

# RECREATION

- 7.1 PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES
- 7.2 PRESERVATION
- 7.3 ACCESSIBILITY
- 7.4 OPEN SPACE AND RESOURCE-BASED PARKS

## Introduction

Uptown Plan Recreation Element includes goals and recommendations 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 Master Plan, 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 August of 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 consultant 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 assessment consisted of an objective, statistically-valid, random telephone survey. 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 update where appropriate. (See Appendix B for a summary of the Park and Recreation Needs Assessment Survey).

## RECREATION ELEMENT GOALS

- A sustainable park and recreation system that meets the needs of Uptown residents and visitors which serves a variety of users, such as children, persons with disabilities, and the underserved teenage and senior populations.
- Parks and recreation facilities that keep pace with Uptown population growth through timely acquisition of available land and development of new facilities.
- Increased quantity and quality of recreation facilities in Uptown through the promotion of alternative methods, such as park equivalencies, where development of typical facilities and infrastructure may be limited by land constraints.
- Park and recreation facilities that are accessible to, and within a one-half mile radius of, Uptown residents, and form an inter-connected community park system.
- A sustainable park and recreation system that meets the needs of Uptown residents by using “green” technology and sustainable practices in all new and retrofitted projects.
- A balance of recreational facilities in Uptown that are available for programmed and non-programmed uses.
- Comprehensive pedestrian and bicycle connections between parks and open space lands within and adjacent to Uptown, as well as to surrounding communities.
- An open space and resource-based park system in Uptown that provides for the preservation and management of significant natural and man-made resources.
- A system of pedestrian paths and bikeways linking population-based parks with resource-based parks and open space lands within Uptown.

### Categories of Population-Based Parks

1. Major Park
2. Community Park
3. Neighborhood Park
4. Mini-Park
5. Pocket Park or Plaza
6. Special Activity Park

## 7.1 Parks and Recreation Facilities

### PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITY 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 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 community. The General Plan standard is to provide a minimum of 2.8 useable acres of public park land per 1,000 residents. 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.

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

At full community development, the projected population for Uptown is 55,700. Therefore, according to General Plan standards for population-based parks and recreation facilities, the community should be served by a minimum of 155.96 useable acres of park land at full community development.

Additionally, at full community development, the projected population warrants approximately two and one-quarter recreation centers equivalent to 37,910 total square feet, and approximately one aquatic complex.

Opportunities for additional park land and recreation facilities within Uptown are anticipated to come primarily through redevelopment 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 City's General Plan allows for the application of park equivalencies to be determined by the community and City staff through a set of guidelines.

### General Plan Guideline Calculations for Park and Recreation Facilities

Parks:  $55,700 \text{ people} \div 1,000 = 55.70 \times 2.8 = 155.96$  acres of population-based parks

Recreation Center: (17,000 square feet) serves population of 25,000:  $55,700 \text{ people} \div 25,000 \text{ people} = 2.23$  Recreation Centers  
= 37,910 square feet total

Aquatic Complex: serves population of 50,000:  $55,700 \text{ people} \div 50,000 \text{ people} = 1.11$  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.

Uptown is an urbanized community where park equivalencies are appropriate for satisfying some of the community’s population-based park needs. The community and City staff 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). It was determined that a variety of sites and facilities within and adjacent to Uptown do, or could, serve as population-based parks or park equivalencies.

Tables 7-1 and 7-2 summarize the existing and proposed parks and equivalencies that have been selected by Uptown to supplement their existing population-based park inventory. The table also includes recommendations contained in the Balboa Park Master Plan, including the Sixth Avenue Area, where appropriate, as well as recommendations generated by the community and City staff for facilities outside of Balboa Park.

Uptown needs a total of 155.96 acres of population-based parks at full community development, as of 2016, 18.21 acres exist. Through the community plan update, City staff and community members identified 36.85 acres of new population-based park land and park equivalency sites within and adjacent to Uptown, resulting in a 100.90 acre deficit.

