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# Planning for Parks and Recreational Opportunities

**SD** City Planning

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# Planning for Parks in an Infill City

- Housing Capacity
- Market realities
- State law constraints

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# Growth in a Developed City

- San Diego is largely built out, with limited vacant land for new development
  - State housing laws require cities to accommodate growth within existing urban areas
  - Housing needs to be located near jobs, services, and transit to remain affordable and reduce displacement
  - As neighborhoods intensify, parks must serve more people within the same physical footprint
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# How We Used to Plan for Homes and Parks

- New communities developed on largely vacant land
  - Parks were planned at the same time as homes and schools
  - Land could be reserved or acquired in advance
  - Park systems were predictable and contiguous
  - Homes were constructed and occupied within a short timeframe, along with the parks
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# Planning for Parks in a Newly-Planned Community

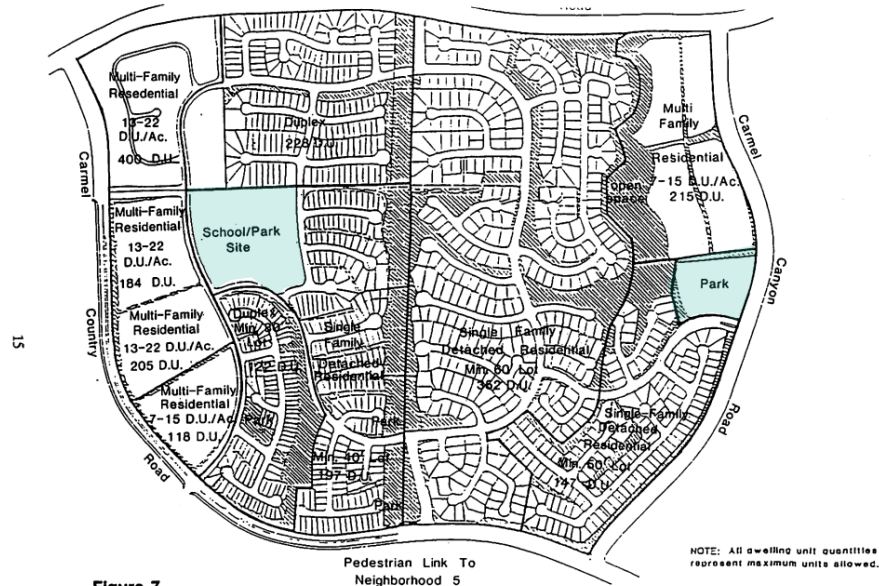


Figure 7  
Land Use



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# Planning for Parks in Existing Communities

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# How We Plan for Homes and Parks Today

- Virtually no large areas of developable vacant land remain
- Capacity for new homes is created within existing developed communities
- Most land is privately owned by thousands of different owners
- Community plan updates create capacity for new homes to be built, but do not mandate it be built
- The decision to redevelop a property ultimately rests with individual property owners

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# Capacity Does Not Equal Growth

- Community plans allow more housing, businesses and services than is built
- Capacity is a long-term ceiling, not a development forecast
- The pace and scale of new home construction depends on:
  - market conditions
  - financing
  - timing
  - property owner interest in redeveloping or selling to a developer





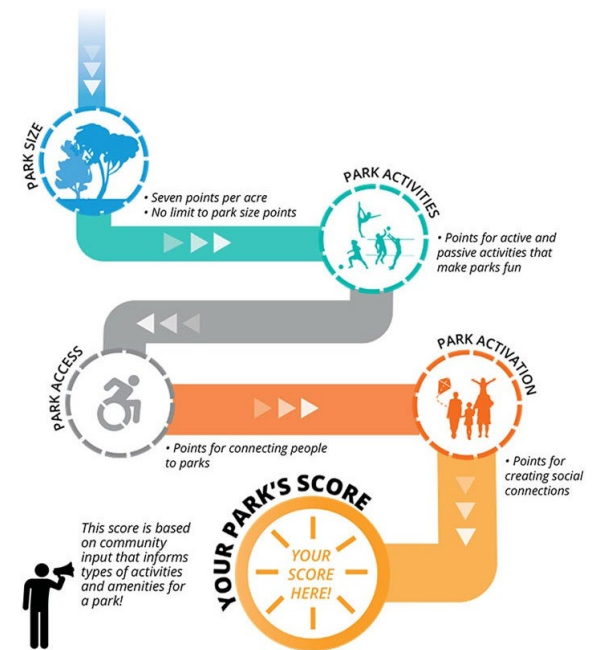
# Why We Cannot Plan Parks on Private Land

- State law prohibits down-zoning
  - The City:
    - Cannot reserve future parkland on private property
    - Cannot assume specific sites will redevelop
  - Park planning must be legally defensible
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# Infill Development Requires a Different Park Strategy

- Parks Master Plan established a new standard for park development that reflects the City's reality as a developed, in-fill City
- Success is measured by recreational value, not acreage





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# Infill Development Requires a Different Park Strategy

- Park planning in infill communities focuses on:
    - Enhancing existing parks
    - Identifying City-owned land that can be used for parks
    - Creating flexible, multi-use spaces
    - Improving connectivity and access
    - Identifying opportunities for joint use with other agencies
    - Acquiring new lands for parks as opportunities arise
      - 10% of Citywide Parks DIF reserved for land acquisition
    - Larger projects constructing public spaces
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# Role of Private Development

- In designated overlay zones
  - Developer must provide publicly accessible spaces
  - Projects contribute to on-site recreation
- These spaces:
  - are scaled to development size
  - complement city parks
  - expand access to recreational opportunities in dense areas
- New Community Enhancement Overlay Zones are established with Community Plan Updates



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# What This Means Going Forward

- Community plans add capacity for new homes and businesses, but cannot compel redevelopment, which occurs incrementally based on market conditions and property owner interest
  - Specific parks are identified on current City-owned and controlled land
  - Infill communities require:
    - Incremental and flexible solutions
    - Partnerships with other agencies such as school districts
    - Public-private partnerships
    - Identifying opportunities for future land acquisition
    - A focus on access, quality, and equity
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# Citywide Plans

- In addition to Community Plan Recreation Elements updates, the Park Planning team works on various Citywide Park plans, including master plans for regional parks
  - Active projects – Chollas Creek Park Master Plan, Trails Master Plan and Balboa Park Master Plan
  - As part of Citywide Park Planning efforts, policies to further access to recreation are proposed and brought forward to City Council
  - The Park Planning team is also working on making the Park Master Plans implementation ready through streamlining the review process
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# Parks & Rec Board Participation

- City Planning will engage the Park & Recreation Board at key milestones throughout each Community Plan Update, including:
    - At project kick-off
    - During the ideas phase of the planning process
    - Once a draft is available for the community plan
    - For a recommendation to the City Council
  - City Planning is currently advancing the Mid-Cities Community Plan Update
  - Upcoming Community Plan Updates include:
    - Otay Mesa–Nestor
    - Rancho Bernardo
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