



*final draft  
march 31, 2009*

City of  
***Culver*** CITY  
parks and recreation  
master plan update



PLANNING | DESIGN | COMMUNICATIONS | MANAGEMENT | TECHNOLOGY  
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City of  
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## executive summary

### INTRODUCTION

THE PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN (Master Plan) is based on the vision that recreation facilities, programs, and open space are important resources for the residents of Culver City, enhancing community health, enriching people's lives, and contributing to a unique community identity and quality of life.

The Master Plan is an implementation tool of the General Plan, providing strategies for addressing the General Plan's goals and policies based on current analysis and community input.

What recreational facilities and programs does Culver City have? Who uses Culver City's facilities and programs? What role do parks, facilities, open space, and recreation programs have in the lives of residents? What type of facilities and programs does the City need? Where will these facilities and programs be located and how will they be funded?

These are the key questions discussed and addressed by this Master Plan. To some, parks are active sports fields; others have images of passive open spaces with walking trails and view points; still others may envision parks as places for community gatherings and events. In actuality parks and recreation facilities are used for all of these purposes.

Several professional organizations such as the California Park and Recreation Society and the National Recreation and Parks Association describe the many important ways recreation facilities and programming can help in creating healthy lifestyles and livable communities. Some of these ways are by:

- *Strengthening community identity and sense of place*
- *Protecting important places (environmentally, historically, aesthetically, and culturally)*
- *Encouraging human contact and education*
- *Supporting economic development*
- *Preserving cultural unity*
- *Encouraging fitness and health*
- *Providing social meeting places*
- *Supporting families*

Through a comprehensive inventory of the recreation resources available in Culver City, and an understanding of resident demand, the Master Plan provides a road map for how to meet the recreation needs of the community and to enhance quality of life for all Culver City residents and visitors.

### **PURPOSE OF THE MASTER PLAN**

The purpose of the Master Plan is to provide a realistic guide for the creative, orderly development and management of recreation facilities and programs for Culver City. This Master Plan builds on previous planning efforts and other planning processes currently taking place, such as the conceptual planning process for Veterans' Park. A considerable amount of time and effort was invested in obtaining new community input that has resulted in an up to date understanding of current and future recreation and park needs and opportunities specific to Culver City.

The Master Plan provides data and analysis that lead to recommendations that establish how Culver City should maintain and develop recreation facilities and programs now and into the future. The Master Plan covers an approximate

time period from 2008 through 2028. It is intended to be a flexible document, presenting findings and recommendations that will be evaluated, validated, and/or modified periodically as the City responds to unforeseen issues and opportunities as well as changes in residents' needs and demands.

It is anticipated that Master Plan recommendation priorities will be considered on an annual basis in the context of other City projects and, as appropriate, Park and Recreation projects will begin the process of implementation as permitted by the City's budget and the success of other funding initiatives.

## **HIGHLIGHTS OF EACH CHAPTER**

The following presents the highlights of each chapter of the document. While the reader is encouraged to read each individual chapter in the document, this overview will provide a quick reference to the key findings of each chapter and offers a summary for a speedy review of the document.

### **Chapter 1 - Introduction**

This chapter summarizes the purpose and process of the Master Plan. It details the scope and purpose of the Master Plan, describes the planning process, outlines the public involvement and presents how the report is organized.

### **Chapter 2 – Planning Context**

This chapter provides an overview and description of the study area for the Master Plan. It is important to understand both the regional and local context of the planning area in order to determine its specific needs for park and recreation services. Some of the planning context highlights are:

Culver City is in a period of transition. Over the past 50 years the major land uses have been for movie studios, retail and residential development. Recent growth is transitioning its uses to density residential, retail, commercial,

industrial, and tourism. The community has a strong interest in preserving its historical past while managing its future growth to produce quality neighborhoods that translate to healthy and happy lifestyles.

Culver City has experienced residential growth over the last 20 years. The City has expanded to a current population of over 40,000. Culver City is projected to continue to grow over the next 15 to 20 years to an estimated 60,000 residents.

The age breakdown of Culver City's population as of the 2000 Census was:

- *7% of the population is 5 years or younger*
- *16% of the population is between 5 and 19 years of age*
- *44% of the population is between 20 and 54 years of age*
- *33% are over 55 years of age*

These proportions remain about the same today. Culver City is a racially diverse community with a growing Hispanic community. Although future ethnic demographics are projected to transition to a greater mix of Hispanic and non-Hispanic residents, there will still be a substantial Hispanic or Latino population in Culver City in the future, and consequently, a high priority for the City will be the need to continue to address the specific needs and cultural desires of the Hispanic community.

The total number of housing units in Culver City is just over 18,000 with an average household size of 2.4 persons. Forty-one percent of the population has lived in Culver City for more than 21 years. The majority of the population, 75 percent, seeks employment outside the City's boundaries. Nevertheless, the daytime population remains high due to the large volume of people that commute into Culver City for work and other tasks.

Median household income is about \$69,400 per year as reported by Research Network, up \$17,600 from the 2000 Census numbers. This figure is significantly higher than the median family incomes of Los Angeles County: \$51,315 and U.S.: \$48,451 from 2006 U.S. Census estimates.

Additional demographic information and planning context issues can be found in Chapter 2.

### **Chapter 3 – Existing Parks and Facilities**

Understanding the existing conditions in the community is an essential step in the Master Plan process. Chapter 3 provides an inventory of City recreation facilities as well as other recreation facilities open to the public and includes discussion of public school facilities, private recreation facilities and a listing of other publicly owned lands (opportunity sites) within and surrounding the City limits.

This chapter defines the characteristics of mini parks (or parkettes), community parks, neighborhood parks, regional parks, natural open space and special use areas, and it classifies the parks in the Culver City park system as they are defined by the national standard.

The information in Chapter 3 will provide a more detailed description of each of the parks and facilities, including amenities at each location and a brief site analysis.

There is a discussion of the non-profit organizations that also offer programs and activities and share facilities with the City, enabling it to expand needed programs and activities.

### **Chapter 4 – Recreation Programs and Services**

Culver City residents enjoy a variety of recreation activities, programs and services. The City, along with various nonprofit organizations and community

groups offer many recreation pursuits to the community. Neighboring recreation opportunities include Kenneth Hahn State Recreation Area and the nearby L.A. County Park and Recreation areas, Ballona Creek Wetlands and access to numerous beach and marina areas. Human and social services are offered through local nonprofits along with City, County and State offices.

Chapter 4 summarizes the recreation program analysis which includes a review of the current level of recreation program and services offered by the Culver City Recreation Division. The program needs assessment was completed by using the community comments given and the demographic trends analysis done in Chapter 2.

Recommendations to address the identified recreation program needs are included in both Chapter 4 and in Chapter 7, where both facility and program recommendations are presented.

### **Chapter 5 – Needs Assessment**

Chapter 5 provides a detailed assessment of the recreation facility needs of the Culver City community. Data from the community was obtained to develop an understanding of the demand for various facilities. The Needs Assessment utilizes the following needs identification tools to generate this understanding:

*Community Outreach:* Information gathered from the community through a series of workshops, stakeholder interviews, community organization questionnaires, and a sports organization survey.

*Citywide Telephone Survey:* The Citywide survey provides current statistically valid information specific to Culver City that provides detailed information for the types of recreation facilities most often utilized by Culver City residents.



The telephone survey revealed several important factors regarding the use of park and recreation services in Culver City. Most importantly, the survey results confirmed that residents are indeed taking advantage of the City's services. Some of the key findings include:

- *Over half of the respondents described themselves as "Frequent Users" of parks and recreation facilities*
- *Three out of every ten residents called themselves "Moderate Users" of parks and recreation facilities and programs*
- *The facility most often used by the households polled was Veterans' Park*
- *Residents most commonly received information regarding facilities and programs via the internet*
- *When asked what benefits they seek from recreational opportunities, over half of the residents polled cited physical fitness, health and well-being as most important*
- *Another large percentage of residents desired the opportunity to gather and socialize with others*

The benefits above were evident in the activities used most frequently by residents including:

- *Walking/Jogging/Running for Recreation or Fitness*
- *Picnicking in Developed Sites*
- *Swimming*
- *Use of Senior and Adult Services and Programs*
- *Participating in Fitness Classes and Arts and Crafts activities*

*Demand and Needs Analysis:* An evaluation of selected current and future facility needs was developed using results from the telephone survey, sports organization survey, facility inventory, and relevant demographic projections.

