# 7

# RECREATION


7.1 PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES

7.2 PRESERVATION

7.3 ACCESSIBILITY

7.4 OPEN SPACE LANDS AND RESOURCE-BASED PARKS

## INTRODUCTION

The Recreation Element includes goals and policies addressing the following topic areas: Parks and Recreation Facilities, Preservation, Accessibility, and Open Space Lands and Resource-based Parks. These goals and recommendations, along with the broader goals and policies of the General Plan and the Balboa Park East Mesa Precise Plan (BPEMPP), provide a comprehensive parks strategy intended to accommodate the community at full community development. In addition to soliciting public input through various stakeholder meetings and the community plan update advisory committees, in 2011, the City commissioned a Park and Recreation Needs Assessment for the Golden Hill, North Park, and Uptown Communities. The assessment was conducted by an independent research company to determine how and where the communities currently recreate, their priorities and preferences for future recreational uses and facilities within their communities, as well as consideration of Balboa Park as a recreational resource. The survey results, which were representative of the broad and demographically-diverse communities' recreational use patterns and opinions, were contained in a report presented to each community, and have been incorporated into this plan where appropriate. (See Appendix A for a summary of the Park and Recreation Needs Assessment.)

*Montclair Neighborhood Park provides children's play areas and multi-purpose turf areas.*

### Recreation Element Goals

1. Creation of a sustainable park and recreation system that meets the needs of North Park residents and visitors and serves a variety of users, such as children, persons with disabilities, pet owners and the underserved teenage and senior populations.
2. Provision of parks and recreation facilities that aggressively keep pace with North Park population growth through timely acquisition of available land and development of new facilities.
3. Increase the quantity and quality of recreation facilities in North Park through the consideration of alternative methods, such as park equivalencies, where development of typical facilities and infrastructure may be limited by land constraints.
4. Preservation, protection and enhancement of the integrity and quality of parks, open space, and recreation programs.
5. Provide a sustainable park and recreation system that meets the needs of North Park residents by using "green" technology and sustainable practices in all new and retrofitted projects.
6. Preservation, protection management and identification of the natural, cultural, and historic resources that serve as recreation facilities in the North Park Community.
7. Enhance access to recreation facilities in North Park by optimizing pedestrian, bicycle, public transit, automobile, and alternative modes of travel.

8. Design all new recreation facilities to be part of an inter-connected park and open space system that is integrated into and accessible to North Park Community residents.
9. Retrofit all existing park and recreational facilities to meet the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to accommodate persons with all disabilities as funding becomes available.
10. Provide a balance of recreational facilities in North Park that are available for both programmed and non-programmed uses (i.e. passive and active recreation).
11. Creation of comprehensive pedestrian and bicycle networks between parks and open space lands within and adjacent to North Park, as well as to surrounding communities.
12. Provision of an open space and resource-based park network in North Park that provides for the preservation and management of significant natural and man-made resources.
13. Preservation and protection of the natural terrain and drainage systems of North Park's open space lands and resource-based parks that preserve the natural habitat and cultural resources.
14. Providing for a network of pedestrian paths and bikeways linking population-based parks with resource-based parks and open space lands within North Park.
15. Rebuild and expand existing facilities.

## 7.1 PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES

### PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES STANDARDS

The General Plan Recreation Element describes three categories of parks within the City of San Diego: Open Space Lands, Resource-based Parks, and Population-based Parks. (See General Plan Section RE-4 Open Space Lands and Resource-Based Parks for descriptions.) Population-based parks and recreation facilities are typically located within close proximity to residents and are intended to serve the daily recreational needs of the neighborhoods and the community. The General Plan standard is to provide a minimum of 2.8 useable acres of public park land per 1,000 residents.

There are six categories of population-based parks: 1) Major Park; 2) Community Park; 3) Neighborhood Park; 4) Mini-Park; 5) Pocket Park or Plaza; and 6) Special Activity Park. A recreation center, typically 17,000 square feet in size, should be provided for every 25,000 residents, and an aquatic complex should be provided for every 50,000 residents. The General Plan Recreation Element, Table RE-2, Parks Guidelines, provides the descriptions and minimum standards for these park and recreation facilities.

*North Park Community Park Recreation Center to be expanded to provide additional multi-purpose community rooms.*

## EXISTING AND FUTURE POPULATION-BASED PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES

The household population for the North Park Community Plan at build out is estimated to be 73,170 residents. Based on the General Plan standard for population-based parks and recreation facilities, the community should be served by approximately 205 useable acres of park land. The projected population warrants almost three recreation centers equivalent to 49,810 total square feet, and approximately one and one-half aquatic complexes.

Opportunities for additional park land and recreation facilities within North Park are anticipated to come primarily through development of private and public properties and through the application of park equivalencies. While the City's primary goal is to obtain land for population-based parks, where vacant land is limited, unavailable or is cost-prohibitive, the General Plan allows for the application of park equivalencies to be determined by the community and the City through a set of guidelines.

