

## Schools as parks | Fresno Bee Fresno Bee

Thank you for covering the inequity in Fresno's parks. We've known that neighborhoods south of Shaw Avenue lack access to safe spaces for physical activity for some time and little has been done.

According to the General Plan, Fresno would need to invest in 947.85 acres of park space, south of Shaw, to meet the goal of 5 acres per 1,000 residents. The Parks Master Plan should address this, but we can't wait. While we work on park inequity we have to be proactive in promoting health. The General Plan offers another way to increase access to green space through "coordination with school districts."

As an immediate approach, schools can allow residents to use the green space and blacktop area (i.e. through expanded school policies and joint-use agreements) during non-school hours. Fresno Unified School District operates 95 schools, if half of the schools in south Fresno opened their gates to community, the impact would be tremendous.

School board members and city council members should work in partnership to make this happen immediately while they work on updating the Parks Master Plan to create and improve parks.

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