This chapter also concludes that through the surveys and interviews obtained from the community, it is apparent that people expect the Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department to provide essential recreation opportunities.

### **Chapter 6 – Park Land Dedication and Park Impact Fee Ordinances**

This chapter looks at the City’s park dedication requirements, park fee requirements and analyzes their effectiveness in securing the 10 acres of park land per one thousand population that is recommended in the City’s General Plan. It also analyzes the amount of park land that will be needed in the future to meet this standard and provide enough space to implement the facility recommendations contained in Chapter 7. In addition, it outlines potential strategies for the City to consider for increasing park dedication requirements, updating impact fees and establishing new fee ordinances to secure funding for acquisition of park land and development of new facilities.

A summary of the key findings in Chapter 6 include:

- *Culver City has a general plan goal of providing 10 acres of park land for each 1,000 persons residing within the City.*
- *The City meets this goal by providing City park land, using school district property, and using nearby LA County regional park land in its calculations.*
- *There is a deficiency of approximately 53 acres of park land using the above approach, which will grow to approximately 136 acres when the*

- *The most significant issue contributing to this deficit is the City's Park Dedication Ordinance that only requires a dedication of 3 acres per 1,000 of population.*
- *Because of the way the Quimby Ordinance is written, which uses density as the multiplier to determine the amount of park acreage, Culver City actually receives less park land dedication than the state average because of its lower density per household.*
- *Increasing the parkland dedication requirement from 3 acres per 1000 of population to 5 acres per 1000 of population will help off-set the projected deficit but will still not meet the stated goal of 10 acres/1000 population.*
- *Adjusting the density factor for housing types when the 2010 census is completed will be necessary.*
- *Spelling out language in the Park Dedication and In-Lieu Fee ordinance that defines the park property that is to be dedicated to be appraised with infrastructure in place, i.e. roads, curbs, sewers, water, and utilities to the site should be considered.*
- *Adding a section that applies a "flat rate in-lieu fee" to residential development when a house is being added on to or replaced with a single family unit that is 50% or greater than the existing single family housing unit on the same parcel should be considered.*
- *The City needs to look at the possibility of establishing a Park and Facilities Maintenance District to secure funding to avoid deferring maintenance which will lead to even greater deterioration of Veterans' Park, The Plunge (Municipal Pool), Senior Center, Teen Center, as well as individual park recreation centers and huts.*

- *There is a deficit of parkland now and it will continue to grow in the future if the City does not implement a park land acquisition plan.*
- *The City will have to plan and be diligent in its efforts to protect open space to reinforce the community's desire for more "green space".*
- *Given the limited tax dollars available for parks and recreation, the City will have to look for ways of raising additional revenue to support the development of needed facilities and delivery of recreation programs, such as new fees and charges and use of facilities for asset management (leases, advertising, naming rights, concessions, etc.)*

### **Chapter 7 – Priority needs, recommendations, policy guidelines and implementation strategies**

This chapter covers general guidelines and policies that will provide groundwork for decision making to meet the recreation programming and facility needs of Culver City residents.

This chapter also presents twelve specific priority guidelines that will help the department move in the right direction to implement the goals and recommendations of the park and recreation master plan. Following these 12 policies and guidelines will insure that decisions and actions taken by the Department will contribute to the successful implementation of the parks and recreation master plan:

- 1 The aspiration of the Recreation and Community Services Department is to develop and improve park facilities, to expand recreational programs and enhance the quality of life in the community.
- 2 Everyone in the department takes responsibility to promote and market recreational activities to increase the level of community participation.

- 3 The Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department will work with other agencies, such as the School District, County, State and Baldwin Hills Conservancy to develop joint use plans for Culver City that includes guidelines for sharing facilities and determining a process for development of joint projects that will serve public park and recreation needs.
- 4 The Department will develop its annual capital improvement plans based upon the recommendations of the Park and Recreation Master Plan.
- 5 The Department will continue implementation of customer service program and objective-based management practices with all park and recreation staff.
- 6 The Department will continually review hours of operation and types of recreation classes to address the changing needs of the community.
- 7 The Department will strive to adopt maintenance standards shown in Appendix E that provide for park maintenance standards, sports field renovation and facility maintenance that meets the public's expectations within the financial resources available.
- 8 The Department will work with public safety agencies to enforce, to the extent possible, all regulations regarding public health, safety, and welfare and to repair vandalism and remove graffiti in as timely a manner as possible.
- 9 The Department will seek out and encourage the provision of volunteer assistance from civic organizations, special interest groups, and individuals to provide support to programs and facility development and to augment recreation opportunities.

- 10 The Department will monitor program needs through surveys of neighborhood residents and other participation mechanisms.
- 11 The Department will seek opportunities to satisfy field space demands of sports leagues by considering the installation of artificial turf so that increased use does not negatively affect park and school fields, and by lighting fields in an environmentally conscious way where appropriate, and by making fields multi-use, where possible.
- 12 The Department will review and revise operational plans to ensure that programs and services can be offered effectively, efficiently and be available to all residents without barriers or limitations.

In order for the Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department to focus on meeting the needs that will have the greatest impact on improving the park and recreation delivery system the Master Plan prioritizes the short-term and long-term needs for programs and facility development. These identified priorities form the basis for the recommendations contained in Chapter 7.

### Summary List of Short-Term Needs

- *Change in policy for how fees are established for fee based programs*
- *Completion of three (3) conceptual plans for improvements to Veterans' Park*
- *Improvements to Blair Hills Park, Blanco Park, Carlson Park, Culver West Alexander Park, El Marino Park, Tellefson Park, Fox Hills Park, Syd Kronenthal Park, and Lindberg Park*
- *Addressing park funding as outlined in Chapter 6*
- *Increased maintenance standards for parks and facilities*

- *Introduction of more cultural and arts programming*
- *Increased methods for informing the public of programs and activities*
- *Additional sports fields*

#### Summary List of Long-Term Needs

- *Acquisition and/or development of an additional Senior Center*
- *More children's play areas with controlled access*
- *More passive park areas with picnic facilities*
- *Expansion of the trails system*
- *Additional parking at public facilities*
- *Consistent program for ADA compliance*

One of the key findings in the program analysis was that there is tremendous potential in Culver City for the expansion of fee based recreation programs. This is particularly true in the areas of fitness, self-improvement, social activities, and cultural activities. The major deterrent in the Recreation Division's ability to implement new classes, add additional class sessions, and develop fee-based activities that respond to current trends for specific types of activities is the cumbersome system for establishing fees and rates for charging for activities.

The current system of establishing the rate for class fees requires City Council approval of every fee and every fee change by City Council resolution. This means that if the department wants to add a requested class in mid-session it must wait until a fee resolution pertaining to that class is adopted by City Council. Since fee resolutions are generally adopted on an annual or bi-annual basis, it makes it very difficult for the Recreation Division to respond quickly to community demands for fee-based activities and programs in a timely and entrepreneurial manner.



The theory behind the current method is to insure that the public and the City Council have the opportunity to review all fees and charges so that the City Council can determine their fairness and accessibility for Culver City residents. While the theory is good, in practice the system is cumbersome and slow to respond to community needs.

A recommended more efficient approach is to have the City Council adopt an annual Park and Recreation Fee Policy that allows the Parks, Recreation and Community Services Director to establish market rate fees and charges consistent with City Council policy that fee-based programs should cover a certain percentage (minimum) of the cost of providing the activity. This would allow the City Council to continue to set priorities for fee-based programs during the City's annual budget process and provide the Parks, Recreation and Community Service Department with the flexibility it needs to initiate new programs, add additional sessions to popular programs, and meet community demands for activities currently requested. The fee resolution could also contain policies that would provide discounts for Culver City residents, low-income residents, and other categories of individuals of the City Council's choosing to make sure that fee-based programs are accessible to all residents.

Modifying the system for establishing fees and charges should be a top priority, as should the adoption of recommended park and facility maintenance standards.

Chapter 7 describes the importance of establishing maintenance standards that will meet the expectations of the Community within the financial resources available and ensuring these standards are met via the performance of regular inspections.

Finally, Chapter 7 details specific recommendations, financial strategies and a priorities of a Capital Improvement Program for the city and its Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department to use when making decisions to allocate time and financial resources to meeting community needs for park and recreation services.