The community plan identifies joint-use of the future Grant K-8 School gymnasium, and the need for two future recreation projects, at sites to be determined, that will provide all of the recreation center space required to serve the community plan at full projected development. The plan also identifies the need for an aquatic complex, at a future site to be determined. The City will continue to work with the community to seek future opportunities for provision of parks and recreation facilities.

In addition to the inclusion of these projects in the Uptown Public Facilities Impact Analysis, identification of potential donations, grants and other funding sources for project implementation will be an ongoing effort. Figure 7-1, Parks, Recreation Facilities and Open Space, depicts the approximate locations of existing and proposed parks, recreation facilities, park equivalencies and open space.

PARKS / RECREATION FACILITIES	EXISTING USEABLE ACREAGE	FUTURE USEABLE ACREAGE	PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES LOCATION AND DESCRIPTIONS	PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES RECOMMENDATIONS
<b>Major Parks</b>				
None				
<b>Community Parks</b>				
None				
<b>Neighborhood Parks</b>				

PARKS / RECREATION FACILITIES	EXISTING USEABLE ACREAGE	FUTURE USEABLE ACREAGE	PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES LOCATION AND DESCRIPTIONS	PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES RECOMMENDATIONS
Mission Hills Park (includes Pioneer Memorial Park)	8.34		Existing park consisting of passive recreation amenities, such as multi-purpose turf areas, parking lot, a children's play area, seating, picnicking, walkways, and landscaping.	
Mystic Park		7.58	Proposed park site located east of SR-163, north of Washington Street and south of Pascoe Street on City and Caltrans right-of-way. Portions of the site are designated as a California Historic Parkway and Scenic Highway, and are a State Historic Resource and City Historic Landmark.	Prepare a park feasibility study; The study may address historic resource issues, vehicular, pedestrian and traffic circulation, reconfiguration of freeway on-ramps, new traffic signalization, community recreation needs, other issues to be determined, and a preliminary cost analysis. An agreement with Caltrans may be required. Based on results of the study, acquire, design and construct park amenities for active and passive uses which could include multi-purpose turf areas, children's play areas, an amphitheater and performance opportunities, picnicking, seating, exercise areas, and an off-leash dog area.
Old Trolley Barn Park	2.92		Existing park consisting of passive recreation amenities, such as multi-purpose turf areas, a children's play area, seating, picnicking, walkways, and landscaping.	

PARKS / RECREATION FACILITIES	EXISTING USEABLE ACREAGE	FUTURE USEABLE ACREAGE	PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES LOCATION AND DESCRIPTIONS	PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES RECOMMENDATIONS
Reynard Way Neighborhood Park		4.72	Proposed park site on undeveloped property, consisting of multiple, privately-owned parcels, located at 3532 Reynard Way. The site consists of varied topography and a potentially historically significant building which would present some developmental challenges, but would yield many recreational opportunities. Adaptive reuse of the building for recreational purposes is a possibility.	Acquire, design and construct park amenities for active and passive recreation, such as informal multi-purpose sports field, children's play areas, seating, picnicking, walkways, and landscaping.
<b>Mini Parks</b>				
None				
<b>Pocket Parks/Plazas</b>				
Bandini Street Pocket Park		0.18	Proposed pocket park on vacant, privately-owned property located on the east side of Bandini Street at Mergho Impasse.	Acquire, design and construct park amenities to include passive recreation, such as a children's play area, seating, picnicking, walkways and landscaping.
Fir Street Pocket Park		0.23	Proposed pocket park on 2 privately-owned parcels, located on the southwest corner of Fir Street and Sixth Avenue. The site is currently developed with a small structure and associated parking area.	Acquire, demolish existing improvements, design and construct park amenities to include passive recreation, such as a children's play area, seating, picnicking, walkways and landscaping.

