



Green LA Coalition serves as an organizing hub for sixty-plus Southern California-based environmental groups. Organized in Work Groups where plans to win its policy objectives are organized around initiatives and policy campaigns.



Greening the Ports

Creating a healthy wake for our port communities



Creating Parks & Open Space in the Urban Core/Conserving Water

Going for more walks in the park & Conserving Water



Re-imagining LA's Transportation System

Use your re-imagination



Creating Green Jobs

Green dollars make green sense

A challenging future

Despite Green LA's focused agenda and dedicated member base, serious challenges remain. The economic downturn is being manipulated by some interests to turn the public against environmental initiatives. Witness **Proposition 23** which seeks to overturn AB32, California's landmark climate legislation.

Responding to these challenges, Green LA has recently developed a new strategic direction for the coalition. The new direction will move the coalition away from immediate short-term policy wins toward making systemic change. Longer term campaigns will build a stronger more resilient and cross-sector political base and will increase our grassroots community engagement and mobilization.

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Restoring Natural Ecosystems for Urban Sustainability

Restoring our urban ecosystems means bringing nature back to our overly paved, gray urban core. Green LA's work on this monumental task is being done by three committees of its Urban Ecosystems Work Group - the Verde Coalition/Open Space Committee, the Water Committee, and the Urban Ecosystems Committee.

Walking to the Park

Only 33% of LA's children are fortunate enough to be able to walk to a park in their neighborhood. Compare that to the 97% in Boston or even 65% in San Diego. Moreover, the lack of park space problem correlates with levels of poverty—four out of the five city council districts with the lowest median household incomes also have the least amount of community park space.

The [Verde Coalition](#), a network of park advocates created in 1999, also serves as Green LA's Open Space Committee. The Verde Coalition is focusing on two issues impacting the creation and sustainability of park spaces: severe budget cuts to the Recreation & Parks Department (a 25% reduction over the last 3 years) and the profound lack of revenue to operate them.

Mobilizing to Prevent Park Cuts & Obtain New Revenue Sources

The Verde Coalition (Green LA's Open Space Committee) and [Save LA Parks Alliance](#) are taking on severe cuts to LA's parks budget with sobering resolve. To stave off the elimination of vital staff and to ensure the viability of spaces in our most vulnerable, park-poor neighborhoods, members continue to address the impact of deepening cuts. The next step is to launch an initiative to campaign for a local revenue stream for LA to fund new parks and ongoing operations and maintenance.

The Verde Coalition is also convening team to develop a case study for the national [City Parks Alliance](#) to demonstrate how their *Red Fields to Green Fields* program would work in Los Angeles. Red Fields to Green Fields seeks to access billions in federal stimulus and financial bailout funds to revitalize communities by creating jobs, improving the real estate market and creating much needed green open spaces.

Participating Organizations

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- [From Lot to Spot](#)
- [Hollywood Beautification Team](#)
- [Los Angeles Conservation Corps](#)
- [Los Angeles Neighborhood Land Trust](#)
- [People for Parks](#)
- [SEIU, Local 721](#)
- [Shared Spaces Landscape Architecture](#)
- [TreePeople](#)
- [Trust for Public Land](#)
- [Urban & Environmental Policy Institute, Occidental College](#)

Conserving Water

115 billion gallons of rainwater annually; 60% of all the water used by Angelenos last year alone—that’s how much water we channel off into rain gutters and down our storm drains to the sea. This is wasteful. Los Angeles imports over 80% of its water – at a cost of hundreds of millions of dollars and impacts on the electrical grid – transporting water is the single largest use of electricity in California.

Members of the Water Committee have organized to move beyond our water-wasting ways and ‘temporary drought’ mentality. Bringing water to Southern California is not a sustainable practice, although it has been adopted as a long-term crisis-driven band-aid. Tapping into the Colorado, Sacramento and the San Joaquin Rivers and the Eastern Sierra is costly and politically fragile.

Long term solutions that focus on changing attitudes towards local water resources have been a starting place; reducing LA’s dependence on imported water is the goal line.

Water wisdom

Green LA’s Water Committee focuses on water policy to help Los Angeles wean itself from over-dependence on imported water. Los Angeles imports over 80% of its water – which places the region in great precarity.

The Water Committee created *Not Enough to Waste: Solutions to Securing LA’s Water Future* to enable city officials and residents to pursue readily available solutions to LA’s water problems. Members also organize briefings for policy makers and public organizations who want to learn more about local water issues and solutions. To request a briefing, the group can be contacted [here](#).

Participating Organizations

- City Vida
- Environmental Justice Coalition for Water
- Environment Now
- Desal Response Group
- Food and Water Watch
- Sierra Club, Angeles Chapter
- Southern CA Watershed Alliance
- The River Project
- Urban Semillas

Using Natural Systems to Improve the Urban Environment

The Urban Ecosystems Committee focuses on restoring vital urban ecosystems. By greening LA’s metropolitan infrastructure to re-establish natural systems, local water resources will soon be enhanced by a new policy measure, Low Impact Development, which mandates that new developments capture local stormwater thereby allowing rain to infiltrate into the ground instead of polluting our rivers and ocean. [Read the Natural Resources Defense Council study here.](#)

Green LA helped to win passage of a comprehensive Low Impact Development ordinance for the city of Los Angeles. This cutting-edge policy requires certain new developments and retrofits to capture storm water on site—helping set a precedent to establish environmentally sustainable landscaping practices.

Participating Organizations

- Heal the Bay
- TreePeople
- City Vida

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Creating Green Jobs

Green dollars make green sense

Green jobs make green sense

Green LA's Green Economy Initiative coordinates governmental, educational and non-profit efforts to attract green investment and jobs.

