

# Executive Summary

## Antioch Park Assessment Report:

A community-based participatory research and evaluation project

Prepared January 2015

### 1. INTRODUCTION

In fall of 2013, a collaborative team of residents and early childhood health organizations assessed 32 parks within the City of Antioch to determine their suitability for young children and families to play and engage in physical activity. The partners included: the East County Regional Group—a parent advocacy group comprised of residents of Antioch and East Contra Costa County; First 5 Contra Costa Children & Families Commission; and Healthy & Active Before 5 (HAB45)—a collaborative of Contra Costa agencies committed to promoting early childhood health. During follow-up workshops, the team analyzed the data, selected priority parks, determined priority issues, and developed recommendations for improvements.

### 2. ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

Prior to assessing the parks, the team developed a park survey tool. The tool included seven assessment categories: family amenities, maintenance, safety, innovative play atmosphere, all-abilities accessibility, young child experience, and parent overall rating. ECRG members and staff then identified and visited 32 parks in fall 2013 to conduct the assessments (Image 1). Following the completion of the assessments, project staff compiled the assessment data and facilitated a series of community workshops to identify quality park spaces and to prioritize those parks in need of improvement, based on the assessment results. Lastly, the partners used data from the surveys, East Contra Costa County health indicator report, and U.S. Census Bureau to inform the final recommendations.

### 3. FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Antioch Community and Markley Creek parks received some of the highest parent ratings of all the parks evaluated. Parks that rated highly overall, generally rated well in each of survey areas. Analysis of the data showed a stark disparity in the quality of parks located in lower- versus higher- income neighborhoods and highlighted several issues particular to each park. Among those parks needing improvements, four thematic priority areas emerged from the data analysis: safety, play equipment, bathrooms, and water fountains. While the team found that a number of parks assessed need improvements, the ECRG members selected Prosserville and Contra Loma Estates as priority parks in need of immediate improvement. Both parks rated poorly in each of the priority areas (Table 1), and are located in neighborhoods with high crime rates, high poverty rates, and a high concentration of young children, under age 5\*.

Table 1: Selected Park Ratings

Park Name	Amenities	Maintenance	Safety	Innovation	ADA Access	Child	Parent
Antioch Community	5	4	4.5	4	4	5	5
Markley Creek	4.25	4	4	4.25	4	4.5	4.75
Contra Loma Estates	3	3.4	2.8	1.6	2	1.3	2.3
Prosserville	2.75	1.75	2.25	1.75	1.6	1.75	1.75

Color Coding Key

4.00 – 5.00	3.00 - 3.99	2.00 - 2.99	1.00 - 1.99
No Improvement Needed	Needs Only Minor Improvement	Needs Some Improvement	Needs Major Improvement

\* Reference: U.S. Census Bureau, 2008-2012 American Community Survey. Obtained by Contra Costa Health Public Health Epidemiology, Planning, and Evaluation Department, April 2014