PARKS / RECREATION FACILITIES	EXISTING USEABLE ACREAGE	FUTURE USEABLE ACREAGE	PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES LOCATION AND DESCRIPTIONS	PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES RECOMMENDATIONS
First & Robinson Pocket Park		0.28	Proposed pocket park on vacant, privately-owned property located on the northwest corner of First and Robinson Avenues.	Acquire, design and construct park amenities to include passive recreation, such as a children's play area, seating, picnicking, walkways and landscaping.
Golden Gate Drive Pocket Park		0.33	Proposed pocket park on city-owned open space land within the University Heights Open Space area directly adjacent to Golden Gate Drive.	Design and construct park amenities to include passive recreation, such as a trailhead and interpretive signage, improved trails, overlook/seating, landscaping, etc.
Laurel Street Pocket Park		0.11	Proposed pocket park on undeveloped City-owned park land.	Design and construct park amenities to support passive recreation, such as children's play area, seating, picnicking, walkways, and landscaping.
Olive Street Park		0.60	Proposed pocket park on undeveloped city-owned park property located on Olive Street.	Design and construct park amenities to include passive recreation, such as a children's play area, walkways, seating, picnicking, and landscaping.
Sixth Avenue Pocket Park		0.45	Proposed pocket park located on privately-owned property on the west side of Sixth Avenue between University and Robinson Avenues. The site is currently developed with the "Pernicano's" restaurant and associated parking lot.	Acquire, demolish existing improvements, and design and construct park amenities to include passive recreation, such as a children's play area, seating, picnicking, walkways and landscaping.
West Lewis Street Pocket Park	0.35	0.03	Existing park, located between Falcon and Goldfinch Streets, comprised of passive recreational amenities, a trail, public art,	Construct Phase II improvements, including the trail connection with the existing Phase I, in accordance with the approved General Development Plan.

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			interpretive signage, and seating.	
West Maple Canyon Pocket Park		0.25	Proposed pocket park on undeveloped City owned land adjacent to the Maple Canyon Open Space area.	Construct passive park amenities including seating, interpretive signage, landscaping, and a trailhead, in accordance with the approved General Development Plan.
<b>Special Activity Parks</b>				
None				
<b>Recreation Centers</b>				
Grant K-8 School Gymnasium	N/A	N/A	Proposed gymnasium located within the Grant K-8 School site on San Diego Unified School District (SDUSD) land.	Pursue an agreement with SDUSD for joint-use of the proposed 10,454 sq. ft. gymnasium. The facility would be designed and constructed by SDUSD.
Uptown Recreation Center - North	N/A	N/A	Proposed recreation facility located in the northern portion of the community.	Design and construct an approximately 10,456 sq. ft. recreation center including community meeting and multi-purpose rooms, arts & crafts rooms, and fitness rooms.
Uptown Recreation Center - South	NA	NA	Proposed recreation facility located in the southern portion of the community.	Design and construct an approximately 17,000 sq. ft. recreation center including a gymnasium, community meeting and multi-purpose rooms, arts & crafts rooms, and fitness rooms.
<b>Aquatics Complexes</b>				

PARKS / RECREATION FACILITIES	EXISTING USEABLE ACREAGE	FUTURE USEABLE ACREAGE	PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES LOCATION AND DESCRIPTIONS	PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES RECOMMENDATIONS
Uptown Aquatics Complex	N/A	N/A	Proposed aquatics complex to be located at a site to be determined within Uptown.	Acquire land if the location is not within an existing park site. Design and construct an aquatics complex, sized to meet community needs, including a swimming pool, universal access and water amenities such as a children's pool and a therapeutic pool, and a pool house including locker rooms, staff offices and equipment storage facilities.
<b>Joint-use Facilities</b>				
Birney Elementary School	0.86		Existing joint-use facilities consisting of turf multi-purpose playfield, multi-purpose courts, and hardscape for court games pursuant to long-term lease agreement. (Facility is total of 1.82 acres and is shared with Greater North Park (0.96 acres) and Uptown (0.86 acres))	
Florence Elementary School		1.2	Proposed joint-use facility at the school site.	Design and construct joint-use facilities, including multi-purpose courts. Pursue a pedestrian connection between the joint-use area and the future Mission Hills Library site. Enter into a joint-use Agreement with the San Diego Unified School District.
Grant K-8 School		1.00	Proposed joint-use facility at school site.	Design and construct joint-use facilities, including multi-purpose playfield, hard courts and gymnasium. Enter into a joint-use Agreement with the School District.



