
IV. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

J. PUBLIC SERVICES

3. RECREATION AND PARKS

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

City Parks

The City of Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks (LADRP) manages all municipally-owned park and recreational facilities within the City. The LADRP operates and maintains approximately 385 public parks and recreation centers. The LADRP is divided into three geographical regions. The Griffith-Metro Region encompasses Central and East Los Angeles, including the project area, and all facilities in Griffith Park. The Pacific Region includes the Westside and South Los Angeles. The Valley Region encompasses the San Fernando Valley. Each region is assigned to an Assistant General Manager who oversees the recreation, parks, golf, education facilities, and maintenance and construction in that region.

The Public Recreation Plan, a portion of the Service Systems Element of the City's General Plan, categorizes parks into three groups: neighborhood, community and regional. Ideally, neighborhood parks are 5 to 10 acres in size, have a service radius of approximately one-half mile, and are pedestrian-accessible without crossing a major arterial street or highway/freeway. Community parks are ideally 15 to 20 acres, have a service radius of two miles, and are easily accessible to the area served. Regional parks in the City are ideally greater than 50 acres, provide specialized recreational facilities and/or attractions, and have a service radius encompassing the entire Los Angeles region. Currently, the City's standard ratio of neighborhood and community parks to population is four acres per 1,000 people. However, this standard is not currently being met within the project site vicinity or in the City.¹

As shown in Figure IV.J-3 and listed in Table IV.J-2, seven City parks and recreational facilities would likely serve the residents in the project area.² However, according to the LADRP, the majority of these City parks only have outdoor features with limited or no recreational facilities. These parks do not provide the types of recreational facilities usually found in neighborhood and community parks, such as sports fields, baseball diamonds, basketball courts, gymnasiums and community rooms. Furthermore, the Verdugo Hills Pool and the McGroarty Park and Recreation Center (a cultural arts center) have

¹ *City of Los Angeles, written correspondence from Manuel Mollinedo, General Manager, Department of Recreation and Parks, October 30, 2002.*

² *Ibid.*

Figure IV.J-3 Park Locations

specialized facilities which do not meet many of the recreational needs of the community. Sunland Park and Recreation Center, which is currently heavily used, is the only City recreational facility in the area that provides active recreational opportunities for children, youth, and their families.³

Table IV.J-2
City Parks and Recreational Facilities
Canyon Hills Project

Park	Location	Distance to Closest Development Area^a (miles)	Size (acres)	Type^b
Haines Canyon Park	South Terminus Haines Canyon Ave.	0.4	35	Regional
Howard Finn Park	Foothill Blvd./Machrea Street	0.8	2	Neighborhood
Little Landers Park	10116 Commerce Ave.	0.8	1.2	Neighborhood
Fehlhaber-Houk Park	9521 Tujunga Canyon Blvd.	1.2	1.2	Neighborhood
Verdugo Hills Pool	10654 Irma Ave.	1.0	0.7	Community
McGroarty Park and Recreation Center (Cultural Arts Center)	7570 McGroarty Terrace	0.1	16.2	Regional
Sunland Park and Recreation Center	8651 Foothill Blvd.	1.3	16.5	Neighborhood

^a Linear approximate measurement from the closest Development Area to the applicable park.

^b City of Los Angeles, *Los Angeles Citywide General Plan Framework Draft Environmental Impact Report, January 19, 1995, Table R-1.*

Other Parks and Recreational Facilities

In addition to City parks, federal, State, and privately owned parks and recreational facilities provide recreational opportunities for the public in the vicinity of the project site, including Angeles National Forest, La Tuna Canyon Park, Verdugo Mountains State Park, and Verdugo Hills Golf Course. The following discussion provides an overview of these additional parks and recreational facilities.

