

Would You Build A Park Next To A Freeway? Fresno May Build Two

By Ezra David Romero



The group says parks next to freeways are a risk to children's health and that direct exposure to exhaust can lead to higher rates of asthma, diabetes and gastrointestinal disease.

Credit Ezra David Romero / Valley Public Radio

With the final vote for the Fresno General Plan Update and Environmental Impact Report just around the corner, activists are appealing for changes to the plan that could potentially alter the health of children in the region.

Air quality activist Kevin Hall says the city's decision to put parks near freeways shows a lack of concern about the health of children.

Credit Ezra David Romero / Valley Public Radio

A group of activists and health leaders met today at the site of a proposed new park in Northwest Fresno near Highway 99 to protest what they call a big problem with the city's proposed new general plan. Their concern - this park and another would be built next to busy freeways - and the polluted air that comes from them.



"We know now that it actually affects the genetic structure of our kids," says Kevin Hamilton with Clinica Sierra Vista in Fresno.

Hamilton says parks next to freeways are a risk to children's health and that direct exposure to exhaust can lead to higher rates of asthma, diabetes and gastrointestinal disease.

Credit Ezra David Romero / Valley Public Radio

Air quality activist Kevin Hall says a decision to build parks near freeways shows a lack of concern about the health of children.

"This is an easy fix, but it's just one symptom of the city's response to public input on health impacts," Hall says.

But Mark Standriff, a spokesman with the City of Fresno, says it's too early to know if these spaces will even be parks.

"Any specific allegations on this I'd think it's kind of putting the cart before the horse," Standriff says. "In the plan we don't designate between what would be in this particular park case what would just be called open space or green space buffer."



The group would like the policy for parks near freeway corridors amended from the general plan and 30 more days for review of comments in the environmental impact review.

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