In 2008 and 2009 Green LA's Green Economy Fellow, Jane Paul, helped win two specific policies fundamental to shaping LA's future, Green Purchasing and Green Business Certification.

The Environmentally-Preferred Purchasing policy directs the city to buy environmentally-sustainable products. Green Business Certification encourages small businesses and hotels to embrace environmentally friendly practices, these may include conservation of energy and water resources, preventing pollution and managing waste safely.

The green way

For two years, Green LA and United Way have jointly convened the Green Jobs Leadership Network, an unprecedented effort focusing government, organized labor, colleges, workforce developers, businesses and environmentalists on creating local green jobs. The Network's primary focus is moving LA's local workforce toward newer, safer skills, educational opportunities and employment in our growing green economy.

Green Economy members are moving the community to embrace a future full of green concepts; a green manufacturing hub, clean technology center and advocating for even higher environmental standards will define LA's economic development moving forward.

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A vital hub of commerce for Southern California, the Port of Los Angeles encompasses 7500 acres and 43 miles of waterfront, handles nearly 190 million metric revenue tons of cargo yearly, and adds 1.1 million jobs to the State.

Yet the Port also poses an immense health threat to surrounding communities and to the workers it employs in the form of lung cancer, asthma and other pulmonary diseases. The resulting jobs-health-environment paradox puts the city of Los Angeles in a powerful and challenging responsive position.

Advancing the Green Port plan

The formation of Green LA's Port Work Group helped assemble environmental, public health, community and labor advocates who had been working independently on Port-related issues impacting the Harbor Area.

Together, the Port Work Group helped achieve significant policy wins including the following milestones:

- Clean Air Action Plan
- Clean Trucks Program
- Enacting of Proposition 1C provisions

The Campaign for On-Dock Rail

Current Port Work Group initiatives include preventing the siting and expansion of rail yards adjacent to residential neighborhoods and the building of sufficient on-dock infrastructure capacity at the Port, as outlined in the Clean Air Action Plan.

Green LA's Port Work Group is continuing to press for reducing air contaminants from the port and attendant movement of goods. The essential next step is to stop proposed transfer facilities, SCIG and ICTF, which will release contaminants next to schools and homes in a low-income, immigrant community.

In an on-going effort to remain on the forefront of advocacy, the group and its members maintain regular communication with nonprofits in other major port cities. Individuals share policy strategies, information and best

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practices related to improving goods transition and Port’s operations using green and sustainable methods.

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- Coalition for Clean Air
- Communities for a Better Environment
- East Yard Communities for Environmental Justice
- Harbor Vision Task Force/Livable Cities Committee
- Sierra Club
- Long Beach Alliance for Children with Asthma
- Long Beach Interfaith Community Organization
- Natural Resources Defense Council
- Transportation 4 America

Advisors

- Occidental College
- Southern CA Environmental Health Sciences Center, USC

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Re-imagining LA's Transportation System
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LA's finally moving

Los Angeles—the city of sub-cities. The city where distance is defined in hours and minutes.

The International Energy Agency reports that for the first time in human history, more than 50% of the Earth's population lives in cities—a startling and sobering reality that undermines the urgent need for more efficient infrastructure and significant reductions of energy-related carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions. Nowhere is this seemingly more apparent than Los Angeles.

Members of Green LA's Transportation Work Group represent a diverse collection of voices advocating for improved transit, bicycle and pedestrian projects, which are pivotal to reducing LA's total greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. The following describes the work group's top policy priorities for 2010/2011.

A successful sales tax

In November 2008, LA county voters passed Measure R, a county-wide sales tax designed to raise an estimated \$40 billion for transit projects throughout Los Angeles County. The Green LA Transportation Work Group worked successfully to unite environmental, labor and community organizations into a unified voice to ensure local funds be set aside for pedestrian and bicycle projects.

With perseverance, Transportation Work Group members have a commitment from the City of LA to secure adequate funds for bicycle and pedestrian projects by allocating 10% of Measure R local revenue specifically to these typically non-traditional transportation alternatives.

Living Streets

The built environment influences whether we live an active or passive lifestyle. LA's city streets, a key part of the infrastructure that supports our daily lives, have long favored the automobile, making active forms of movement like bicycling and walking uncomfortable and even perilous.

The focus of Green LA's Living Streets Initiative is on the mobility needs of people, rather than cars. Living Streets seeks to accommodate all modes of transportation—bicycles, cars, pedestrians and even skateboards—making more efficient, safe and comfortable use of the street.

Caminos del Pueblo: Boyle Heights

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Caminos del Pueblo: Boyle Heights is Green LA's new Living Streets program that promises to reduce exposure to air contaminants in an impoverished and polluted community surrounded by freeways. Working closely with the Community Redevelopment Agency, Green LA staffer Holly Harper is coordinating the development of three pilot Living Streets near Mariachi Plaza and Soto Street light rail stations, a project which is expected to become a model for the region.

Moving Buses

With buses running faster in their own lanes, bus-only lanes are a tremendous way to encourage commuters to leave polluting vehicles at home. The bus-only lane on Wilshire Blvd. will cut up to 20 minutes of rush-hour commuting for 100,000 passengers. With the implementation of the first such dedicated lane, Green LA is seeking to implement a countywide network of bus-only lanes on all major bus transit corridors in Los Angeles County.

Participating Organizations

- Bus Riders Union
- CicLAvia
- Coalition for Clean Air
- L.A. County Bicycle Coalition
- Los Angeles Taxi Workers Alliance
- LA Walks
- Public Counsel
- Ryan Lehman
- Ryan Snyder
- Sierra Club, Los Angeles Chapter

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