In summary, there are a number of Appendices and Exhibits at the end of the document that provide additional information on the research and data collection, maintenance standards, maps and related documents. While this Executive Summary gives the reader the highlights of each chapter in the document one really must read the entire document to gain a full understanding of the Master Plan and its implications.

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## chapter one: introduction

### parks and recreation master plan update

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## chapter 1 – introduction

### 1.1 SCOPE AND PURPOSE

IN DECEMBER OF 2006, THE CITY OF CULVER CITY entered into an agreement with Moore, Iacofano, Goltsman Inc. (MIG) to initiate a study that would assess the community's parks and recreation needs and develop a vision for meeting those needs. The outgrowth of this study is a 20-Year Parks and Recreation Master Plan that addresses the following subjects:

- *Current and future demographic projections and regional context;*
- *Current conditions of parks and facilities;*
- *Current public demand and needs for parks, recreation and cultural facilities and programs;*
- *Goals based on future needs expressed by the community and the staff;*
- *Improvements of existing parks and facilities;*
- *Status of current policy documents;*
- *Financing strategies and funding actions to enable the City to reach goals set by this document.*

### 1.2 GOALS, VISION AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this Master Plan is to provide direction for the future parks and recreation needs of Culver City and to support the vision and goals of the Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Service department in serving Culver City. The goals of the Department are stated to be:

*"To support our community's economic development by improving and protecting our parks and natural resources, facilitating and providing recreation and leisure opportunities, promoting health, wellness and human development,*

*strengthening our sense of cultural unity through recognizing our cultural diversity, and by strengthening the safety and security through the development of our community's image and sense of place."*

### **1.3 PLANNING PROCESS**

To develop the Master Plan for parks and recreation specific to Culver City's current and future needs, MIG embarked on discovering the unique qualities of Culver City. The team made individual park visits and concluded park evaluations; created an inventory of amenities; and assessed existing facilities and in-place recreation programs. Through public outreach, MIG gained an understanding of the character, spirit and vision of the community and the physical context of neighborhoods in relation to facilities and services to arrive at a basis for building a realistic plan for the future.

### **1.4 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**

Reaching out to the community was essential to gain an understanding of its needs and wants. By employing a variety of tools, the MIG Team was able to ensure that a broad range of the population was reached.

Three community workshops were held at which participants were asked to give their opinions on needed facilities, programs and services.

A telephone survey was conducted among the residents of Culver City, the summary of which is reported in Chapter 5.

Two community focus groups were formed to provide information about programs and facilities.



Staff interviewed visitors in the parks one-on-one to hear personal experiences about park usage.

A cumulative analysis and key findings of the various methods are covered in Chapter 5. Meeting reports and workshop results can be found in Appendices B, B1, B2 and B3.

## **1.5 REPORT ORGANIZATION**

This Master Plan is designed to lead the reader through the process the Team used to make its findings.

Chapter One sets the stage for the path the team took in assembling information contained within these pages.

Chapter Two gives an overview of the City location, demographics, context and profile which forms the basis for the future growth of the City.

Chapters Three and Four identify existing recreation and park facilities and their current conditions, as well as recreational programs offered by the City and other providers. This information is used to set a baseline for the City to measure where to begin to meet the needs of its residents.

Chapter Five distills the information and analyses from Chapters Three and Four and summarizes the needs and wants of the community.

Chapter Six, examines and evaluates the state of the City's current land dedication and fee ordinances for potential changes and improvements.

In Chapter Seven, the Team makes recommendations and suggests policies based on the previous chapters. These recommendations and policies are

designed to enable the City to set goals and develop policy direction to help meet its needs in the short term and for the future.

Chapter Eight provides a practical roadmap for the City by making recommendations for future development, proposing policies and goals, and recommending implementation strategies to make those goals a reality.

Following the body of the document are the Appendices which contain materials referenced throughout the Master Plan, including a glossary of terms, original forms and questionnaires submitted to individuals and groups, unedited input from the various workshops, presentation materials, telephone survey results, etc.

The complete telephone survey results will be presented as a separate document due to its size.



## chapter two: planning context

### parks and recreation master plan update

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## chapter 2: planning context

### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

THIS SECTION PROVIDES AN OVERVIEW of the planning context for which the Master Plan was prepared. It includes a look at both the local and regional context of Culver City and describes the service area for the Parks, Recreation and Community Service Department. It is important to understand the demographic profile of the community in order to plan for future park and recreation needs. Knowing the City's population and age demographics, income distribution and ethnic composition is important in being able to analyze the needs and wants for facilities, programs, and services within the community. This section provides this basic background and gives the reader a foundation for where Culver City is located, whom it serves, and what key demographic issues affect the delivery of park and recreation services.



*Harry H. Culver is on the left surveying development plans*

### 2.2 REGIONAL CONTEXT & HISTORY

Spanish Explorers claimed California in the 1500s but it was not until 1769 that King Carlos III of Spain mandated colonization. Father Junipero Serra then began to establish missions, which functioned as the center of activities from San Diego upward, between 1769 and 1823. The Native American people who inhabited this area were the Tongva. They traversed the valley in search of food and utilized nearby marine resources. Due to their proximity to the San Gabriel Mission (est.1771), the Spanish referred to them as the Gabrielinos. In 1781, a nearby settlement began as "El Pueblo de Nuestra Señora la Reina de Los Angeles".

It was Harry H. Culver, from Milford, Nebraska, who dreamed of a balanced city. He announced plans for the city that carries his name in

1913, and it became an incorporated entity in 1917. He established the city in a temperate zone, along a transportation route and railroad, halfway between the growing pueblo of Los Angeles and Abbot Kinney's resort of Venice. Culver City began to do the business of developing itself.

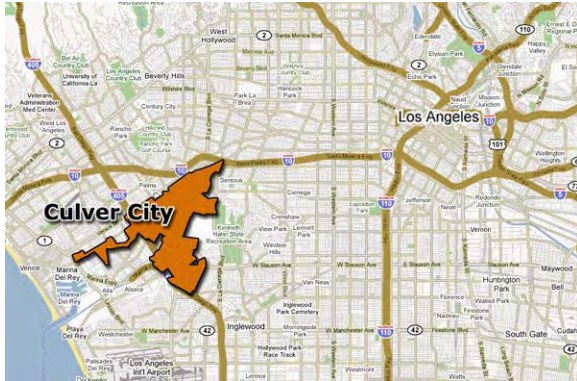
The Fire and Police Departments were established. The economic balance began with the studios forming the early economic base. Industry came in the form of Western Stove in 1922, the Helms Bakeries in 1930, and the Hayden Industrial Tract in the 1940s. The years of prohibition spawned a plethora of night spots and bootlegging in the 1920s and 1930s, with World War II stalling the City's growth in the 1940s. Car Dealerships replaced the night spots on Washington Boulevard in the 1950s.

Over the years, more than forty annexations increased city size to about five square miles. Culver City transitioned from a general law city to a charter city in 1947. In addition to city government, schools became a part of the community and by 1949 Culver City had its own Unified School District, meaning that education was available through secondary school. The five-member Board of Education was established to govern Culver City's public schools just as the five-member elected City Council was established to govern the City. At this time, the City was governed by a City Council with the assistance of a Chief Administrative Officer. By 1971, the City Council became aware of the need for redevelopment and formed the Culver City Redevelopment Agency. The first major project accomplished under the Agency was the Fox Hills Mall, which opened in 1975. By the year 2000, the city had quadrupled in size and became a community of nearly 40,000 residents.

In 2005, a community task force was assembled by the City Council to consider whether or not the City should remain as a Council-CAO form of

government or whether it should rewrite its Charter to become a Council-City Manager form of government. This question came before the voters in 2006 and was answered with a majority vote to change the Charter to a Council-City Manager form of government.

### 2.3 SERVICE AREA



The Culver City vicinity map to the left shows the City limits as well as the surrounding areas that may utilize the City's park and recreation facilities and programs.

### 2.4 DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

The City of Culver City is in a period of transition. Over the past 50 years the major land uses have been for movie studios, retail, and residential development. Recent growth is transitioning its land uses to higher

density residential, retail, commercial, industrial, and tourism. The community has a strong interest in preserving its feel and historical past while managing its future growth to produce quality neighborhoods that translate into healthy and happy lifestyles.

