

February 2, 2026

Salome Martinez  
Program Manager  
City of San Diego  
Parks and Recreation Department  
[symartinez@sandiego.gov](mailto:symartinez@sandiego.gov)

RE: Allied Gardens Grantville Community Council Response to the 2026 City of San Diego  
Parks & Recreation Needs Assessment Survey

Ms. Martinez,

This council is pleased with the terrific efforts you and the rest of the Parks and Recreation teams demonstrate daily to bring joy, education, socialization, and activity, to all of our San Diego communities. We are likewise appreciative of the opportunity to provide feedback on the process of bringing these benefits to our community. To answer this call, we submit the following suggestions for consideration of development within our community's area parks - including the Mission Trails Regional Park.

Parks for all of us means every community is a community of concern. Despite a boom of over 2,000 new and approved housing units since completing the 2015 Grantville Redevelopment Plan (with as many as 6,275 more coming along the San Diego River corridor), Grantville has seen no new park developments or plans for them. We see this as a critical misdirection to the Development Impact Fee (DIF) money programming for this area, which has seriously neglected this community. These impacts now include the Allied Gardens recreation facilities, which are 65 years old, and its services, now overwhelmed, are inadequate to support the area's new and growing population.

The Navajo planning area is the 11<sup>th</sup> most populated planning area of the city and ranks with Clairemont and Linda Vista with regards to average density per acre at roughly 6 units/acre when the Mission Trails Regional Park acreage is removed from calculations. However, densities in Navajo vary greatly. Grantville for instance has densities in excess of the downtown planning area's average density of ~21 units/acre, approaching an average of 50 units/acre and up to 110 units/acre in Transit Priority Areas.

Using the population-based standards in the 2021 Parks Master Plan of 17,000 Sq Ft. of recreation center per 25,000 persons, and the most recent 2020 census, Grantville and Allied Gardens with a population of roughly 22K should have 15,000 sq. ft. of recreation center spaces and an Aquatics Center – we currently have a ~12,000 Sq Ft. recreation center and an Aquatics Center (built in 1982) that was not designed for a population of 50,000 per the standard. We are also the most underserved community in the city with respect to library services and spaces.

Additionally, large sections of Grantville and Allied Gardens currently fall outside the Parks Master Plan's 10-minute "walk-roll" goal. To address this gap in accordance with the General Plan's Recreation Element, prioritizing new parks and amenities development in Grantville and Allied Gardens, and expanding trails and amenities within the Navajo Canyon, will offer a cost-effective, short-term solution to improve accessibility while future recreation sites are identified in Grantville which has been objective seven of the [2005 Grantville Redevelopment Plan](#) for the last 20 years (see para 3.4.1 of the plan).

Allied Gardens and Grantville are exhibiting at least two of four key characteristics of park-deficient communities:

- Poor Quality & Amenities: Existing parks in disrepair, lacking modern facilities, or experiencing unsafe conditions.
- Access Issues: Residents face longer distances to reach parks, with challenges in walking or biking.

Generally, our priorities are as follows:

Top investment priorities for our facilities are:

- Vest-Pocket or neighborhood parks next to current and future developments along the San Diego River
- Park amenities
- Develop new trails & identify connections to existing trails along the San Diego River, and Navajo Canyon
- Off-leash dog parks in Grantville
- Upgrade existing public restrooms
- Upgrade existing parks facilities
- Upgrade existing trails
- Upgrade existing regional parks

Top investment priorities for our programs are:

- Child and teen programs
- Fitness and wellness programs
- Senior adult programs
- Art Programs
- Seasonal special park events

We also note these opportunities and challenges related to funding and governance:

- Misdirection and prioritization of DIF funds away from our communities
- Placemaking and activation – social gatherings and activities in parks
- Parks and user experience - user outcomes are inconsistent

- Lack of adequate funding for operations and maintenance
- Need for sustainable fee-based programs to address ongoing gaps
- Missed opportunities for partnerships and collaboration – volunteerism, philanthropy, and non-profit partners
- Sustainability and the environment – contributions to habitat, and urban forestry
- Equity and accessibility – for seniors and disabled

Specific improvements by location are suggested in Attachment (1). Descriptions of trails, viewpoints, and park scoring for Navajo Canyon Open Space Park are in Attachment (2). General Plan and Parks Master Plan policies supporting these recommendations are in Attachment (3).

Sincerely,

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## **Attachment (1)**

### **Specific Recommendations by Location**

Specific improvements suggested by location are below. A summary of each park's current score, new totals after improvements, and cost estimates derived from examples in the [Citywide Parks Nexus Study](#) are given. The [Parks Master Plan](#) Appendix E, was used to verify current and proposed park scoring for the following parks: pp. 81 & 82 Allied Gardens Park, pp. 91 & 92 Rancho Mission Canyon Neighborhood Park, pp. 95 & 96 Grantville Neighborhood Park, pp. 105 & 106 Lewis Middle School, pg. 108 Navajo Regional Recreational Value. Appendix E was also used to draft the proposal for improvements to the Navajo Canyon Open Space Park.

#### **Grantville Community Park (Current score 108.5; proposed 154; Est. total cost \$924,519)**

Roughly 54 acres of the San Diego River Park, SDSU West, is not located in Grantville but is within a 10-minute "walk-roll" distance for some of Grantville west of the San Diego River. However, because of limited access points to cross the interstate highway (I-15), only those residences within a ½ mile pedestrian path of the Rancho Mission Rd. and San Diego Mission Rd. entrances to the park meet the city's 10-minute walk-roll goal.

Otherwise, the vast majority of Grantville's population of roughly 8,000 is currently served by one 2.8-acre pocket park at the corner of Vandever Ave. and Crawford St.. Per [Council Policy \(CP\) 700-34](#) pocket parks should serve a maximum of 5,000 people and be 10 acres when not collocated with an elementary school, 5 acres when they are. Since the adjacent, private, Sam and Rose Stein Academy three acre play area is not a joint use field for the park, Grantville is underserved by 13.2 acres of park space (using the 10 acres/5,000 person standard.) If the school were to once again serve as a public school to support children from Grantville's new developments, it could become a Joint Use Park area. Grantville's population does not yet justify a dedicated recreation center; this means making the most of the current park and developing more park spaces is critical for this community.

What priority should Grantville parks be given?

With the 2015 Grantville focused plan amendment and recent bonus densities provided by city and state laws, residential zoning in Grantville provides in excess of the standard densities for CC-3-9 (109 dwelling units per acre), CC-3-8 (up to 73 dwelling units per acre), and RM-3-7 / CC-3-6 (44 dwelling units per acre). Approximately 40% of Grantville has traditional lower density residential zoning (4 to 6 units per acre). Most of Grantville's residential zoning then exceeds the residential population density of 50 per net residential acre needed for 10 ranking points in CP 700-34.

