



United Neighborhoods of the Historic
Arlington Heights, West Adams,
and Jefferson Park Communities
Neighborhood Council

June 6, 2025

RE: Park Needs Assessment (PNA), UNNC Report
Via email: LACityParksNeeds@theolinstudio.com

Thank you for considering this report about park needs within UNNC, the United Neighborhoods of the Historic Arlington Heights, West Adams and Jefferson Park Neighborhood Council.

UNNC is certainly in need of increased green space. We have a stakeholder base of approximately 80,000 people (65,000 residents, workers, school children and others) who experience our lack of public green space – both lack of parks and lack of tree canopy – on a daily basis.

Within UNNC, the Benny Potter Park, a bedrock of the community, together with our three pocket parks (the Washington Irving, West Adams Heights and Leslie Shaw parks) are woefully insufficient for our population base. Even considering three adjacent and larger additional parks (the Normandie Recreation Center, Queen Anne and Loren Miller parks) that may serve some of our stakeholders, the available parks are inadequate compared to those of other communities in the City. We understand that there are over 679 parks in Los Angeles, but UNNC and South Los Angeles overall lack green space compared to other communities.

Obtaining more public green space is one of UNNC's primary objectives. This is an important equity issue.

The residents of the UNNC have requested not only the need for additional green space and trees but specifically for that space to include **adult workout equipment** and **native trees**.

One of our residents recently wrote to us, requesting that UNNC support a proposal for an additional park on a city-owned parcel. He explained to us that he and his 5-year-old son had to walk nine blocks along Jefferson Boulevard (a mostly unshaded commercial corridor) to arrive at the park nearest to their home.

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We thought his thoughtful letter, excerpted here, is well worth sharing with you:

Our neighborhood is deeply underserved when it comes to accessible green space. According to the Trust for Public Land's ParkServe tool (<https://parkserve.tpl.org/mapping/#/?CityID=0644000>), the area around the Crenshaw/Expo Metro stop [within UNNC boundaries], including the proposed site, ranks among the most park-poor in the city. A park at this location would offer critical community benefits: outdoor space for children and families, a refuge from urban heat, and a much-needed site for safe recreation and gathering.

This need becomes even more urgent with the passage of recent state laws that will bring increased density to transit-adjacent neighborhoods like ours by:

- *Allowing upzoning near train and rapid bus stops*
- *Streamlining approvals for multi-family housing within a half-mile of transit*
- *Enabling transit agencies to develop housing on their land*

While...[these laws] will help address the housing crisis, it also increases the need for thoughtful planning around livability and public infrastructure, especially parks. As Jefferson Park [and the other UNNC neighborhoods] become more densely populated, we must ensure it remains a vibrant and healthy place to live.

We wholeheartedly agree with this resident.

In reviewing the ParkServe tool, we also see that a large portion of UNNC's footprint falls within the dark purple shaded zones, e.g., the Very High Priority areas for new parks.

Related to the lack of parks is the lack of trees – UNNC's tree canopy as measured by the City is 15%, compared to the citywide average of 25%. Tree canopy includes both trees in public spaces like parks, and also trees in the Right-of-Way along streets. We ask that Recreation and Parks (RAP) consider planting more trees wherever feasible.



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Our parks are also under-funded. This creates both staffing and maintenance issues. Additionally, the community has been advocating that RAP acquire the funds or set aside the funds to rehabilitate the house for use as the children's center (plans are already available) but there has been no effort, it seems, on the part of Park Department officials to do so.

UNNC has also discussed at previous meetings the perceived inequity of the allocation of Quimby Funds to our community parks. There does not seem to be any accountability of where those funds are earned nor where they are spent; certainly community members are not given the opportunity to weigh in. More transparency is needed.

Thank you for your consideration,

Laura Meyers
UNNC Vice President