

3I. Recreation

This section provides the recreational setting for the project and an analysis of potential impacts that project implementation might have on existing recreation facilities. Where impacts are identified to be significant, mitigation measures are recommended to reduce these impacts to acceptable levels. The following analysis is based on the City of Los Angeles Northeast Los Angeles Community Plan.

3I.1 Environmental Setting

Approximately 19.4 percent of the Northeast Los Angeles Community Plan area consists of open space and public facilities. The Plan area provides approximately 1,597 net acres of open space alone. Open space uses include Lincoln Park, Ernest B. Debs Regional Park, Hazard Park, Ascot Reservoir, and Arroyo Seco Park. Lincoln Park is a large city park located at 3501 Valley Boulevard, Los Angeles, in the Lincoln Heights area, near the old Selig Motion Picture studios (about 4 to 5 miles south of the campus). Facilities at this park include an auditorium, indoor gym, lighted baseball diamond, skate park, and a variety of indoor and lighted outdoor uses. The 487-acre Ernest B. Debs Regional Park is located at 4235 Monterey Road, Los Angeles, along the southeast side of SR 110, between I-5 and South Pasadena, near Montecito Heights (about 2 miles southeast of the campus). Its facilities include an Audubon Center, trails, a lake/pond, and picnic facilities. Hazard Park, located at 2230 Norfolk Street (about 4 to 5 miles south of the campus), provides outdoor tennis courts, auditorium, jogging path, lighted multipurpose courts, and other facilities near the USC University Medical Center, less than 0.5 miles south of Lincoln Park. Arroyo Seco Park connects to the Ernest B. Debs Regional Park along SR 110 and is located at 5566 Via Marisol (about 2 miles southeast of the campus).

Park facilities in the community of Eagle Rock include Yosemite Park and Recreation Center, which is adjacent to the 3,000-student Eagle Rock High School, and is located at 1840 Yosemite Drive. The Park is considered a “class park,” and includes an auditorium, lighted basketball courts, indoor and outdoor gyms, an amphitheatre, a multipurpose sports field, and a pool. The Recreation Center offers aerobics, dance classes, a music class, a teen club, an after-school club. Both the high school, and the park and recreation center are located along a portion of the northeast perimeter of Occidental College.

Occidental College contains a number of sports fields and active play areas for the use of students and staff. In addition the campus is used by community members for walking and jogging and other similar recreational pursuits.

3I.2 Regulatory Background

City of Los Angeles General Plan

General Plan Framework

Adopted by the Los Angeles City Council in 1996 and readopted in 2001, the General Plan Framework provides strategies for long-term growth in the City of Los Angeles. The General Plan Framework states:

The Framework Element contains goals, objectives, and policies for the provision, management, and conservation of Los Angeles' open space resources, addresses the outdoor recreation needs of the City's residents, and are intended to guide the amendment of the General Plan's Open Space and Conservation Element. As established by the State legislature, "open space" is defined at a broader level than the traditional zones that have been used by the City. It encompasses both publicly- and privately-owned properties that are used for the preservation of natural resources, managed production of resources, outdoor recreation, and protection of life and property due to natural hazards. The inclusion of policies affecting private open space in this Element should not be interpreted to mean that the City intends to change fair market values or purchase such land.

The General Plan Framework provides goals, objectives, and policies regarding land use, housing, urban form and neighborhood design, open space and conservation, economic development, transportation, and infrastructure and public services. The following policies are relevant to the proposed project:

Policy 6.1.6: Consider preservation of private land open space to the maximum extent feasible. In areas where open space values determine the character of the community, development should occur with special consideration of these characteristics.

Goal 9L: Sufficient and accessible parkland and recreation opportunities in every neighborhood of the City, which gives all residents the opportunity to enjoy green spaces, athletic activities, social activities, and passive recreation.

Policy 9.23.3: Establish joint-use agreements with the Los Angeles Unified School District and other public and private entities which could contribute to the availability of recreation opportunities.

