

4.10 RECREATION AND PARKS

This section analyzes potential impacts of onsite development related to recreational facilities. This includes parks, open space, and designated public and private areas used for passive recreation.

4.10.1 Environmental Setting

a. City of Los Angeles Parks and Recreation Facilities. City of Los Angeles public parks and open space exceeds 36,000 acres (Citywide Community Needs Assessment, 2009). This includes land designated Recreation and Park lands along with County land within the City-limits, but does not include private recreational facilities. The City of Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks categorizes parks by the following types: mini-parks, neighborhood parks, community parks, and regional and large urban parks. Below is a description of each type of park.

Mini-Parks. Mini-parks are typically less than one acre in size and are small pocket parks that serve the immediate neighborhood.

Neighborhood Parks. A neighborhood park typically provides space and facilities for outdoor and indoor recreation activities intended to serve residents of all ages within the immediate neighborhood. A neighborhood park has a service radius of approximately one-half mile and is pedestrian-accessible without crossing a major arterial street or highway/freeway. Neighborhood parks typically include a recreation building, multi-purpose field, hard court area, play apparatus, picnic area, off-street parking, and a maintenance area. Although the ideal size for a neighborhood park is considered to be ten acres, such parks within the City of Los Angeles are typically one to five acres in size.

Community Parks. Community parks are designed to serve residents of all ages in several surrounding neighborhoods and include such facilities as a community building, multi-purpose fields, hard court areas, parking, maintenance service areas, and play areas. These facilities may also include baseball diamonds, football and soccer fields, tennis and handball courts, and a swimming pool. Within the City's General Plan, it is stated in the Public Recreation Plan (PRP) that a community park is ideally 15 to 20 acres in size, has a service radius of two miles, and is easily accessible to the area served. Hollenbeck Park and Hazard Park are community parks within the vicinity of the project site.

Regional and Large Urban Parks. Regional and large urban parks are typically 50+ acres in size and include sports parks. This park type is the only category of which the City does not own the gross majority of total acreage; much of the non-City owned acreage is attributable to the Santa Monica Mountain Conservancy, the Angeles National Forest, Topanga State Park, and Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park.

According to the Citywide Community Needs Assessment, 2009, the City's total acreages by park type are broken down as follows:

- *Mini-parks – 50.46 total acres;*



- *Neighborhood parks – 773.72 total acres;*
- *Community parks – 2,966.43 total acres;*
- *Regional and large urban parks – 32,288.98 total acres*

Based on these inventories, the current citywide park acreage to resident ratio is 9.231 acres per 1,000 residents (Citywide Community Needs Assessment, 2009). This number, however, is inflated by the large number of Regional and Large Urban Park lands. The 2009 Citywide Community Needs Assessment includes the following park acreage to resident ratios, broken down by park type:

- *Mini-parks – 0.013 acres per 1,000 residents*
- *Neighborhood parks – 0.198 per 1,000 residents*
- *Community parks – 0.759 acres per 1,000 residents*
- *Regional and large urban parks – 8.261 acres per 1,000 residents*

