
PARK AND RECREATION

GOAL

Ensure adequate park and recreational facilities and activities easily accessible to all portions of the community.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The General Plan speaks to older communities such as Greater North Park as follows:

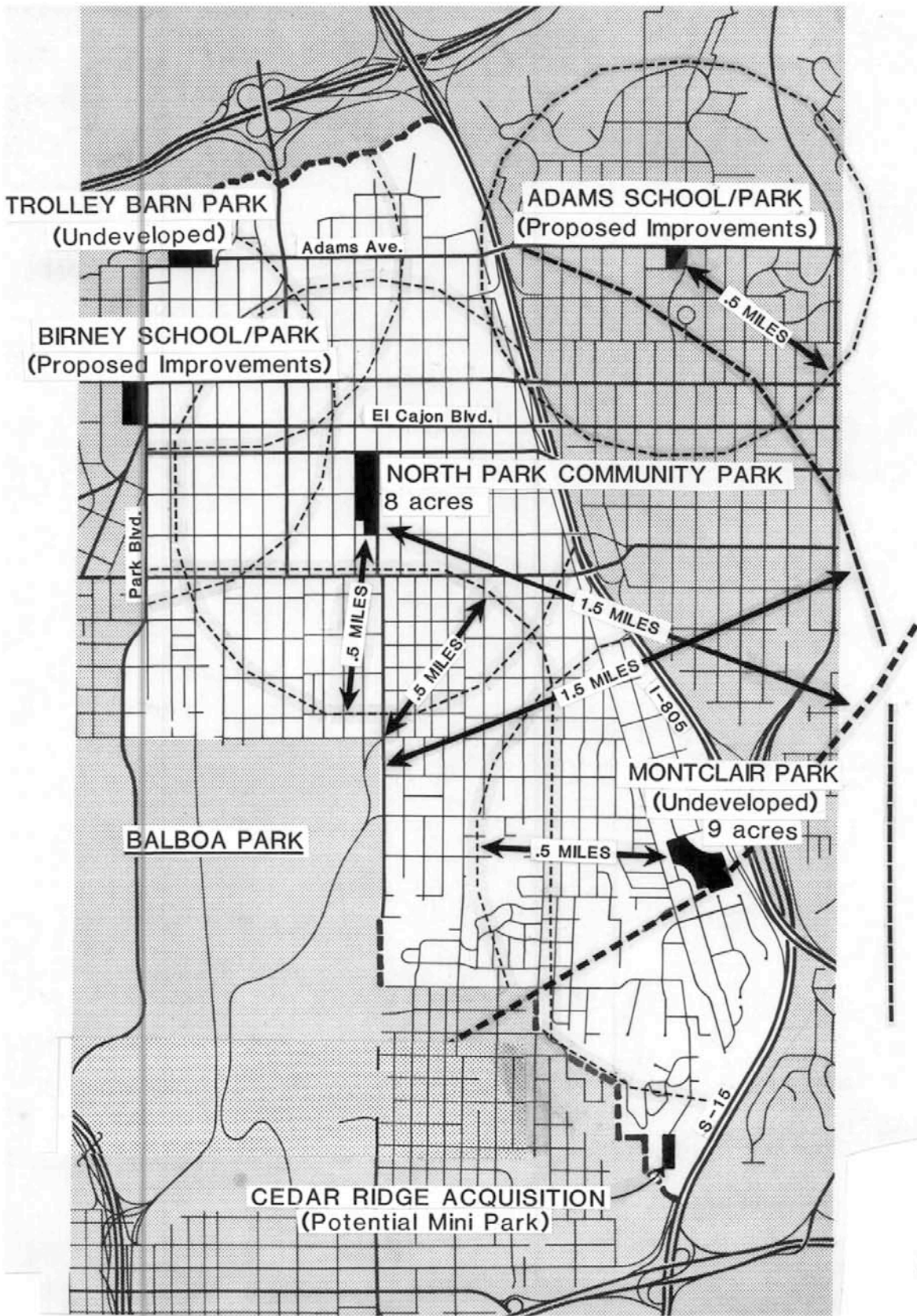
“In older, already developed parts of the City, where recreation space is difficult to acquire, efforts should be directed toward providing staff and facilities which compensate for deficiencies in acreage. Land, equipment, and supervision in varying proportions can still add up to recreational opportunity and service to the residents. If acreage is reduced, facility investment and leadership should be correspondingly increased.”

General Plan park criteria are difficult to achieve due to the lack of available vacant land and the prohibitive cost of buying and clearing developed land in locations where the need is the greatest. In addition, acquisition of developed land for park expansion purposes generally means the removal of housing stock and the displacement of the residents of that housing stock.

North Park Recreation Center is the only developed community or neighborhood park in Greater North Park. It is an eight-acre community park providing lighted baseball fields and tennis courts, shuffleboard, picnic and play areas and a recreation building (see **Figure 19**).

Montclair Park is an undeveloped neighborhood park of approximately nine acres, including “paper” streets, located south of Quince Street and next to I-805. Development of this park is planned for 1990. However, due to the community’s lack of adequate parks, consideration should be given to accelerating the development of this park. Paper streets within the park site should be vacated as part of the park development program (see **Figure 19**). The park should be developed as a passive neighborhood park featuring play areas, picnic facilities, landscaping and lawn areas.