Recreational and Cultural Facilities Program (RCFP)

The Recreational and Cultural Facilities Program (RCFP) is responsible for the acquisition, development, improvements, restoration and maintenance of City parks, open spaces, recreation and community facilities and other youth-related projects. A majority of the funding is through Proposition K, an annual real property tax assessment on City residents over a 30-year period. Other funding sources include the Quimby Act and Propositions A, 12 and 40.

RCFP's primary purpose is to combat the inadequacies and decay of the City's youth infrastructure, which has resulted in serious unmet needs for park, recreation, childcare and community facilities. As a result, this program performs such services as feasibility studies, site

and building design, construction documents (plans and specifications), construction/project estimating, bid and award services and construction and project management for both new and existing facilities. Services are performed using City personnel or through consultants managed by City staff. In summary, the RCFP participates in the decision-making process for both City owned and non-City-owned recreational facilities. Funding for specified projects is designated in the original Proposition K ballot measure, as approved by the voters of the City of Los Angeles, as well as through a biennial open and competitive call for projects process.

Public Recreation Plan (PRP)

The PRP, a portion of Section 1 of the Service Systems Element of the City of Los Angeles General Plan, was adopted in 1980 by the City Council. The PRP focuses on physical facilities by emphasizing the provision of neighborhood and community recreation sites, community buildings, gymnasiums, swimming pools and tennis courts. The PRP largely focuses on facility planning in residential areas, as these areas generate the greatest demand and need for parks and recreational facilities. The PRP also establishes general locations for future facilities based on a proposed service radius and projected population levels. The PRP states that the location and allocation of acreage for neighborhood and community park and recreational facilities should be determined on the basis of the service radius within residential areas throughout the City. No parks or recreational facilities should be diminished in size or removed from any service radius unless the required acreage is replaced elsewhere within the same service radius or unless the need is diminished due to population and/or land use changes. An overall provision of 10 combined acres per 1,000 residents for total recreational facilities is recommended in the PRP. Further, the PRP recommends a minimum of 10 percent of the total land area be dedicated to public recreation or open space.

The desired long-range standard for both neighborhood and community park/recreation facilities is 2 acres (minimum) per 1,000 residents and, for regional parks, 6 acres per 1,000 residents. In addition to acreage requirements, the PRP identifies service distances for parks. For a neighborhood park, a walking or travel distance should be not greater than approximately one-half mile and, for a community park, not greater than 2 miles from a residence. No standard is provided for regional parks. The PRP recognizes that these standards may not be fully attained during the long-term life of the adopted PRP.

Northeast Los Angeles Community Plan

According to the Northeast Los Angeles Community Plan, the following definitions and standards are used to define open space, and recreational and park facilities:

Open Space

In the Northeast Los Angeles Community Plan area, important open space areas exist separately from land under the control of the City of Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks. According to the Plan, open space is important for physical and environmental protection. There are two classifications for Open Space, distinguishing that which is publicly owned from that which is privately owned.

The Plan broadly defines Open Space as land that is essentially free of structures and buildings and/or is natural in character and enhances Northeast Los Angeles by providing:

- Recreational or educational opportunities;
- Scenic, cultural, or historic resources;
- Public health or safety;
- Community identity;
- Rights-of-way for utilities or transportation facilities;
- Nature preserves or ecologically important areas; and
- Preservation of physical resources, including ridge protection.

Recreational and Park Facilities

In the Northeast Los Angeles Community Plan area, the City Recreation and Parks Department manages three types of parks; neighborhood, community, and regional, which are described as follows:

Neighborhood Parks: The Department of Recreation and Parks describes a neighborhood park as providing at least two acres of parkland per 1,000 persons within a one-half-mile service radius. The Department tries to locate neighborhood parks so that users do not have to cross major roadways to access the parks and tries to provide facilities and programs tailored to the clientele served.

Community Parks: A community park also provides two acres per 1,000 residents. However, the ideal community park should contain at least 20 acres and the facilities or programs offered would reach a larger service radius usually two miles. Community parks may offer swimming pools, community buildings, tennis, shuffleboard and basketball courts, baseball diamonds, or senior citizen facilities.