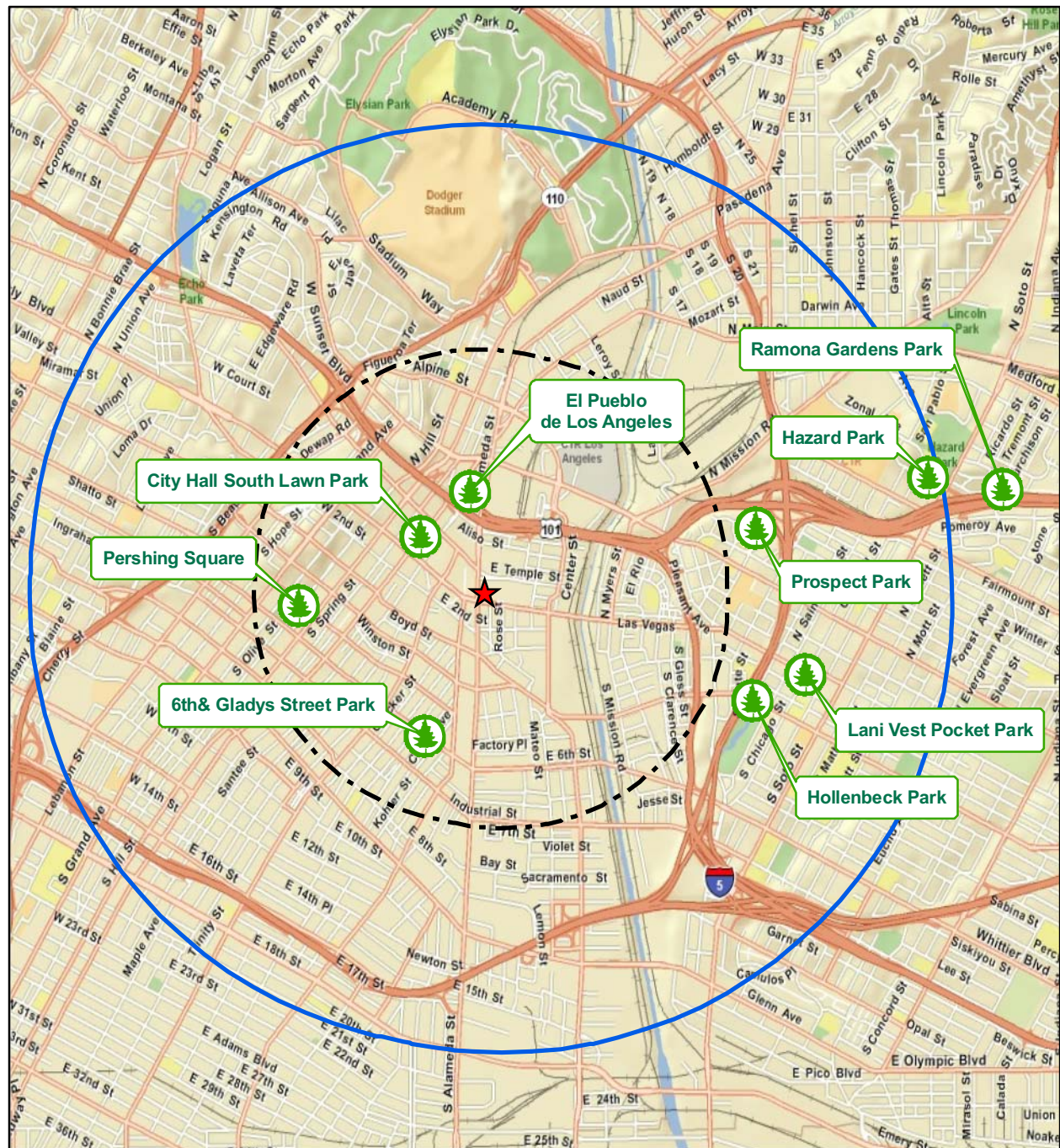
The City's primary focus is on increasing the number of mini, community, and neighborhood parks, with an emphasis on adding parks space downtown (Citywide Community Needs Assessment, 2009).

b. Parks and Recreational Facilities within the Project Site Vicinity. The Recreation and Parks Department operates three parks and recreational facilities located within one mile of the project site, totaling approximately 13 acres, and eight facilities between one and two miles from the project site, totaling approximately 67 acres (City of Los Angeles Planning Department, 2009). Facilities within one mile of the project site are listed in Table 4.10-1 and facilities between one and two miles from the project site are listed in Table 4.10-2. The locations of these facilities are also shown on Figure 4.10-1.



Table 4.10-1
Park Facilities within 1 Mile of Project Site

Facility	Total Acres	Comments/Current Amenities
El Pueblo de Los Angeles	11	Special facility, plaza
City Hall South Lawn Park	1.3	Walkways, grassed areas
Sixth and Gladys Street Park	0.3	Two half-court basketball courts, cabana, grassed areas
Total	12.6	

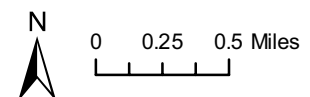
Source: City of Los Angeles Planning Department, GIS Data



Legend

-  Park Location
-  Project Location
-  One-Mile Radius
-  Two-Mile Radius

Map images copyright © 2009 ESRI and its licensors. All rights reserved. Used by permission.