The first step in determining the community's present and future needs for recreation services and park facilities is to understand the current and future demographics and characteristics of the City.

Culver City has experienced residential growth over the last 20 years. The City has expanded to a current population of over 40,000 and is projected to continue to grow over the next 15 to 20 years to an estimated 60,000 residents.



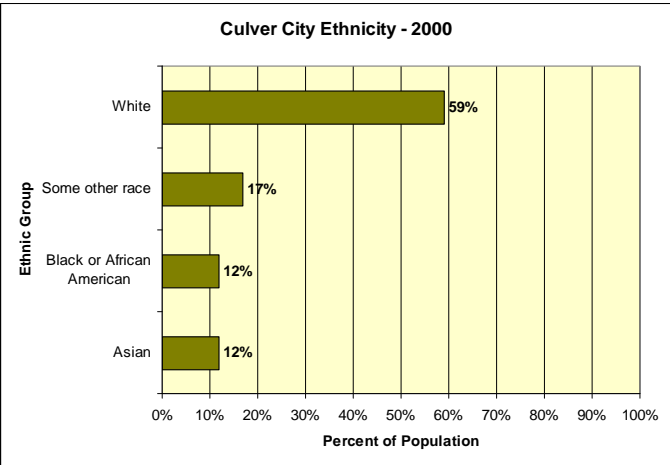
The median age of adults in Culver City was 39.1 in 2000. However, according to statistics compiled by Research Network in conducting the citywide telephone survey the median age is now 43. The 2006 Census median age for Los Angeles County is 33.9 and 36.4 for the U.S. That makes Culver City’s population significantly older than the average city’s population.

The age breakdown of Culver City’s population as of the 2000 Census is as follows:

- 7% of the population is 5 years or younger
- 16% of the population is between 5 and 19 years of age
- 44% of the population is between 20 and 54 years of age
- 33% are over 55 years of age

Culver City is a racially diverse community with the following ethnic proportions:

Most recent figures reported that the City was 12.5% Hispanic or Latino (of any ethnicity). Although the future ethnic composition is projected to transition to a greater mix of Hispanic and non-Hispanic residents, there will still be a substantial Hispanic or Latino population in Culver City in the future, and consequently, a high priority for the City will be the need to continue to address the specific needs and cultural desires of the Hispanic community.

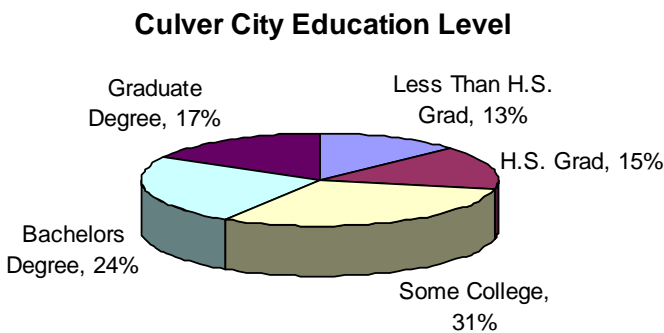




The total number of housing units in Culver City is just over 18,000 with an average household size of 2.4 persons. Forty-one percent of the population has lived in Culver City for more than 21 years. The majority of the population, 75 percent, seeks employment outside the City’s boundaries. Nevertheless, the daytime population remains high due to the large volume of people that commute into Culver City for work and other tasks.

The occupants of future residential growth will tend to be people currently working in the urban areas of Los Angeles who want to live in the town atmosphere and life styles of the anticipated developments in Culver City.

Future residents can be expected to commute to regional or centralized park facilities. This fact should be taken into account when planning for facilities that serve a citywide audience such as sports complexes, swimming pools, community centers, and special use facilities, such as trails.



Median household income is about \$69,400 per year as reported by Research Network, up \$17,600 from the 2000 Census numbers. This figure is significantly higher than the median family incomes of Los Angeles County: \$51,315 and U.S.: \$48,451 from 2006 U.S. Census estimates.

The higher income levels among residents in Culver City is in keeping with statistics that show that individuals who are better educated tend to earn higher salaries. Culver City’s population is well educated as shown in the chart to the left. Culver City’s income and education place it in the company of other highly rated cities ranking among the top 20 in the country as reported by the American Community Survey of the U.S.

Census Bureau. The table below compares Culver City with California cities from that top 20 list.

***California Cities Ranked Among Highest Education and Income Levels***

Comparable California Cities	Percent of population with college degree or higher	Median household income
San Francisco	50.1	\$57,496
Culver City	41.0	\$69,400
San Diego	40.4	\$55,637
San Jose	36.1	\$70,921

2.5 DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

In the coming years, national trends in the perception of the environment, socio-economics, technology, and in urban development will affect the city’s planning efforts for recreation services and park facilities.

In 2004 the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) developed a list of trends which will cause the greatest impact on local agencies planning for recreational facilities. The NRPA’s list of pertinent trends that will affect Culver City’s planning efforts for developing recreation facilities and programs are as follows:

- *Preventive recreation, that is, recreation as an antidote for social problems.*
- *Recreation for groups limited by income, physical disability, language, or cultural barriers.*
- *Collaboration among program and facility providers, partnering and cooperation between public, private, and non-profit sectors, especially cultural organizations.*

- *A greater need for walking and biking on trails, sidewalks, within parks, along streets and within utility corridors.*
- *Family recreation centers (Intergenerational Campuses) that offer a variety of services for each family member.*
- *Pressure to increase park capacity and infrastructure of existing parks and concern for adequate maintenance.*
- *Collaboration between parks and schools to share construction, development, and use of lands and facilities.*
- *Community volunteering opportunities, such as adopt a park projects, friends of the parks groups, and park watch programs.*
- *Increased demand for Tiny-Tot and Pre-School programs and activities.*
- *Provision for aquatics programs and water safety instruction.*
- *Provision for Senior Citizen programs and Activities.*
- *The need for financial sustainability in order to deliver quality recreation services and facilities.*

The future socio-demographic make up of Culver City and these national park and recreation trends will influence the planning for recreation and parks services and programs.

## **2.6 KEY FINDINGS**

In summary, preparation for recreation services and park facilities should take into account the following key socio-demographic and planning area findings:

*Population Size* – The population size in Culver City is expected to continue to grow along with the rest of Southern California reaching approximately 60,000 residents within the next 20 years. It is important to understand this expected

growth in order to anticipate and plan for the appropriate number of recreation services and park facilities.

*Age* – Current population projections by age group indicates that the majority of the population is made up of working age couples without children and individuals 55 and older. So, there will be significant increase in those 65 years and older within the next 20 years.

*Ethnicity* – It is anticipated that Culver City will continue to increase in ethnic diversity. Increase in diversity among the senior citizen population will continue to be significant. Following the ethnic characteristics of Culver City is necessary to anticipate the needed changes in recreation needs based on cultural heritage.

*Household Type* – Limited residential growth will lead to denser populated urban spaces, as land is scarce. There is likely to be some shift in household composition in coming years as the aging of parents, increasing property values and the traditions of ethnic cultures in the region may give rise to more extended family situations. Changes in residential development also affects funding and revenue streams for future recreation services and parks facilities.

*Economic Makeup* – With a significant population of upper middle class professional level households and only six percent of the population below the poverty level, Culver City can definitely support fee-based programs. Still among the growing number of retirees, economic trends show that only the top 25% will retain their current level of wealth. Others on retirement incomes may need to rely on discounts to participate in programs provided by the City. Culver City should continue to offer fee-based services to seniors on a sliding scale to accommodate those who cannot afford to pay for programs.



# chapter three: existing parks, recreation, schools and cultural facilities

## parks and recreation master plan update

City of  
*Culver* CITY



## chapter 3: existing parks, recreation, schools and cultural facilities

### 3.1: INTRODUCTION

THE PURPOSE OF THIS CHAPTER is to present park standards based on regional and national criteria and show how Culver City parks and facilities compare. This chapter will also provide an inventory of existing parks and recreation facilities noting current conditions along with improvements, if any, that are already planned by the City. Also included in this chapter is a listing of facilities operated by other agencies, schools and universities, and private non-profits that provide recreational services to the community. Finally, the chapter will report findings and summarize conclusions about the parks and facilities based on on-site observations and input from staff and the community.