Grantville community boundaries overlay three census tracts on the 2026 CTCAC/HCD Opportunity Area Map. These tracts are designated Highest Resource, Moderate Resource and Lowest Resource areas. The lowest density areas of Grantville are the highest resource tracts,

and density increases inversely to resources. Most of Grantville's area and population density is included in the Lowest Resource tract. As a low resource area, 50% of Grantville earns less than the San Diego LMI, scoring 10 points on this metric.

It is believed under the Age/Mobility metric, Grantville earns 10 points for roughly 40% of the population being under age 14 and over 55 years of age.

It appears Grantville may have an adequacy score of 5, but as low as 2 per CP 700-34.

This means Grantville has a minimum ranking score of 32 of 50 possible points for prioritization of developing more pocket parks. These recommendations are made for the existing Grantville park and Grantville:

- Dedicate at least 10 acres of new park space in Grantville as recommended in the San Diego River Park Master Plan (see recommendations for the SD River Park below).
- Update the specialty recreation court (soft surface) with concrete corn hole, ladder toss, and game table equipment (1 each) within the space currently used for horse shoes. All three new elements will fit here because the throw distances (40', 15', 0' respectively) are smaller than the game of horse shoes. (\$ TBD)
- Build an off-leash dog park at the southwest corner, along the fence and between the sidewalk and specialty recreation court. There is room for a ~ 10,600 Sq Ft. park without interfering with the specialty courts or more used areas of the park (\$262,519).
- Install a 40–80-person amphitheater to be used for social gatherings and community activities. Up to 3,000 Sq. Ft. is available between the two playgrounds on the hillside along the walk (\$190,000).
- Develop a fitness trail of (9) stations located on the north perimeter next to 350' of sidewalk between the west park entry walk and east end of the water culvert, ~7,000 Sq Ft. is currently irrigated, unused, and over grown, and flat enough, without need for a retaining wall (\$472,000). Shutting off irrigation to this section would save additional water costs.
- Replace the BBQ stand – currently there is a hot coals bin, but no BBQ stand. (\$ TBD) Community sponsors might purchase and install one.
- Repaint the park's sign (\$ TBD). Community volunteers may be sought for this.

**Navajo Canyon Open Space Park^ (Current score 21; proposed 119; Est. total cost \$407,502)**

- Interpretive/educational elements (1) at Eldridge St. & trail head, providing a variety of plant descriptions, Kumeyaay history, language, or plant uses, geology and trail map distances and descriptions of elevation gains/difficulty (\$65,348).
- Two picnic tables or benches at Eldridge St. plant restoration project trail head viewpoint (\$ TBD)

- Provide disabled access to interpretive elements from Eldridge St. curb to trail head view point. (\$ TBD)
- Way finding/signage at all other trail heads (6) - trail map, distances and descriptions of elevation gains/difficulty (\$14,154).
- New or refurbished trails – 2 miles (\$328,000).
- Streamline trail maintenance opportunities for volunteers

^See detailed proposal descriptions and scoring in Appendix 2.

**Allied Gardens Park: (Current score 336; proposed 462; Est. total cost \$2,869,189)**

- Two public art pieces with place making elements along walking paths with individual (anchored) seating that creates spaces for social gathering (\$200,000).
- Fitness trail (9) stations located at the east (2), north (2), and south (5) perimeters of the park (\$472,000).
- 3,200 Sq. Ft. All-weather shade cover/pavilion with tables/seating at west end – removing and replacing the currently unused concrete foundation (\$1,512,00).
- Comfort station at the west end – (near pavilion) using proximate water and sewer connections. (\$537,602).
- Way finding/signage (3) at intersections of Greenbriar & 51<sup>st</sup>; Greenbriar & Glenroy; At the park entry walk next to the recreation center parking area. Show area/park history, and amenity locations (\$7,077).
- 400 Sq. Ft. Food concession next to the sidewalk on Glenroy, at the north east corner of the aquatics center (\$140,510). Potential public private partnership.
- Interactive/Technology/Gaming Element – currently the recreation center has a PS4 and monitor in the old ‘crafts room’ next to the office, negligible investments would provide better rainy-day options for kids (\$ TBD).
- Recreational features for disabled people (\$ TBD).
- Replacement tree plantings in the Recreation & Aquatic Center Parking areas – currently there are planter spaces without trees (Included in park acre cost).
- Specialty Recreation (hard-surface), provide outdoor concrete equipment for, corn hole, ladder toss, game table, disc connect, on the north side of the recreation center (replacing currently unused 5,000 Sq. Ft. small hardcourt (four 4-square) areas) Potentially use poured in place rubber around equipment or remove asphalt altogether and fill with sand to reduce wear on game gear. (Included in park acre cost).

**Allied Gardens Recreation Center**

More afternoon and evening program activities and facilities upgrades:

- Teen-oriented activities, and field trips
- Outdoor workout and fitness areas;
- Public meeting/multi-purpose rooms

- New HVAC, flooring, Wi-Fi, & monitors/large screen displays in the Gardens Room
- Senior Citizen Services and Therapeutic Recreation Services
- Yoga, Dance, Line Dance
- Martial arts, and self-defense

Provide food and drink options at the recreation and aquatic centers;

- Fix the drinking fountains at the facility entrance next to the Gardens Room.
- Provide economic development opportunities.
- Convert the existing Recreation Center kitchen into a leased space for commercial food vendors.
- Provide machines with healthy food & drink options.
- Build a snack and drink vendor at the dog park/aquatics center.
- Include potential revenue sharing or public private partnerships to fund the center.

Formal Performance/Event Space - semi-annual events providing revenue opportunities.