Parks within a 1- and 2-Mile Radius

Figure 4.10-1

Table 4.10-2
Park Facilities within 2 Miles of Project Site

Facility	Total Acres	Comments/Current Amenities
El Pueblo de Los Angeles	11	Special facility, plaza
Sixth and Gladys Street Park	0.3	Two half-court basketball courts, cabana, grassed areas
City Hall South Lawn Park	1.3	Walkways, grassed areas
Prospect Park	2.8	Children's play area
Hollenbeck Park	21	Auditorium, barbeque pits, basketball courts, children's play area, community room, indoor gym, picnic tables
Lani Vest Pocket Park	0.4	Grass
Hazard Park	25	Auditorium, barbeque pits, basketball courts, children's play area, community room, handball courts, indoor gym, picnic tables, tennis courts, jogging path, multi-purpose sports field, stage, utility field
Pershing Square	5	Neighborhood park, sunken amphitheater, grass
Total	66.8	

Source: City of Los Angeles Planning Department, GIS Data

Residents in the project site vicinity are also served by private recreational centers, which include a variety of fitness centers, gyms and private condominium and apartment amenities.

c. Regulatory Setting. Park regulations include those which have been developed by the State of California Quimby Act, the Los Angeles General Plan, and the Los Angeles Municipal Code. A description of each follows below.

Quimby Act of 1975. The Quimby Act (California Government Code Section 66477) authorized cities and counties to pass ordinances requiring that developers set aside land, donate conservation easements, or pay fees for park improvements. The goal of the Act was to require developers to help mitigate the impacts of property improvements. The Act gave authority for passage of land dedication ordinances to cities and counties and established a State standard of 5 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents.

Los Angeles General Plan. The City of Los Angeles General Plan establishes standards for the park and recreation system in the following three areas: (1) sufficient land area reserved for parks and recreation; (2) appropriate distribution of park and recreation facilities throughout the City; and (3) a full complement of park and recreation facility types (i.e., active and passive recreation for all age groups) to accommodate a wide variety of users. Facilities are to be provided at the neighborhood, community, and regional levels.

The PRP establishes goals, objectives, policies and standards related to parks, recreation facilities, and open space areas in the City. Adopted in 1980 by the Los Angeles City Council,

the PRP focuses on the development of physical facilities by emphasizing the provision of neighborhood and community recreation sites, including community buildings, gymnasiums, swimming pools and tennis courts. To a larger extent, the PRP focuses on facility planning in residential areas, as these areas generate the greatest demand for parks and recreational facilities. The PRP also establishes general locations for future facilities based on proposed service radii and projected population levels.

The PRP states that the location and allocation of acreage for neighborhood and community parks and recreational facilities should be determined on the basis of the service radius within residential areas throughout the City. The desired long-range standard for local parks is based on a minimum of two acres per 1,000 persons for neighborhood parks with a service radius of 0.5 mile, and a minimum of two acres per 1,000 persons for community parks with a service radius of two miles. However, it is also noted in the PRP that these long-range standards may not be reached during the life of the PRP and, therefore, the PRP includes more attainable short- and intermediate-range standards of one acre per 1,000 persons within a one-mile service radius for neighborhood parks and one acre per 1,000 persons within a two mile service radius for community parks. The PRP also establishes that no park or recreational facility shall be diminished in size or removed from any service radius unless the required acreage is replaced elsewhere within that same service radius, or the need is diminished due to population and/or land use changes.

City of Los Angeles Municipal Code. Section 12.21.G of the Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC) sets forth requirements for the amount of usable open space that that must be provided for all residential developments containing six or more dwelling units on a lot. Table 4.10-3 summarizes these open space requirements.

Table 4.10-3
LAMC Open Space Area Requirements

Habitable Rooms	Square Footage of Open Space Area per Dwelling Unit
Less than 3	100 sf
Equal to 3	125 sf
Greater than 3	175 sf

Source: LAMC Section 12.21.G.

As required by Section 12.21.G of the LAMC, common open space areas must be readily accessible to all residents of the site and constitute at least 50% of the total required usable open space. Common open space areas can incorporate recreational amenities such as swimming pools, spas, children's play areas, and sitting areas. A minimum of 25% of the common open space area must be planted with ground cover, shrubs, or trees. In addition, indoor recreation amenities cannot constitute more than 25% of the total required usable open space.

Private open space is an area that is contiguous to and immediately accessible from a single dwelling unit, may have a dimension no less than six feet in any direction and must contain a minimum of 50 square feet, of which no more than 50 square feet per dwelling unit can be counted towards the total required usable open space.

LAMC Section 17.12 requires developers to set aside land, donate conservation elements or pay fees for park improvements. Standards for parkland acreage requirements are identified in LAMC Section 17.12, as are fees per unit. The area of land within a subdivision that is required to be dedicated for park and recreation uses is determined by the maximum residential density permitted by the zone within which the site is located. The project site provides for a maximum density of over 100 dwelling units per acre. Thus, based on the provisions set forth in LAMC Section 17.12, 32% of the gross subdivision area would be required to be dedicated as parkland.