### 3.2: PARK LAND DEFINITIONS

In order to address specific planning needs for park, open space, and recreational areas, park classifications have been used. Each park class provides a distinct type of recreational opportunity. The ideal community park system is made up of several different types or classifications of parks. Design guidelines for each park type are found in Chapter 5, Section 5.7. The classification system in this document is based on national standards and is used to determine a baseline for Culver City in a broad sense.

*Mini/Pocket Parks/Parkettes:* Mini-parks, pocket-parks, tot lots and children's playgrounds are all small single-purpose play lots designed primarily for small child use or as small oases to break up dense urban areas. Due to their size (less than three acres), the facilities are usually limited to a small open grass

area, a children's playground, and a small picnic area. The service area is roughly one-half mile, and the size is usually two acres or less.

*Neighborhood Parks:* Neighborhood parks are designed primarily for non-supervised, non-organized recreation activities. They are generally small in size (3-15 acres) and serve people living within approximately one-half to one mile of the park. Since these parks are located within walking and bicycling distance of most users, the activities they offer serve the entire neighborhood, including children. Typical facilities found in a neighborhood park include: playgrounds, picnic areas, trails, open grass areas for passive use, outdoor basketball courts, and multi-use open grass areas for practice fields.

*Community Parks:* A community park (15-40 acres) is planned primarily to provide active and structured recreation opportunities for young people and adults. Community park facilities are designed for organized activities and sports, although individual and family activities are also encouraged. Community parks can also provide indoor facilities to meet a wider range of recreation interests. Community parks serve a much larger area and offer more facilities. As a result, they require more support facilities, such as parking, restrooms, and covered play areas. Community parks usually have sport fields or similar facilities as the central focus of the park. Their service area has generally a 2- to 3-mile radius.

*Regional Parks:* Regional parks are large recreation areas designed to serve an entire region beyond the city limits. Often they are acquired to provide a specific and sometimes unique recreation opportunity. Frequently they are owned and maintained by a county, state or federal agency.

*Linear Parks:* Linear parks are developed landscaped areas and other lands that follow linear corridors such as rivers, creeks, abandoned railroad rights-



of-way, canals, powerlines, and other elongated features. This type of park usually contains trails, landscaped areas, viewpoints, and seating areas.

*Special Use Areas:* Special use areas are sites often occupied by a specialized recreation facility. Some uses that fall into this category include waterfront parks, boat ramps, botanical gardens, community gardens, single purpose sites used for a particular field sport, or sites occupied by recreation buildings.

*Natural Open Space:* Natural open space is defined as undeveloped land primarily left in its natural form with recreation uses as a secondary objective. It is usually owned or managed by a governmental agency and may or may not have public access. This type of land may include wetlands, steep hillsides, or other similar spaces. In some cases, environmentally sensitive areas are considered open space and can include wildlife habitats, stream and creek corridors, or unique and/or endangered plant species.

*Undeveloped Land:* This land is undeveloped and has not yet been designated for a specific park use.

### 3.2.1 Existing Parks Classifications

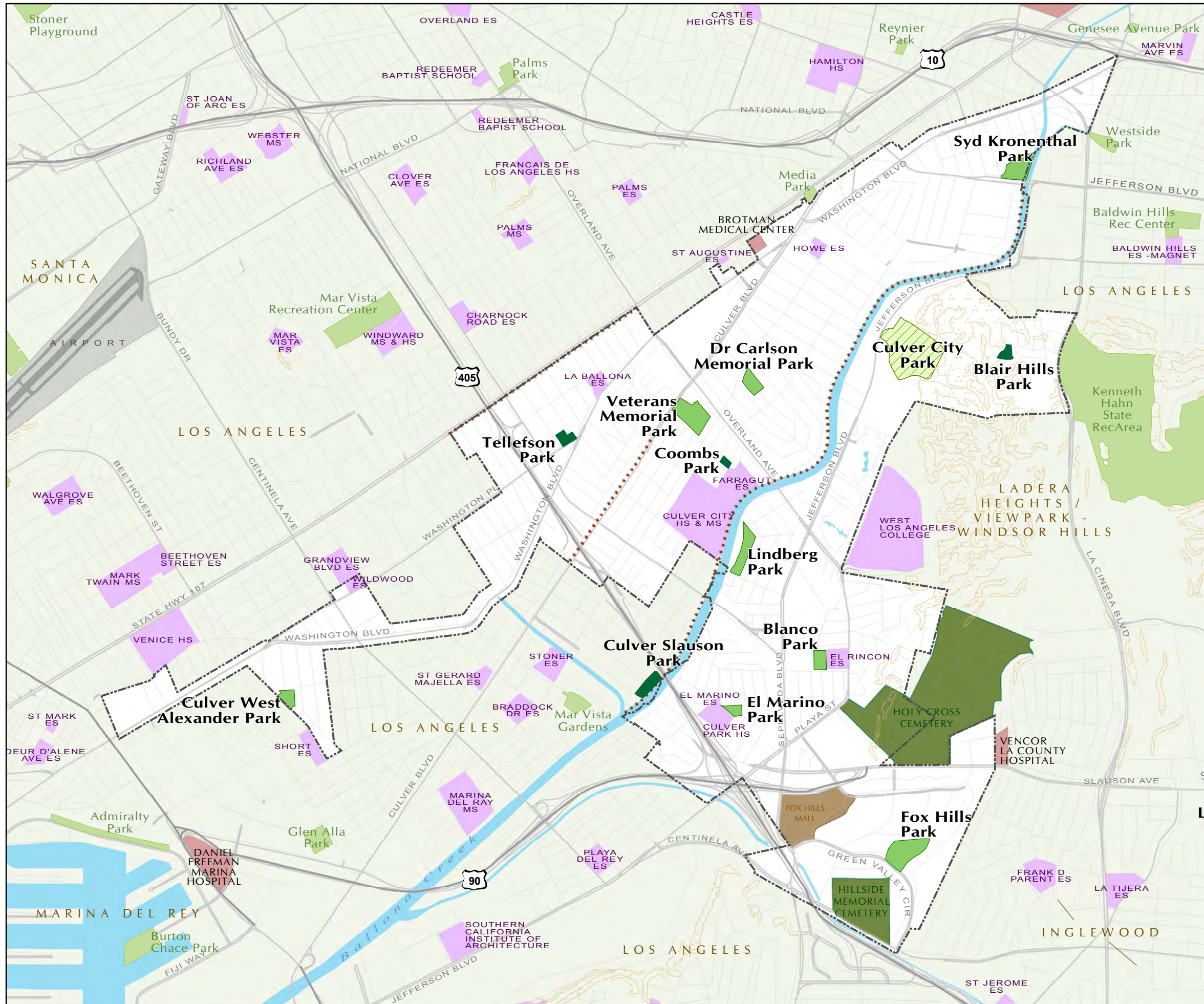
Currently, the Culver City Department of Parks and Recreation oversees the maintenance and operations of 11 parks and five parkettes and special use facilities representing a total of 92.2 acres of land. These sites range in size from .02 acres to 41.6 acres. Of the types of parks defined above, Culver City's parks fall into the following categories:

Park Acreage Summary	
Community	
	Culver City Park 41.55 Acres
	Veterans Park 12.9
Neighborhood	
	Fox Hills Park 10 Acres
	Syd Kronenthal Park 6 Acres
	Lindberg Park 4.39 Acres
	Blanco Park 3.26 Acres
	El Marino Park 3.15 Acres
	Culver West Alexander Park 3 Acres
	Carlson Park 2.66 Acres
Parkette/ Mini Park	
	Blair Hills Park 1.6 Acres
	Tellefson Park 1.5 Acres
Special Use	
Seni	or Center
	Municipal Pool (Veterans' Park)
	Teen Center (Veterans' Park)
	Veterans Memorial Building (Veterans' Park)

The sections that follow will provide a more detailed description of each of the parks and facilities, including amenities at each location and a brief site analysis.

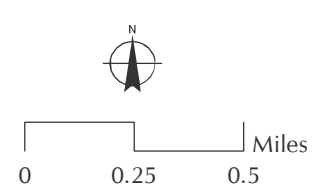
Chapter 5 contains a more comprehensive assessment along with recommendations for each park and facility.