### General Plan Guidelines

*Parks:*

73,170 people divided by 1,000 = 73.17 x 2.8 acres = 204.88 acres of population-based parks

*Recreation Center:*

(17,000 square feet) Serves population of 25,000 people: 73,170 people divided by 25,000 people = 2.93 Recreation Centers = 49,810 square feet total

*Aquatic Complex:*

Serves population of 50,000: 73,170 people divided by 50,000 people = 1.46 Aquatic Complexes

Facilities that may be considered as population-based park equivalencies include:

1. Joint use facilities;
2. Trails through open space;
3. Portions of resource-based parks;
4. Privately-owned, publicly-used parks;
5. Non-traditional parks, such as rooftop or indoor recreation facilities; and
6. Facility or building expansion or upgrades.

North Park is an urbanized community where park equivalencies are appropriate for satisfying some of the community's population-based park needs. The community and City identified and evaluated population-based park and recreation opportunities, as well as potential park equivalency sites, for their recreational value, possible uses and functions, public accessibility, consistency with General Plan policies and guidelines, and other land use policy documents (e.g., Balboa Park Master Plan and Balboa Park East Mesa Precise Plan).

Tables 7-1 and 7-2 summarize the existing and future parks, park equivalencies and recreation facilities that have been selected by the North Park Community to supplement their existing population-based park and recreation facilities inventory. The table also includes recommendations contained in the Balboa Park East Mesa Precise Plan for the Neighborhood Edge, including the Morley Field Area, where appropriate, as well as recommendations generated by the community and City staff for facilities outside of Balboa Park. Identification of private property as a potential park site does not preclude permitted development per the underlying land use or zone.

## Table 7-1: *Population-Based Parks and Recreation Facilities Inventory and Recommendations*

| Parks/ Recreation Facilities | Existing Useable Acreage | Future Useable Acreage | Parks and Recreation Facilities Descriptions | Parks and Recreation Facilities Recommendations |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Major Parks - None* | | | | |
| *Community Parks* | | | | |
| North Park Community Park | 7.90 | | Existing park and recreation facilities consisting of a recreation center, a teen center, an adult center, a comfort station, a lighted ball field, multipurpose turf areas, a children's play area, three tennis courts, handball courts, walkways, seating and picnic tables. Of the 7.90 acres, 2.84 acres is part of the joint use area with ALBA school. | Replace natural turf on ball field with synthetic turf and provide new sports field lighting to increase use. |
| *Neighborhood Parks* | | | | |
| Montclair Park | 4.97 | | Existing park consisting of passive recreation amenities, including multi-purpose turf area, children's play area, seating, picnicking, walkways, and landscaping. | |
| *Mini Parks - None* | | | | |
| *Pocket Parks/Plazas* | | | | |
| 34th Street Pocket Park | | 0.15 | Proposed pocket park is within the street-right-of-way located at the southern terminus of 34th Street, south of Maple Street, which is the official trailhead to Juniper Canyon open space. | Vacate the street right-of-way, acquire site, design and construct park amenities to support passive recreation, such as a children's play area, seating, picnicking, walkways, and landscaping. |
| Cedar Ridge Park | 0.27 | | Existing park at the southern terminus of Pentuckett Avenue, south of Fir Street, consisting of passive recreation amenities, including multi-purpose turf area, children's play area, seating, walkways, and landscaping. | |
| North Park Mini-Park | | 0.50 | Proposed park on City-owned property, on an undeveloped site located behind the North Park Theater, on North Park Way, between Granada Avenue and 29th Street. | Construct the park amenities consistent with the approved General Development Plan. |
| Lincoln Avenue Pocket Park | | 0.21 | Proposed park on undeveloped street right-of-way, from Georgia Street to the existing alley, to accommodate passive recreational uses. | Vacate street right-of-way, acquire site, design and construct park amenities to support passive recreation, such as pathways, overlooks, seating, interpretive signs, and landscaping. |
| Switzer Canyon and 30th Street Pocket Park | | 0.16 | Proposed park within City-owned open space in Switzer Canyon to accommodate passive recreational uses. | Design and construct park amenities to support passive recreation, such as seating, walkways, and interpretive signs. |
| Teresita & Maple Streets Pocket Park | | 0.17 | Proposed pocket park on undeveloped street right-of-way to accommodate passive recreational uses, including a trailhead into Juniper Canyon Open Space. | Vacate street right-of-way, acquire site, design and construct park amenities to support passive recreation, such as a children's play area, seating, picnicking, walkways, landscaping, and a trail system staging area. |
| *Special Activity Parks - None* | | | | |