LAMC 17.12F states that payment to the City of a fee for each dwelling unit permitted to be constructed in the subdivision can be made in lieu of the dedication of all or a portion of all of the land otherwise required. LAMC Section 17.12F also allows private recreation areas developed within a project site for use by the project's residents to be credited against the project's land dedication requirement. Recreational areas that qualify under this provision include swimming pools and spas (when the spas are an integral part of a pool complex) and children's play areas with playground equipment comparable in type and quality to those found in City parks. Furthermore, the recreational areas proposed as part of a project must meet the following standards in order to be credited against the requirement for land dedication: (1) each facility is available for use by all of the residents of a project; and (2) the area and the facilities satisfy the park and recreation needs of a project so as to reduce that project's need for public recreation and park facilities.

Central City North Community Plan. The project site is located an area of the City of Los Angeles known as the Central City North Plan Area. In the Central City North Plan Area, public parks and recreation areas are managed by the City of Los Angeles Recreation and Parks Department. The Central City North Community Plan includes the following goals, objectives, and policies that pertain to park space and recreational facilities:

- *Goal 4. Adequate recreation and park facilities which meet the needs of the residents in the Plan Area.*
- *Objective 4-1. To conserve, maintain, and better utilize existing recreation and park facilities which promote the recreational needs of the community.*
- *Policy 4-1.1. Preserve the existing recreation facilities and park space. The plan assists in preserving such facilities and park space by designating City recreation and park facilities as Open Space, which provides such protection.*
- *Objective 5-1. To preserve existing open space resources and where possible develop new open space.*
- *Policy 5-1.1. Encourage retention of passive and visual open space which provides a balance to the urban development of the Plan Area.*

4.10.2 Impact Analysis

a. Methodology and Significance Thresholds. Based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, significant impacts to recreational facilities would occur if a project would:

- *Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated; or*
- *Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment.*

As set forth in the *City of Los Angeles CEQA Thresholds Guide*, the determination of significance shall be made on a case-by-case basis, considering the following:

- *The net population increase resulting from the proposed project;*
- *The demand for recreation and park services anticipated at the time of project buildout compared to the expected level of service available. Consider, as applicable, scheduled improvements to recreation and park services (renovation, expansion, or addition) and the project's proportional contribution to the demand; and*
- *Whether the project includes features that would reduce the demand for recreation and park services (e.g., on-site recreation facilities, land dedication or direct financial support to the Department of Recreation and parks).*

Based on these factors, according to the *City of Los Angeles CEQA Thresholds Guide*, a significant impact to parks and recreational facilities would occur if the onsite development would:

- *Increase the use of existing neighborhood and community parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated.*

b. Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures.

Impact REC-1 **New residents generated by onsite development would increase the use of existing neighborhood and community parks and recreational facilities, which could cause or accelerate physical deterioration of the facilities. However, with payment of required Quimby fees and/or Recreation and Park fees and the provision of required onsite open space, impacts to parks and recreational facilities would be less than significant.**

The development on the project site could add up to 528 residential units to the City. Based on the 2009 residential population and number of housing units in the City, there are approximately 2.89 persons per household (California Department of Finance, Population and Housing Estimates, 2009). Therefore, the onsite development would generate an estimated 1,526 new residents.



Based on the City's standards of one acre per 1,000 persons within a one-mile service radius for neighborhood parks and one acre per 1,000 persons within a two mile service radius for community parks, the 1,526 residents generated by onsite development would require approximately 1.5 acres of neighborhood parks within a one-mile radius, and 1.5 acres of community parks within a two mile radius. The onsite development could include up to 25,000 sf of community space. Parks located within a 1-mile and 2-mile radius are shown above in Tables 4.10-1 and 4.10-2. The location of these parks in relation to the project site is shown on Figure 4.10-1. The onsite development does not conflict with any of the Central City North Community Plan goals, objectives, or policies as listed above in the regulatory setting. However, because no community parks or neighborhood parks are proposed as part of the project and or by the City Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks, the standards above would not be achieved. Onsite development would increase the use of existing neighborhood and community parks or other recreational facilities. The increased use of existing parks and recreational facilities as a result of proposed onsite development has the potential to cause or accelerate physical deterioration of the facilities.