City of  
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**Parks & Recreation  
Master Plan**  
Culver City, California

- Community Park
- Neighborhood Park
- Mini Park
- Other Park
- Cemetery
- School
- BikePath
- Landslide Area
- City Limits
- Other City
- Water
- Highway
- Major Road



**Existing Facilities & Schools**  
**Exhibit 3.1**









### **3.3 INVENTORY OF CULVER CITY PARK & RECREATION FACILITIES**

An inventory of park and recreation facilities for this Master Plan was developed using information provided by the Culver City Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Service, from site visits by the MIG team, and from private and non-profit agencies that also provide recreation facilities and programs for the community. The Park Amenities Inventory is a matrix showing total amenities in each of the parks in the City and total acreage for each park as well as additional facilities available through the schools, private, public or non-profit agencies.

Following the inventory is an overview of each City park or facility including an aerial or other photo identifying the site, a description of size, classification, development status, existing amenities, its overall condition and any proposed improvements.

An additional assessment was conducted specifically on building facilities to determine deferred maintenance issues and is included in Appendix F



Blair Hills Park

Size:	1.6 Acres
Address:	5950 Wrightcrest Drive
Classification:	Mini Park
Status:	Developed
Existing Facilities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Play equipment area</i></li> <li>• <i>Basketball court</i></li> <li>• <i>Softball field w/ backstop &amp; bleachers</i></li> <li>• <i>Building-Restroom</i></li> <li>• <i>Picnic shelter &amp; areas</i></li> </ul>
Conditions:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Rubberized surface at play area in good condition</i></li> <li>• <i>Play equipment in good condition</i></li> <li>• <i>Fencing/gates in poor condition</i></li> <li>• <i>Pavement at entry and drinking fountain in poor condition</i></li> <li>• <i>No ADA parking available</i></li> <li>• <i>Surface of basketball court in poor condition</i></li> <li>• <i>Counter at group picnic area in poor condition</i></li> <li>• <i>Park building in poor condition</i></li> </ul>
Planned Improvements:	Recently replaced concrete benches



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Blanco Park  
1951

Size:	3.26 Acres
Address:	5801 Sawtelle
Classification:	Neighborhood Park
Status:	Developed
Existing Facilities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basketball courts, handball courts</li> <li>• Softball Diamond</li> <li>• Baseball Diamond</li> <li>• Main building-Day care facility</li> <li>• Picnic shelter &amp; areas</li> <li>• Parking on street</li> </ul>
Conditions:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Picnic areas in good condition</li> <li>• Ball field in fair condition</li> <li>• Main building is in fair condition</li> </ul>
Planned Improvements:	None



Carlson Park  
1927

Size:	2.66 Acres
Address:	Braddock Drive at Motor Avenue
Classification:	Neighborhood Park
Status:	Developed
Existing Facilities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Open turf area</i></li><li>• <i>Building-Restroom</i></li><li>• <i>Picnic shelter &amp; areas</i></li><li>• <i>Parking on street</i></li><li>• <i>Sculpture</i></li><li>• <i>Night lighting</i></li></ul>
Conditions:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Picnic area in good condition</i></li></ul>
Planned Improvements:	None

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Culver City Park/Botts Field/Boneyard Park  
1982

Size:	41.55 Acres
Address:	Corner of Duquesne & Jefferson
Classification:	Community Park
Status:	Developed
Existing Facilities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Play area: 2-5 yr olds</li> <li>• 2 Basketball half-courts (no lights)</li> <li>• Baseball fields</li> <li>• Open turf areas</li> <li>• Building-Restroom</li> <li>• Picnic areas</li> <li>• Parking on street</li> <li>• Skate park facility</li> <li>• Trails</li> <li>• Bone Yard Dog Park</li> </ul>
Conditions:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Play area in poor condition</li> <li>• Picnic area in good condition</li> <li>• Basketball court in good condition</li> <li>• Ball fields in good condition</li> <li>• Restroom Building in fair condition</li> </ul>
Planned Improvements:	Planned completion of Phase II of Dog Park. Renovate playground to include 2-5 year olds and 5-12 year olds.



**Culver West Alexander Park**  
1925

<b>Size:</b>	3.13 Acres
<b>Address:</b>	4162 Wade Street
<b>Classification:</b>	Mini Park
<b>Status:</b>	Developed
<b>Existing Facilities:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Play area: Two 2-5 yr olds</i></li> <li>• <i>1 Basketball court (w/ lights), Tennis court (w/ lights), 2 Paddle tennis courts (w/ lights), 3 Handball courts (w/ lights)</i></li> <li>• <i>Baseball field</i></li> <li>• <i>Open turf areas</i></li> <li>• <i>Building-Community</i></li> <li>• <i>Picnic areas</i></li> <li>• <i>Parking on street and small parking lot (off street)</i></li> </ul>
<b>Conditions:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Play area in good condition</i></li> <li>• <i>Picnic area in good condition</i></li> <li>• <i>Tennis and paddle tennis courts in excellent condition.</i></li> <li>• <i>Basketball court in good condition</i></li> </ul>
<b>Planned Improvements:</b>	Low-level path lighting, drought tolerant exposition garden, Paseo renovation.



1954

Size:	3.15 Acres
Address:	5301 Berryman Ave.
Classification:	Mini Park
Status:	Developed
Existing Facilities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Play areas: 2-5 yr old &amp; 5-12 yr old</i></li> <li>• <i>Basketball court (w/ lights) &amp; Handball wall (w/out lights)</i></li> <li>• <i>Open turf areas</i></li> <li>• <i>Building- Daycare</i></li> <li>• <i>Restroom</i></li> <li>• <i>'Pottery Hut'</i></li> <li>• <i>Picnic shelters</i></li> <li>• <i>Open picnic areas</i></li> <li>• <i>Parking on street</i></li> </ul>
Conditions:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Play area in good condition</i></li> <li>• <i>Picnic area in good condition</i></li> <li>• <i>Basketball court in good condition</i></li> <li>• <i>Handball wall "flooring" surface needs repair/replacement</i></li> </ul>
Planned Improvements:	None





## Fox Hills Park

1980

Size:	10 Acres
Address:	Green Valley Circle & Buckingham Parkway
Classification:	Neighborhood Park
Status:	Developed
Existing Facilities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Play area: One 2-5 yr old</li> <li>• Basketball half-courts (w/ lights), 4 Tennis courts (w/ lights), 4 Paddle tennis courts (w/ lights), Volleyball court (w/ lights)</li> <li>• 2 Softball fields(w/out lights)</li> <li>• Open turf areas</li> <li>• Building-Maintenance/Bathroom</li> <li>• Picnic areas</li> <li>• Parking on street</li> <li>• Gazebo</li> <li>• Par course &amp; loop trail</li> </ul>
Conditions:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Play area in good condition</li> <li>• Picnic area in good condition</li> <li>• Courts in good condition</li> <li>• Ball field in fair condition</li> </ul>
Planned Improvements:	Recently replaced concrete benches. Planned repair of surface of tennis and paddle tennis courts.

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Syd Kronenthal Park

Size:	6 Acres
Address:	3459 McManus Ave.
Classification:	Neighborhood Park
Status:	Developed
Existing Facilities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Play area: One 2-5 yr old, one 5-12 yr old</i></li> <li>• <i>Basketball court (w/ lights), Tennis court (w/ lights) &amp; 2 Paddle tennis courts (w/ lights)</i></li> <li>• <i>2 Softball fields(w/ lights) &amp; 2 soccer fields(w/ lights)</i></li> <li>• <i>Open turf areas</i></li> <li>• <i>Building-w/restroom and meeting/class room</i></li> <li>• <i>Picnic shelters/areas</i></li> <li>• <i>Parking on site</i></li> <li>• <i>Fitness cluster</i></li> <li>• <i>Trail loop</i></li> </ul>
Conditions:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Play area in good condition</i></li> <li>• <i>Picnic areas in good condition</i></li> <li>• <i>Courts in good condition</i></li> <li>• <i>Ball field in good condition</i></li> </ul>
Planned Improvements:	None



### Lindberg Park

1927

Size:	4.39 Acres
Address:	5041 Rhoda Way
Classification:	Neighborhood Park
Status:	Developed
Existing Facilities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Play area: One for 2-5 yr old &amp; 5-12 yr old</i></li> <li>• <i>Basketball court (w/out lights)</i></li> <li>• <i>2 Softball fields(w/ partial lights) &amp; 1 soccer fields(w/out lights)</i></li> <li>• <i>Hand ball wall</i></li> <li>• <i>Open turf areas</i></li> <li>• <i>Building-(Multi-purpose/daycare)</i></li> <li>• <i>Picnic shelters/areas</i></li> <li>• <i>Parking on site &amp; street</i></li> </ul>
Conditions:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Play area in very good condition</i></li> <li>• <i>Picnic areas in good condition</i></li> <li>• <i>Courts in good condition</i></li> <li>• <i>Ball field in fair condition</i></li> </ul>
Planned Improvements:	None