Angeles National Forest

The Angeles National Forest is located approximately 3.4 miles from Development Area A, encompasses approximately 650,000 acres⁴ of diverse terrain, and provides recreational opportunities for residents throughout Southern California. Angeles National Forest offers over 110 camping and

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Angeles National Forest, "About Us," www.fs.fed.us/r5/angeles/about/, April 11, 2003.

picnicking sites, 500 miles of hiking trails, and opportunities for fishing, hunting and target shooting, off-highway vehicle exploration, water sports, and winter sports.⁵

La Tuna Canyon Park

La Tuna Canyon Park, located directly south of the project site, is a 1,100-acre park on the north slope of the Verdugo Mountains. La Tuna Canyon Park is owned by the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy and is operated by the Mountain Recreation and Conservation Authority. Access to La Tuna Canyon Park is via the La Tuna Canyon Trail which begins at La Tuna Canyon Road and ascends to the Verdugo Fire Road. Picnicking and hiking are the most common recreational activities in La Tuna Canyon Park.⁶

Verdugo Mountains State Park

Verdugo Mountains State Park is a California State Park located approximately 1.25 miles southwest of Development Area B that was set aside for the purpose of preserving and protecting a remnant of undeveloped land amidst the urban development of the City of Glendale and surrounding communities.⁷

Verdugo Hills Golf Course

The Verdugo Hills Golf Course is located 1.2 miles east of Development Area A on La Tuna Canyon Road. This public golf course was built in 1959 and includes 18 par-three holes.⁸

Public Open Space Fees

To alleviate the demand on City parks and recreational facilities, the City requires residential developers to pay a public open space fee, as permitted under the Quimby Act. The Quimby Act allows California municipalities to require developers of new residential subdivisions to dedicate parkland or to pay fees in lieu of parkland dedication. In subdivisions containing more than 50 dwelling units, developers may dedicate parkland in lieu of paying fees (LAMC Section 17.12).

⁵ Angeles National Forest, "Recreational Activities," www.fs.fed.us/r5/angeles/recreation/, April 11, 2003.

⁶ California Environmental Resources Evaluation System, "Park Listings - La Tuna Canyon," ceres.ca.gov/smmc/latuna.htm, April 11, 2003.

⁷ California State Parks, "Verdugo Mountains," cal-parks.ca.gov/default.asp?page_id=635, April 11, 2003.

⁸ TheGolfCourses.net, "Verdugo Hills Golf Course," thegolfcourses.net/golfcourses/CA/11544.htm, April 11, 2003.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Thresholds of Significance

In accordance with Appendix G to the CEQA Guidelines, impacts on parks and recreational facilities would be significant if the proposed project:

- Results in the need for new or physically altered facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios or other performance objectives; or
- Increases 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.

Project Impacts

The proposed project would increase the local residential population by approximately 831 persons.⁹ Based on the preferred parkland per population ratio of four acres per 1,000 persons, the proposed project would require 3.3 acres of new parkland. According to the LADRP, the added population associated with the proposed project would impact existing parks and recreational facilities.¹⁰ The parks and recreational facilities needs of the additional residents, particularly regarding facilities for children and youth, would not be fully met by existing City facilities and, thus, new parks and recreational facilities would be needed with development of the proposed project.

The LADRP expects that access for the new residents to existing parks (other than La Tuna Canyon Park) and recreational facilities would be difficult, especially for future residents in Development Area B. Although La Tuna Canyon Park is approximately 0.3 miles from the Development Area A and 0.5 miles from Development Area B, Interstate 210 would be an obstacle to future residents of Development Area A that could potentially walk to La Tuna Canyon Park. Future project residents in Development Area B could potentially walk to La Tuna Canyon Park. Children and youth residing in Development Area B would need to be driven to nearby parks and recreational facilities, such as the Sunland Park and Recreation Center, to participate in recreational programs and use park facilities appropriate to their age group.

Although additional parks and recreational opportunities are provided by non-City parks (i.e., Angeles National Forest, La Tuna Canyon Park, Verdugo Mountains State Park and Verdugo Hills Golf

⁹ Source: Sunland-Tujunga-Lake View Terrace-Shadow Hills-East La Tuna Canyon Community Plan, Plan Population and Dwelling Unit Capacity, Persons Per Dwelling Unit (2010), Low Residential Land Use Category = 2.97 persons per unit x 280 units = 831 persons.

