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# Lemon Grove Environmental Assessment



Institute for Public Strategies

## 2017 Interim Report

### Purpose of Environmental Assessment

This report summarizes findings from 21 Environmental Scans conducted by East County Community Change Project (ECCCP) in collaboration with community partners to assess conditions at six Lemon Grove parks. Each park was assessed at least twice by different assessors. All assessments occurred between 6:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. on April 08, 2017. It is worth noting that the number of assessments conducted per each park is very low; therefore, the findings presented below are intended to guide prevention planning.

### Location

**The following six public parks were assessed:**

Kunkel Park (Lemon Grove Way)

Lemon Grove Park (Washington Street)

Berry City Park (3232 Main Street)

Firemen's Park (3120 School Lane)

Civic Center Park [Historical Society] (3200 Main Street)

Promenade Park [Trolley Station] (3443 Main Street)

## Summary of Key Findings

**DAN KUNKEL PARK** – Although there was a smoke free environment sign, there were cigarette butts everywhere. The park bench and trees had graffiti. It seems someone had been sleeping in the park, considering there were clothes that left next to a trashcan. There was also graffiti on the wall that read "f\*\*\* rape haha." There was a broken marijuana capsule next to a pack of "Dutches" as well as a Bud Light bottle cap.

There were clothes left next to the slide area, a cigarette package and butts left behind next to a table. There was a table sprayed with yellow paint that made the premises look unwelcoming. The bench table had offensive graffiti language on each side. When I climbed to the top of slide, I found disturbing messages (which cannot be seen from the bottom). I don't think parents are aware of unless they were to climb up the slide. This was very offensive and disturbing language that no child at a playground should have to see.

One of the signs (which contained the park's rules) was not visible at the entrance and had very small print. The sign did not provide a number to call to report a complaint either. The playground next to the slide area contained particles that seemed unsafe. I would not want to step on that playground as something sharp could easily be hidden underneath. There was also clothing left behind. There was light flickering at the park entrance as one of the lamps needed to be replaced. One trashcan had a really bad smell as though someone had defecated inside.

### Cigarillo Wrappers Such trash may indicate signs



### of marijuana usage.

**LEMON GROVE PARK** — Lots of trash in the parking lot, grass area, playground. Empty beer and alcohol bottles. Cigarette butts. Code enforcement signs covered by trees also faded and small text that is not readable. Graffiti in the bathrooms and playground equipment. Spoke to a neighbor of 23 years and she mentioned Tim, a familiar homeless friend, was found dead a few days ago. No water fountain, sink in bathroom was very dirty and water not running well, more like a drip. Upon arrival, parking gate was open. Seemed that four cars were there overnight, with people living out of the car.

Graffiti on tables and benches. No good signs visible or obvious number to call and report. Some signs are faded and not at eye level for some of them. Some of light posts are covered by tree branches. Not enough lighting. Entrance has spider web on the chain/gate that is used to close the park. Another resident that lives across the street says the park is never closed.

Arrived at park talked to Grandma that has lived here 23 years. Shared that Tim (a homeless man) that lives in the park died. Was found at park dead this week. She said "this is not a normal park

anymore." She feels that too much drug activity and drinking takes place here. She walks every morning and finds condoms on tables. People are in bad shape. The bathroom looks dirty no paper locked in its container. No water in sink. Bathroom looks dark and filthy. Like it has no cleaning. No soap. No paper towels. Bad smell in bathroom. Trash can full of soiled paper. Talked to another jogger and she shared that "a lot of drug and alcohol activity is always present." Toilet dirty paper by the fence in parking lot and human poop. Bottles of beer and hard liquor present throughout most of park. Found a shrine present for Tim (homeless man that



passed). Some of the children's equipment not working. Wood chip in playing area where kids walk full of trash and particles. Not safe to walk on. Sharp objects could be hidden in wood chips.

**BERRY STREET PARK** — No trash bag in trash can. Trash falling out. Graffiti on no smoking sign/some signs are too high not at eye level. Over all this is a cleaner park. No trash bag in "Doggie Walk Bags." Graffiti on post. Board for

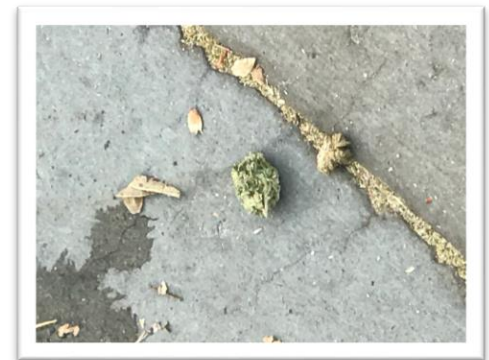
announcements rusty and wet. Not enough Doggie walk bags stands. Biggest problem was dog poop everywhere. Maybe because of dog presence, which is good. Wood rotten next to reservation sign needs replacement. I entered the men's bathroom and the men's urinal was plugged and filled with urine. The smell was overpowering. The woman's bathroom was over all decent. Toilet paper in both bathrooms which was not present at the other parks. The dog poop could be helped with more doggy bag dispensers. Over all this park feels safe and cared for. One walking path is unsafe, deep uneven areas (holes).

**FIREFIGHTER'S SKATE PARK** — We found marijuana on the ground; marijuana canisters; excessive litter, food and empty cigarette boxes. We also found candy wrappers, cigar wrappers and beer tops.

There were shoes hanging in the trees. We found a cigarette lighter on the ground and a lot of drug paraphernalia and trash. We suspected that there was a lot of underage smoking happening in that area as we also found a gram of marijuana on the ground.

**CIVIC CENTER PARK** — Clean and well maintained not a lot of graffiti. Surveyors saw two vehicles with people inside sleeping. There were a few cigarettes.

**PROMENADE PARK** — Directly in front of a new building across the street we saw three grocery shopping carts, plenty of trash, items of clothing and a tent on the walkway. We observed hundreds of cigarette butts, possibly thousands if you count the entire area. We also saw graffiti cover up on a new structure painted over with non-matching paint. We observed five people loitering and drinking alcohol. Given their untidy appearance, it seemed like they may have spent the night at the park. We also noted an electric box with a nice painting on it that seemed to be decaying. The trash cans were over filled and there was even litter all around them. The bench did not look clean and there was graffiti on one side of it. We also saw food wrappers, paper, plastic, and other trash all around the trolley area. Plants and bushes had trash hanging from them. This is the last place we surveyed and by far the dirtiest, and it was especially littered with cigarette butts and other trash. Toward the end of our observation, two of the five people who were drinking on the tables left and later returned with a case of beer. They did not use bags to cover the beer and drank out in the open in broad daylight.





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## FOR MORE INFORMATION

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