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Park(ing) Day Called for LA

Group asks Angelenos to turn parking spaces into parks

LAURA B. WEISS

INTERIOR DESIGN · SEPTEMBER 6, 2007

Few people would confuse a cramped metered space intended specifically to park a car with the expansive public parks that cities and towns have traditionally allotted for picnics or games of Frisbee. But that's exactly what an LA group is calling on citizens in the driving-obsessed town to do.

September 21st marks the first official Park(ing) Day in Los Angeles, and a collection of groups—including the LA chapter of the American Institute of Architects, Livable Cities, and the Trust for Public Land—is calling on residents to congregate at locations around the city, insert some quarters into a parking meter, and create temporary-yet-tiny public parks.

But why curb Angeleno's natural desire to stash their vehicles in those narrow, gritty street-side spaces more accustomed to oil pan leaks than blossoming trees and shrubs? Los Angeles has fewer parks and vibrant public spaces than other large cities, the group contends.

Park(ing) Day reflects a concern "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," the group says in a statement.

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Some parks will simply consist of a layer of sod or artificial turf, a bench or two, and potted trees and shrubs. Professional architects and landscape architects will design others more elaborately.

For more information on how to participate, visit: www.parkingdayla.com.

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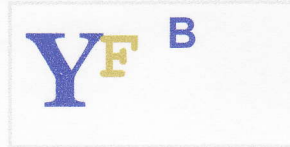
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