*Table 7-1: Population-Based Parks and Recreation Facilities Inventory and Recommendations*

| Parks/ Recreation Facilities | Existing Useable Acreage | Future Useable Acreage | Parks and Recreation Facilities Descriptions | Parks and Recreation Facilities Recommendations |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Recreation Centers* | | | | |
| North Park Recreation Center | N/A | N/A | Existing facility consisting of 11,232 square feet provides an indoor gymnasium, teen center and multi-purpose/arts & crafts rooms housed in three separate buildings; facilities are outdated to fully serve the community. | Replace and expand the existing recreation center to provide a 17,000 square feet recreation facility (possibly add second story); provide improvements and ADA upgrades. In the interim, redesign current foyer to serve as lobby area for recreation center; install additional outdoor security lighting, and extend security system into multi-purpose/arts & crafts room. |
| Adult Center at North Park Community Park | N/A | N/A | Existing facility consisting of 1,706 square feet provides meeting rooms, kitchen and outdoor game rooms; facilities are outdated to fully serve the community. | Replace and expand the existing adult center to provide 3,000 square feet, with recreation facilities designed to accommodate a variety of community oriented meeting and recreation programs for adults. |
| Morley Field Recreation Center (within Balboa Park) | N/A | N/A | Proposed 28,262 square feet Recreation Center to be located within the Morley Field area of Balboa Park. | Design and construct a new 28,262 square feet recreation center to accommodate community meetings, gymnasium, recreation and fitness programs, and restrooms, consistent with the recommendations in the BPEMPP. |
| Morley Field Pétanque Center (within Balboa Park | N/A | N/A | The existing Pétanque Center (formerly a senior center) was built in 1933 and is approximately 1,548 square feet and provides community meeting rooms and play areas. | Preserve and restore the existing historic Pétanque Center for community use. |
| *Aquatic Complexes* | | | | |
| Bud Kearns Aquatic Complex (within Morley Field area of Balboa Park) | N/A | N/A | The existing historic Bud Kearns Pool and Clubhouse consisting of approximately 13,000 square feet, were built in 1933, and provide one community swimming pool and a building with changing rooms, showers and restrooms. | Preserve and restore and renovate the existing historic Bud Kearns pool facility to serve the Golden Hill and North Park Communities.<br>Provide additional swimming facilities such as children's play pool, therapeutic pool and additional clubhouse pool building facilities to meet the needs for the community. The new facilities would augment and be complimentary to the existing pool and clubhouse without compromising the historic character of the original pool and clubhouse. |

*Table 7-1: Population-Based Parks and Recreation Facilities Inventory and Recommendations*

| Parks/ Recreation Facilities | Existing Useable Acreage | Future Useable Acreage | Parks and Recreation Facilities Descriptions | Parks and Recreation Facilities Recommendations |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Joint Use Facilities* | | | | |
| ALBA Charter School (formerly North Park Elementary School) | 0.12 | | Existing joint use facilities consisting of kindergarten play area, amphitheater, and outdoor lunch area pursuant to long-term joint use agreement. The total joint use acreage is 2.96, of which 2.84 acres is located on North Park Community Park and 0.12 acres is located on School District property. | |
| Birney Elementary School | 0.96 | | Existing joint use facilities consisting of turf multi-purpose playfield, multi-purpose courts, and hardscape for court games pursuant to long-term joint use agreement. Facility is a total of 1.82 acres and is shared with; North Park (0.96 acres) and Uptown (0.86 acres). | |
| Garfield Elementary School | 0.70 | | Existing joint use facilities consisting of turf multi-purpose fields pursuant to long-term joint use agreement. | |
| Jefferson Elementary School | 1.45 | | Existing joint use facilities consisting of multi-purpose synthetic turf playfield, multi-purpose courts, and hardscape for court games pursuant to long-term lease agreement. | |
| McKinley Elementary School | | 2.67 | Joint use facilities consisting of multi-purpose turf playfield, multi-purpose courts, and hardscape for court games pursuant to long-term joint use agreement. | |
| *Trails; Useable acres credit for trails was determined by multiplying the linear footage of trail by 12'-0" width and dividing by one acre in square feet (43,560)* | | | | |
| Juniper/34th Streets Canyon Open Space Trails | | 2.12 | Approximately 7,700 linear feet of existing and proposed trails located in Juniper/34th Streets Canyon Open Space (City-owned, MHPA-designated) which provide passive recreation. | Expand the existing 6,600 linear feet of trails by designing and constructing approximately 1,100 linear feet of new trails and provide trail improvements, such as interpretive signs, protective fencing, native landscaping, trash and recycling containers, overlooks, etc., where needed and appropriate for the trail type, as determined and approved by City. |
| Switzer Canyon Open Space Trails | | 1.80 | Approximately 6,500 linear feet of existing and proposed trails located in Switzer Canyon Open Space (City-owned, MHPA-designated) which provide passive recreation. | Expand the existing 5,400 linear feet of trails by designing and constructing approximately 1,100 linear feet of new trails and provide trail improvements, such as interpretive signs, protective fencing, native landscaping, trash and recycling containers, overlooks, etc., where needed and appropriate for the trail type, as determined and approved by City. |

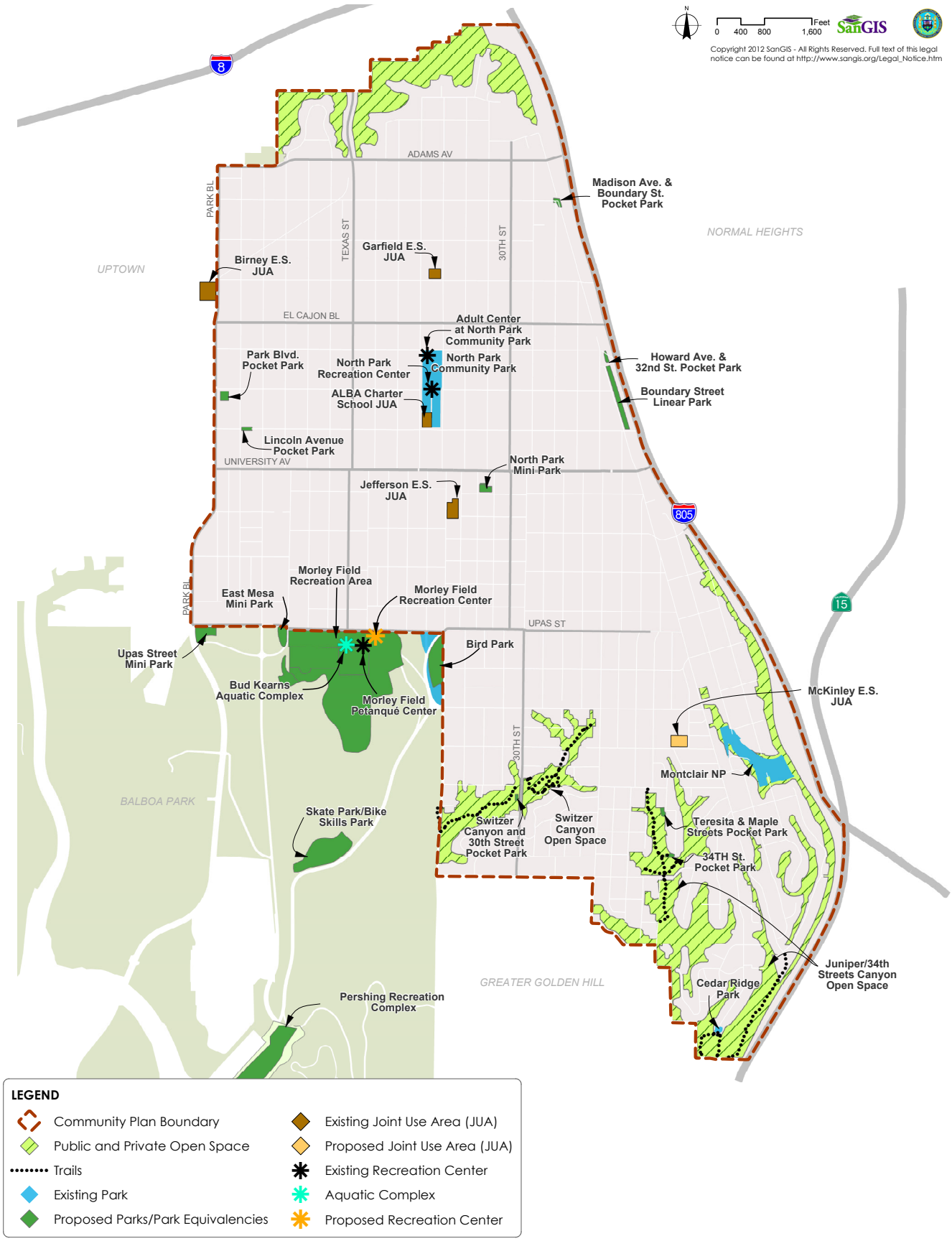
*Table 7-1: Population-Based Parks and Recreation Facilities Inventory and Recommendations*