Regional Parks: Regional parks should have over 50 acres and provide specialized facilities such as lakes, golf courses, campgrounds, wilderness areas, and museums; they serve people from beyond the City boundaries. There are four regional parks which serve the immediate Northeast Los Angeles Community Plan area. Ernest B. Debs Regional Park and Arroyo Seco Park are located within the Plan area. Two others, Griffith Park and Elysian Park are immediately adjacent to the Plan area, approximately 570 feet away from the eastern campus boundary.

Last revised in 1999, the Northeast Los Angeles Community Plan also contains a relevant goal related to open space, and recreation and park facilities.

Goal 5: Adequate recreation and park facilities to meet the needs of the residents in the Plan Area.

31.3 Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Methodology

Recreation impacts are assessed based upon the City of Los Angeles' planning standards for recreation facilities. Specifically, this section of the EIR addresses issues relating to recreational

facilities and the provision of recreation programs and services that might be affected by the proposed project.

Significance Criteria

The criteria used to determine the significance of an impact are based on the Initial Study Checklist in Appendix G of the *CEQA Guidelines*, the *LA CEQA Thresholds Guide* and City precedent. For this analysis, the proposed project may result in significant impacts if it would:

- Require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment.
- The net population increase resulting from the proposed project could result in a demand for new or improved parks;
- Contribute to a demand for recreation and park services at the time of project buildout that exceeds 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

Consideration is given to 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).

Project Impacts

The proposed project includes construction of residential and possibly active recreational facilities in Subarea 3 (on BOS 5), and the renovation of some existing recreational facilities. The project is not anticipated to result in the loss of recreational space. However BOS 7 is designated as a Building Opportunity Site that could be developed. If the play field on BOS 7 were developed it is anticipated that existing (and potentially proposed new field on BOS 5) open space on campus would continue to meet the needs of the students and staff.

As a part of the project, the environmental effects of constructing proposed buildings and recreational facilities have been analyzed throughout this EIR in each of the respective environmental sections. In general, the new facilities (both academic and recreational) are proposed to more adequately serve students and faculty, and new residents that could live in new housing proposed for Subarea 3. The proposed recreational facilities include a possible new playfield along Avenue 50 at the northwest end of Eaton Street, (BOS 5). This playfield would be located adjacent to existing residential housing, and would be approximately 400 feet northeast of an existing baseball diamond. New tennis courts are proposed along Campus Road on the north side of the campus (BOS 24).

The new recreational facilities would be part of the Occidental College campus, and use would generally be limited to Occidental staff and students. Constructions of these facilities are not required but would provide facilities that are not restricted to use by inter-college or intramural teams.

There are several recreational facilities within the vicinity of the proposed project and within the Northeast Community Plan area, including parks and recreational centers. The increase in use of recreational facilities is generally spurred by population growth in the area. The proposed project is intended to respond to the needs of Occidental College and would not substantially increase the population in the area. The project could add about 35 housing units for faculty and staff; faculty and staff would be expected to continue to use campus resources as at present. Therefore, the proposed project would not increase the use of, or accelerate the deterioration of recreational facilities.

The entire Occidental College Campus, is used by neighbors in the community as a recreational resource (walkers, joggers). Although the campus is private property the College has not restricted access and has no plans to do so. The project would therefore be consistent with Framework policy 6.1.6 regarding preservation of private land open space to the maximum extent feasible. The project would be consistent with Goal 9L that “sufficient and accessible . . . recreation opportunities [are present] in every neighborhood,” since the project site would continue to be a resource accessible to the community. The project would also be compatible with Policy 9.23.3 – Occidental College would continue to make their recreational facilities available.

The proposed project would not result in significant impacts directly due to expansion and construction of recreational facilities. Less than significant impacts would result.

Mitigation Measures

Refer to the mitigation measures identified in Sections 3A-3H, and 3J of this DEIR.

3I.4 Cumulative Impacts

The proposed project together with related residential projects within the project vicinity would not substantially increase the population in the City of Los Angeles. Similar to the proposed project, related projects would be required to provide recreational facilities or pay an in-lieu fee. As such, cumulative recreation and open space impacts would be less than significant.

3I.5 Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant.