

RECREATION

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Introduction

The North Park Community 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 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 which serves a variety of users, such as children, persons with disabilities, and the underserved teenage and senior populations.*
2. *Provision of parks and recreation facilities that keep pace with the North Park Community 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 promotion 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. *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 and management of the natural, cultural, and historic resources that serve as recreation facilities in the North Park Community.*
7. *Enhancement of recreation facilities in North Park that optimize pedestrian, bicycle, public transit, automobile, and alternative modes of travel.*

8. *Design all new recreation facilities for 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. *A balance of recreational facilities that are available for programmed and non-programmed uses.*
11. *Comprehensive pedestrian and bicycle connections between parks and open space lands within and adjacent to the North Park Community, as well as to surrounding communities.*
12. *An open space and resource-based park system in the North Park Community that provides for the preservation and management of significant natural and man-made resources.*
13. *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. *A system of pedestrian paths and bikeways linking population-based parks with resource-based parks and open space lands within the North Park Community.*

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 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

At the plan horizon, the projected household population for the North Park Community is 61,965. Based on the General Plan standard for population-based parks and recreation facilities, the community should be served by a minimum of 173.50 useable acres of park land. The projected population warrants approximately two and one-half recreation centers equivalent to 42,160 total square feet, and approximately one and one-quarter aquatic complexes.

Opportunities for additional park land and recreation facilities within the North Park Community 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.

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).

Table 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.

General Plan Guidelines

Parks:

61,965 people divided by 1,000 = 61.965 x 2.8 acres = 173.50 acres of population-based parks

Recreation Center:

(17,000 square feet) Serves population of 25,000:
61,965 people divided by 25,000 people = 2.48
Recreation Centers = 42,160 square feet total

Aquatic Complex:

Serves population of 50,000: 61,965 people divided by 50,000 people = 1.24 Aquatic Complexes

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				
University Avenue Mini Park		1.59	Proposed mini park on undeveloped private property at southeast corner of University Ave. and Louisiana St. (2305 and 2311 University Ave.) to accommodate passive recreational uses.	Acquire, design and construct park amenities to support passive recreation, such as a children’s play area, seating, picnicking, walkways, landscaping, and public art.
Pocket Parks/Plazas				
34th Street Pocket Park		0.15	Proposed pocket park is within the street-right-of-way and 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 consisting of passive recreation amenities, including multi-purpose turf area, children’s play area, seating, walkways, and landscaping.	Design and construct ADA/accessibility improvements to the children’s play area, the path of travel, and other areas of the park as needed.
North Park Mini-Park		0.50	Proposed park on City-owned property, on an undeveloped site.	Construct the park amenities consistent with the approved General Development Plan.
Redwood & 32nd Streets Pocket Park		0.14	Proposed park on City-owned property, on an undeveloped site.	Design and construct park amenities for passive recreation, such as a children’s play area, seating, walkways, picnicking, and landscaping.
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.

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
<i>Special Activity Parks - None</i>				
<i>Recreation Centers</i>				
Morley Field Pétanque Center (within Balboa Park)	N/A	N/A	Existing 1,548 sq.ft. Pétanque Center (formerly senior center) is proposed to be expanded to enhance recreational programs and services; this facility could be combined with the proposed Morley Field Recreation Center.	Expand/renovate the existing Pétanque Center to increase the size to 5,160 square feet or incorporate the expansion into the proposed Morley Field Recreation Center to provide enhanced recreational programs and services consistent with the recommendations in the BPEMPP.
Morley Field Recreation Center (within Balboa Park)	N/A	N/A	Proposed 17,000 sq.ft. Recreation Center to be located within the Morley Field area of Balboa Park.	Design and construct a new 17,000 sq. ft. recreation center to accommodate community meetings, gymnasium, recreation and fitness programs, and restrooms, consistent with the recommendations in the BPEMPP.
North Park Recreation Center	N/A	N/A	Existing facility consisting of 11,232 sq. ft. provides an indoor gymnasium, teen center and multi-purpose/arts & crafts rooms housed in three separate buildings; facilities are outdated and in need of upgrades to fully serve the community.	Expand the existing recreation center to provide a 17,000 sq.ft. 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.
Renaissance at North Park	N/A	N/A	Proposed 3,000 sq.ft. of community rooms within the Renaissance at North Park mixed-use development located at El Cajon Blvd. and 30th Street.	Design and construct the space to accommodate a variety of community oriented meeting and recreation programs.
<i>Aquatic Complexes</i>				
Bud Kearns Aquatic Complex (within Morley Field area of Balboa Park)	N/A	N/A	Existing aquatic complex located in North Park on Upas Street, with an existing pool and support facilities that are undersized and outdated. (Shared between Golden Hill and North Park Communities)	Replace the existing public pool facilities with an expanded state-of-the-art aquatic complex to serve the Golden Hill and North Park Communities. Provide a new pool house, approximately 5,000 square feet, and universal access and water amenities, such as a children’s wading pool with water play element, and therapeutic pool facilities, consistent with the recommendations in the Balboa Park East Mesa Precise Plan.

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
<i>Joint Use Facilities</i>				
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 lease 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 lease 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 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	Proposed joint use facilities at school site.	Construct the joint use amenities consistent with the approved General Development Plan.
<i>Trails; Useable acres credit for trails was determined by multiplying the linear footage of trail by 24'-0" width and dividing by one acre in square feet (43,560)</i>				
Juniper/34th Streets Canyon Open Space Trails		4.24	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		3.58	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.

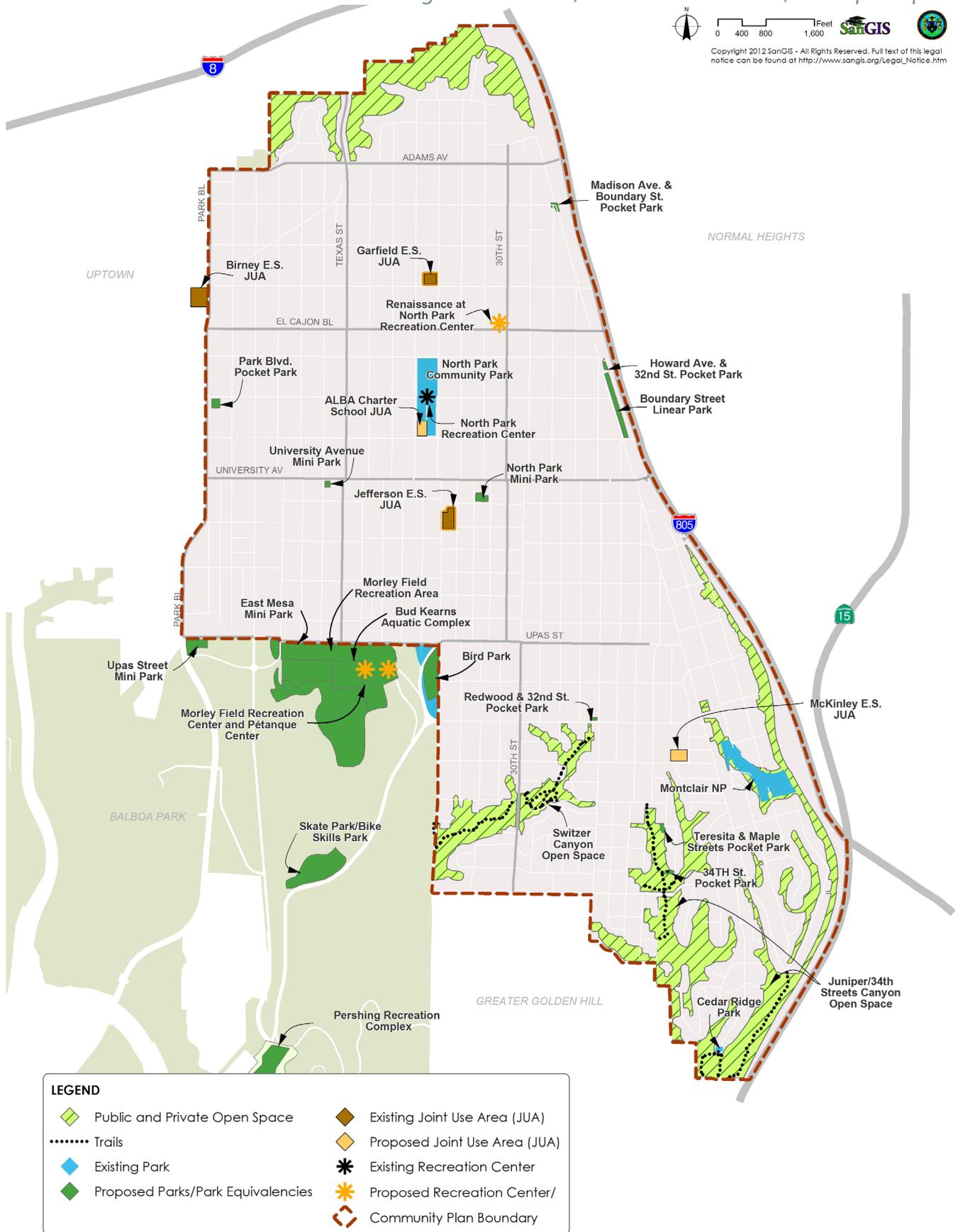
Table 7-1: Population-Based Parks and Recreation Facilities Inventory and Recommendations

