7 RECREATION

Parks and open spaces provide opportunities for recreation, relaxation, walking, and community gathering. The Community Vision adopted as part of the Plan for parks and recreation facilities calls for the acquisition and development of new parks and associated facilities, improving existing parks in order to promote a safe and attractive public realm, providing access to trails and open spaces, and restoring and enhancing the open space network formed by parks, canyons, and the Chollas Creek open space system.

GOALS

1. A sustainable park and recreation system that meets the needs of a variety of users such as children, teens, the elderly, and persons with disabilities
2. A comprehensive plan for pedestrian and bikeway connections between parks and open space lands within Encanto Neighborhoods as well as to surrounding communities
3. A comprehensive plan for open space system preservation and management of Chollas Creek and area canyons
4. Bicycle and pedestrian trail corridors along Chollas Creek
5. A program to incentivize the provision of publicly accessible, but privately maintained open space as part of new development
6. Provision of expanded recreational opportunities through joint use or leasing of public and private facilities.

TABLE 7-1: RECREATION TOPICS ALSO COVERED IN OTHER PLAN ELEMENTS

RECREATION TOPIC AREAS	LAND USE	URBAN DESIGN	PUBLIC FACILITIES, SERVICES, AND SAFETY	CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABILITY
Park and open space land designations	x			
Recognizable open space network		x		
Joint-use facilities at schools, community facilities			x	
Open space, including Chollas Creek open space system				x

The Recreation Element includes policies and opportunities addressing the following topic areas: Parks and Recreation Facilities, Preservation, Accessibility and Open Space Lands. These policies and opportunities, along with the broader goals and policies of the General Plan, provide a comprehensive parks strategy intended to accommodate the community through community build out.

Recreation topics overlap with other Plan elements, as shown in Table 7-1. Joint-use facilities at schools are relevant in the Public Facilities, Services and Safety Element; open space also has value for the Conservation and Sustainability Element; and the parks system helps to produce the community's identity, a concern discussed in the Urban Design Element.

7.1 Parks and Recreation Facilities

Population-based Parks and Recreation Facilities Standards

The General Plan Recreation Element describes three categories of parks: Population Based Parks, Resource Based Parks, and Open Space Lands. This section covers Population-based Parks. Population-based parks and recreation facilities are typically located within close proximity to residents and are intended to serve the daily recreational and leisure needs of the neighborhoods and communities at a General Plan standard of 2.8 usable acres per 1,000 residents.

Population-based parks consist of six facility types: 1) major park; 2) community park; 3) neighborhood park; 4) mini park; 5) pocket park or plaza; and 6) special activity park. Typically, major parks are a minimum 20 acres and serve single or multiple communities and provide specialized facilities that serve large populations. Community parks are a minimum of 13 usable acres, serve a population of 25,000, and provide active and passive recreation. Neighborhood parks are 3 to 13 usable acres, serve a population of 5,000 within approximately one mile radius, and are accessible primarily by foot or bicycle. Mini parks are 1 to 3 usable acres and serve a population within a half mile radius; Pocket parks and plazas are typically less than 1 usable acre within a quarter mile radius from residents to be served. The size of special activity parks vary depending upon the activity and population to be served. usable park land, by General Plan standards, must have a slope of less than two percent grade in active use areas, or a slope of less than ten percent for unstructured recreational or passive use areas.

The General Plan also establishes minimum standards for recreation centers and aquatic complexes based on population. 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.

Meeting General Plan Standards for Population-based Parks and Recreation Facilities

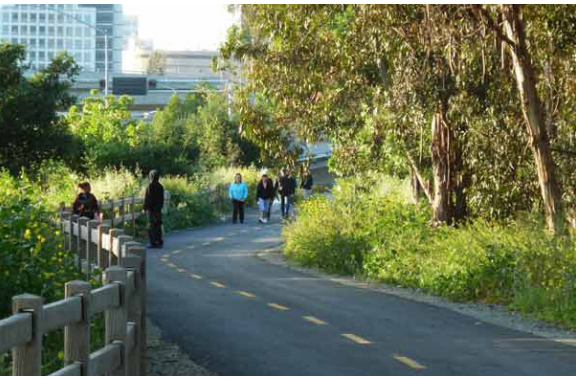
For Encanto Neighborhoods, the projected population at full community build out is projected to be 76,739. Therefore, according to General Plan standard of 2.8 usable acres of population-based parks per 1,000 residents, the community should be served by a minimum of 214.87 usable acres of park land. Additionally, Encanto Neighborhoods should have at least 3.07 recreation centers for a total of 52,183 square feet, and 1.53 aquatic complexes.

Existing Population-based Parks and Recreation Facilities

The existing park system which serves Encanto Neighborhoods is shown on Figure 7-1. It includes two community parks: Encanto Community Park in the northeast and Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Community Park in the southeast. Both parks include a recreation center, and a combination of ball fields and passive recreation. Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Community Park also includes an aquatic complex.

The community includes three neighborhood parks: Emerald Hills Park, Gompers Park and John F. Kennedy Park. All provide children's playgrounds, comfort stations, and passive recreation. Emerald Hills Park also includes tennis and multi-purpose courts. Walls of Ex-

Martin Luther King, Jr. Park is the largest park in Encanto Neighborhoods and provides play structures, walking/jogging paths, and recreation facilities.



Joint-use school sites are a park equivalency (top), trails (middle) and privately-owned, publicly-accessible open space (bottom) are potential park equivalencies. Last two examples are from other communities.

cellence is a pocket park/plaza recognizing outstanding local residents for contributions to the community.

Existing Park Equivalencies

Three Joint Use facilities, Chollas-Mead, Kennedy-Porter and Valencia Park Elementary Schools provide turf multi-purposed playfields as park equivalencies.

Proposed Population-Based Park and Recreation Facilities

Opportunities for additional park land and recreation facilities within Encanto Neighborhoods are anticipated to come primarily through property acquisition, redevelopment of private and public properties and through the application of park equivalencies.

Where undeveloped 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 City staff through a community plan update or amendment. Park equivalency categories include: 1) joint use facilities; 2) trails; 3) privately-owned publicly accessible parks; 4) non-traditional parks, such as roof top or indoor recreation facilities; 5) portions of resource-based parks; and 6) park facility expansion or upgrades. Encanto Neighborhoods is an urbanized community where park equivalencies are appropriate for satisfying some of the community's population-based park needs.