### **Allied Gardens Aquatic Center**

- Aquatic complex – upgrades to facilities and equipment such as:
  - Spin Dryers for men’s and women’s dressing rooms
  - Point of use, tankless water heaters for showers
  - LED Lighting
  - Robotic Cleaners
  - Automated pool covers

### **San Diego River Park**

We support the efforts of the San Diego River Park Foundation and the [San Diego River Park Master Plan](#) which are compatible with the [2005 Grantville Redevelopment Plan](#) (para 3.6.2.1)

We endorse the river park master plan recommendations to acquire park land in Grantville:

- 1) In Paragraph 3.2.3, Confluence Reach, recommendations A-H and:
  - a. Path connection to the east side of Mission Gorge Road and Fairmount Avenue
  - b. Wildlife habitat restoration
  - c. Interpretation of Grantville history
  - d. Public parks that feature picnic areas, scenic or interpretive overlooks, fitness stations, seating and educational exhibit areas. In areas that do not contain sensitive habitat additional park amenities could include children’s play areas, multi-purpose courts, and multipurpose lawn areas. Recreation activities within the river, such as non-motorized water craft, could be proposed and will require Resource Agency approval at the time of a project proposal.
  - e. Location visually or conceptually connected to the river
  - f. Character reflects the river’s ecology and history

- g. River function incorporated into design
- 2) In Paragraph 3.2.4, Upper Valley Reach, recommendations A-H and:
- a. Public parks with recreational uses, such as picnic areas, children’s play areas, multi-purpose fields and courts
  - b. Incorporation of the San Diego River Pathway as an amenity of the public park
  - c. Wildlife habitat restoration
  - d. Location visually or conceptually connected to the river
  - e. Character reflecting the river’s ecology and history
  - f. River function incorporated into design

**Mission Trails Regional Park (MTRP)**

We support the efforts of the MTRP Task Force and their findings in the [2019 MTRP Master Plan Update](#) and [Program Environmental Impact Report](#). We provide their prioritized list of recommendations here:

- 1) [MTRP-MPU-Summary-of-Priority-Projects-Nov-18-2021.pdf](#)
- 2) [MTRP-MPU-Implementation-Priorities-Adopted-Nov-18-2021.pdf](#)

We only add a request for streamlined trail maintenance opportunities for volunteers.

## **Attachment (2)**

### **Navajo Canyon Open Space Park**

#### **Project location**

Navajo Canyon is located in the Navajo community of San Diego, near San Diego State University (SDSU) and Interstate 8. The canyon runs through the Allied Gardens and Del Cerro neighborhoods. Per the Navajo Community plan Navajo Canyon is an approximately 179-acre open space which should be preserved in a substantially open character.

Uses compatible with the open space concept like hiking, biking trails, picnic facilities, and wildlife preserves are appropriate and within the guidance of community and city planning documents for this area. Any developments should be compatible with the objectives of the open space system.

#### **Area Description**

##### **Geography and Geology**

The canyon is part of San Diego's coastal upland, featuring steep hillsides and a valley floor that includes a mostly dry creek bed. The area is characterized by sedimentary formations, including San Diego Formation sandstone (late Pliocene age), which contains rich molluscan fossils, and reddish-brown pebble and cobble conglomerates. The landscape is notably rocky with hard-packed dirt trails and significant elevation changes along the canyon's edge.

##### **Plant Life**

The canyon hosts a mix of riparian (streamside) and upland habitats. Characteristic vegetation includes Coastal Sage Scrub (sagebrush, California buckwheat, white and black sage) and Chaparral (toyon, lemonade berry, and prickly pear cactus). Endangered species such as coast barrel cactus and California spine bush are also present. Along the canyon bottom, native willows, sycamores, and cottonwoods provide nesting sites for birds like the hooded oriole and house wren.

Current vegetation restoration efforts near the 6510 Eldridge St. access to the canyon aim to remove non-native Mexican fan palms and eucalyptus trees to restore the natural water filtering and habitat functions of the canyon. This effort is compatible with trail creations proposed later as some invasive plants could be removed as part of trail creation.

##### **Animals**

Urban-Adapted Species like raccoons, skunks, and opossums are common near the canyon edges. Coyotes are common in the canyon, as natural predators, they help control local rodent populations. The canyon floor supports various small rodents, including woodrats, mice, and ground squirrels, which also serve as a primary food source for the canyon's birds of prey.

## **Bird Life**

Navajo Canyon is a significant birding location with resident and migratory species. Large birds of prey, including Cooper's hawks, red-tailed hawks, and various owls (such as barn owls and great horned owls), forage and breed within the canyon. Other year-round residents include Nuttall's woodpeckers, bushtits, California towhees, and wren tits. Migratory species like the hooded oriole and house wren migrate to the canyon to nest in its riparian vegetation and fan palms. The federally threatened California gnatcatcher might be occasionally heard making its distinctive "kitten-like" call in the sage scrub areas.

## **Reptiles and Amphibians**

The rocky, sun-exposed slopes and seasonal moisture in the canyon bottom provide ideal habitats for these species. Common sightings include the southern alligator lizard, western fence lizard, and side-blotched lizard. Various snakes, including rattlesnakes, inhabit the area and should be treated with caution by hikers. In the wetter, riparian sections of the canyon, you may find Pacific tree frogs or western toads.

## **Native American History**

Navajo Canyon is situated within the ancestral territory of the Kumeyaay (also known as Diegueño) people. The Kumeyaay have inhabited the San Diego region for over 10,000 years. The Tipai division of the Kumeyaay lived in areas including Mission Valley, which is adjacent to the canyon. Historically, the Kumeyaay practiced sophisticated land management, including controlled burns and harvesting local resources like Torrey pine nuts and acorns. The land occupied by nearby San Diego State University (SDSU) and the surrounding canyons like Navajo is formally recognized as Kumeyaay land in modern land acknowledgments.

## **Project Description**

The project is largely defined by the establishment of a viewpoint adjacent to the 6510 Eldridge St. access to the Navajo Canyon vegetation restoration area and creation of just over 2.0 miles of new trails and trail heads (T/H) located at public access points leading into the canyon.

Construction of a public viewpoint will include interpretive and educational elements, installation of seating (picnic table or benches), and T/H for a new trail at the existing public access point at 6511 Eldridge St., in Allied Gardens. It includes refurbishment of the existing 1.3 miles of Navajo Canyon Trail (NCT) as well as addition of approximately 2.0 miles of a new connecting trail network with T/H at public access points at: 5751 Lyden Way, 6090 Romany Dr., 5800 Navajo Rd., 5499 Mound Ave., 5350 Adobe Falls Rd., and 5100 Adobe Falls Rd.. Three of these T/H are new, 5751 Lyden Way, 6090 Romany Dr., and 5800 Navajo Rd.. Waypoint signage (6) at existing and new T/H are needed. An optional trail and T/H at 6405 Spear St. would provide an alternative 0.14 mile long trail access to the larger trail network; however, it is believed this access point is too steep to be created without retaining barriers and it is land

owned by SDG&E which would require an easement for access – therefore it is thought infeasible.