| Parks/ Recreation Facilities | Existing Useable Acreage | Future Useable Acreage | Parks and Recreation Facilities Descriptions | Parks and Recreation Facilities Recommendations |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Portion of Resource-Based Parks* | | | | |
| Bird Park (within Balboa Park) | | 5.39 | Existing park located in the northeast corner of Balboa Park which provides passive recreational uses, such as a children's play area, multi-purpose turf area, walkways, landscaping, and public art. | Design and construct additional amenities to implement the General Development Plan for Bird Park. |
| East Mesa Mini-Park (within Balboa Park) | | 1.00 | Proposed mini-park located between Florida Canyon Dr., Upas St., Alabama St., and Morley Field Dr. | Design and construct passive park amenities, such as a children's play area, seating/picnicking, security lighting, walkways, landscaping, and community gardens consistent with recommendations in the BPEMPP. |
| Morley Field Recreation Area (within Balboa Park) | | 57.00 | Proposed recreation complex located on Upas Street in the Morley Field Recreation Area, which provides active and passive recreation, including organized sports (baseball and softball), tennis, swimming, senior center, bocce ball, picnicking, children's play area, dog off-leash area, archery, and multi-purpose turf areas. | Design and construct additional active and passive recreational and support facilities and upgrades, such as parking lots for expanded uses, multi-purpose turf fields, ball fields, children's play areas, sky plaza/ promenade, concession building/ comfort station, group picnicking, security lighting, upgrades to the dog off-leash area, path of travel and ADA upgrades consistent with the recommendations in the BPEMPP. |
| Pershing Recreation Complex (within Balboa Park) | | 4.54 | Proposed community park/sports complex located at the corner of Pershing Drive and 26th Street. This site is currently used by City Central Operations Station facilities. This 15 acre facility will be shared with North Park, Golden Hill, Uptown and East Village in Downtown. | Design and construct community park/sports complex with active recreation facilities consistent with the recommendations in the BPEMPP, subsequent to relocation of non-park, City facilities. |
| Skate Park / Bike Skills Park (within Balboa Park) | | 10.00 | Proposed above-ground skate park and/ or Bike Skills/BMX track, located along Pershing Drive on the Arizona landfill. Facility will be shared with Golden Hill. | Design and construct above-ground skate and/or Bike Skills park, and support facilities, such as parking lot and portable restrooms. Amendment to the BPEMPP may be necessary. |
| Upas Street Mini Park (within Balboa Park) | | 1.58 | Proposed mini-park located at the corner of Upas St. and Park Blvd. | Design and construct passive park amenities, such as a children's play area, seating/picnicking, security lighting, walkways, and landscaping. |
| *Privately-Owned Park Sites - None* | | | | |
| *Non-Traditional Park Sites* | | | | |
| Boundary St. Linear Park | | 0.75 | Proposed linear park located along Boundary St. between Howard and Lincoln Aves., on City and Caltrans right-of-way. | Pursue acquisition or a lease agreement with Caltrans; design and construct passive recreation amenities such as seating, walkways, and landscaping. |
| Howard Avenue Pocket Park | | 0.30 | Proposed pocket park located at the southeast corner of the intersection of Howard Ave. with 32nd and Boundary Streets, on City and Caltrans right-of-way. | Pursue acquisition or a lease agreement with Caltrans; design and construct passive recreation amenities such as seating, walkways, and landscaping. |
| Madison Avenue Pocket Park | | 0.11 | Proposed pocket park located at the intersection of Madison Ave. with Illinois and Boundary Streets, on City right-of-way. | Design and construct passive park amenities, such as seating, walkways and landscaping. |
| *Facility or Building Expansion or Upgrade - None* | | | | |

## Table 7-2: *Summary of Existing and Proposed Population-Based Parks and Recreation Facilities*

| Population-Based Parks | Useable Acres |
|---|---|
| Existing Population-based Parks and Park Equivalencies | 16.37 acres |
| Proposed Population-based Parks and Park Equivalencies | 88.45 acres |
| Total Existing and Proposed Population-based Parks and Equivalencies | 104.82 acres |
| Population-based Park Requirements at full community development | 204.88 acres |
| *Population-based park deficit at full community development* | 100.06 acres |
| **Recreation Centers** | **Square Feet** |
| Existing North Park Recreation Center Building, 11,232 square feet, to be replaced with a new facility for a total of 17,000 square feet. | 17,000 SF |
| Existing Recreation Center: Morley Field Pétanque Center | 1,548 SF |
| Existing North Park Adult Center Building, 1,706 square feet existing, to be replaced with a new facility for a total of 3,000 square feet. | 3,000 SF |
| Proposed Recreation Center: Morley Field Recreation Center | 28,262 SF |
| Total Existing and Proposed Recreation Centers | 49,810 SF |
| Recreation Center Requirement at full community development | 49,810 SF |
| *Recreation Center Deficit at full community development* | *No Deficit* |
| **Aquatic Complexes** | **Unit** |
| Existing Aquatic Complex: Bud Kearns Community Swimming Pool | 1.00 |
| Proposed Aquatic Complex adjacent to Bud Kearns Community Swimming Pool | 0.94* |
| Total Existing and Proposed Aquatic Complexes | 1.94* |
| Aquatic Complexes Requirement at full community development | 1.46* |
| *Aquatic Complex deficit at full community development* | *No Deficit* |
| **Bud Kearns Community Swimming Pool Complex will be shared. Greater Golden Hill requires 0.48, and North Park requires 1.46, aquatic complexes. The existing historic pool facility and the proposed new pool facility will satisfy the combined requirements (1.94 aquatic complexes) for both communities.* | |
| *Note: Identification of private property as a potential park site does not preclude permitted development per the designated land use.* | |

