



The Wilmington Waterfront Park is uniquely poised to meld cultural and ecological history with green technology in the heart of the harbor at the nation's busiest port, the Port of Los Angeles. The project is located at the edge of Wilmington, California, an industrial-based town with minimal open space. The primary objective of the park is to reconnect the community of Wilmington with a coastal environment.

After gaining community input and support, the Port's design team balanced the desire for a healthy, safe, accessible recreation environment that would restore a coastal connection and habitat. Creating common ground between a bustling Port and a residential community, the southern edge of the park created an opportunity to mitigate noise from industrial traffic along Harry Bridges Boulevard and the Harbor Freeway by creating a landform and planted terraces, which provide both an elevated promontory to visually connect with the Pacific water sheet, physically connect with an extension of the California Coastal Trail, and substantially reduce adjacent traffic noise.

Given the post-industrial, brownfield condition of the site and its surrounding working industrial waterfront environs, the opportunities were limited for visitors to physically access the inner waterways. The design team developed a series of active turf grass recreation areas with slopes of low-mow ornamental grass for passive recreation such as spectator viewing, lounging and sunbathing under the green canopy of shade trees. To offset the water demand of the recreation turf, the design team included one panel of artificial turf and implemented a stormwater management system to capture and filter the stormwater on site reducing the dependency on water – a precious resource in the region.

In concert with the noise attenuation, stormwater management includes over 5,000 linear feet of subsurface stone French drains along walkways, planter beds, and low points in the landscape. The French drains promote the infiltration of stormwater back into the ground rather than piping it out to the City storm drainage system. Many of the walkways and plazas are sloped toward grass swales or planter beds which both filter the stormwater runoff and slow the rate at which it leaves the site. In the parking lots, subsurface sand filtration chambers have been installed to remove oils and suspended sediment from the runoff so it is not discharged to the ocean.

Air quality is another sustainable issue addressed through the park's design. In early phases of the project, Sasaki investigated the integration of titanium dioxide to mitigate vehicle-related air pollution. The research found that titanium dioxide reduces nitrogen oxide by 45 percent per 500 vehicles. As a result, a titanium dioxide coating has been applied on a portion of the El Paseo Promenade terraces. Additionally, the planting of tree groves comprised of 653 trees or approximately 14.42 acres of coverage in the surrounding landscape will further enhance air quality, sequester carbon and re-establish ecological habitat for the community of Wilmington.

## **Sustainability**

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In addition to the sustainable noise attenuation, stormwater management, and air quality strategies; the following are further sustainable design initiatives which were integrated in the project:

- Pervious infiltration to improve stormwater quality
- Light management within the site
- Drought-tolerant plant material to reduce irrigation demand
- Reclaimed water provided for park irrigation
- Specification of sustainable certified materials, regional materials, and materials with recycled content

The Wilmington Waterfront Park is considered a community park but serves the Los Angeles region. It is the first of four community parks and streetscape improvements planned within Wilmington which extend the California Coastal Trail approximately 1.5 miles and will physically reconnect the community with its waterfront at Banning's Landing — the historic birthplace of the Port of Los Angeles.

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