- Eldridge St. Trail – This trail begins near the street access point to take advantage of the potential to remove invasive plants. Beginning slopes are adjacent to a natural drainage point on steep slopes. A series of 8-14 switchbacks will be needed for the first 1,000 ft. to reduce the canyon slope in this area, prevent erosion and provide an acceptable grade for recreational hikers. After the switchbacks, the trail continues through waist high chapparal on more moderate slopes connecting with the NCT after about 1560 ft. at a four-way intersection with the Romany Dr. Trail (See Figure 1.)
- Lyden Way Trail – The beginning of this trail includes about 750 feet of relatively flat and unobstructed ground, with the remaining 1,350 ft experiencing minor shrub brush obstructions before connecting to the current NCT approximately 0.6 miles from the main, 5350 Adobe Falls, T/H (See Figure 2.)
- Romany Dr. Trail – This T/H's opening is dominated with dense vegetation of riparian oak, invasive pepper trees, and Mexican palms for which the invasives would have to be removed to gain access. Access difficulty is compounded by steep slopes, probably requiring a drain culvert or wood plank bridge to cross storm runoffs fed by Romany Dr. drainages. Once penetration into the tree canopy is achieved (about 200 ft.) storm water runoff crossings can be avoided by staying to one side of the canyon slope, some additional crossings may be required as canyon fingers are crossed. Approximately 2,000 ft. into the canyon the trail breaks out into relatively flat ground obstructed only by low chapparal before connecting to the current NCT at a four-way intersection with the proposed Eldridge St. Trail and approximately 4,430 ft. from the main Adobe Falls T/H, roughly 850 ft. from the intersection of the Navajo Rd. Trail and ~ 2,400 ft. from the Mound Ave. T/H. (See Figure 3.)
- Navajo Rd. Trail – The trail's path could follow either side of the small canyon created by stormwater runoff from Navajo Rd., but the western approach is less dense with vegetation and the initial slopes are flatter than those on the east side of the storm drain gorge which is about 15 ft. deep and presents a significant danger to kids or the curious. A split rail fence is recommended to keep people on the path and away from gorge edges for the first 400 ft. of trail which is otherwise shaded, gently sloping down and unobstructed. At this point a series of 2-4 switchbacks will allow easy descent into the canyon where the trail should be covered by tree canopy and relatively free of difficult obstructions. At around 1,100 ft. into the canyon this trail breaks out into low chaparral and will be easily traversed before it intersects with the existing NCT after about 2,100 ft from the Navajo Rd. T/H. This intersection with the existing NCT is ~1615 ft. from the Mound Ave. T/H, and roughly 850 ft. to the Romany Dr. Trail intersection (See Figure 4.)

- Existing Navajo Canyon Trail heads. The northern terminus of the NCT is at the 5499 Mound Ave. T/H. The southern terminus of the NCT has two endings one at the main 5350 Adobe Falls Rd. T/H and an alternate end at the 5100 Adobe Falls Rd. T/H. The trail from the Main T/H to the Mound Ave T/H is about 6,870 ft. (1.3 miles). The Navajo Canyon Trail is an easy hike with minimal elevation gain (around 200-250 ft), featuring a mostly flat path after an initial dip, rocky sections, creek crossings, and abundant vegetation, making it a peaceful, kid-friendly option (See Figure 5.)

The primary goal of the project is to enhance public access to scenic views of the canyon while educating visitors about the unique local environment and activating mobility. The total trail network once completed would include roughly 3.3 miles of trails accessible from two communities otherwise closed off to the canyon now (see Figure 6.)

### **Potential Environmental Impacts and Considerations**

Establishing additional hiking trails in Navajo Canyon may minimize impacts to surrounding habitat and discourage random trails made by unauthorized camping within the canyon. Trails should be located adjacent to streams within a buffer area in a manner that focuses activity away from sensitive habitat areas. Access to habitat areas should be discouraged through the design of the trails and the use of specialized plantings.

The project area and adjacent locations are subject to several significant environmental constraints and hazards that must be addressed:

**Multi-Habitat Planning Area (MHPA):** The viewpoint location is within or directly adjacent to the City of San Diego's MHPA, a critical area designated for regional biodiversity conservation and habitat linkage. Any development here must comply with the MHPA Land Use Adjacency Guidelines, which strictly limit development to ensure long-term habitat preservation.

**Environmentally Sensitive Vegetation Areas (SV, PSV):** The canyon is potentially home to sensitive native habitats, including Coastal Sage Scrub and Chaparral, and potentially endangered plant species. Construction activities at the view point and trails could directly impact this vegetation. Mitigation measures may be required to avoid disrupting the breeding seasons of sensitive wildlife, such as the California gnatcatcher (brush management is generally restricted from August 16 to January 31).

**Brush Management Challenges:** The development of a public viewpoint could require ongoing brush management for fire safety, creating a defensible space (typically a 100-foot radius around structures). This poses a challenge, as it could involve clearing or thinning the natural beauty visitors are there to see, potentially conflicting with MHPA preservation goals and requiring coordination with city departments and wildlife agencies.

**High Fire Hazard Severity Zones:** The entire canyon area is classified as a high-risk fire zone per the 2026 CalFire, Fire Hazard Severity Map. The proposed viewpoint could increase the number of people in the area, potentially increasing the risk of human-caused wildfires. Fire prevention and evacuation plans must be a primary component of the project design.

**Special Flood Hazard Zone A (At the Adobe Falls Trail Head):** While the viewpoint is at Eldridge Street, nearby access points like Adobe Falls Road are in a Special Flood Hazard Zone A, indicating a potential for flooding during significant rain events. This highlights the need for hydrological review and appropriate drainage design for the viewpoint area to avoid exacerbating erosion or water quality issues in the canyon bottom. As this is an existing trail head the impact is assessed not significant.

**Disturbed Land at Romany St. Access:** The presence of existing disturbed land at the Romany Street access point could offer alternative locations for interpretive site development that minimize impact on pristine habitats. Leveraging these already impacted areas for an interpretive site may be a less impactful option without increasing costs. It could be a more environmentally sound approach compared to developing a new site at Eldridge Street. However, the Romany St. location will prohibit a handicapped access, and it is potentially a more difficult site to install an interpretive site.

**Conclusion**

Establishing a viewpoint at the Eldridge Street access presents potential environmental challenges due to its location within a sensitive, fire-prone habitat area that is part of the regional conservation plan. To be approved, the project may need mitigation measures and detailed plans to minimize habitat destruction, manage fire risk, and ensure compliance with all city and regional environmental regulations. An alternative to using the Eldridge St. access is already disturbed ground at the Romany St. access which may be a less impactful option without increasing costs if the interpretive site can be sighted there. However, it will prohibit handicapped access and viewing.