¹⁰ City of Los Angeles, written correspondence from Manual Mollinedo, General Manager, Department of Recreation and Parks, October 30, 2002.

Course), without onsite active recreational opportunities, there would be a local deficiency of active recreational opportunities for children and youth at the project site. There are no available flat areas on the project site that would permit the development of a park with a wide range of active recreational facilities for children and youth. However, the proposed Development Areas do include active recreational facilities for children, youth and adults. Within the Development Areas, recreational facilities would include tot lots, an active play area, passive open space, hiking trails, a vista point with a picnic area and gazebo, and a swimming pool with a jacuzzi, restroom building and barbecues. The tot lots, active play area and pool would provide onsite recreational opportunities for children and youth. The LADRP has indicated that additional recreation and/or park opportunities within the Development Areas is a viable option to offset the additional demand for parks and recreational facilities generated by the proposed project.¹¹ Combined, these recreational facilities in the Development Areas would provide approximately 1.7 acres of recreational opportunities for future project residents. The proposed three-acre public equestrian park and trail would also be available to all project residents. The equestrian park, in combination with the recreational facilities in the Development Areas, would provide approximately 4.7 acres of recreational opportunities for future project residents. While the future residents would increase the demand for parks and recreational facilities in the project area, this demand would be offset by the three-acre equestrian park, 1.7 acres of other onsite recreational facilities and several hundred acres of preserved open space.

If and to the extent the proposed equestrian park and other onsite recreational facilities do not fully satisfy the requirements of the Quimby Act with respect to the proposed project, the project developer would be required to pay Quimby fees to the City to satisfy the balance of its obligations under the Quimby Act. The provision of the equestrian park and other onsite recreational facilities and preserved open space, together with the payment of any required Quimby fees, would satisfy the need for any new or physically altered parks or recreational facilities in order to maintain current service ratios. Therefore, project impacts on parks and recreational facilities would be less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURES

The open space, the equestrian park and other onsite recreational facilities included in the proposed project, together with the potential payment of Quimby fees, would avoid impacts on parks and recreational facilities. Therefore, no mitigation measures are recommended.

CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Development of the proposed project in combination with the 13 related projects (see Figure II-1 in Section II.C (Related Projects)) would result in an increase in employees and residents in the project area. Of the 13 related projects, three include recreational facilities (Related Project Nos. 10, 11 and

¹¹ *Ibid.*

12), two are residential developments (Related Project Nos. 7 and 11), and the remaining eight consist of commercial/institutional uses. Employees generated by the commercial components of the related projects would not be expected to use local park or recreational facilities to any great extent since they would not typically have long periods of time during the workday to visit parks and recreational facilities. However, the increase in the residential population by the related projects in the vicinity would potentially contribute to the existing parkland deficiency in the project site vicinity. The two residential-related projects include a total of 135 single-family homes and would generate the demand for an estimated 1.6 acres of parkland.

However, in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 13130(a)(3), the proposed project's contribution to the cumulative impacts on parks and recreational facilities would not be cumulatively considerable because the project developer would (1) provide the equestrian park and other onsite recreational facilities and preserved open space and (2) to the extent that such facilities and open space are insufficient to satisfy fully the project developer's Quimby Act obligations, pay Quimby fees. The satisfaction of the Quimby Act requirements would constitute the project's fair share of mitigation designed to alleviate the cumulative impact on parks and recreational facilities.¹² Therefore, cumulative impacts of the proposed project in combination with the related projects would be less than significant.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

The proposed project's impacts on parks and recreational facilities would be less than significant.

¹² *CEQA Guidelines Section 13130(a)(3) states: "An EIR may determine that a project's contribution to a significant cumulative impact will be rendered less than cumulatively considerable and thus is not significant. A project's contribution is less than cumulatively considerable if the project is required to implement or fund its fair share of a mitigation measure or measures designed to alleviate the cumulative impact...."*