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Roosevelt Middle School	2.19		Existing joint-use facilities consisting of turf multi-purpose playfields and perimeter running track pursuant to long-term agreement.	
<b>Trails:</b> Useable acres credit for trails was determined by multiplying the linear footage of trail by 12'-0" width and divided by one acre in square feet (43,560)				
Bankers Hill Open Space Trail		0.39	Proposed trail amenities for the existing trails, 1,400 lineal feet, in the Bankers Hill Open Space. A portion of the proposed trail is located on undeveloped public right-of-way.	Design and construct trail amenities, such as benches, interpretive signs, protective fencing, native landscaping, trash and recycling containers, and overlooks, where needed and appropriate for the trail type, as determined and approved by City.
Buchanan Canyon Open Space Trail		0.41	Proposed trail amenities for the existing trails, 1,500 lineal feet, in the Buchanan Canyon Open Space. A portion of the proposed trail is located on undeveloped public right-of-way.	Design and construct trail amenities, such as such as benches, 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.
Curlew Canyon Open Space Trail		0.14	Proposed trail amenities for the existing trails, 500 lineal feet, in the Curlew Canyon Open Space.	Design and construct trail amenities, such as benches, interpretive signs, protective fencing, native landscaping, trash and recycling containers, and overlooks, where needed and appropriate for the trail type, as determined and approved by City.

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Cypress Canyon / Marston Open Space		1.16	Proposed trail amenities for the existing trails, 4,200 lineal feet, in the Cypress Canyon/Marston Open Space.	Design and construct trail amenities such as benches, 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.
Hospice Point Open Space Trail		0.30	Proposed trail amenities for the existing trails, 1,100 lineal feet, in the Hospice Point Open Space.	Design and construct trail amenities, such as such as benches, 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.
Maple Canyon Open Space Trail		0.77	Proposed trail amenities for the existing trails, 2,800 lineal feet, in the Maple Canyon Open Space.	Design and construct trail amenities, such as benches, interpretive signs, protective fencing, native landscaping, trash and recycling containers, and overlooks, where needed and appropriate for the trail type, as determined and approved by City.
Mission Hills Open Space Trail		0.41	Proposed trail amenities for the existing trails, 1,480 lineal feet, in the Mission Hills Open Space. A small portion of the proposed trail is located on privately-owned property.	Design and construct trail amenities, such as protective fencing, native landscaping, trash and recycling containers, overlooks, etc., where needed and appropriate for the trail type, as determined and approved by City. Acquire a recreation easement for public use of the privately-owned portion of the trail.

PARKS / RECREATION FACILITIES	EXISTING USEABLE ACREAGE	FUTURE USEABLE ACREAGE	PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES LOCATION AND DESCRIPTIONS	PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES RECOMMENDATIONS
University Heights Open Space Trail		0.08	Proposed trail amenities for the existing trails, 300 lineal feet, in the Buchanan Canyon Open Space.	Design and construct trail amenities, such as benches, 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.
<b>Portion of Resource-Based Parks</b>				
Freedom Park (within Balboa Park)		2.29	Proposed park located on the north side of the War Memorial Building on Park Boulevard.	Design and construct active and passive recreation amenities and support facilities, such as seating/picnicking, security lighting, walkways, and landscaping.
Nate's Point Dog Off-leash Area (within Balboa Park)		2.75	Dog off-leash area at Laurel Street and Balboa Drive.	Design and construct dog off-leash area upgrades, such as drinking fountains, site furniture, security lighting, walkways, and landscaping.
Pershing Recreation Complex (within Balboa Park)		3.45	Proposed community park/sports complex located at the corner of Pershing Drive and 26 <sup>th</sup> Street. This site is currently used by City Central Operations Station facilities. This 15 acre facility will be shared with; Downtown, Greater North Park; Greater Golden Hill; and Uptown.	Design and construct a community park/ sports complex with active recreation facilities consistent with the recommendations in the BPEMPP, subsequent to relocation of non-park, City facilities.
Presidio Neighborhood Park (within Presidio Park)		3.84	Neighborhood park located on Cosoy Way and Presidio Drive within Presidio Park. Existing uses include a children's play area, picnic areas and a comfort station.	Design and construct additional recreation amenities such as a picnic shelter, accessible walkways, interpretive signs, etc.