**Navajo Canyon Open Space Park Scoring,**

Points are awarded for the Following:

<b>Table 1.1 Point Scoring</b>	
Element Description	Points
Parke Acreage – 179 acres	
Integration with Transit < 500ft. from Bus Stops on Waring (Navajo Rd. T/H)	14
Interpretive Elements – Next to revegetation area, with seating, and natural views	7
Disabled access to view point	21
(6) T/H with 3.4 miles of trails	49
Connections to a trail system	14
Connection to Natural Area	7

Way Finding	7
Proposed point totals	119
Current points assigned NCOSP are for Trail Network and Mileage	(21)

Figure 1

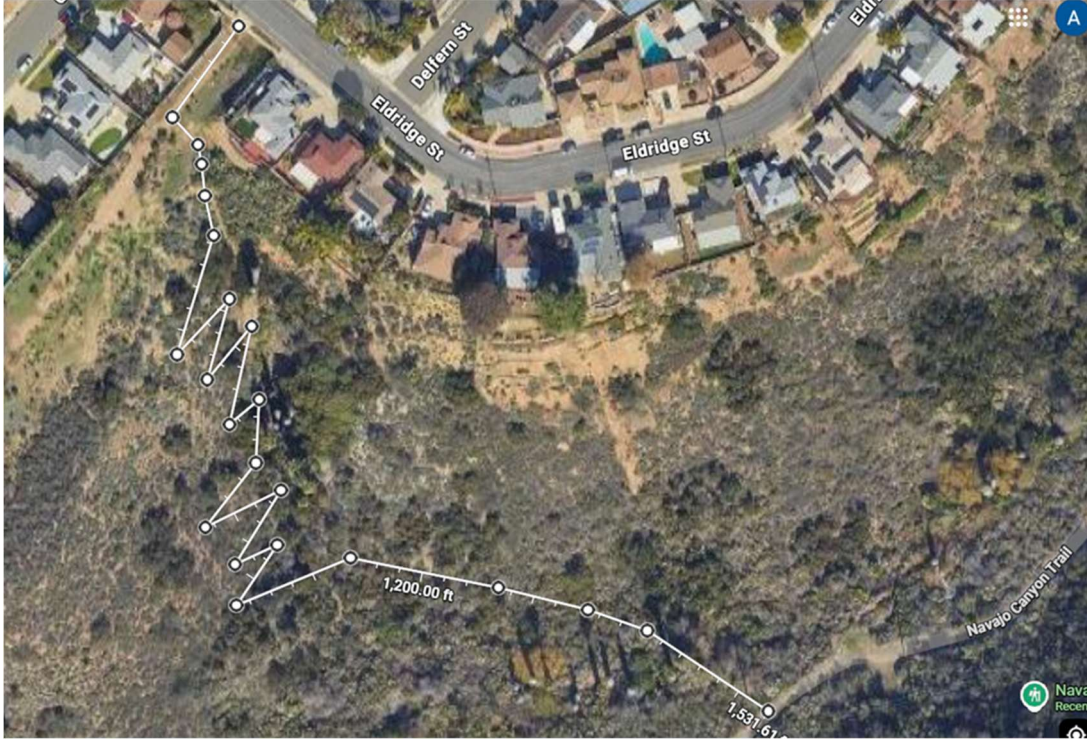


Figure 2

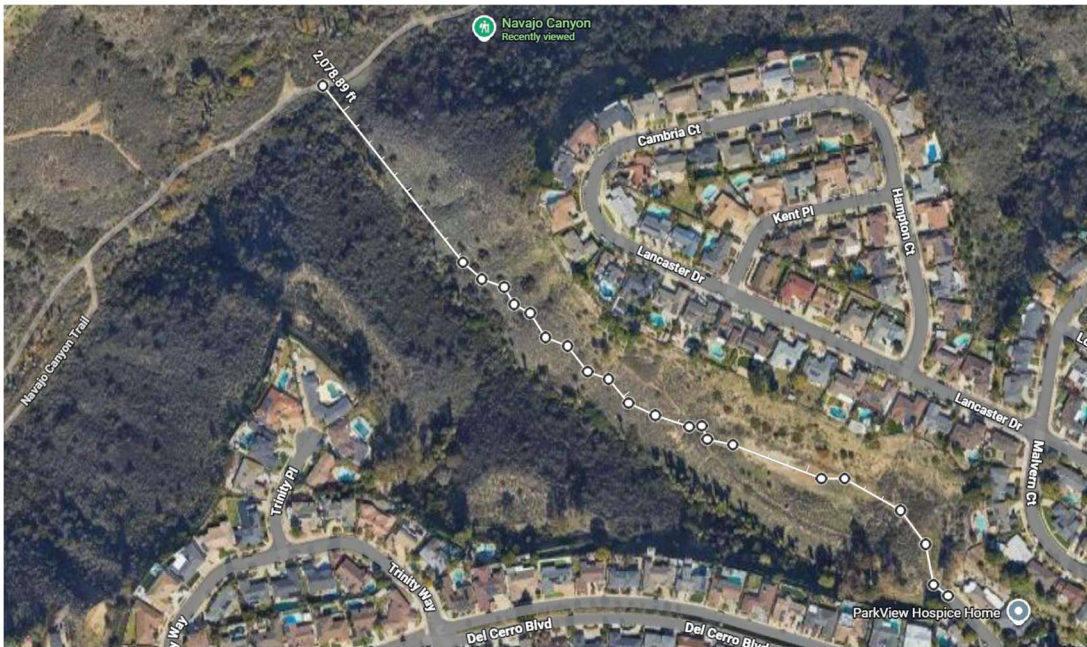
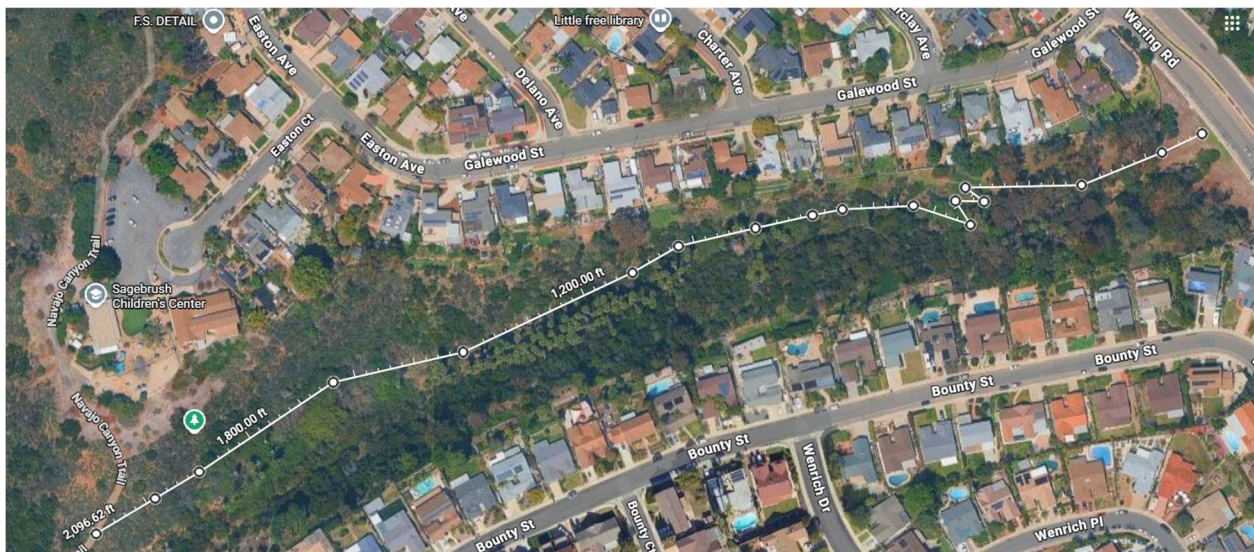