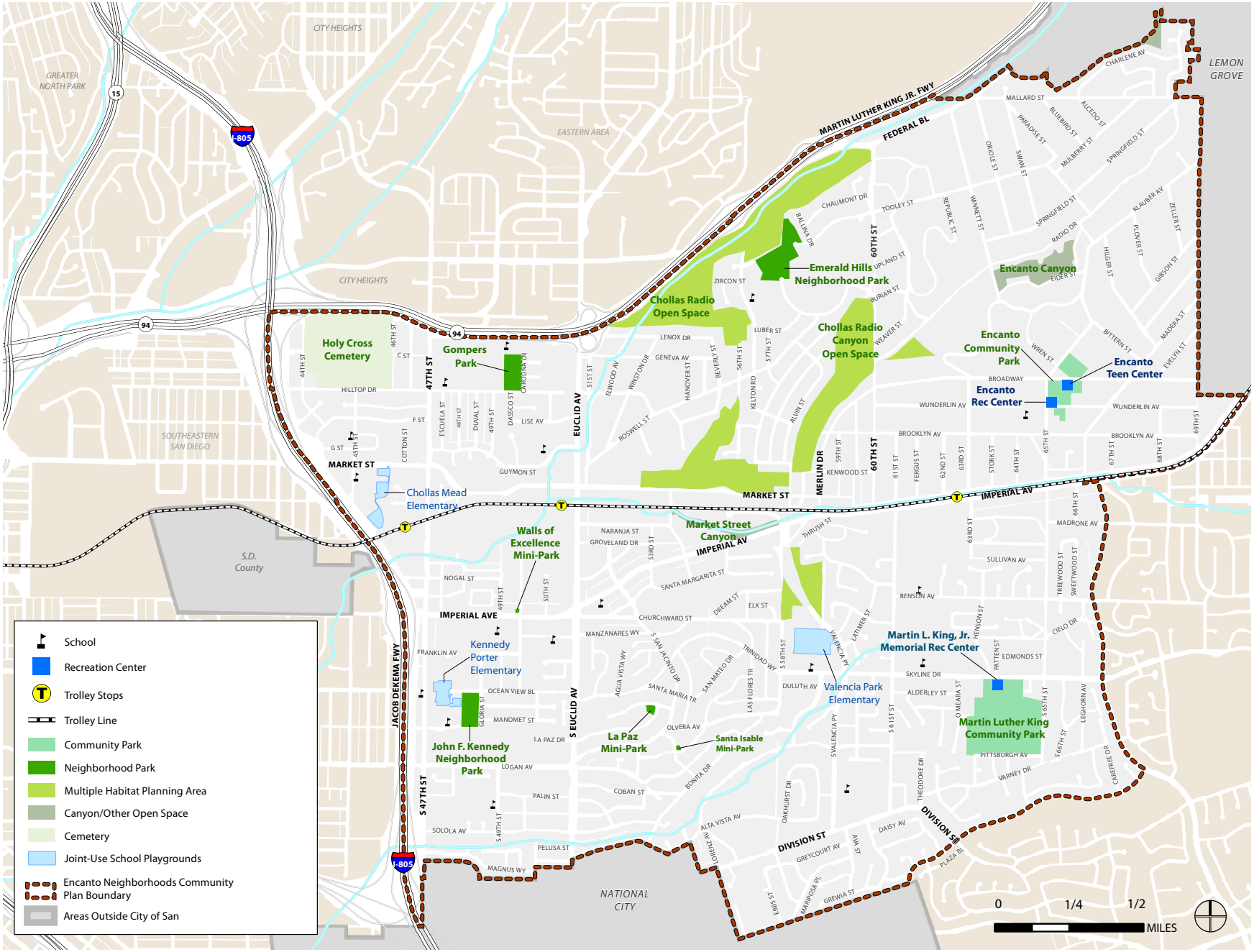
Population-based park and recreation opportunities, as well as proposed park equivalency sites have been identified and evaluated for their recreational value, uses, functions, and public accessibility. They were also evaluated for consistency with General Plan policies and guidelines, and other land use policy documents, including the Chollas Creek Enhancement Plan, and the Euclid+Market Land Use and Mobility Plan (EMLUMP). It was determined that a variety of sites and facilities within the community do, or could, serve as population-based parks or park equivalencies.

The Euclid+Market Land Use and Mobility Plan (EMLUMP) includes a conceptual plan for a series of park spaces of varying sizes and functions, and open space all connected by a creekside pathway. The proposed pathway will provide a continuous greenway from 47th Street on the west to Merlin Street on the east, along the South Branch and Encanto Branch of Chollas Creek, as well as to the north along the Emerald Hills Branch.

The Chollas Creek open space system as identified in the Chollas Creek Enhancement Plan, as a whole, is not considered population-based park. However, proposed population-based parks along the creek open space system will provide needed recreation space and create connections between communities. Trails that connect these parks that feature such amenities as benches, picnic tables, exercise stations or areas for passive enjoyment could be considered as a park-equivalency. See Section 7-4: Open Space Lands (page 7-15) for more discussion of open space along Chollas Creek.

Table 7-2 identifies existing and 23 proposed park or joint-use sites in Encanto Neighborhoods. Existing, proposed parks and park equivalencies are shown in Figure 7-2 and summarized in Table 7-2. **Identification of private property as a potential park site does not preclude permitted development per the underlying land use or zone. The acreage figures represent existing and planned sites anticipated at the time of**

FIGURE 7-1: Existing Parks and Recreation Facilities



adoption of the community plan. Acreage maybe further refined over time without the need to amend the community plan.

In summary, an estimated 215.00 acres of population-based parks will be needed to serve the Encanto Neighborhoods at community build-out. With 62.00 acres of existing population-based parks and equivalencies, combined with the 68.00 acres of proposed parks and equivalencies that have been identified, an additional 85.00 acres will need to be identified in the future through land acquisitions/donations or future park equivalencies identified by the City or the community to meet General Plan standards for population-based parks.

TABLE 7-2: POPULATION-BASED PARKS AND PARK EQUIVALENCIES INVENTORY

PARK OR PARK EQUIVALENCY	EXISTING USABLE ACREAGE	PROPOSED USABLE ACREAGE	ACQUISITION REQUIRED	EXISTING CONDITIONS / AMENITIES	PROPOSED ACTIONS AND RECOMMENDED RECREATION COMPONENTS AND AMENITIES PARKS
Parks					
Major Parks					
(1) 60th Street north of Old Memory Lane, west side		19.80	X	One undeveloped parcel with telecommunications building and towers.	• Acquire, design and construct a community park, with lease-back for telecommunications.
Community Parks					
Encanto	6.88	0.81		Existing facilities consisting of both active and passive recreation that includes a recreation center, teen center, multi-sports fields, tennis courts, children's play area, walkways, seating and picnic tables.	• Design and construct a new gazebo. • Upgrade park facilities to meet accessibility and safety requirements. • Increase the concession stand square footage to expand park use. • Construct parking and multipurpose court on park parcel south of Wunderlin Ave.
Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial	25.91			Existing facilities consisting of both passive and active recreation that includes a recreation center, a senior center, comfort station, ball fields, multi-use courts, children's play area, walkways, seating and picnic tables.	• Design and construct a new gazebo, sportsfield, and security lighting. • Upgrade park facilities to meet accessibility and safety requirements.
Neighborhood Parks					
Emerald Hills	6.72			Existing facility consisting of passive recreation that includes comfort station, multi-purpose court, tennis court, shade structure, children's play area, walkways, seating and picnic tables.	• Upgrade park facilities to meet accessibility and safety requirements.
Gompers	4.82			Existing facility consisting of passive recreation that includes, comfort station, children's play area, walkways, seating and picnic tables.	• Upgrade park facilities to meet accessibility and safety requirements. • Design and construct security lighting.

FIGURE 7-2: Existing and Proposed Parks and Park Equivalencies

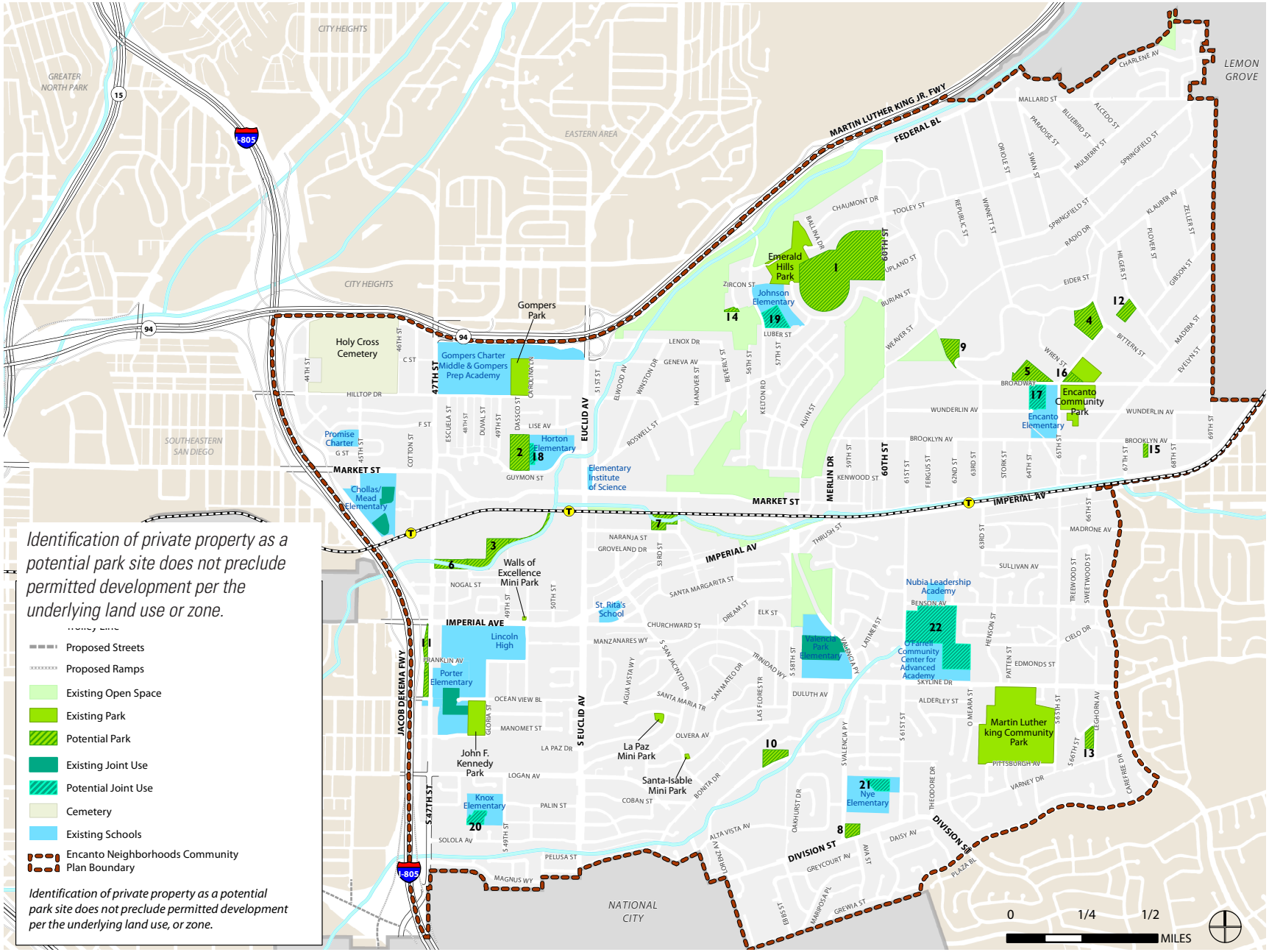


TABLE 7-2: POPULATION-BASED PARKS AND PARK EQUIVALENCIES INVENTORY

PARK OR PARK EQUIVALENCY	EXISTING USABLE ACREAGE	PROPOSED USABLE ACREAGE	ACQUISITION REQUIRED	EXISTING CONDITIONS / AMENITIES	PROPOSED ACTIONS AND RECOMMENDED RECREATION COMPONENTS AND AMENITIES PARKS
John F. Kennedy	4.08			Existing facility consisting of passive recreation that includes comfort station, children's play area, walkways, seating and picnic tables.	• Upgrade park facilities to meet accessibility and safety requirements. • Design and construct security and ballfield lighting.
(2) Guymon Street, west of Horton Elementary School		3.40		Existing City fee-owned open space.	• Design and construct a neighborhood park with interpretation of existing natural open space.
(3) South side of El Rey Mobile Home Park along Chollas Creek		2.80	X	Partially developed parcel with modular homes along the Chollas Creek open space system.	• Acquire, design and construct a neighborhood park with restoration of Chollas Creek as identified in Euclid+Market Master Plan (EMLUMP).
(4) Klauber Avenue & Bittern Street.		3.00	X	Two undeveloped parcels with gently rolling slopes. Close to Encanto Community Park.	• Acquire, design and construct a park with typical neighborhood park amenities.
(5) Broadway west of 65th Street		3.30	X	Undeveloped parcel.	• Acquire, design and construct a park with typical neighborhood park amenities.
Mini-Parks/Pocket Parks/Plazas					
(6) Castana Street east of 47th Street along Chollas Creek		2.10	X	Public Utilities Department owned property along Chollas Creek.	• Acquire property from enterprise fund department, design and construct a park with typical mini-park amenities and with trails as identified in the Euclid+Market Master Plan.
(7) Naranja Street between 53rd & 54th Street north side, along Chollas Creek		1.20	X	Three undeveloped parcels and three single family residential parcel (lower half of lots undeveloped) adjacent to Chollas Creek open space system.	• Acquire a portion of the parcels, design and construct a park with typical mini-park amenities.
(8) Division Street & Valencia Parkway, northeast corner		0.80	X	Church-owned parcel with undeveloped area.	• Acquire a portion of the parcel, for design and construction of a park with typical pocket-park amenities.
(9) Scimitar Drive north of Broadway, west side		0.90	X	Two undeveloped parcels adjacent to City fee-open space.	• Acquire, design and construct a park with typical mini-park amenities taking advantage of panoramic views.
(10) Cervantes Avenue, north side		2.30 (includes vacated right of way)	X	Street right of way and undeveloped parcel adjacent to City fee-owned open space.	• Vacate right of way, acquire, design and construct a park with typical pocket-park amenities with interpretation of adjacent open space. • Provide an improved pedestrian link to connect both ends Cervantes Avenue.

TABLE 7-2: POPULATION-BASED PARKS AND PARK EQUIVALENCIES INVENTORY					
PARK OR PARK EQUIVALENCY	**EXISTING USABLE ACREAGE**	**PROPOSED USABLE ACREAGE**	**ACQUISITION REQUIRED**	**EXISTING CONDITIONS / AMENITIES**	**PROPOSED ACTIONS AND RECOMMENDED RECREATION COMPONENTS AND AMENITIES PARKS**
(11) 47th St between Imperial Avenue & Ocean View Boulevard, west side		1.80	X	Three undeveloped parcels across the street from Lincoln High School and Kennedy-Porter Elementary School.	• Acquire, design and construct a linear park for special activities.
(12) Hilger Street between Klauber Avenue & Madera Street, west side		1.30	X	Two undeveloped parcels.	• Acquire, design and construct a park with typical mini-park amenities.
(13) Leghorn Avenue north of Varney Drive, west side		1.50	X	Eight undeveloped parcels.	• Acquire, design and construct a park with typical mini-park amenities.
Santa Isabel		0.10		City fee-owned undeveloped park land.	• Design and construct a park with typical pocket-park amenities.
Valencia (La Paz)		0.46		City fee-owned undeveloped park land.	• Design and construct a park with typical pocket-park amenities.
Walls of Excellence	0.12			Existing city fee-owned property providing landscaping and seating recognizing outstanding local citizens.	
(14) Amethyst Street, south end		0.80		Existing City fee-owned park land maintained as open space.	• Design and construct a park with typical pocket-park amenities and trail head to the adjacent open space.
(15) Brooklyn Avenue between 67th & 68th Street		.50	X	An undeveloped parcel.	• Acquire, design and develop a park with typical pocket-park amenities.
(16) Broadway & Klauber Avenue		0.70	X	Two parcels with residential structures.	• Acquire, design and develop as a park expansion of the adjacent Encanto Community Park.
Recreation Centers					
Encanto (9,890 square feet)				Includes a meeting room, a craft room, a kitchen, and a large indoor basketball court.	
Martin Luther King Memorial (17,000 square feet)				Includes a large indoor basketball court, two indoor racquetball courts, craft room, meeting room, large kitchen.	
Emerald Hills Recreation Center					• Design and construct a 17,000 square feet Recreation Center.

