. By 2020, California state departments and agencies will have incorporated health and equity priorities into plans, funding opportunities, communications materials, and stakeholder outreach.**

**Action Step 1A:** *Task Force input to 2020 SCORP.* Every five years the Governor approves a Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP), submitted to the U.S. Secretary of Interior in order to 1) qualify for federal grants and establish state grant priorities, and 2) plan for how state and local agencies will meet the park and recreation needs of Californians. The Task Force will provide multi-sectoral input on key considerations to include in the 2020 SCORP and will help Parks engage with underrepresented groups and organizations that represent and work with those groups, to identify strategies for expanding access to parks.

- Early action: Prior to plan finalization (May 31st, 2017) the State Parks Office of Grants and Local Services (OGALS) held a focus group for state agencies, departments, and offices to provide initial input on materials.

**Action Step 1B:** *Parks pilot project.* This pilot project will demonstrate how multi-generational physical activity programs can transform underutilized and perhaps unsafe parks into a thriving health zone. This leverages multi-sector financial resources by engaging SNAP-Ed partners who promote nutrition and physical activity through evidence-based approaches to help people lead healthier lives. Besides improving the health of communities through direct physical activity programming in community parks, the evaluation and lessons learned from this State-level health/parks partnership can provide valuable information for other state and local governments seeking to pursue this approach.

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<sup>ix</sup> CDPH's CalBRACE program also has a tree canopy related indicator.



- Early action: In the summer of 2017, State Parks and the Nutrition Education Obesity Prevention Branch at CDPH are finalizing site selection and a plan for project evaluation.

**Action Step 1C.** *Communicating the role of parks for health.* State Parks will develop a new brochure for local park agencies that communicates the health value of parks. HiAP staff will provide public health input, and Task Force members will provide input to ensure strong messaging about the cross-sectoral nature of healthy parks work. Departments will consider signing on to the document as endorsers, to convey support across government sectors. By giving local practitioners materials that convey the benefits of these public infrastructure investments across sectors, the Task Force is supporting an important step in establishing a common language and shared goals that can lead to shared action in local communities.

- Early Action: The CDPH Office of Health Equity is producing a stakeholder educational briefing document that describes the value of parks in promoting health and health equity.

**Action Step 1D.** *Local arts in parks.* Arts infrastructure increases the utility of parks and is particularly important for bringing in populations less likely to use parks, such as women and girls. Investments in art-related parks infrastructure, such as amphitheater construction, have been less common over the past two decades. State Parks and CAC will collaborate to support local parks and recreation agencies to identify sources of arts funding for parks programs for priority locations and populations, including interventions that show promise in reducing recidivism of formerly incarcerated individuals. For example, State Parks staff will disseminate CAC grant program information to local partners, and will add CAC grant program information to potential SCORP funding sources for park programming for local parks and recreation agencies.

- Early action: Parks and CAC held an initial planning meeting on January 10th, 2017.

**Objective 2. By 2020, California state departments and agencies will have conducted outreach to, engaged, and created resources for priority communities**

**Action Step 2A.** *Opportunities for promoting tree canopy and greening on school campuses.* While K-12 schools have not been a target of the California Climate Investment (CCI) fund, they have benefited from some of the programs. CNRA and CAL FIRE will review successful partnership from previous funding rounds to learn from the successes and challenges of applicants, distill key lessons, and disseminate findings and recommendations to state and external stakeholders in order to catalyze additional LEA interest and success in accessing the funding program.

- Early action: HiAP staff facilitated meetings with CDE, CAL FIRE, DGS, and CNRA to identify opportunities and barriers to increasing greening at school sites.

**Action Step 2B.** *Integrate school parcel data into tree canopy and greening maps.* This action step will be a first step towards providing communities across California with access to maps that identify K-12 school sites that could be targeted for urban forestry and greening efforts. A number of sectors have identified priority communities based on tree canopy, exposure to urban heat island, and other data, but school sites have generally not been included in these assessments.[27]

**Action Step 2C.** *School input on greening grant programs.* Schools face a number of barriers





to accessing CCI and other state grant funds for tree canopy and greening projects. By engaging in the development and administration of greening grant programs, CDE can provide input on strategies to better engage K-12 school districts, and the staff at non-school agencies that are implementing these programs will be better equipped to troubleshoot the barriers schools face in accessing these funds.

- Early action: CDE served as a reviewer for CNRA's 2017 Urban Greening grant program.
- Early action: HiAP staff provided health and equity input and review to CNRA's 2017 Urban Greening grant program.

**Action Step 2D.** *Workforce development strategies in CCI programs.* Departments administering CCI programs are beginning to test approaches to promote job training and apprenticeship programs for priority populations, including through scoring points and other incentives. The Task Force will identify best practices from greening and forestry-promoting grant programs and consider how they can be integrated into CCI programs. This will include assessing and sharing information about successful examples of creative partnerships between workforce development experts such as CWDB staff, community college leaders, and urban forestry companies.

**Action Step 2E.** *Disseminate resources on vegetation for near-roadway applications.* New research shows that vegetation, including trees, can change how pollutants move and disperse, and vegetation near high-volume roadways can help reduce air pollution exposure in some contexts.[28] As research and resources on this topic become available, including specific recommendations for jurisdictions, the Task Force will support dissemination across sectors and to local partners.

- Early action: Task Force members presented on extreme heat mitigation using vegetation at the April 2016 Climate Action Team Public Health Work Group meeting.

**Action Step 2F.** *Increase urban tree canopy through California Green Building Standards Code.* The Division of the State Architect, within the Department of General Services, as a part of the 2018 Triennial Code Adoption Cycle will be proposing regulations to increase shade tree plantings at public schools and community colleges. The Division of the State Architect will hold the public stakeholder meetings to gather input, with the final meeting in March 2018.

**Objective 3. By 2020, at least 3 state departments will incorporate data from other sectors on priority communities' urban tree canopy and park access.**

**Action Step 3A.** *Data gaps, resources, and indicators.* In order to collaborate effectively to promote tree canopy and park access, departments need to share information and collaborate on data projects. With facilitation through the Task Force, departments will identify data gaps, explore opportunities to use existing data and indicators more efficiently by aligning them across organizations, and collaborate on efforts to update indicators that provide benefit to multiple entities.

## Evaluation and Accountability

The HiAP Task Force will report out annually on progress toward the listed objectives, through written reports to the Strategic Growth Council. These will become part of the public record.



Evaluation of this Action Plan will be limited unless additional resources are secured. There is value in tracking and evaluation for several reasons: 1) To demonstrate accountability to the public through fulfillment of these commitments; 2) To determine whether and how the listed objectives and actions lead to meaningful change in policies, practices, programs, and ultimately population health, equity, and environmental sustainability; and 3) To learn from this process, because the Task Force is an important “learning laboratory” for the Health in All Policies approach, and has a role to play in contributing to the national and international body of knowledge about this field.

## Contact

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