Parks/ Recreation Facilities	Existing Useable Acreage	Future Useable Acreage	Parks and Recreation Facilities Descriptions	Parks and Recreation Facilities Recommendations
<i>Portion of Resource-Based Parks</i>				
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)		5.00	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 and Uptown.	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.
<i>Privately-Owned Park Sites - None</i>				
<i>Non-Traditional Park Sites</i>				
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.
<i>Facility or Building Expansion or Upgrade - None</i>				

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		94.17 acres
Total Existing and Proposed Population-based Parks and Equivalencies		110.54 acres
Population-based Park Requirements at full community development		173.50 acres
Population-based park deficit at full community development		62.96 acres
Recreation Centers		Square Feet
Existing Recreation Center: North Park Recreation Center		11,232 SF
Proposed Recreation Center addition: North Park Recreation Center (for a total of 17,000 square feet)		5,768 SF
Existing Recreation Center: Morley Field Pétanque Center		1,548 SF
Proposed Recreation Center addition: Morley Field Pétanque Center (for a total of 5,160 square feet)		3,612 SF
Proposed Recreation Center: Morley Field Recreation Center		17,000 SF
Proposed Recreation Center: Renaissance at North Park		3,000 SF
Total Existing and Proposed Recreation Centers		42,160 SF
Recreation Center Requirement at full community development		42,160 SF
Recreation Center Deficit at full community development		No Deficit
Aquatic Complexes		Unit
Existing Aquatic Complex: Bud Kearns Community Swimming Pool		0.00
Proposed Aquatic Complex addition: Bud Kearns Community Swimming Pool		1.24*
Total Existing and Proposed Aquatic Complexes		1.24*
Aquatic Complexes Requirement at full community development		1.24*
Aquatic Complex deficit at full community development		No Deficit
*Bud Kearns Community Swimming Pool will be shared. Greater Golden Hill requires 0.44, and North Park requires 1.24, aquatic complexes. The proposed, larger facility will satisfy the combined requirements (1.68 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 plan 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 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 with a special effort to locate 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 as identified in Table 7-1, Population-Based Parks and Recreation Facilities Inventory and Recommendations, and as opportunities arise.
- RE-1.3 Encourage proposed residential mixed-use development to include recreational facilities to serve existing, as well as new residents. Consider 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 active or passive recreation into publicly owned buildings, support facilities (e.g., parking structures), or the surrounding exterior lands, where space allows.
- RE-1.5 Increase recreational opportunities by acquiring and developing land through street/alley rights-of-way vacations (paper streets), where appropriate, 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 Expand the North Park Recreation Center (11,232 SF existing) by 5,786 sq.ft. to provide a total of 17,000 sq.ft. by consolidating all or some of the separate structures and/or adding a second floor to accommodate the recreation needs of existing and future residents at full community development.

RE-1.8 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. Enhance the main entry to Morley Field area at Texas Street.
- c. Renovate open lawn areas for multipurpose recreational uses.
- d. Provide additional security lighting along the park edge.
- e. Maintain irrigated lawn throughout the neighborhood edge for informal play; irrigate with reclaimed water when available.
- f. Plant large canopy trees throughout the neighborhood edge, using care to maintain clear visibility across the area for security surveillance.
- g. Construct a children's play area in the Eucalyptus grove across from the Morley Field Tennis Club (East Mesa Mini Park).
- h. Provide enhanced pedestrian crossings at all intersections which enter into Balboa Park; engage community input for these designs.
- i. Design and construct the proposed Pershing Recreation Complex to serve the North Park, Golden Hill and Uptown Communities, when feasible to do so.