TABLE 7-2: POPULATION-BASED PARKS AND PARK EQUIVALENCIES INVENTORY

PARK OR PARK EQUIVALENCY	EXISTING USABLE ACREAGE	PROPOSED USABLE ACREAGE	ACQUISITION REQUIRED	EXISTING CONDITIONS / AMENITIES	PROPOSED ACTIONS AND RECOMMENDED RECREATION COMPONENTS AND AMENITIES PARKS
Aquatic Complexes					
Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial				25 yards long x 15 yards wide - pool, shaded bleaches Spectator Area and outdoor showers.	• Upgrade and improve the aquatic facility to accessibility and safety requirements and expand to provide additional aquatic recreational opportunities.
Park Equivalencies					
Joint Use Facilities					
Chollas-Mead Elementary	3.45			Existing facilities consisting of turf multi-purposed playfield.	
Kennedy-Porter Elementary	3.05			Existing facilities consisting of turf multi-purposed playfield.	
Valencia Park Elementary	6.78			Existing facilities consisting of turf multi-purposed playfield.	
(17) Encanto Elementary		2.00		Decomposed granite fields and asphalt play area.	• Pursue a joint use agreement for the design and construction of a turf multi-purpose playfield, multi-purpose courts, hardscape for games, and children's play area.
(18) Horton Elementary		.90		Decomposed granite fields and asphalt play area.	• Pursue a joint use agreement for the design and construction of a turf multi-purpose playfield, multi-purpose courts, hardscape for games, and children's play area.
(19) Johnson Elementary		3.00		Decomposed granite fields and asphalt play area.	• Pursue a joint use agreement for the design and construction of a turf multi-purpose playfield, multi-purpose courts, hardscape for games, and children's play area.
(20) Knox Elementary		1.50		Decomposed granite fields and asphalt play area.	• Pursue a joint use agreement for the design and construction of a turf multi-purpose playfield, multi-purpose courts, hardscape for games, and children's play area.
(21) Nye Elementary		1.40		Decomposed granite fields and asphalt play area.	• Pursue a joint use agreement for the design and construction of a turf multi-purpose playfield, multi-purpose courts, hardscape for games, and children's play area.

TABLE 7-2: POPULATION-BASED PARKS AND PARK EQUIVALENCIES INVENTORY

PARK OR PARK EQUIVALENCY	EXISTING USABLE ACREAGE	PROPOSED USABLE ACREAGE	ACQUISITION REQUIRED	EXISTING CONDITIONS / AMENITIES	PROPOSED ACTIONS AND RECOMMENDED RECREATION COMPONENTS AND AMENITIES PARKS
Trails					
Emerald Hills Open Space (9,800 lineal feet)		5.40		City fee-owned open space.	• Design and construct trails. • Provide trailheads with kiosks, interpretative panels and passive recreational amenities, such as benches and picnic tables.
Chollas Radio Canyon Open Space (9,500 lineal feet)		5.20		City fee-owned open space.	• Design and construct trails. • Provide trailheads with kiosks, interpretative panels and passive recreational amenities, such as benches and picnic tables.
Valencia Canyon Open Space (2,860 lineal feet)		0.88		City fee-owned open space and San Diego Unified School District undeveloped parcel.	• Design and construct trails. • Provide trailheads with kiosks, interpretative panels and passive recreational amenities, such as benches and picnic tables. • Pursue an easement for design and construction of a trail connection from the adjacent open space through School District property to Valencia Park Elementary.
Privately-Owned Park Sites					
None					
Non-Traditional Park Sites					
None					
Facility or Building Expansion or Upgrade					
None					
TOTAL PARK ACREAGE AND EQUIVALENCIES CREDITS	**61.81 (62.00)**	**67.95 (68.00)**			

1 Site numbers refer to potential park sites evaluated by City Staff and shown on Figure 7-2. Many sites were recommended by the community.

2 The methodology used to determine the amount of acreage credit for trails is as follows X xY÷43,560
X = lineal footage of trail
Y = (24 feet) 4 feet of trail tread plus 10 feet of vegetative buffer on either side
43,560= one acre

3 The methodology used to determine the amount of acreage credit for expansion of an existing facility, or in excess of General Plan standard: X÷Y =Z
X = cost of improvements
Y = cost of acquisition, design and construction of 1.0 acre of parkland in Southeastern San Diego
Z= equivalency credit in acres

A major park could be created in conjunction with the existing telecommunications facility (top). New parks and trails (middle) could join the Market Creek Plaza amphitheater (bottom) along Chollas Creek.

TABLE 7-3: EXISTING AND PROPOSED POPULATION-BASED PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES SUMMARY

POPULATION-BASED PARKS	USABLE ACRES
Existing Population-based Parks & Equivalencies	62.00
Proposed Population-based Parks & Equivalencies	68.00
Population-based Park Requirements at Community Build-out[1]	215.00
Existing and Proposed Population-based Parks & Equivalencies	130.00
POPULATION-BASED PARK DEFICIT AT COMMUNITY BUILD-OUT	**85.00**
Recreation Center(s)	*Square Footage*
Existing Recreation Centers	26,890
Proposed Recreation Center at Emerald Hills	17,000
Existing and Proposed Recreation Centers	43,890
Recreation Center Requirement at Community Build-out[2]	52,183
RECREATION CENTER DEFICIT AT COMMUNITY BUILD-OUT	**8,293**
Aquatic Complex	
Existing Aquatic Complex	1
Aquatic Complex Requirement at Community Build-out[3]	1.53
AQUATIC COMPLEX DEFICIT AT COMMUNITY BUILD-OUT	**0.53**

1 General Plan standard: A community build-out population of 76,739 divided by 1,000 = 67,254 x 2.8 usable acres = 214.87 (215.00) usable acres of population based parks.

2 General Plan standard: 17,000 square feet recreation center serves a population of 25,000. A community build-out population of 76,739 divided by 25,000 = 52,183 square feet

3 General Plan standard: Aquatic Complex serves a population of 50,000. A community build-out population of 76,739 divided by 50,000 = 1.53 aquatic complexes.

Policies

P-RE-1: Continue to pursue land acquisition for the creation of new public parks from willing sellers, and through urban infill and redevelopment proposals, as identified in Table 7-2.

P-RE-2: Pursue park equivalencies as opportunities arise, and as identified in Table 7-2.

P-RE-3: Encourage private development proposals to include publically accessible recreational facilities within their land holdings. This could include non-traditional park and recreation facilities on rooftops of buildings and parking structures, and/or on the ground level, or within new buildings.

P-RE-4: Pursue lease agreements with public agencies (i.e. San Diego Unified School District, Caltrans), to incorporate active or passive recreation into existing buildings, or surrounding grounds, where non-programmed space is available and appropriate for public use.

