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PRESS RELEASE - August 22nd 2007 – Los Angeles

September 21st 2007 is Park(ing) Day L.A.

Celebrate Parks and Urban Open Space!

Lease a park for a day by feeding a parking meter!

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Coming soon to a metered parking space near you: a park for a day!

Friday September 21st 2007 is International Park(ing) Day, following a successful project initiated by San Francisco's REBAR Group in November of 2005, in which a metered parking space was turned into a temporary public park. The park lasted two hours, but the creative spark brought together diverse activists from artists to environmentalists to concerned residents, and now Park(ing) Day has now taken root and spread worldwide. September 21st, 2007 marks the first official Park(ing) Day in Los Angeles.

Los Angeles has fewer parks and vibrant public spaces than other large cities. L.A.'s public spaces have increasingly become dedicated to and degraded by large volumes of vehicular traffic. Park(ing) Day raises awareness about the need for community-oriented and recreational spaces such as parks, while promoting dialogue around creative alternatives to current uses of urban public space. Park(ing) Day L.A. is a call to action for all who seek to improve quality of life in our urban centers and are concerned about the disparities between public space allocated for parking cars and space made available for parks and other community infrastructure such as playgrounds and gardens.

On September 21st 2007, at various locations throughout greater Los Angeles, teams will assemble, insert a few quarters into their parking meter, and create temporary public parks for Angelinos to enjoy. Artists, community activists, non-profits, design professionals, urban bicyclists and others are already planning parking space parks. Some parks will be as simple as a layer of sod or artificial turf, a bench or two, and a few potted trees and shrubs. Other parks are being elaborately designed by professional architects and landscape architects. Some mini-design competitions have even emerged between various architecture and landscape architecture firms working with community groups to design temporary parks. The fun isn't simply in building the parks but in transporting the materials too. Many parks will be deployed solely by bicycle-power, including towing large potted trees down L.A. streets via large bike trailers.

PARK(ING) DAY LA

Build a Park

Join a team working to design and build a parking space park – or bring your neighbors or a local community organization together to plan and program your own mini-park. The parks for a day can include various activities such as relaxing and meditating, catching up with old friends and meeting new friends, dance and exercise, public performance, or just simply enjoying the sun – the possibilities are endless!

The Park(ing) Day L.A. website www.parkingdayla.com can connect you with a team planning a park in your community, or can guide you on how to create your own parking space park. The site includes a wiki bulletin board that connects volunteers with teams and teams with resources. Do you want help building your park? Do you have a bench or a potted tree to donate or lend? Do you want to find out what parking space parks will emerge in your neighborhood? Check www.parkingdayla.com.

Additional participating cities include San Francisco, New York City, Boston, Minneapolis, Washington DC, and Seattle. Various groups are involved in organizing the event including Livable Places, the American Institute of Architects (Los Angeles Chapter), Illuminate L.A., North East Trees, the Trust for Public Land, and the Bicycle Kitchen. Anyone can create their own park. Join an existing team or invite friends and family to create your own team, and start planning a park today!

Come to the After-Party!

Park(ing) Day L.A. will conclude with an after-party. We're still finalizing the location – check www.parkingdayla.com – but it will be a large outdoor public space that's currently dedicated to (you guessed it) parking. The after-party will feature music, speakers and outdoor film screenings (courtesy of C.I.C.L.E. and the Echo Park Film Center). Parking space parks from throughout L.A. will pack up and converge at the after-party, so folks can experience various mini-parks in one place.

Park Building Workshop on September 5

On Wednesday September 5th at 6:30 pm, Parking Day L.A. will be hosting a workshop at the LA Eco-Village—117 Bimini Place, LA 90004—for individuals and organizations interested in creating parks. The workshop is designed to give assistance and inspiration to groups, to help answer questions, and help get community parks ready for the big day on September 21st.

To find out more about how to get involved, including current teams, how to select a site and create a park, as well as additional materials and resources, come to the September 5th workshop and/or visit: www.parkingdayla.com. Alternately, call 213.622.5980 or email info@parkingdayla.com

Check the website for updates on upcoming meetings, workshops, maps of planned parks and much more!