## Figure 7-1: *Parks, Recreation Facilities, and Open Space*



The Recreation Element identifies projects that will provide all of the recreation center space and the aquatics complex facilities required to serve the community at full projected development. These proposals represent significant achievements towards implementing the General Plan and the community's goals. Staff will continue to work with community members to seek future opportunities for provision of parks and recreation facilities. In addition to the inclusion of these projects in the North Park Impact Fee Study, identification of potential donations, grants and other funding sources for project implementation will be an ongoing effort. Figure 7-1 depicts the approximate locations of existing and proposed open space, parks, recreation facilities and park equivalencies.

*Children's play area within North Park Community Park.*

*North Park Community Park children's play area Frog.*

## POLICIES

RE-1.1 Pursue the land acquisition, design and construction of new public parks and recreation facilities prioritizing them in park deficient areas of the community, and include facilities that can accommodate multiple uses. Seek opportunities to increase park land through urban infill and redevelopment proposals and acquisition of available private property.

RE-1.2 Pursue park equivalencies identified in Table 7-1, Population-Based Parks and Recreation Facilities Inventory and Recommendations, as opportunities arise.

RE-1.3 Encourage proposed residential, commercial and mixed-use development to include recreational facilities to serve all residents. Consider incorporating non-traditional park and recreation amenities on rooftops of buildings and parking structures, and/or on the ground level within new buildings.

RE-1.4 Incorporate recreation facilities into public facilities, including their buildings, parking structures, or their surrounding exterior lands.

RE-1.5 Increase recreational opportunities by acquiring and developing land through street/alley rights-of-way vacations (paper streets), to provide for park and recreation uses.

RE-1.6 Promote safety of North Park parks to the public by providing park designs that incorporate the City's 'Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design' (CPTED) measures (see General Plan Policy UD-A.17).

RE-1.7 Replace and expand the North Park Recreation Center (11,232 square feet existing) to provide a total of 17,000 square feet to accommodate the recreation needs of existing and future residents at community plan build out.

RE-1.8 Pursue lease or joint use agreements with public agencies (e.g., San Diego Unified School District, Caltrans, etc.) to incorporate active or passive recreation into existing buildings or surrounding grounds, where non-programmed space is available and appropriate for public use.

RE-1.9 Replace and expand the existing North Park Adult Center (1,706 square feet existing) to provide a total of 3,000 square feet to accommodate the recreation needs of existing and future adults at community plan build out.

RE-1.10 Develop smaller neighborhood parks, mini parks, pocket parks and plazas throughout the community, especially in areas more distant from larger public park facilities with high density, mixed-use as a priority.

RE-1.11 Pursue opportunities to provide active use facilities for teenagers and young adults, such as BMX tracks, soccer fields, ballparks, skate parks, and paintball facilities.

RE-1.12 Ensure that the design of public parks provided on privately owned land complies with Council Policy 600-33, provides population-based park amenities per the General Plan, and that the hours of public use shall be consistent with typical publicly-operated parks and facilities.

RE-1.13 Implement recommendations contained in the Balboa Park East Mesa Precise Plan for the Mesa Rim and Neighborhood Edge which specifically serve the neighborhood and community park needs of the North Park Community, as follows:

a. Construct park improvements in the northeast corner along 28th Street to Redwood Street, including a children's play area, gateway and entry garden.

b. Renovate open lawn areas for multi-purpose recreational uses.

c. Plant large canopy trees throughout the Neighborhood Edge, using care to maintain clear visibility across the area for security surveillance.

d. Construct a children's play area in the Eucalyptus grove across from the Morley Field Tennis Club (East Mesa Mini Park).

e. Provide enhanced pedestrian crossings at all intersections which enter into Balboa Park and obtain community input for these designs.

f. Design and construct the proposed Pershing Recreation Complex to serve the North Park, Golden Hill, Uptown Communities and downtown East Village, when feasible to do so.

RE-1.14 Implement recommendations contained in the Balboa Park East Mesa Precise Plan for the Morley Field area which specifically serves the neighborhood and community park needs of the North Park Community, as follows:

a. Preserve and restore and renovate the existing historic Bud Kearns pool facility to serve the Golden Hill and North Park Communities. Provide additional swimming facilities such as children's play pool, therapeutic pool and additional clubhouse pool building to meet the needs for the community. The new facilities would augment and would be complimentary to the existing pool and clubhouse without compromising the historic character of the original pool and clubhouse.

b. Construct four rearranged lighted, ball fields and a common gathering area (sky plaza) for organized sports leagues, including support facilities, such as a concession/restroom building, spectator stands and enhanced pathways/promenades.

c. Construct one multi-purpose lighted sports field east of the ball field complex.

d. Reconfigure parking to concentrate vehicles for safer and more convenient use.

e. Construct a group picnic area at the south end of Morley Field.

f. Construct a group picnic area and two children's play areas between the ball fields and the pool/recreation center area.