CULVER CITY  
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**Tellefson Park**  
1976

Size:	1.5 Acres
Address:	Washington Place and Tilden Ave.
Classification:	Mini Park
Status:	Developed
Existing Facilities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Play area: 2-12 yr old</i></li> <li>• <i>Soccer fields(informal)</i></li> <li>• <i>Open turf areas</i></li> <li>• <i>Restroom building</i></li> <li>• <i>Picnic shelter</i></li> <li>• <i>Parking on street</i></li> </ul>
Conditions:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Play area in very good condition</i></li> <li>• <i>Picnic areas in good condition</i></li> </ul>
Planned Improvements:	None



**Veterans Park**  
1938

<b>Size:</b>	12.9 Acres
<b>Address:</b>	4117 Overland Ave.
<b>Classification:</b>	Community Park
<b>Status:</b>	Developed
<b>Existing Facilities:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 Basketball courts (One w/lights, One w/out lights) &amp; 2 tennis courts (w/lights)</li> <li>• 2 Softball fields (One w/lights, One w/out lights) &amp; 1 soccer field(w/ lights)</li> <li>• Open turf areas</li> <li>• Handball wall</li> <li>• Restroom building</li> <li>• Picnic shelter</li> <li>• Restricted on street parking and site parking</li> <li>• Play area: 2-5 yr old</li> <li>• Veterans Memorial Building</li> <li>• 50 Meter x 25yd. Aquatic Center</li> <li>• Teen Center</li> <li>• AM Vets Building</li> <li>• National Guard Armory (owned by city)</li> <li>• Boy Scout Hut (owned by city)</li> <li>• 3 Paddle Tennis Courts (lighted)</li> </ul>
<b>Conditions:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Play area in fair condition</li> <li>• Picnic areas in fair condition</li> <li>• Courts in good condition</li> <li>• Ball field in good condition</li> </ul>
<b>Planned Improvements:</b>	Refer to Veterans' Park Master Plan

### 3.4: RECREATIONAL FACILITIES PROVIDED BY OTHERS

No city can be expected to provide all the recreational resources for its residents. Governmental agencies, private and non-profit agencies and businesses fill many of the gaps needed to accommodate the varied recreational interests and activities of children, youths, adults and seniors within and surrounding the Culver City area. The sections that follow list many of the facilities owned or operated by others within or near Culver City and available to the public.

#### 3.4.1 Regional Recreation Venues

##### State of California

- *Los Angeles River Greenway*
- *Kenneth Hahn - State Recreation Area*
- *Baldwin Hills Scenic Overlook Trail, (Kenneth Hahn SRA)*
- *Baldwin Hills Area Recreational Trails, (Kenneth Hahn SRA)*
- *Dockweiler State Beach*
- *Rio de Los Angeles State Park*
- *Santa Monica State Beach*
- *Will Rogers State Historic Park*

##### Los Angeles County

- *Marina del Rey Main Channel View Park*
- *Marina del Rey Harbor*
- *Marina del Rey Public Beach*
- *Burton Chase Park*
- *Venice Beach*
- *Venice Fishing Pier*

##### City of Los Angeles

- *Ballona Creek Wetlands*
- *Ballona Creek Trail and Bike Path*

##### City of Santa Monica

- *Palisades Park*

### 3.4.2 Private and Non-Profit Recreation Facilities

*Culver/Palms YMCA:* The YMCA is a family-based, non-profit organization that provides recreational and physical fitness opportunities for community. Services include community development, physical training, art and dance classes, sports and swimming activities, Child Care/Preschool programs, Teen programs and outdoor activities.

*Los Angeles School of Gymnastics:* LASG is a nonprofit corporation and Olympic quality training center. Classes range from toddler motor development programs to the pursuit of Olympic caliber competitors.

*Debbie Allen Dance Academy:* A highly acclaimed dance academy for people of all ages to learn dance, dance performance and choreography.

*Culver City Ice Arena:* Adult and youth free skating sessions, hockey, professional instruction, broom ball.

### 3.4.3 Los Angeles County Library

*Culver City Julian Dixon Library:* Services include reference materials, children's story times, Teen Summer Reading Program and online library catalog with magazine and newspaper indexes. Also, public access Internet and computer work stations, a Homework Center and meeting room.

### 3.4.4 Other

Numerous martial arts, dance and gymnastics, and art instruction opportunities.

### 3.5: EDUCATION

Culver City has its own school district that operates 10 educational facilities within its boundaries. They are listed in the table below.

#### 3.5.1: Culver City Schools

##### *SCHOOLS WITHIN THE CITY OF CULVER CITY*

SCHOOL NAME	TYPE	ADDRESS	DIST.
<b>ELEMENTARY</b>			
El Rincon El	K-5	11177 Overland Ave	CCUSD
Farragut El	K-5	10820 Farragut Drive	CCUSD
La Ballona El	K-5	10915 Washington Blvd	CCUSD
Linwood Howe El	K-5	4100 Irving Place	CCUSD
<b>MIDDLE SCHOOL</b>			
Culver City MS	6-8	4601 Elenda St	CCUSD
<b>HIGH SCHOOL</b>			
Culver City HS	9-12	4401 Elenda St	CCUSD
<b>SPECIALIZED EDUCATION</b>			
Culver Park HS	Continuation	5303 Berryman Ave	CCUSD
Culver City Independent Study School		5303 Berryman Ave	CCUSD
Culver City Adult Education	Adult & Career Education	Two campuses	CCUSD
El Marino Lang. School	K-5	11450 Port Rd	CCUSD

The City and the Culver City Unified School District currently have a joint use agreement to share use and maintenance of some school and park land facilities. The types of school facilities available for use can be found in Table 3.1, Culver City Parks and Facility Inventory.

#### 3.5.2 Colleges and Universities

*West Los Angeles College and Extension:* A member of the California Community College District, the college provides a two-year degree curriculum, general education transfer credits for a four-year degree,

vocational training, classes for career building and business skills, personal enrichment classes as well as youth oriented activities and events such as Summer Camp, Summer Youth Orchestra and a Study Institute Camp.

*Antioch University Los Angeles:* This private campus in Culver City offers BAs in liberal studies and MAs in several other fields as well as teacher credentialing.

*UCLA:* Westwood, home to UCLA, is eight miles from Culver City. The Culver City Teen Center offers "UCLA Bruin Corps Tutorial Program" to students in middle and high school.

*Pepperdine University:* this Pepperdine Los Angeles Campus is located within one-half mile of Culver City. It primarily provides post-graduate programs.

### 3.5.3 Specialized Educational Organizations

*Culver City Academy of Visual and Performing Arts:* This is a multidisciplinary arts education program at Culver City High School. The AVPA is committed to creating the optimum environment for students of all ages to excel in performing arts by providing the finest artistic education and training for both the aspiring professional and novice. AVPA provides classes in art, film, music, theatre, dance, and theatre design. Enrollment is open to high school students from Culver City and interested students from other high schools in the area.

*No Limits:* No Limits is a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the communication skills and confidence of deaf and hard-of hearing children." Children learn to improve their listening and their speaking

skills through a national theatrical program and educational after school programs.

### 3.6: CULTURAL & ARTS VENUES

Culver City's cultural and artistic history is closely bound up with the film industry's. Many of the earliest film studios, such as Ince/Triangle, Hal Roach, MGM, Selznick, Desilu and Culver Studios have given way to Columbia and Sony Pictures. This influence is reflected in many of the streetscapes and public art throughout the city and on the City's seal "Heart of Screenland".

The City sponsors an Art in Public Places Program and has a Cultural Affairs Commission that oversees the funding, promotion and development of creative arts within Culver City.

The City boasts of more than 20 galleries within its boundaries, three performing arts venues and scores of special public events held throughout the year. Among the points of interest to visit are the following:

*Sony Pictures Studios:* The studio offers daily tours and an online museum history tour. Visitors can also attend tapings of several shows during taping season.