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Quince Street Mini-Park (within Balboa Park)		2.30	Proposed mini park located at the southeast corner of the intersection of Balboa Drive and the Quince Street / SR-163 northbound exit ramp.	Design and construct passive recreation amenities, such as seating/picnicking, security lighting, walkways, and landscaping.
Sixth Avenue Children's Playground (within Balboa Park)	3.55		Proposed linear park located between Sixth Avenue and Balboa Drive, from Upas Street to Quince Street.	Design and construct amenities consistent with the approved General Development Plan for the Sixth Avenue Children's Playground located between Thorn and Spruce Streets.
<b>Privately-Owned Park Sites</b>				
None				
<b>Non-Traditional Park Sites</b>				
Normal Street Linear Park		1.60	Proposed linear park located within the Normal Street right-of-way, including the medians.	Design and construct a variety of passive recreational and community uses, including a children's play area and flexible opportunities for the weekly farmer's market and other community events. Coordinate with the State's redevelopment efforts of the DMV office site, where appropriate.
<b>Facility or Building Expansion or Upgrade</b>				
None				

**Summary of Existing and Proposed  
Population-based Parks and Recreation Facilities**

<b>POPULATION BASED PARKS</b>	<b>USEABLE ACRES</b>
Existing Population-based Parks and Park Equivalencies	18.21 acres
Proposed Population-based Parks and Park Equivalencies	36.85 acres
Total Existing and Proposed Population-based Parks and Equivalencies	55.06 acres
Population-based Park Requirements at full community development	155.96 acres
<b>Population-based park deficit at full community development</b>	<b>100.90acres</b>
<b>RECREATION CENTERS</b>	<b>SQUARE FEET</b>
Existing Recreation Centers:	0
Proposed Recreation Center: Grant K-8 School Gymnasium	10,454 SF
Proposed Recreation Center: Uptown Recreation Center - North	10,456 SF
Proposed Recreation Center: Uptown Recreation Center - South	17,000 SF
Total Existing and Proposed Recreation Centers	37,910 SF
Recreation Center Requirement at full community development	37,910 SF
<b>Recreation Center deficit at full community development</b>	<b>No Deficit</b>
<b>AQUATIC COMPLEX</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Existing Aquatic Complexes	0
Proposed Aquatic Complexes: Uptown Aquatic Complex	1.11
Total Existing and Proposed Aquatic Complexes	1.11
Aquatic Complexes Requirement at full community development	1.11
<b>Aquatic Complexes deficit at full community development</b>	<b>No Deficit</b>