RE-1.15 Design and construct a skate park/bike skills park within the former Arizona Landfill area, if feasible, or elsewhere within the community at a location to be determined through a community planning process.

*Garfield Joint Use Facility features passive lawn areas and basketball courts.*

## 7.2 PRESERVATION

The demand for park and recreation opportunities will continue to grow as the population of North Park continues to grow. Undeveloped land for parks is difficult to find in North Park, making preservation of existing park facilities essential to providing recreation opportunities in the community. Preservation can include improvements to existing facilities to increase their life span, or expand their use and sustainability. The Morley Field Area of Balboa Park will continue to serve as the main recreation venue for the community. With increased demand and usage, the facilities will need to be reconstructed, upgraded, and expanded with sustainable and green technology features.

*Bud Kerns Pool House, within Balboa Park, to be expanded to provide an aquatic complex for the North Park community.*

Preservation can also include the enhancement of resource-based parks and open space lands that provide a balance between protecting the natural resources and allowing for a certain level of public recreation use. Within North Park this would include concentrating active recreational use improvements towards larger resource-based parks, such as at Morley Field, and focusing passive use improvements at open space areas, such as Switzer Canyon and Juniper/34th Streets Canyons Open Space areas which are within the Multiple Habitat Planning Areas (MHPA). Aside from trails, only passive uses are allowed in the MHPA, therefore, to protect the natural resources and still add recreation value, interpretive signs at open space parks can educate the public about the unique natural habitat, scenic value, and the history of the place. (See the Conservation Element for additional information on preservation of natural resources.)

*Morley Field, within Balboa Park, provides several ball fields and areas for soccer.*

### *POLICIES*

RE-2.1 Preserve, expand, and enhance park and recreation facilities to increase their life span and to optimize their uses and sustainability.

RE-2.2 Provide sufficient human and economic resources to preserve and enhance the existing parks and open space areas within North Park.

RE-2.3 Preserve and protect Switzer Canyon and Juniper/34th Streets Canyons Open Space areas by designating trails and providing interpretive signs to educate the public about their natural habitats and historic and scenic qualities.

RE-2.4 Preserve, protect, and restore canyons and hillsides as important visual features of community definition.

RE-2.5 Provide pocket parks with ecologically-sensitive recreational uses as enhanced trailheads to open space systems.

RE-2.6 Protect and preserve native species and the unique habitats they depend upon within the open space systems consistent with the MSCP guidelines. (See Conservation Element.)

RE-2.7 Create mini parks and pocket parks that preserve and protect designated public views identified in Figure 4-6.

RE-2.8 Restore, upgrade, and expand the recreation facilities at Morley Field consistent with the Balboa Park East Mesa Precise Plan to meet existing and future demand. Use sustainable methods and materials (such as native and low-water using plants), and "green" technology that also respects any historical significance of the area.

RE-2.9 When existing Recreation Centers are upgraded to meet increased demand, the new improvements should, to the extent possible, reuse building materials; use materials that have recycled content; use materials that are derived from sustainable or rapidly renewable sources; and implement Council Policy 900-14.

## 7.3 ACCESSIBILITY

Accessibility to park and recreation facilities within North Park has three main components: 1) all facilities should be located within walking distance of neighborhoods and employment centers; 2) facilities should be accessible to the broadest population possible; and 3) facilities should be open for use by the general public with a balance between programmed and non-programmed activities.

All parks and recreation facilities within North Park are planned to be linked by a network of existing and proposed transit routes, bikeways, and pedestrian paths. For a discussion of future accessibility and linkages to parks and open space see the Mobility Element.

All new and existing parks and recreation facilities within North Park are required to meet ADA requirements when they are constructed or retrofitted for improvements or upgrades. Meeting these requirements could include adding accessible pedestrian ramps and provide paved pathways at acceptable gradients that lead from a public sidewalk or parking area to a children's play area or other park destination (referred to as the "path of travel"). Other improvements include the provision of disabled parking spaces and remodeling of restrooms and building interiors.

Accessibility to facilities also means the availability of active and passive recreation to all residents. Organized sport leagues can make use of the facilities at specific times while making the facilities available at other times for unstructured play and impromptu users. The schedule is adjusted each year to make sure a balance is

*Overview of the trail system in Switzer Canyon Open Space.*

provided for community residents. When special uses are designed into parks, such as dog off-leash areas or community gardens, these areas should also include amenities, such as pathways, benches, or picnic tables on the perimeter that could accommodate more than one type of user and enhance the recreational and leisure experience. Special uses, such as dog off-leash areas and community gardens, would be required to undergo a City-approval process prior to facility construction.