RE-1.9 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. Renovate the existing pool house to create a new 17,000 square foot recreation center.
- b. Replace the Bud Kearns Community Swimming Pool with an aquatic complex sized to accommodate both the North Park and Golden Hill Communities' needs, including a new pool house which accommodates multiple user types, and which is solar heated or heated by methane gas from the former Arizona Landfill collection system.
- c. 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.
- d. Construct one multipurpose lighted sports field east of the ball field complex.
- e. Reconfigure parking to concentrate vehicles for safer and more convenient use.
- f. Construct a group picnic area at the south end of Morley Field.
- g. Construct a group picnic area and two children's play areas between the ball fields and the pool/recreation center area.
- h. Relocate two tennis courts north of the competition court to the east end of the block of courts to accommodate an expanded clubhouse and gathering area.

- RE-1.10** 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.
- RE-1.11** 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-1.12** Consider the demolition of the existing 1,706 square foot Adult Center located within North Park Community Park, due to prohibitive and non-cost effective renovation costs. And, the relocation of the senior, social and community programs to the other existing and proposed recreation centers described in this plan. Convert this area to useable park land.
- RE-1.13** Develop smaller neighborhood parks, mini parks and pocket parks throughout the community, especially in areas more distant from larger public park facilities.
- RE-1.14** Pursue opportunities to provide facilities for active uses for teenagers and young adults, such as BMX tracks, soccer fields, ballparks, skate parks, and paintball facilities.
- RE-1.15** Ensure that the design of public parks provided on privately owned land comply with Council Policy 600-33, provide 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.



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



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



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

7.2 Preservation

The demand for park and recreation opportunities will continue to grow as the population of the North Park Community continues to grow. Undeveloped land for parks is difficult to find in North Park making preservation of 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 uses 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. 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 lands that provides 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 on the unique natural habitat, scenic value and the history of the place. (See Conservation Element for additional information on preservation of natural resources.)

POLICIES

- RE-2.1 Expand/upgrade the recreation facilities at Morley Field consistent with the Balboa Park East Mesa Precise Plan to meet existing and future demand, as described in RE-1.9. 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-2.2 Preserve, expand and enhance park and recreation facilities to increase their life span, and to optimize their uses and sustainability.
- RE-2.3 Provide sufficient human and economic resources to preserve and enhance the existing parks and open space areas.
- RE-2.4 Preserve and protect Switzer Canyon and Juniper/34th Streets Canyons Open Space areas by limiting public use to designated trails and providing interpretive signs describing the biologic and scenic value of the open space systems.
- RE-2.5 Preserve, protect and restore canyons and hillsides as important visual features of community definition.
- RE-2.6 Provide pocket parks with ecologically-sensitive recreational uses as enhanced trailheads to open space systems.
- RE-2.7 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.)



Overview of the trail system in Switzer Canyon Open Space.

7.3 Accessibility

Accessibility to park and recreation facilities within the North Park Community 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 the North Park Community 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 the North Park Community are required to meet ADA requirements 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 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, remodeling of restrooms and building interiors.

Accessibility facilities includes 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 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.



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

POLICIES

- RE-3.1 Ensure all existing and future parks and recreation facilities meet local, state and federal accessibility guidelines.
- RE-3.2 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 the North Park Community, 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.
- RE-3.3 Provide information kiosks and maps at key park sites and community gateways that provide way-finding information about pedestrian, bicycle and transit routes to all parks that serve North Park.

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 20.51 acres) and Juniper/34th Street Canyons (approximately 51.44 acres, of which 32.06 acres are within the North Park Community and 19.38 acres are within the Golden Hill Community) which provide low intensity recreational uses, such as hiking and bird watching. 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 the North Park Community, as well as to the Uptown and Golden Hill Communities. Balboa Park features specialty gardens and horticultural interests, and houses numerous arts museums, educational, recreational, 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 the North Park Community 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 includes a map of how the canyon interfaces with the North Park Community.
- RE-4.4 Construct approximately 2,045 linear feet of 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 for approximately 351 linear feet of 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 the North Park Community.
- 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.