The demand for public parks and recreational facilities would be incrementally offset by the required provision of onsite private and community open space, as stated in the City's Municipal Code as shown on Table 4.10-3. As discussed in Section 2.0, *Project Description*, no specific development has been proposed. As planned, onsite development would include up to 25,000 sf of community space, however, no specific development of private or community open space has been proposed at this time. Onsite residential development would be required to comply with the standards for private and community open space as stated in the City's Municipal Code and shown in Table 4.10-3. Mandatory compliance with Section 17.12A, Section 12.21G, and 17.12F of the City's Municipal Code would offset the demand for ratios of community parkland to population and impacts to parks and recreational facilities would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures. The following standard City mitigation measures and municipal code requirements would be required.

REC-1(a) Quimby Fees. Per Section 17.12-A of the LAMC, the applicant shall pay the applicable Quimby fees for the construction of condominiums, or Recreation and Park fees for construction of apartment buildings.

REC-1(b) Open Space per Unit. As per Section 12.21G of the LAMC, the onsite development would be required as a residential development containing six or more dwelling units on a lot, to provide, at a minimum, the following usable open space area per dwelling unit: 100 square feet for each unit having less than three habitable rooms, 125 square feet for each unit having three habitable rooms, and 175 square feet for each unit having more than three habitable rooms. Usable open space is defined as areas designed and intended to be used for active or passive recreation and may consist of private and/or common areas.

Common open space areas must be readily accessible to all residents of the site and constitute at least 50% of the total required usable open space. Common open space areas can incorporate recreational amenities such as swimming pools, spas, children's play areas, and sitting areas. A minimum of 25% of the common open space area must be planted with ground cover, shrubs, or trees. In addition, indoor recreation amenities cannot constitute more than 25% of the total required usable open space.

Private open space is an area which is contiguous to and immediately accessible from a single dwelling unit, may have a dimension no less than six feet in any direction and must contain a minimum of 50 square feet, of which no more than 50 square feet per dwelling unit can be counted towards the total required usable open space.

As the onsite development would allow for a maximum density of over 100 dwelling units per acre, based on the provisions set forth in LAMC Section 17.12, 32% of the gross subdivision area would be required to be dedicated.

It is stated in LAMC 17.12F that payment to the City of a fee for each dwelling unit permitted to be constructed in the subdivision can be made in lieu of the dedication of all or a portion of all of the land otherwise required. LAMC Section 17.12.F also allows private recreation areas developed within a project site for use by the project's residents to be credited against the project's land dedication requirement. Recreational areas that qualify under this provision include swimming pools and spas (when the spas are an integral part of a pool complex) and children's play areas with playground equipment comparable in type and quality to those found in City parks. Furthermore, the recreational areas proposed as part of a project must meet the following standards in order to be credited against the requirement for land dedication: (1) each facility is available for use by all of the residents of a project; and (2) the area and the facilities satisfy the park and recreation needs of a project so as to reduce that project's need for public recreation and park facilities.

In addition to the above measures, Mitigation Measure AES-2(g) in Section 4.1, *Aesthetics*, requires onsite development to provide a landscaped focal point or courtyard to serve as an amenity for residents and provide useable open space for outdoor activities. Implementation of this measure would serve to further offset the increase in recreational facility demand associated with onsite development.

Significance After Mitigation. The applicant would be required to pay Quimby and/or park fees to the City. The payment of park fees would help fund the development of recreational facilities to offset the incremental increase in the usage of recreational facilities that would result from onsite development. The development onsite would be required to adhere to the City

regulation as stated in the mitigation measure above to reduce potential impacts associated with private and common open space. Compliance with the Municipal Code would incrementally offset some of the demand generated for community facilities. Therefore, impacts related to parks and recreational facilities the onsite development would be less than significant with code compliance and required payment of Quimby and/or park fees.

c. Cumulative Impacts. Projected planned and pending development in the City would add new residents and workers to the existing population in Los Angeles. As shown in Table 3-2 in Section 3.0, *Environmental Setting*, planned and pending development in the area would add an estimated 17,417 residential units. Based on the average number of persons per household for the City of Los Angeles in 2009 (approximately 2.89 persons per household), these new residences would increase the City's population by approximately 50,335 persons. Parkland and open space within the City exceeds 36,000 acres (Citywide Community Needs Assessment, 2009). Based on these inventories, the current citywide park acreage to resident ratio is 9.231 acres per 1,000 residents (Citywide Community Needs Assessment, 2009). Like the onsite development, effects to neighborhood and community parks from the increase in population generated by cumulative development would be mitigated on a project by project basis as per the requirements of the City's Municipal Code. All new developments are either required to provide onsite park facilities or pay in-lieu fees to offset this increase. With the collection of required fees to provide needed new facilities and the implementation of new facilities to serve this new demand, cumulative impacts to parks and recreation would be less than significant.