Figure 3



Figure 4





**Attachment (3)**  
**Supporting General and Parks Master Plan Policies**

**Supporting General Plan Policies: (Only supporting policies and sub elements that apply are shown)**

RE-A.9. Identify opportunities to increase recreational value and population-based parks within the community consistent with the Parks Master Plan by planning for upgrades and new investments within existing parks. Allow for flexibility and innovation to provide parks and recreational opportunities.

b. Increase community and Citywide access to population-based parks, resource-based parks and open spaces, consistent with the Parks Master Plan.

c. Identify underutilized existing parks to be upgraded to increase recreational value to the City's parks system.

RE-A.14. Ensure that appropriate quality and quantity of parks, recreation facilities and infrastructure is provided citywide.

RE-A.19. Ensure that all development impact fees collected for the acquisition and development of population-based parks and recreation facilities are used for appropriate purposes in a timely and equitable manner.

RE-B.2. Sustain partnerships with communities in the planning, site selection, design, and construction of park and recreation facilities to ensure resident, neighborhood and area needs are satisfied.

RE-B.3. Include recreation needs in community plans, consistent with the Parks Master Plan, to ensure that facilities and programs reflect community preferences, including the growing demand for senior activities.

RE-B.4. In planning, with respect to existing parks, give consideration to preserving the existing uses, while simultaneously identifying opportunities to upgrade and improve the parks.

RE-C.2 Protect, manage and enhance parks and open space lands through appropriate means which include sensitive planning, park and open space dedications, and physical protective devices.

RE-C.9. Determine strategies that accommodate both land for residential, commercial, and industrial use with the needs for parkland and open space uses.

RE-C.10. Develop strategies that adapt public rights-of-way that support recreation, walkability, sociability, bikeability, and health while reducing vehicular congestion and emissions.

RE-D.3. Provide recreation programs and services specifically designed to meet the needs of children, the increasing elderly population, persons with disabilities and the underserved teenage population.

RE-D.6. Provide safe and convenient bicycle, pedestrian, and micromobility linkages to, and within, park and recreation facilities and open space areas.

- a. Provide pedestrian and bicycle paths between recreation facilities and residential development.
- b. Designate pedestrian and bicycle corridors, and equestrian corridors where appropriate, that link residential neighborhoods with park and recreation facilities, trails, and open spaces and active commercial areas.
- c. Improve public access through development of, and improvements to, multi-use trails within urban canyons and other open space areas.
- d. Coordinate efforts with the City's Pedestrian Master Plan, the Parks Master Plan, Trails Master Plan, and the County's trail system to provide safe and convenient linkages between areas (see also Mobility Element, Section A).
- e. Coordinate with the county, state, and federal governments to ensure planning for and connectivity to trail systems outside of the City such as the Trans-County Trail Plan, San Diego River trails, Sweetwater River trails, Otay Valley trails, the California Coastal Trail, the Pacific Crest Trail and the California Riding and Hiking Trail.
- f. Identify key trails and access points as a part of community plan updates, discretionary permit reviews, and other applicable land use and park planning documents.

RE-D.7. Provide public access to open space for recreational purposes.

- a. Provide public access into Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) open space for only those recreational purposes deemed compatible with the preservation goals of the MSCP Subarea Plan.
- b. Provide public access at locations consistent with the goals and policies of the Conservation Element.
- c. Provide new, and preserve and enhance existing public beach access, where appropriate.

RE-D.9. Maximize natural sunlight and shade opportunities by planting trees in park areas to provide shade relief and a range of recreational experiences throughout the year for all users.

RE-E.6. Use underutilized or unnecessary City rights-of-way and utility easements to help meet recreational needs, where appropriate.

- a. Develop and maintain an inventory of underutilized or unnecessary rights of-way, including underlying ownership.
- b. Develop criteria to determine potential value of underutilized or unnecessary rights-of-way and utility easements for recreational use, including bike, pedestrian, and equestrian linkages for trail access to parks and open space (and canyons), and as overlooks into open space or beaches.

RE-E.8. Pursue partnerships and agreements with public agencies and not-for-profit entities to provide additional recreational space within the City such as parks, greenbelts, trail connections, parkways, bike paths, community gardens, plazas, and other recreation facilities. Potential partners for recreation land and facilities may include, but are not limited to:

- Metropolitan Transit System
- San Diego Unified Port District
- California Department of Transportation
- U. S. Department of Defense

- Other governmental agencies and jurisdictions
- Utility and railroad companies
- Redevelopment agencies
- Not-for-profit youth and recreation entities
- School districts

RE-E.12. Encourage and support multi-level volunteerism to supplement and enhance public recreational programs, through provision of a wide range of programs that help meet community needs.

RE-E.13. Pursue partnerships with private interests providing publicly accessible parks and urban plazas as part of the development, participating in the financing, programming, maintenance and operations.

RE-F.2. Provide for sensitive development of recreation uses within and adjacent to City owned open space lands.

- a. Include only those development features and amenities that do not encroach upon or harm the feature or resource that inspires the open space or resource based park.
- b. Design and maintain open space lands to preserve or enhance topographic and other natural site characteristics.
- c. Preserve designated public open space view corridors, such as views to the Pacific Ocean, other bodies of water, and significant topographic features.
- d. Preserve open space along lakes, rivers, and creek beds for passive public recreation uses that are consistent with MSCP preservation goals.

RE-F.4. Balance passive recreation needs of trail use with environmental preservation.

RE-F.5. Utilize open space lands for outdoor recreation purposes, when doing so is compatible with cultural, historic preservation and MSCP conservation goals and surrounding land uses, including, but not limited to:

- Corridors that link recreation facilities and open space areas such as utility easements, river and stream corridors, trails, and scenic highway corridors; and
- Sites particularly suited for park and recreation purposes, such as areas adjacent to and providing access to beaches, lakeshores, rivers, and streams.

RE-F.6. Encourage the planning and coordination of river parks to provide public recreational opportunities, protect natural resources, and enhance community character.

RE-F.7. Create or enhance open space multi-use trails to accommodate, where appropriate, pedestrians/hikers, bicyclists, and equestrians.