P-RE-5: Acquire and develop land through street/alley rights-of-way vacations (paper streets), where appropriate, to provide park and recreation uses.

P-RE-6: Retain and promote safety in parks by incorporating the City's Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) measures (see General Plan Policy UD-A.17) in existing parks and through future park design.

P-RE-7: Implement recommendations contained in the Euclid + Market Land use and Mobility Plan and the Chollas Creek Enhancement Plan that serve park needs.

P-RE-8: Encourage development of pocket parks and plazas within commercial districts.

7.2 Preservation, Protection and Enhancement

The demand for park and recreation facilities will continue to grow as the population grows. Undeveloped land for parks has already become difficult to find in Encanto Neighborhoods making preservation of the existing parks and open space essential to providing recreation opportunities in the community. Preservation can include improvements to existing facilities in a sustainable manner to increase their life span.

Preservation can also include the enhancement of open space that provides a balance between protecting natural resources and allowing for a certain level of public recreation use. This would require the focusing of passive use improvements on the edge of open space areas. In addition, to protect natural resources and add recreation value, interpretive signs could be featured at these open spaces to educate the public on its unique natural habitat and/or history. See the Conservation and Sustainability Element for additional discussion of preservation of natural resource preservation.

Preservation of existing parks in Encanto Neighborhoods includes, but is not limited to, upgrading security and ball field lighting; upgrading irrigation systems; repairing sidewalks; and improving parking lots.

Policies

P-RE-9: Preserve, and enhance existing park and recreation facilities using green technology to increase their life span and ensure sustainability.

P-RE-10: Preserve, protect, and restore canyons and hillsides as important visual amenities and

Improve facilities in a sustainable manner to increase their life span (top). Restored creekside open space and trails (bottom) are another form of enhancement.

Accessible improved trails ensure walkability between parks and adjacent areas (top) and should be enhanced. Trails requiring improvements for walkability (bottom).

limit public use to designated trails.

P-RE-11: Provide signs at strategic open space overlooks and trail entryway locations that interpret the biological and scenic value of the open space systems.

P-RE-12: Provide sufficient human and economic resources to preserve and enhance the existing parks and open space areas serving Encanto Neighborhoods.

7.3 Accessibility

Accessibility within Encanto Neighborhoods has three main components: 1) facilities should be accessible to the broadest population possible; 2) all facilities should be accessible by walking, biking and mass transit within neighborhoods and employment centers and 3) facilities should be open for use by the general public with a balance between programmed and non-programmed activities.

Access to parks is one of the criteria used to consider future park sites. Park sites that would add usable recreational space within a quarter-mile walk of residents not currently served by parks should generally be prioritized.

Chollas Creek open space system has the potential of providing a major pedestrian and bicycle link connecting the various Encanto Neighborhoods to each other and to surrounding communities.

The American with Disabilities Act (ADA) also requires that newly constructed and/or altered local government facilities are to be readily accessible and usable by individuals with physical disabilities. Therefore, all new and existing parks and recreation facilities within Encanto Neighborhoods are required to meet ADA guidelines. 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, remodeling of restrooms and building interiors, and providing interpretive signage along a nature trail.

Accessibility also means the availability of active and passive recreation to all community residents. The Encanto and Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Community Parks are programmed through the recreation centers while making the facilities available to organized sport leagues use and unstructured play and impromptu users of the facilities at other times. The schedule is adjusted each year to make sure a balance is provided for community residents. Future park and recreation facilities should be designed to accommodate a variety of uses as determined by community desires consistent with General Plan Guidelines. When special uses are designed into parks, such as off-leash dog areas or community gardens, the 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.

Policies

P-RE-13: Ensure all parks meet accessibility and safety requirements.

P-RE-14: Give priority to acquisitions of parkland within one quarter mile of residents to be served.

P-RE-15: Provide accessible public transit stops, or accessible parking to community and neighborhood park and recreation facilities for persons with disabilities.

P-RE-16: Provide information kiosks and maps at key sites in the community that identify all parks that serve Encanto Neighborhoods and provide directional information for those walking, biking or using public transit.

P-RE-17: Provide senior and youth services, activities and facilities wherever possible within the community's public park and recreation system.

P-RE-18: Acquire private property and/or easements that allow for public trails within the Chollas Creek open space system and other open space systems to ensure continuous trail connections.

7.4 Open Space Lands and Resource-based Parks

City-owned open space lands are located within canyons, mesas and other natural land forms. These open space lands are typically free from development and kept in their natural state to protect their biological resources and habitat value, while providing responsible public access through hiking, biking and equestrian trails. Encanto Neighborhoods contain City-owned open space lands in Chollas Radio Canyon, Emerald Hills, and Valencia Canyon, along ridges, and along Chollas Creek, totaling 177 acres, as shown in Figure 7-3.

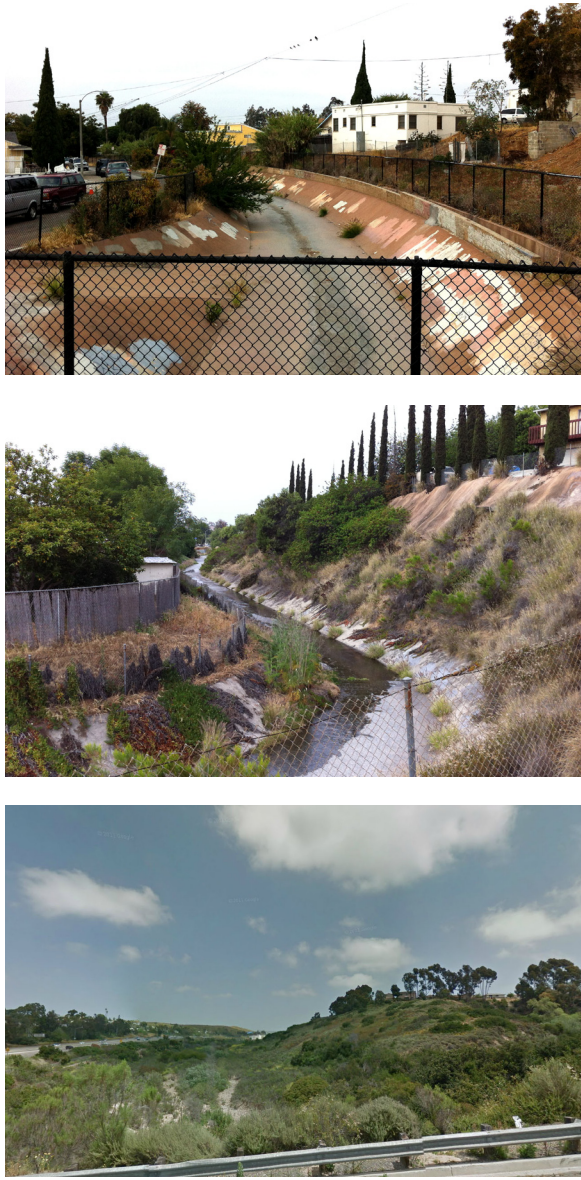
Most of the City-owned open space in Encanto Neighborhoods is mapped Multi-Habitat Planning Area (MHPA). These lands are part of the City's Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP), to support flora and fauna by conserving core biological resource areas.

Chollas Creek Open Space and Trails

Chollas Creek Enhancement Program and South Branch Implementation

The Chollas Creek Enhancement Program extends over 25 miles from Mid-City and Lemon Grove through Encanto Neighborhoods and Southeastern San Diego to San Diego Bay and is predominately private property. The Emerald Hills and Encanto branches flow from east to west, joining to form the South Branch near Euclid Avenue and Market Street. Creek conditions vary from concrete-lined channel, concrete on one bank only, and earthen channel. Certain reaches have intermittent flow, while others have water throughout the year. Chollas Creek presents additional open space opportunities, while providing for stormwater and urban runoff management in the Planning Area.

The Chollas Creek Enhancement Program (Program) identifies the need for restoring disturbed areas; avoiding future channelization; developing a system of linear trails, access points, and enhanced sidewalks where routes must follow streets; and ensuring that development preserves connections and addresses the open space system. The Program includes a 20-year phasing schedule, and identifies the South Branch as the first phase, due to its potential for restoration and its exposure to a wide swath of neighborhoods and commercial areas. The City adopted a more detailed Program for the South Branch and has implemented several pilot projects along the creek. The Market Creek Plaza development, with its adjoining terraces and community amphitheater, has revealed the creek to the community and has made its presence a strong part of the site's identity. Actions proposed for other segments include:



Creek restorations should include naturalizing the channel where feasible, so that sections of concrete-lined channel become more naturalized (top, at Hilltop Drive, middle, at Elwood Avenue) Chollas Creek within Emerald Hills Open Space (bottom).

The amphitheater at Market Creek Village (top) and the path east of Euclid Avenue (middle) show the promise of creekside enhancements. Many creek segments present challenges (Imperial Avenue, bottom).

- Trail and public art along the channelized creek segment along 51st Street, and pedestrian linkages to Gompers Learning Laboratory, the Multiple Species Conservation Program preserve, and Malcolm X Library;
- Habitat enhancement and restoration along the channelized but not concrete-lined segment of the creek west of Euclid Avenue and north of Market Street;
- Trail connection along the creek between Market Creek Plaza and 47th Street.

Additional Chollas Creek Improvement Opportunities

Figure 7-3, Open Space and Trail Systems, shows existing City-owned and proposed future public and private open space along Chollas Creek, and shows a recommended route for developing a pedestrian and bicycle trail system. The Figure shows locations where trials are feasible or feasible with minimal adjustment, and where trails would require land acquisition, agreements, or major grading. Where providing a trial directly along the creek would be difficult, an alternate route is identified. The Figure shows where critical crossings of major streets and freeways could be provided with relative ease, and where they would be challenging. Trailheads are identified, pointing to the importance of visibility and access, in a system that has been historically hidden from view. Four enlarged plans that identify conditions and improvements for these different areas of Chollas Creek in Figures 7-4 through Figure 7-7.

Development along the creek has led to land ownership obstacles for creek restoration. Restoring access and environmental quality along Chollas Creek will require action both by the City and future private development adjacent to the creek. These actions can include acquisition of land or easements from willing sellers for creek restoration and public access at key locations.

In other places, steep topography, major roadways and freeways complicate completing a trail connection. Major street crossings will require signalization improvements and bike/pedestrian bridges. Freeway undercrossings may require substantial infrastructure modification. Where the creek passes under freeways, long, low tunnels will require substantial infrastructure modification. Caltrans must also plan for pedestrian/bicycle movement over freeways in future projects, such as the re-design of Interstate 805. Temporary alternative routes are recommended as interim steps to bypass or circumvent significant obstacles.

Open Space and Trails

The open space systems in Encanto Neighborhoods contain trails that connect neighborhoods and in some cases provide links to parks and joint use areas. These trails can also provide a user with the chance of "getting away from it all," a natural open space classroom, as well as a source of passive recreation such as hiking, biking and bird watching. However, some trails cross private property, other agency lands, or have no particular destination. To ensure a trail system that respects the surrounding natural habitat and reduces impacts associated with human use, new trail segments need to be constructed to provide more direct links; some existing trails need to be reconstructed to reduce erosion and other impacts, and trails that are redundant need to be closed. Trailheads should feature kiosks providing

FIGURE 7-3: Open Space and Trail System

Chollas Radio and Canyon Radio Open Spaces (top). Trail or streetscape improvements could connect neighborhoods with nature "in the backyard" (bottom).

information on the natural open space as well as maps of the trail system. Figure 7- 3, Open Space and Trail System, identifies future open space trail system for Encanto Neighborhoods.

Existing trails along Chollas Radio Canyon and the Emerald Hills branch of Chollas Creek are recommended to link to trails along Chollas Creek and to enhanced streetscapes. Improved wayfinding signage and amenities such as benches, shade structures, overlooks, and interpretive signage would enhance the community's use and enjoyment of nature. A second trail system within Valencia Canyon Open Space can provide a connection from the community to Valencia Park Elementary School.

Cemeteries

Like other open space, cemeteries provide valuable visual relief in the urban environment. The approximately 45-acre Holy Cross Cemetery is privately owned and operated and is not identified as public park land, but nevertheless provides a distinctive landmark for the community's northwestern corner.

Open Space Lands and Resource-based Park Recommendations

P-RE-19: Protect and enhance the natural resources of open space lands by re-vegetating with native plants and using open wood fences adjacent to very sensitive areas for additional protection while still allowing viewing opportunities.

P-RE-20: Require all stormwater and urban run-off drainage be filtered or treated before entering into open space lands.

P-RE-21: Provide recognizable access points (trailheads) to the trail system as shown on Figure 7-3, Open Space and Trail System. Place a kiosk at trailheads that has a map of how the canyon interfaces with Encanto Neighborhoods, and provide interpretive signs on the biological and scenic value of the open space system.

P-RE-22: Construct new trails within Encanto Neighborhoods open space as shown on Figure 7-3, Open Space and Trail System.

P-RE-23: Provide trails with benches and overlook(s), where appropriate, to ensure that all residents of the community can enjoy the open space in Encanto Neighborhoods.

P-RE-24: Prepare a comprehensive plan for the management and preservation of City-fee owned canyons within the Multiple Habitat Planning Area (MHPA).

P-RE-25: Prepare a comprehensive study analyzing Chollas Creek's outstanding, distinctive natural, cultural or historic resources of a regional nature for consideration of designation as a Regional Park. If it is designated, prepare a Chollas Creek Regional Park Master Plan.

P-RE-26: Implement recommendations contained in the Chollas Creek Enhancement Plan and the Euclid+Market Land Use and Mobility Plan.

P-RE-27: Pursue open space easements on private property that are of a sustainable size and provide habitat and/or public connectivity.

P-RE-28: Incorporate public art in areas along Chollas Creek that are designated as park areas.

Restoring access and environmental quality along Chollas Creek will require action both by the City and future private development adjacent to the creek. The top row of photos shows private development with public space along waterways. The bottom row shows segments of Guadalupe River Park in San Jose.