Balboa Park is a regional facility which also provides recreational opportunities to neighboring communities. Portions of the park which border Greater North Park offer tennis courts, shuffleboard, a bicycle track, golf course and other forms of active and passive recreation. Most of these facilities are found at the Morley Field recreation area in the northeast corner of the park. The Birney Elementary School Park, located on Park Boulevard at Meade Avenue in the Uptown community, also serves the Greater North Park community. It is scheduled for improvements in fiscal year 1992 with the provision of a turfed athletic area, reconstruction of the existing lighted athletic field with attendant facilities and the construction of a comfort station.



Existing and Proposed Park
Greater North Park Community Plan

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FIGURE

While also not within the Greater North Park community, the old Trolley Barn site on Adams Avenue has been acquired by the City and is scheduled for development as a neighborhood park in fiscal year 1988. This facility would serve the residents of the northwest portion of Greater North Park (see **Figure 19**). Development of this park could be coordinated with the Park and Adams neighborhood commercial center by means of a common visual theme involving landscaping, ornamental lighting and clearly defined pedestrian connections.

OBJECTIVES

- Provide, to the extent feasible given existing constraints, a system of parks and recreational facilities within the community consistent with General Plan standards.
- Continue enhancement of the North Park Recreation Center as the central facility and focal point serving Greater North Park's active recreation needs.
- Enhance public space adjacent to community facilities, such as post office, libraries, schools and churches, to serve as a focus for passive recreation.
- Establish smaller neighborhood parks and mini-parks throughout the community, especially in areas more distant from larger park facilities.
- Encourage development of public park areas in commercial districts, particularly in areas with high pedestrian activity, to provide visual relief and complementary activity areas.
- Require the provision of private recreational facilities in conjunction with new larger residential projects.
- Provide or maintain adequate access to Balboa Park and its facilities for Greater North Park residents.
- Minimize any adverse impacts from regional visitors to Balboa Park on the Greater North Park community.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Normally, Greater North Park, exclusive of Balboa Park, would be considered to be lacking in adequate park and recreation facilities. Based upon its projected population, the community should have at least two community parks of 20 usable acres each and nine neighborhood parks of ten acres each. These figures are based upon standards estimated by the General Plan of the City of San Diego.

However, the existence and proximity of Balboa Park must be taken into consideration since most of Greater North Park is within the one and one-half mile radius established by the General Plan as the standard for community parks. Therefore, due to the proximity to Balboa Park, the community should not be considered to be deficient in community parks and only deficient in neighborhood parks from an acreage standpoint, since most of the community is within one-half-mile walking radius of an existing or proposed park. Based upon General Plan standards, Greater North Park currently has a 21-acre deficiency in park acreage. After

the completion of the Cedar Ridge mini-park, the community will still be deficient by 17-18 acres. In addition, the community's sole community park (North Park Recreation Center) is 12 acres short of the 20-acre standard for community parks.

There are a number of possibilities which should be considered in seeking improvement to the current park and recreation situation in the community.

Consideration might be given to utilizing all or portions of the Garfield School site as a combined neighborhood park and childcare center. In order to achieve this objective, cooperation of the San Diego Unified School District would be necessary since displacement and relocation of existing educational services would result. In addition, it may become necessary, at some point in the future, for the site to revert back to use as an elementary school. However, in that instance, joint school/park use of the four-acre site should be explored.

The City has recently acquired the Cedar Ridge property at the foot of Pentuckett Avenue. The upland or mesa portion of this property could be developed as a small, passive mini-park of approximately three or four acres.

There should be ongoing cooperation between the City and the School District in efforts to expand existing sites and to maximize the use of existing facilities. Street closings, where feasible, are one method of expanding existing facilities.

Property acquisition, including possible land trades, are another possibility of expanding existing sites. In addition, the sale of other City-owned properties in the community which are not needed or are not suitable for public uses, should be explored as a method of obtaining funds for acquiring properties abutting existing park facilities. **Table 5** lists park facilities within and abutting Greater North Park.

**TABLE 5
PARK FACILITIES**

Name	Type	Size
Balboa	Regional	—
North Park Recreation Center	Community	8 acres
Montclair	Neighborhood	9 acres
Cedar Ridge	Mini	3-4 acres
Trolley Barn*	Neighborhood	
Adams Avenue*	Community	
Birney School*	Community	

* Parks located outside the community

Balboa Park, although primarily thought of as a regional facility, does provide neighborhood- and community-oriented recreational opportunities. A Balboa Park Development and Management Plan has been prepared and is currently undergoing environmental review.

Aspects of that plan which will impact Greater North Park include the addition of a new municipal gymnasium at Morley Field. More significant are the recommendations to extend Upas Street across SR-163 and Florida Canyon and to extend 28th Street across Switzer Canyon.

“Certain adverse visual effects would be associated with both the 28th Street and Upas Street extensions. These effects would be the result of the extension of 28th Street across Switzer Canyon and the extension of Upas Street across SR-163 and Florida Canyon. These extensions would require construction of three bridges with extensive grading and landform alteration. These bridges would significantly alter the existing visual environment in the surrounding areas. The 28th Street extension would reduce the value of Switzer Canyon as a visual amenity for homes along the canyon edge.” (Preliminary Draft Environmental Impact Report — EQD No. 84-0595).

IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

1. Establish and maintain an ongoing cooperative program between the City and the School District to maximize the use of existing recreational facilities and to maximize efforts to expand these facilities.
2. Establish financing programs necessary to upgrade and expand existing recreational facilities.
3. If acreage deficiencies of the community’s park system cannot be specified, then efforts should be made towards providing additional staff and facilities which make up for those deficiencies.
4. Development of the Trolley Barn park site should be coordinated with the rehabilitation of the Park and Adams commercial center.
5. Due to the community’s current deficiency in park acreage, consideration should be given to accelerating the development of Montclair Park.