- a. Develop, adopt, and maintain updates of a citywide Trails Master Plan to guide the provision of and enhancement of open space multi-purpose trails.
- b. Enhance public access to public open space by clearly identifying trailheads and trail alignments which are consistent with MSCP preservation goals.
- c. Locate canyon and other open space trails to take advantage of existing pathways and maintenance easements where possible and appropriate.

d. Design, construct and manage trails to:

- Consider the context and sensitivity of the area they traverse.
- Protect and preserve sensitive natural and cultural resources.
- Provide for safe and enjoyable use using best practices (e.g., user management).
- Be sustainable and minimize maintenance using best practices (e.g., erosion control).

**Supporting Parks Master Plan Policies:  
Parks and Programming**

PP1: Increase recreational opportunities throughout the City by:

- a. Investing in existing parks to expand and extend services and amenities available to residents and visitors.
- b. Acquiring new land for parks and other recreational facilities and ensuring that at least 20% of a community's park standard is satisfied through land acquisition.
- c. Repurposing rights-of-way to serve as active transportation connections, with recreational amenities, shade trees, and features that encourage walking and bicycling in the right-of way.
- d. Encouraging and incentivizing the dedication of new park space in areas where new parks are most needed and will be most used.

PP4: Provide flexible, innovative park spaces, including neighborhood and community parks, mini parks, pocket parks, public plazas, green streets, linear parks, trailhead parks and temporary activated spaces, to meet the City's existing and future recreation needs.

PP6: Support and encourage placemaking efforts on parkland that strengthens and unites communities, residents, and visitors.

PP14: Increase recreational programming in existing public spaces and parks by:

- a. Partnering with local non-profit organizations;
- b. Allowing non-profit organizations to use public spaces and parks to generate revenue, where the revenue is used to invest in the park space and programming with those spaces.
- c. Providing reduced cost or no cost permits to non-profit organizations for programming and events within parks and recreation centers which benefit disadvantaged communities

**Equity**

E8: Strive to improve regional air quality by planting drought resilient and native trees to sequester carbon and reduce the urban heat island effect.

E9: Establish an air quality monitoring program by installing monitoring stations within parks. Use this data to establish Citywide programs to improve air quality and report the data annually.

**Access**

A1: All residents should have access to a park within a safe and enjoyable 10 minute walk or roll. Investments should not only focus on providing new access, but improvements that increase the overall safety of an area so that the access has true purpose - prioritize these investments in Communities of Concern. Additionally, focus park and mobility investments to ensure 10-20-30-40-minute park access, meaning in addition to a 10 minute walk or roll, ensure that additional

recreational resources can be reached with a 20 minute bike ride and 30-minute transit ride to ensure greater access to a diverse range of recreational opportunities throughout the system. Parks being accessed should have sufficient recreational space and activity to be enjoyed for at least 40 minutes.

A2: Maintain an integrated Citywide network of trails and open spaces, natural areas, and scenic views that serves all residents and visitors, while conforming to resource values and access/use limitations.

### **Activation**

AV2: Promote positive activity in population based parks by increasing recreational amenities, scheduled programming, pop-up and community events, festivals, farmer's markets, interactive features, and space for shared activities.

AV3: Where appropriate, accommodate and design for temporary or permanent concessions in parks to increase public use of the park's space. Examples of appropriate concessions in parks may include, but are not limited to, restaurants and cafés, food trucks, carts and kiosks, youth-oriented active recreation facilities, bike rental and repair shops, museums, cultural centers, and other park related and compatible uses. Approved use must contribute to the recreational enjoyment of the park.

AV4: Unless otherwise reviewed by the Parks and Recreation Board and approved by the Parks and Recreation Department Director, concessions on City property in parks shall be limited to uses operated by the City, another government agency, or a non-profit or community-based organization, and the revenue generated from the concessions shall be used to provide maintenance, programming, or other investments in City parks.

AV5: Provide and enhance wayfinding, brand identity, and marketing within parks to overcome the lack of public awareness of recreation programs and facilities and improve user experiences.

### **Co-Benefits**

CO1: Plan parks that promote health and economic development, provide opportunities for social connections, integrate with the City's active transportation and transit mobility system, and promote sustainability.

CO2: Encourage investments in walking and bicycling facilities that provide an enjoyable recreational experience and encourage residents and visitors to walk, bike, and take transit.

CO3: Encourage investments in recreational trails that provide critical connections between communities and parks consistent with Policy PP10, CSR 16 and CSR 25.

CO4: Design stormwater management facilities that enhance a park's recreational value and aesthetics and provide co-beneficial uses, such as flood control, limiting runoff, sedimentation and erosion, infiltration, and water quality.

CO5: Plant drought tolerant resilient trees that are not on the California Invasive Plant Council (CAL-IPC) list of invasives for southern California and native trees in parks and incorporate living walls in new buildings in parks to provide carbon sequestration, shade benefits, expand the urban tree canopy, urban heat island relief, air quality benefits, ecological value, and green

spaces to support Climate Action Plan and Climate Resilient SD goals. Manage resource and open space parks for their contributions to ameliorate climate change effects.

CO7: Recognize the mental health benefits of nature within parks by valuing habitat restoration that is accessible and visible for public enjoyment.

CO8: Recognize and promote valuable outdoor experiences and mental health benefits that come from providing residents with open spaces, canyons, overlooks, trails, and opportunities for outdoor education, stewardship and engagement.

### **Community Building**

CB1: Provide opportunities for community experiences that promote local history, cultural awareness and celebrate diversity.

CB2: Promote parks as places where people can foster social connections, build community, and enhance health and well-being.

CB3: Create opportunities for parks to co-locate or share uses with other community assets, such as libraries, museums, interpretive centers, schools, and community organizations.

CB5: Encourage placemaking in existing parks and other underutilized public and private spaces.

CB8: Development projects propose to convert private recreation facilities to new housing should provide parks onsite to address the project's park needs.

### **Mobility as Recreation**

MR1: Encourage investments in active recreational links that connect communities and parks. Examples of active recreational links can include trails, bikeways, green streets, multi-use paths, and other active transportation facilities. See Policies CO2, CO3 and CST22-25.

MR2: Develop a Safe Routes to Parks program to promote safe, active, and engaging ways to access parks.

MR3: Develop a publicly accessible Citywide trail geographic information system (GIS) data set to promote sustainable use of the City's trails, consistent with policies PP10, CO3, and CO10.

MR4: Repurpose appropriate rights-of-way to serve as active transportation connections with integrated recreational amenities, shade, and features that encourage walking and biking. See Policy PP1.

### **Arts & Culture**

AC1: Integrate unique and locally relevant features, such as artwork, cultural infrastructure, design elements, and interpretive elements into the design or renovation of parks as a means to express the diversity, history, and character of a community to create an authentic park experiences.