FIGURE 7-4: Chollas Creek Detail 1

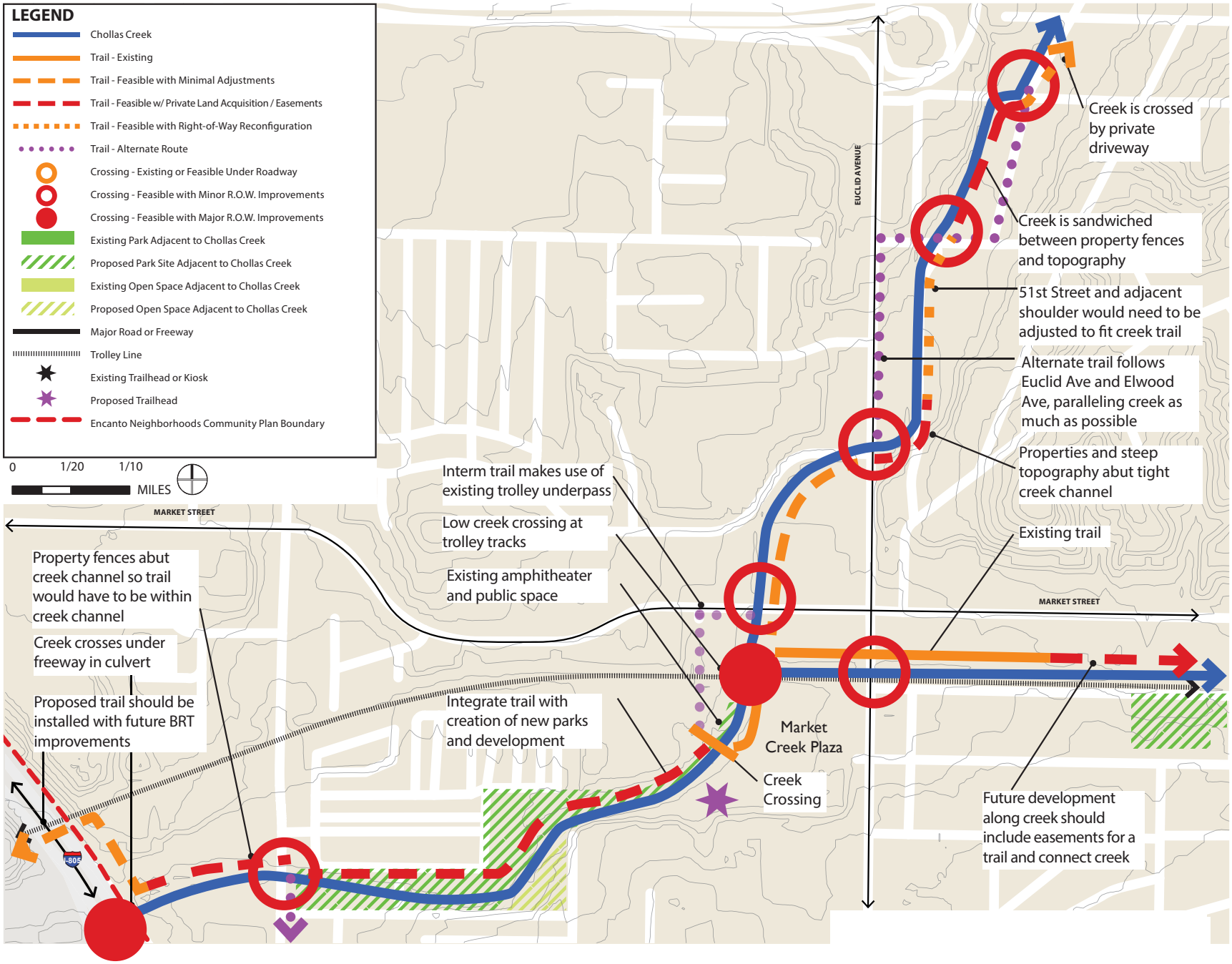


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FIGURE 7-5: Chollas Creek Detail 2