### *POLICIES*

RE-3.1 Ensure all existing and future parks and recreation facilities meet local, state, and federal accessibility guidelines.

RE-3.2 Ensure a balance of programmed and non-programmed uses as part of the community's parks and recreational facilities that meets the needs of North Park's residents.

RE-3.3 Provide connectivity to parks and recreational facilities with pedestrian and bicycle trails, paths, or routes, in a manner that enriches the quality of life in North Park.

RE-3.4 Provide information kiosks and maps at key park sites and community gateways to provide way-finding information to pedestrians, bicyclists and transit users.

RE-3.5 Implement recommendations contained in the Balboa Park East Mesa Precise Plan which specifically aim to improve the existing and future accessibility to and from recreation facilities and North Park, particularly as follows:

a. Provide 8'-0" wide sidewalks with 10'-0" wide planted parkways and security lighting within the Neighborhood Edge of Balboa Park along 28th and Upas Streets, and provide parallel parking adjacent to the curb, to connect the Neighborhood Edge with the surrounding community.

b. Construct pedestrian/bicycle paths and bridges where necessary, within the Neighborhood Edge of Balboa Park to facilitate the park circulation system.

*Kiosks in Morley Field provide way-finding information about pedestrian, bicycle and transit routes.*

## 7.4 OPEN SPACE LANDS AND RESOURCE-BASED PARKS

Open space lands are City-owned property consisting of canyons, mesas, and other natural landforms. This open space is intended to preserve and protect native plants and animals, while providing public access and enjoyment by the use of hiking, biking and equestrian trails. (See Figure 7-1, Parks, Recreation Facilities and Open Space).

In North Park, there are two open space canyons: Switzer Canyon (approximately 20.51acres) and Juniper/34th Street Canyons (approximately 51.44 acres, of which 32.06 acres are within North Park and 19.38 acres are within the Golden Hill Community), which provide low intensity recreational uses, such as hiking and bird watching. Trail locations shown in Figure 7-1 are approximate, and are provided to illustrate general trail alignments and connections to the community. Final alignments will be determined as specific trail improvement projects are implemented. Any proposed improvements to the trail systems shall be consistent with Natural Resource Management Plans, if any, or other governing documents.

Resource-based parks are located at sites of distinctive natural or man-made features and serve the citywide

population and visitors alike. Balboa Park is an approximately 1,200-acre regional facility contiguous to the southwestern edge of North Park, as well as to Uptown and Golden Hill. Balboa Park features specialty gardens and horticultural interests, and houses numerous arts museums, educational, recreational, and social and sports organizations, primarily on the Central Mesa. The adopted Balboa Park Master Plan generally defers to the preparation of a precise plan for improvements within the Morley Field area and the Arizona Landfill; the adopted Balboa Park East Mesa Precise Plan addresses existing and future needs in the areas contiguous to North Park by expanding and enhancing park and recreation diverse uses and experiences, as well as preserving sensitive habitat.

## *POLICIES*

RE-4.1 Protect and enhance the natural resources of open space lands by re-vegetating with native plants and utilizing open wood fences, where needed, adjacent to very sensitive areas to provide additional protection while still allowing views into the area.

RE-4.2 Ensure all storm water and urban run-off drainage into resource-based parks or open space lands to be filtered or treated before entering the area.

RE-4.3 Provide recognizable entrances (trailhead) to the Juniper/34th Streets Canyons Trail system. The trailheads may include a kiosk that provides a map of how the canyon interfaces with North Park.

RE-4.4 Construct new trails on publicly-owned open space to connect with existing trails within Switzer Canyon and Juniper/34th Streets Canyons trail systems. Co-locate trails and utility access roads on publicly-owned open space, wherever possible.

RE-4.5 Pursue public access easements existing trails located on privately-owned open space, where appropriate within the Juniper/34th Streets Canyons Open Space system, to maintain connectivity between trail segments.

RE-4.6 Provide a recognizable entrance (trailhead) to the Switzer Canyon Trail system at Redwood and 31st Streets. The trailhead should include a kiosk that includes a way-finding map that shows how the canyon interfaces with North Park.

RE-4.7 Provide interpretive signs at major trailheads to Switzer Canyon and Juniper/34th Streets Canyons Open Space trail systems to educate users on the sensitive natural habitat, cultural resources and/or scenic qualities of these areas.

RE-4.8 Evaluate utilization of paper streets as future park and open space opportunities by vacating street right-of-way, and acquiring the land for design and construction of park amenities to support passive recreation, such as pathways, overlooks, seating, interpretive signs, and landscaping.