AC9: Develop a Citywide Cultural Plan to be implemented citywide and within parks that:

g. Develops a City brand for public arts, culture, and creativity;

h. Promotes creative reinventing of unused or underutilized spaces through cultural placemaking.

k. Ensures and prioritizes inclusive, creative sector growth and equitable development through arts and culture.

AC11: Create artful and effective wayfinding and branding designs at parks that will increase community use and educate users on natural resources.

AC12: Encourage the use of parks, recreation centers and other Parks and Recreation Department assets for arts and culture public outreach and education.

### **Conservation Sustainability & Resilience**

CSR3: Expand and maintain a healthy drought tolerant tree canopy of species not on the CAL-IPC and include other shade features in all parks. Incorporate living walls into new buildings in parks where feasible.

CSR7: Increase opportunities for people to interact regularly with green spaces, water, and other natural environments – especially in higher density areas.

CSR8: Incorporate effective interpretive signage, wayfinding signage and exhibits to connect visitors to nature and highlight the sustainability and conservation value of the site.

CSR9: Encourage the development of demonstration gardens and native restoration plantings to increase awareness of resiliency, water conservation, stormwater management, Monarch butterfly-friendly, native pollinator, and energy conservation best practices.

CSR10: Where appropriate, include biodiverse and native habitat plantings that support Monarch butterflies and other native pollinators – both nectar plants and host plants. Plantings should incorporate the primary larval host California native milkweed species, native milkweed, narrow leaf milkweed, along with showy, nectar-rich plants that attract adult Monarch butterflies and other pollinators. Where feasible, incorporate signage to interpret Monarch butterfly enhancement.

CSR17: The role of parks in sequestering carbon and mitigating the harmful effects of toxic pollutants should be promoted through urban forestry goals.

CSR 20: Develop new and upgrade existing parks that support environmental development patterns that protect and preserve natural landforms, public and private open space, wildlife linkages, sensitive species, habitats, canyons, and watersheds.

CSR 21: Preserve San Diego's rich biodiversity and heritage through the protection and restoration of open space and wetlands resources, including coastal waters, canyons, creeks, riparian wetlands and vernal pools.

CSR 23: Fund and develop trails, trail alignments, and trail maintenance programs that expand the City's active transportation network, encourage connections between neighborhoods and access to nature through San Diego's unique topography, watersheds, and natural features, consistent with policies PP10, CO3, CO10, MR1, CSR22, and CSR25.

CSR 24: Provide sustainable access to the City's canyons and watersheds as a source of recreation, education, and research in ways that improve human understanding of nature and an opportunity to provide trail linkages between communities, while preserving the natural resources within these areas except where this conflicts with existing Natural Resource Management Plans and MSCP guidelines.

CSR 25: Develop, adopt, and update a Citywide Trails Master Plan to guide the provision and enhancement of open space multi-purpose trails that accommodate pedestrians, hikers, bicyclists, mountain bikers, and equestrians, where appropriate, and to provide safe and convenient linkages to parks, recreation facilities, and open space areas consistent with policies PP10, CO3, CO10, CSR16, and CSR22. A Trails Master Plan shall include a set of criteria and guidelines for evaluating and establishing thresholds of access and use for Open Space parks that prioritize habitat management planning and other requirements in ESL policy and MSCP obligations in advance of specific trails planning. These criteria and guidelines will reflect and encompass the current science of recreation ecology.

CSR 26: Increase and permanently protect open space parks through dedication of City owned lands, timely acquisition of available land in collaboration with private owners, and acceptance of conservation easements in cooperation with public and private owners.

CSR 27: Maximize opportunities to restore native habitat and enhance biodiversity in parks and open space lands.

CSR 28: Consider a holistic and synergistic approach to developing -nature-based enhancements such as green infrastructure. Prioritize watersheds as a basis for optimizing nature-compatible features.

CSR 29: Build synergistic connections across City parks and other recreation facilities in the San Diego region.

CSR 30: Promote the awareness and value of wetlands, waterways, and restored landscapes in developed parks as well as open spaces.

CSR 31: Ensure that shade is provided in parks by trees to the maximum extent possible. Use of artificial shade structures should not substitute for natural shade from trees in parks wherever feasible. Small parks should prioritize space for incorporation of canopy shade trees.

### **Partnerships**

P1: Strengthen partnerships with other agencies, non-profit groups, community partners, and the private sector to expand opportunities for joint use of space and facilities, recreational programming, equitable access, and overall parks system well-being.

P2: Facilitate volunteer efforts to supplement funding for land acquisition, development and maintenance, and operations of parks.

P3: Streamline internal processes to encourage partnerships with other agencies, volunteer groups, and non-profit groups.

### **Operations & Maintenance**

OM2: Provide adequate levels of staffing and other resources to maintain existing park amenities.

OM4: Reinvest in existing parks and recreation facilities to extend their useful lives, improve operating efficiencies, and enhance the quality of service.

OM5: Partner with outside organizations to increase equitable park programming opportunities and result in safe and enjoyable park spaces for residents.

## **Regional Parks**

RP2: Where appropriate, use portions of regional parks for recreational space that can serve the local surrounding community.

RP3: Identify trails within developed regional parks that can be used as bicycling and walking connections between communities and other attractions. Trails in open space and natural lands should be in accordance with the trails standards identified in Appendix E of the City of San Diego's Consultant's Guide to Park Design and Development, and with MSCP guidelines.

RP5: Develop, adopt, and update a Citywide Trails Master Plan to guide the provision and enhancement of open space multi-purpose trails that accommodate pedestrians, hikers, bicyclists, mountain bikers, and equestrians, where appropriate and to provide safe and convenient linkages to parks, recreation facilities, and open space areas, consistent with policies PP10, CO3, CO10, CSR16, and CSR25.

## **Funding**

F2: Identify opportunities for Design-Build Finance-Operate and other public-private funding approaches.

F5: Expand revenue opportunities for park operations, maintenance, and programming that is compatible to park uses through concessions and lease opportunities, user fees, naming rights, sponsorships, and parking fees.

F12: Develop regulations to require on-site dedication of park space during development review, while encouraging development streamlining.

F15: Develop a funding strategy to supplement existing community development impact fee accounts enabling the City to deliver previously planned parks sooner and to transition to a Citywide Park Development Impact Fee to enable the City to deploy funding to more parks throughout the City, with prioritized investments in the areas with the greatest needs. Annually monitor the implementation of this funding strategy and include the use of the funds in the City's annual Development Impact Fee report pursuant to the Mitigation Fee Act. 125

F16: Develop and regularly update a monitoring program to track the total financial investment each park receives on an annual basis. Use this information to inform future park funding prioritization.