## POLICIES

- RE-1.1 Preserve, protect and enhance the integrity and quality of existing parks, open space, and recreation programs in Uptown.
- RE-1.2 Pursue land acquisition for the creation of new public parks and recreation facilities as opportunities arise, with a special effort to locate new park land and facilities in the central and northwestern areas of the community, especially through urban infill and redevelopment proposals.
- RE-1.3 Pursue park equivalencies identified in Table RE-1, Population-based Parks and Recreation Facilities Inventory and Recommendations, and as opportunities arise.
- RE-1.4 Encourage new private development proposals to include recreational facilities within their land holdings to serve existing, as well as new residents in areas of the community where there are land constraints. Provision of non-traditional park and recreation amenities should be considered on rooftops of buildings and parking structures, and/or on the ground level or within new buildings.
- RE-1.5 As public agency land or buildings are redeveloped, active or passive recreation should be incorporated into buildings, support facilities (e.g., parking structures), or the surrounding exterior lands, where space allows.
- RE-1.6 Increase recreational opportunities by acquiring and developing land through street/alley rights-of-way vacations (paper streets), where appropriate and legally defensible, to provide for park and recreation uses.
- RE-1.7 Promote safety of Uptown parks by providing park designs that incorporate the City's 'Crime Prevention through Environmental Design' (CPTED) measures (see General Plan Policy UD-A.17).
- RE-1.8 Construct the proposed Pershing Recreation Complex as recommended by the Balboa Park East Mesa Precise Plan to serve the Downtown, Golden Hill, North Park, and Uptown Communities.
- RE-1.9 Acquire land, design and construct two recreation centers in Uptown.
- RE-1.10 Explore the possibility of renovating and expanding the existing Mission Hills-Hillcrest Library located at West Washington and Hawk Streets to accommodate community recreational needs, after the library is relocated to a new site at Washington and Front Streets adjacent to Florence Elementary School. Coordinate with the adjacent Fire Station #8 to incorporate activity space which could be jointly used, such as community meeting rooms and multi-purpose rooms, fitness center, parking lot, etc. Determine short term and long term uses appropriate for the site.
- RE-1.11 Implement the Sixth Avenue Children's Park approved General Development Plan, located along Sixth Avenue in the Marston Point Area.
- RE-1.12 Encourage development of parks within residential mixed-use developments, and clustered with other public facilities.
- RE-1.13 Pursue lease 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-1.14 Coordinate with the State Department of General Services to explore the possibility of providing a public park within the redevelopment of the Department of Motor Vehicles site on Normal Street.
- RE-1.15 Acquire land, design and construct an Aquatic Complex for Uptown.
- RE-1.16 Explore the possibility of providing a public park within the redevelopment of the San Diego Unified School District's Education Center on Normal Street.

## 7.2 Preservation

The demand for park and recreation opportunities will continue to grow as the population of Uptown continues to grow. Undeveloped land for parks has already become difficult to find in Uptown making preservation of the existing open space and resource-based parks essential to providing recreation opportunities in this community. Preservation can include improvements to existing facilities to increase their life span, or expand their uses and sustainability. The western mesa of Balboa Park will continue to serve as the main recreation venue for the community, but with increased demand and usage, the facilities will need to be reconstructed, upgraded and expanded with sustainable and green technology features, to optimize the space to be fully utilized and to provide new recreation amenities that are needed by the existing and future community residents.

Preservation can also include the enhancement of resource-based parks and open space that provides a balance between protecting the natural resources and allowing for a certain level of public recreation use. For Uptown, this would mean concentrating active recreational use improvements towards larger resource-based parks, and focusing passive use improvements at various open space areas, mini-parks and pocket parks. Aside from trails, only passive uses are allowed in the City's Multi-Habitat Planning Area (MHPA), therefore, to protect the natural resources and still add recreation value, interpretive signs should be featured at open space parks to educate the public on the unique natural habitat, scenic value and the history of the place.

### POLICIES

- RE-2.1 Preserve, protect and manage the natural, cultural, and historic resources that serve as recreation facilities in Uptown.
- RE-2.2 Expand/Upgrade the recreation facilities on the western mesa of Balboa Park consistent with the Balboa Park Master 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-2.3 Preserve, expand and enhance existing park and recreation facilities to increase their life span, or expand their uses and sustainability.
- RE-2.4 Provide sufficient human and economic resources to preserve and enhance the existing parks and open space areas serving Uptown.
- RE-2.5 Preserve and protect City-owned open space canyons within the community by limiting public use to designated trails and providing interpretive signs to explain the biologic and scenic value of the open space systems.
- RE-2.6 Preserve, protect and restore canyons and hillsides as important visual features of community definition.
- RE-2.7 Provide pocket parks with ecologically-sensitive recreational uses as enhanced gateways to open space lands.
- RE-2.8 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.)