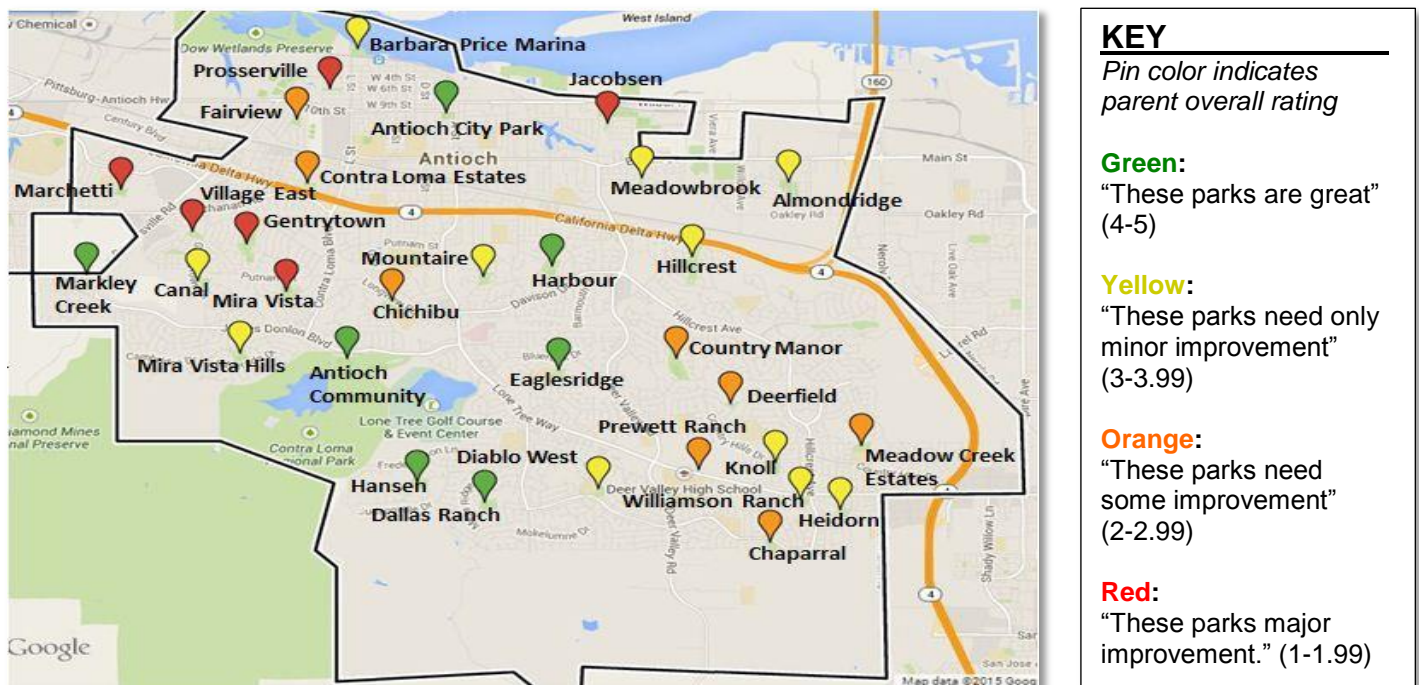
## 4. RECOMMENDATIONS

Overall, the partners recommend that low-rated parks located in very low-income areas inhabited by a high concentration of young children are prioritized for immediate improvements with a focus on the four thematic priority areas. In particular, the partners recommend that Prosserville and Contra Loma Estates parks are prioritized for immediate, comprehensive improvements to the areas of amenities, maintenance, play equipment, and safety (Table 2). The team encourages the City of Antioch to allocate capital improvement funds and work with the partners to explore additional capital park improvement grant funding and other revenue generating strategies. Lastly, the partners recommend that a community safety coalition is formed in partnership with the Antioch Crime Prevention Commission to implement a robust violence prevention strategy in the neighborhoods surrounding the priority parks, as safety in both parks was identified as a pressing issue.

**Table 2: Priority Parks, Prosserville and Contra Loma Estates**

Priority Area	Recommendations by Needs and Issue Areas	
Amenities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shade</li> <li>Basketball courts</li> <li>Soccer fields</li> <li>Water fountains</li> <li>Benches</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Picnic tables</li> <li>Grills</li> <li>Walking trails</li> <li>ADA Accessibility</li> <li>Volleyball court<sup>†</sup></li> </ul>
Maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bathrooms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Garbage and recycling cans</li> </ul>
Play Equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Innovative playground for children ages 0-5</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New play structure for older children (slides, climbing walls, tire swings, etc.)</li> </ul>
Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Change sand to rubber surface</li> <li>Lighting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Higher fencing</li> <li>Video surveillance</li> </ul>

**Image 1: Antioch Park Locations, parent ratings**



<sup>†</sup> Only identified as a need for Contra Loma Estates Park