

BOX 2 A Tale of Two Libraries in Sacramento

The California State Library system's significant cuts have led to reduced staff and programming and shortened hours for Sacramento's twenty-nine libraries. But the differences in both the availability of resources and the way in which they are deployed leads to very different conditions among the libraries in the system.

Sacramento Library's Belle Cooledge branch, located in the affluent Land Park neighborhood, is part of a complex that includes a community center, lush park, and playground. Less than thirteen miles away is the **Del Paso Heights branch in North Sacramento**. This library is a block away from Grant Union High School, ranked as one of the lowest-performing high schools in Sacramento in 2010, making access to free reading materials and Internet, enriching literacy programs, and safe after-school activities vital for the community.

Patrons entering the Belle Cooledge Library pass through automatic doors into a spacious hallway with drinking fountains, community newspapers, and event flyers. The Del Paso Heights branch is similarly structured, but with its significantly smaller hallway, attempting to read local postings is likely to activate the door sensors, creating a loud interruption to the library experience. In fact, at twelve thousand square feet and with three rooms, the Belle Cooledge facility has four times the space of the three thousand square-foot Del Paso Heights Library. It also houses three times the number of books, DVDs, periodicals, and other library items, and has eighteen computers with Internet, as compared with twelve in Del Paso Heights. While both offer story time for tots, Del Paso Heights offers fewer other library programs for teens and the community, and participation rates in these programs are far lower.

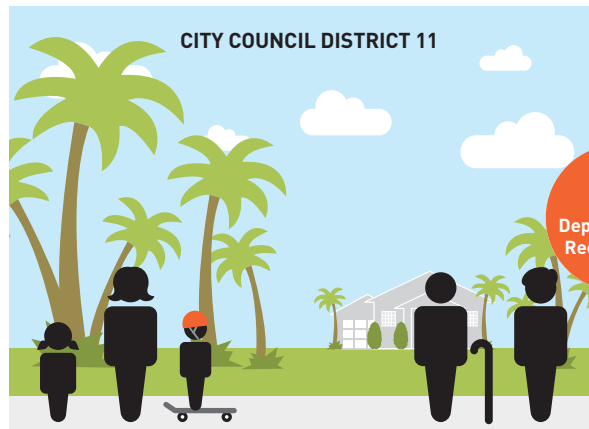
In July 2010, Belle Cooledge was remodeled into a sophisticated space that now resembles a popular chain

bookstore. The revamped library has a 1950s diner-themed teen area complete with a "reading bar" with stools and café-style seating, and a children's play center with a fish tank. Adult amenities include a music section and a periodicals browsing collection of over one hundred magazines and newspapers. At a cost of \$354,000, the Belle Cooledge renovation price tag was steep, but highly successful local fundraising and the efforts and connections of the Friends of the Sacramento Public Library provided the lion's share of funds. With shrinking public funds, friends groups—local volunteers who support individual library branches—have become critical resources for the Sacramento library system. And with the volunteer efforts come further income-generating opportunities—the Belle Cooledge Friends run a bookstore inside the library and donate all profits to the library.

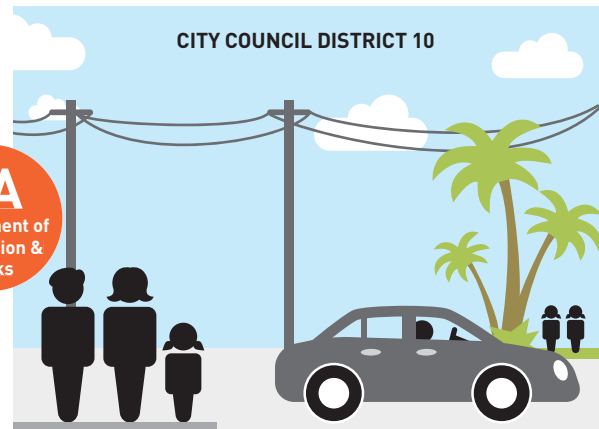
In 2009, the Del Paso Heights Library was also remodeled with a pleasant facade. However, the expansion of the children and teen area came at the expense of the community room, leaving community groups to meet outside, except during winter months when indoor meetings compete with library activities. Del Paso Heights is the only Sacramento city library branch that does not stay open until 8pm any day of the week due to safety issues. With only one room, fewer computers, and shorter hours, Del Paso offers a less welcoming environment for doing sustained homework or research. Del Paso Heights also has an active Friends group, but it does not have the same impact as the Belle Cooledge group, in large part because the community has far fewer resources to offer.

Sources: California Department of Public Health 2010; California Food Policy Advocates 2002; de la Torre 2011; Lambert and Reese 2010; Navarro 2008; United Press International 2011; Sacramento Public Library 2011; The California State Library 2010.

BOX 4 A Tale of Two Parks in Los Angeles



3 ACRES OF PARKLAND FOR EVERY 1,000 RESIDENTS
28 PARKS
LOWER DIABETES RATES



.35 ACRES OF PARKLAND FOR EVERY 1,000 RESIDENTS
18 PARKS
HIGHER DIABETES RATES



Los Angeles's 10th City Council District lies in South Los Angeles and includes the neighborhoods of Jefferson Park, Arlington Heights, and West Adams. The neighborhoods of District 10 have some of the lowest well-being scores on the American HD Index. The area's quiet residential streets are crisscrossed by commercial corridors dominated by gas stations and corner stores, with the Santa Monica Freeway running through its center. Home to approximately 19,000 people per square mile, CD 10 offers 0.35 acres of city parkland for every 1,000 residents. A total of eighteen city parks provide recreational facilities and children's playgrounds to the district's residents. The population in this part of Los Angeles is one fifth African American and over half Latino, and one in five families lives in poverty.

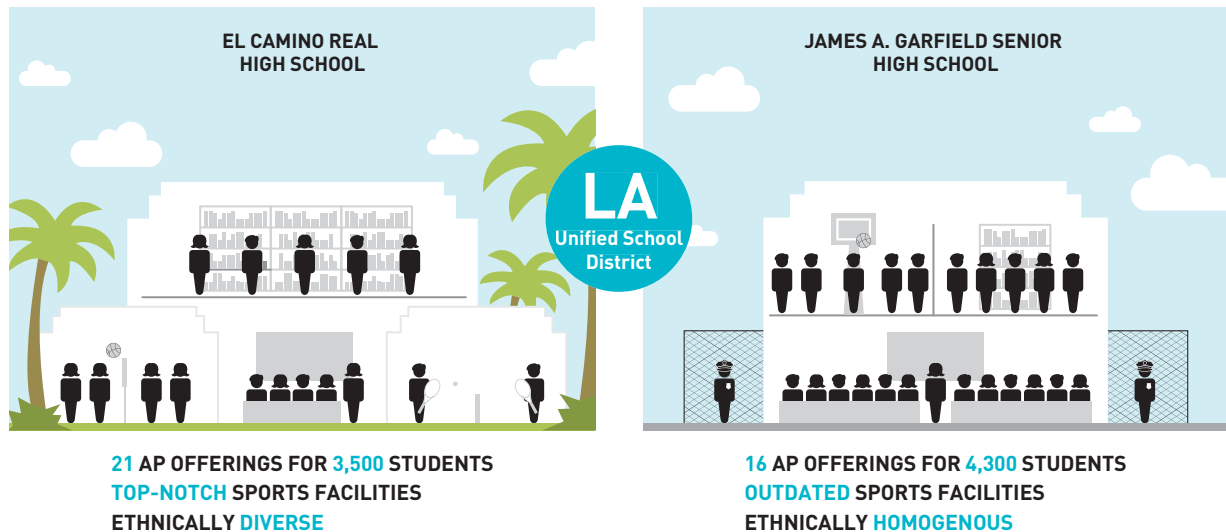
Fewer than ten miles west is the **11th City Council District**, perched alongside the Pacific Ocean and covering Westside neighborhoods like Pacific Palisades, Venice, and Brentwood. Home to the famous Muscle Beach, CD 11 has both single- and multifamily housing; it is characterized by high fences, verdant landscaping, and trendy shops and restaurants. The combination of elegant housing and upscale shopping centers gives the 11th District a feeling of safety and comfort. The neighborhoods of CD 11, in which the majority of residents

are white and the poverty rate is below 7 percent, have some of the state's highest scores on the American HD Index.

CD 11 contains approximately 4,375 people per square mile and offers about 3 acres of city parkland for every 1,000 residents. A total of twenty-eight parks and recreation centers, not including nearby beaches and state parks, serve the district's residents. These Westside neighborhoods offer nearly ten times the net parkland acres as the far more densely populated South Los Angeles neighborhoods, as well as ten more parks and recreation centers.

How is the disparity in people's ability to exercise outdoors in their respective corners of Los Angeles, either in parks or by walking, jogging, or biking on sidewalks and streets, reflected in their health and longevity? A baby born in one of these Westside neighborhoods can expect to outlive one in Los Angeles South neighborhoods by over four years. In addition, the number of hospitalizations for diabetes—a largely preventable chronic disease fueled by unhealthy diets and physical inactivity—is three times higher in District 10.

Sources: The City Project 2011; Girgenti 2011; Healthy City 2011; Los Angeles County Department of Public Health 2010; Los Angeles Department of City Planning.

BOX 1 A Tale of Two Schools in Los Angeles

El Camino Real High School in Los Angeles, nestled in the foothills of the Santa Monica Mountains, serves a diverse population of 3,500 students from the communities of Woodland Hills, West Hills, and Canoga Park. The school resembles a small college, with top-notch sports facilities including an artificial turf football field and amenities for tennis, volleyball, golf, and handball; a well-stocked, two-story library; and an “exemplary” rating from district inspections for the safety and security of the school facility. While large for an American high school, it has enjoyed relatively high levels of academic success, with a graduation rate above 90 percent, and 58 percent of students completing the coursework required to apply to University of California (UC) or California State University (CSU) schools.

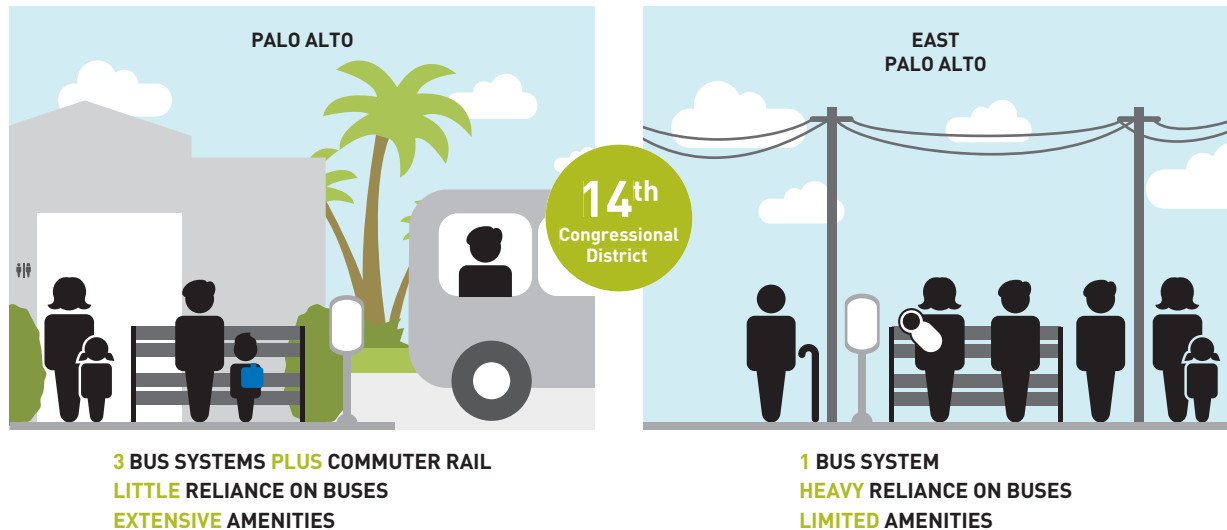
Also part of the Los Angeles Unified School District is **James A. Garfield Senior High School**. Located in the inner-city neighborhood of East LA, Garfield’s population has virtually no diversity; Latinos comprise 99 percent of the student body. With over 4,300 students, Garfield is one of the nation’s largest high schools. Because of severe overcrowding, the school was in operation year-round for many years, with staggered vacations. Recent construction to upgrade the eighty-year-old school building and additional space in other neighborhood schools to relieve crowding has finally allowed Garfield to return to a normal schedule. Sports facilities are limited to one baseball field, a poorly maintained football field, and some tennis and

basketball courts. The library is one floor. The most recent safety and security inspection resulted in “poor” marks for the security of windows, doors, gates, and entryways.

Fewer than 10 percent of Garfield’s students are proficient in English, and the entire student body is eligible for meal subsidies. Yet despite tremendous out-of-school and academic challenges and marked differences in the physical plant, Garfield is making strides. The school has improved each year on California’s Academic Performance Index and on standardized tests. But while El Camino Real has twenty-one Advanced Placement offerings for 3,500 students, Garfield has only sixteen for 4,300 students, one reason that only 36 percent of graduates have completed the coursework required to apply for UC and CSU schools.

A recent state-level grant for closing achievement gaps is helping to bring Garfield into the twenty-first century, particularly in terms of technology, and new construction bodes well for the school’s future. El Camino Real has just voted to become a charter school, qualifying the school for additional state funding while reducing Los Angeles Unified School District’s total student population and thus school budget.

Sources: California Department of Education 2010; CBS Los Angeles 2011; de la Torre 2011; El Camino Real High School 2011; Garfield High School 2011; Office of Data and Accountability 2011a; Office of Data and Accountability 2011b.

BOX 2 A Tale of Two Transport Systems in the Bay Area

California's Congressional District 14 has one of the highest American Human Development Index scores of any district in the country. Silicon Valley's hub, **Palo Alto**, drives these high levels of well-being. Abutting Palo Alto and still in District 14 is **East Palo Alto**, one of the poorest cities in the Bay Area. Income per person in Palo Alto is \$69,000, and 5.7 percent of the population is living below the income poverty line; East Palo Alto's per capita income is \$18,785, and the poverty rate is 17.8 percent.³

Palo Alto is home to a large outdoor bus station, which connects to the commuter train line to San Francisco and San Jose. About a dozen buses from three systems stop at the station as well. The bus station itself has a large shelter, benches, ample signs, maps, and timetables, a public restroom, bicycle parking and storage, newsstands, and landscaping.

The Palo Alto station stands in marked contrast to stops on the East Palo Alto bus line, in the town just next door, which include at most a small shelter with a sign indicating which buses stop at the location. About six buses from one system run through East Palo Alto, though they generally come less

frequently than buses through the Palo Alto station. Many of the buses in East Palo Alto serve chiefly to bring residents to the Palo Alto station rather than providing direct service to other areas, increasing average bus commute time to thirteen minutes longer per ride for East Palo Alto commuters as compared with those traveling from Palo Alto.⁴

Although the largely white, wealthy population of Palo Alto has greater access to bus transit than the chiefly low-income, minority residents of East Palo Alto, the latter are about four times as likely to use buses to commute to work. Low-income communities like East Palo Alto rely more on bus transit because buses are less expensive than trains or driving and because property near train stops tends to be more expensive; yet despite the significantly greater demand for and reliance on bus service by people in East Palo Alto, the service is considerably more frequent and extensive in Palo Alto.

Sources: Metropolitan Transportation Commission 2010; U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2005–2009; Westling 2011.