## 7.3 Accessibility

Accessibility within Uptown 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 Uptown are planned to be linked by a network of existing and proposed transit routes, bikeways, and/or pedestrian paths.

All new and existing parks and recreation facilities within Uptown are required to meet the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guidelines when they are constructed or retrofitted for improvements or upgrades. This could include adding accessible pedestrian

ramps, providing paved pathways at acceptable gradients that lead from a public street sidewalk or parking area to a children’s play area or other park destination, providing disabled parking spaces, remodeling of restrooms and building interiors.

Accessibility also means the availability of active and passive recreation to all 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, exercise stations, 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 design.

## POLICIES

- RE-3.1 Enhance recreation facilities in Uptown by optimizing pedestrian, bicycle, public transit, automobile, and alternative modes of travel.
- RE-3.2 Design all new recreation facilities for an inter-connected park and open space system that is integrated into and accessible to Uptown Community residents.
- RE-3.3 Retrofit all existing park and recreational facilities to meet the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to accommodate persons with all disabilities.
- RE-3.4 Ensure all existing and future parks and recreation facilities meet local, state and federal accessibility guidelines.
- RE-3.5 Retain and enhance pedestrian and bicycle paths within Balboa Park, especially within the West Mesa, to connect with the surrounding community.
- RE-3.6 Provide an information kiosk and map at the gateways to the community that identifies all parks that serve Uptown and how to get to each by walking, biking or public transit.
- RE-3.7 Develop and increase access to senior and youth services, activities and facilities wherever possible within the community’s public park and recreation system, such as for the Chess Club, Horseshoe Club, and Bridge Club within the West Mesa of Balboa Park.

## 7.4 Open Space and Resource-Based Parks

Open space lands are City-owned lands located throughout the City, 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 RE-1, Parks, Recreation Facilities and Open Space.

In Uptown, there are several open space canyons that provide opportunities for experiencing the natural environment through low intensity recreational uses, such as hiking (approximately 13,280 lineal feet) and bird watching. Any proposed improvements to existing trail systems shall be in compliance 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 southeastern edge of Uptown, as well as to the Downtown, North Park and Golden Hill Communities, which contains specialty gardens and horticultural interests, and houses numerous arts, educational, recreational, and social and sports organizations, primarily on the Central Mesa. The adopted Balboa Park Master Plan governs the future development and enhancements within the western area of the park, located between Sixth Avenue and SR-163, and Upas Street and I-5, which is intended to remain primarily as free and open parkland. Any expansions or enhancements of recreation facilities should not encroach on open parkland, landscaped areas or plazas. Recommended



improvements within Balboa Park to serve Uptown are included in Table 7-1, Population-based Parks and Recreation Facilities Inventory and Recommendations.

## POLICIES

- RE-4.1 Protect the natural terrain and drainage systems of Uptown’s open space lands and resource-based parks to preserve the natural habitat and cultural resources.
- RE-4.2 Protect and enhance the natural resources of open space lands by re-vegetating with native drought tolerant 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-4.3 Require 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-4.4 Provide recognizable entrances (trailheads) to the Mission Hills Open Space and Maple Canyon Open Space systems. The trailheads should include a kiosk that includes a way finding map that shows how the canyon interfaces with Uptown, as well as interpretive signage to educate users on the sensitive natural and cultural habitats and unique biologic and scenic qualities of these areas.
- RE-4.5 Pursue public access easements for approximately 2,300 linear feet of existing trails located on privately-owned open space within the Buchanan Canyon (2,000 LF) and Mission Hills (300 LF) Open Space Lands where appropriate to maintain connectivity between trail segments.