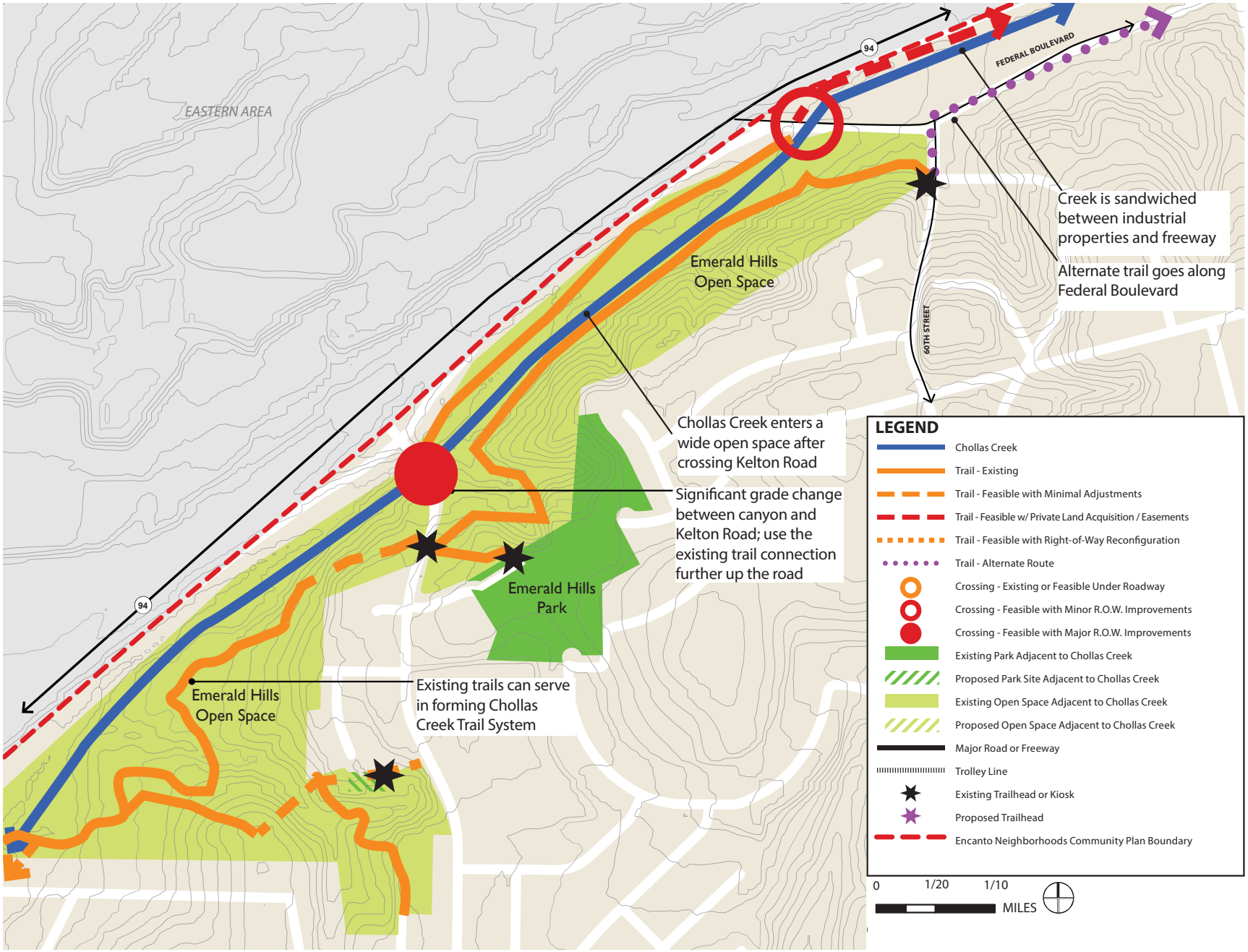


FIGURE 7-6: Chollas Creek Detail 3

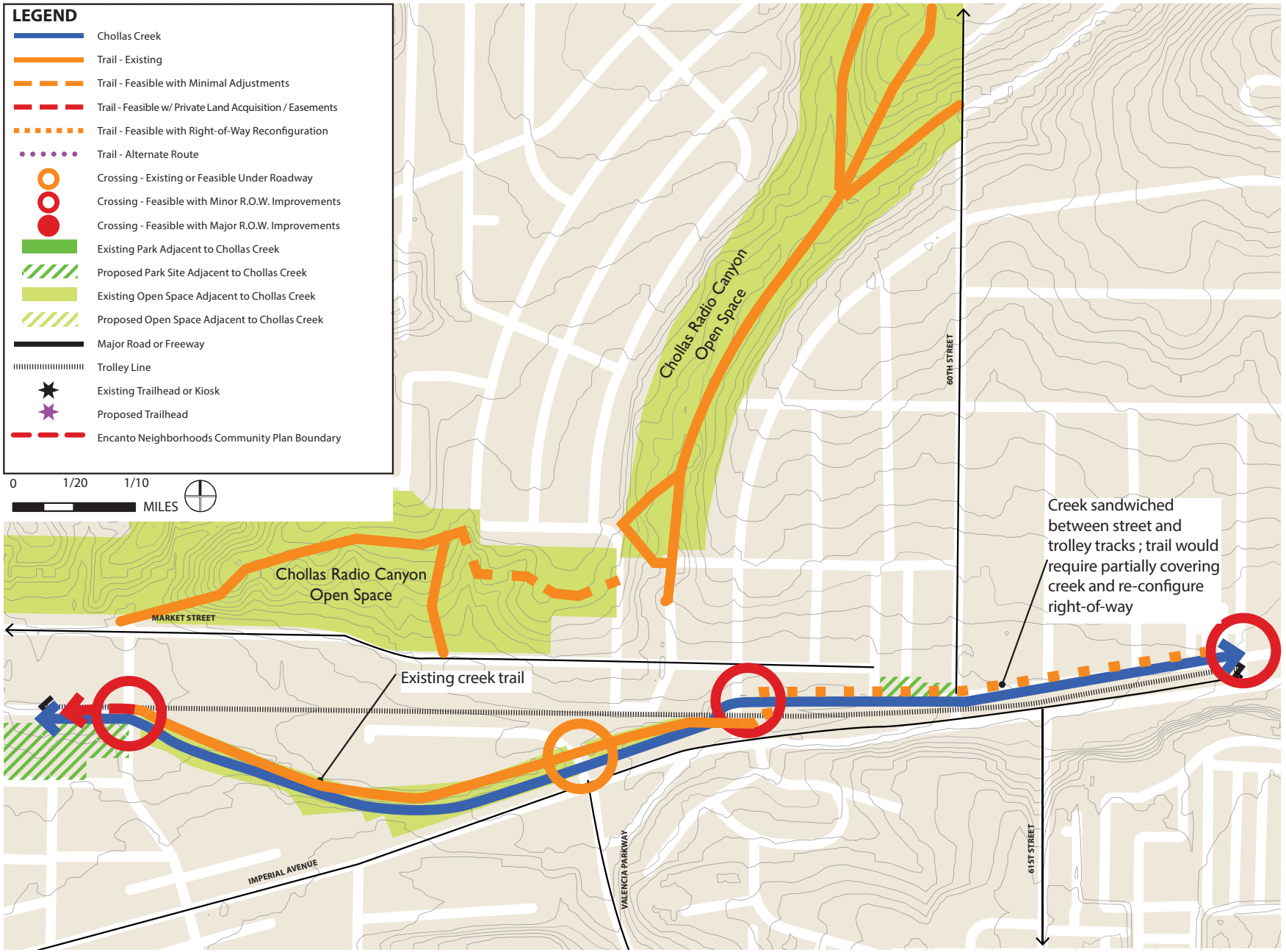
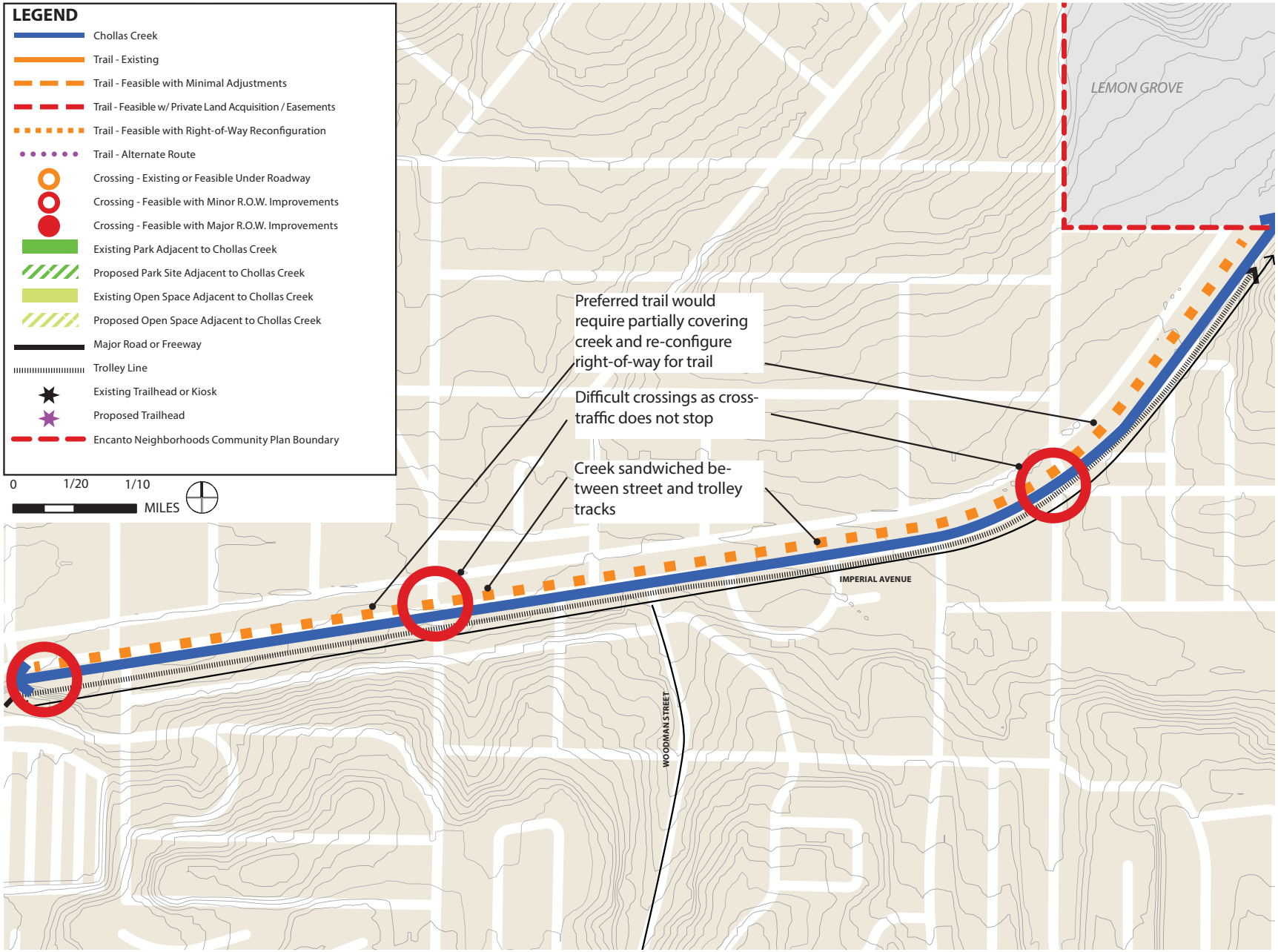


FIGURE 7-7: Chollas Creek Detail 4



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