*Kirk Douglas Theater:* The Kirk Douglas Theater in Culver City is the newest and most intimate of Center Theatre Group's family of theaters. The 317-seat venue, located in a newly renovated historic theatre, opened in October 2004 with a season that included six world premieres.

*The Actors' Gang:* The Actors' Gang is one of Los Angeles' most enduring theatre ensembles. Founded in 1981 by a group of renegades

theatre artists, the Gang's mission is to create bold, original works for the stage and daring reinterpretations of the classics. Over the past 20 years the ensemble has produced a gambit of plays ranging from Greek comedy and tragedy to musical theater. According to their literature their work is..."raw, immediate, socially minded, and crafted with the highest artistic standards."

*Museum of Jurassic Technology:* This is a specialized museum with collections of relics and artifacts from natural history and science history. There is an emphasis on those objects that demonstrate unusual or curious technological qualities. The museum provides a hands-on experience to visitors.

Additional displays and events offered include:

- *Special film screenings*
- *Preservation to cultural traditions lectures*
- *Historical letters of interest*
- *Music performances from opera to classical native and gypsy jazz*
- *Photographic studies*





## chapter four: recreation activities, programs and services

### parks and recreation master plan update

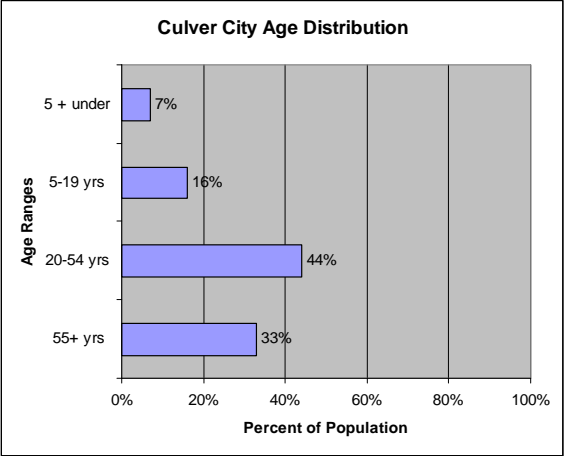
City of  
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## chapter 4: recreation activities, programs & services

### 4.1: INTRODUCTION

THE CITY OF CULVER CITY PROVIDES a wide variety of recreational programs and special events designed to meet the cultural, fitness and social needs of the community. Most of these programs take place at facilities in Veterans Park, which also houses the Teen Center; the Senior Center; the Municipal Plunge; El Marino Park; Culver West Alexander Park; Blanco Park and Lindberg Park. Cultural and special events are held at various locations throughout the City.



Many of the City’s recreational programs are tailored for different age groups, specifically preschool aged children (ages 2-5) youths (ages 5 to 19), adults (20 -54) and seniors (55 and over). The demographic make up of state, regional, county and city populations continue to change over time. It is, therefore, necessary to reevaluate the trends and needs of a community to determine that programs and services are meeting the current needs of its residents. The age of Culver City’s residents based on the 2000 U.S. Census is shown in the table on this page.

### 4.2: PROGRAM INVENTORY

The inventory of recreation programs and services was developed from the review of program materials from the recreation service providers in the community. Additional available recreation services information was obtained

from the Internet, public workshop discussions, and published materials from other recreation providers.

There is a great diversity of recreation related programs and activities available to the community in Culver City with the City delivering much of the recreation programming

Many for-profit businesses, non-profit organizations, and volunteer groups in the community offer a variety of additional recreation programs and services to the Community.

### Communication

The City promotes community recreation programs, activities and services through its publication *Culver City Living, A Guide to Leisure Activities*. In addition to programs and services information and class schedules, this guide provides City news and information to the Community. This brochure is available on the City's website, mailed to every resident through bulk mailing and is available at recreation sites and civic buildings such as City Hall and Julian Dixon library. In addition, residents can elect to provide the City with their email address for enrollment in the Email Master Notification List. Through this listing they are automatically notified of information concerning the categories of interest that they have selected. Parks and recreation information can be found in the local newspaper published one-time per week as well as the phone book. The City website also lists links to many civic organizations, clubs and service providers.

The following section describes of the programs and services available in Culver City.

## CITY SPONSORED PROGRAMS

### Holiday and Cultural Events:

Holiday events and cultural/arts celebrations are hosted frequently by the City. These events are often free to attend and are held at City facilities as well cooperative locations throughout the city. Annual holiday events include Breakfast with Santa, hosted by the City's Recreation staff and the Kiwanis Club; the 4th of July show, which is held at Culver City High School and is co-sponsored by the Exchange Club, the City and the School District; and the Fiesta La Ballona, a summer carnival celebration with live entertainment, food, and activities for the whole family.

- *Fiesta La Ballona*
- *Fiesta of Gems*
- *Charity and Fundraising Events*
- *Annual Garden Show & Plant Sale*
- *Walking Tours of Downtown*
- *Art and Culinary Events*
- *Annual Interfaith Alliance Music & Culture Festival*
- *Lunch with the Easter Bunny*
- *Giant Egg Hunt*
- *4th of July Fireworks*
- *Halloween Party*
- *Breakfast with Santa*
- *Tree Lighting Ceremony*
- *Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration*

- *Monthly Poetry Night*
- *Annual Coastal Clean-up Day*

**Youth Activities:**

Culver City offers a multitude of programs that are just for kids. The majority of these programs are fee-based programs with discounts for residents. Summertime activities include swimming lessons, nature and science exploration, arts & crafts, trips, games, sports and more. Afterschool programs provide supervised recreational activities and homework time. Arts and music programs such as the SmART Space's Art Camp and the Musical Theatre Summer Camp are also available for children who are interested.

- *Sports, Music, Art Camps*
- *Sports, Music, Art Classes*
- *After School Recreation Programming*
- *Bilingual Classes and Camps*
- *Children's Fitness and Movement Programs*
- *Special Needs Programs*
- *Excursion to water parks and amusement parks*
- *Swimming lessons, recreational swimming*
- *Preschool Activities*
- *Toddler and Parent Activities*
- *Special Events*
- *Childcare Programs, (RECC), at specific parks.*
- *Playground Programs*

**Teen Activities:**

Teens can enjoy a variety of sports activities including soccer camp, swimming lessons, martial arts and more. During the summer teens can take advantage of excursions to water and amusement parks. A diverse offering of arts and music opportunities are also available, as well as dances and special events. After school recreation programs and the teen center drop-in activities offer additional opportunities for Culver City's young adults.

- *Introductory and Advanced Sports Camps and Classes*
- *Soccer Camp*
- *Junior Tennis League Classes*
- *Tennis Lessons*
- *Swimming lessons, free swim, and Junior Lifeguard*
- *Martial Arts Classes*
- *Teen Camp*
- *Musical Theater Camp*
- *Piano and Guitar Classes*
- *Latin Dance Class*
- *Ceramics Classes*
- *After School Recreation Programming*
- *Excursions to water parks and amusement parks*
- *Teen Support Groups and Programs*
- *Teen Center-Drop-in Activities*
- *Teen Volunteer/Community Service Opportunities*
- *Homework Assistance*

- *Teen Dances*
- *Special Events and Trips*

### **Senior Activities:**

Culver City's Senior Center offers over a hundred different activities for seniors. With events ranging from Square Dancing socials to Medi-Cal Information sessions, the center is able to capture a diversity of interests and abilities. Seniors can also turn to the City for support services such as bereavement groups, meals on wheels, and the friendly visitor program. West Los Angeles College has partnered with the City to offer educational, cultural and social classes at the Senior Center and the Retired & Senior Volunteer program gives residents an opportunity to give back to others in their community.

- *Computer Classes including Photoshop, graphics techniques*
- *Swim lessons and recreational swimming*
- *Aqua Fit Water Aerobics*
- *Art, Dance, and Music Classes*
- *Health & Wellness Classes*
- *Special Interest Activities, Classes, and Clubs*
- *Excursions*
- *Volunteer Programs*
- *Support Groups, programs services for Health, Legal, Social Services, and Outreach*



### **OTHER ORGANIZATIONAL SPONSORED PROGRAMS**

There are many non-profit, private and otherwise funded organizations that operate within the City to provide additional benefits to residents. These programs offer services such as special needs assistance, extended education, and individualized athletic opportunities. Many of these programs work in conjunction with, and are supported by, the City.

Among other non-profit groups in the City, the Parks and Service Foundation offers recreation scholarships to need-based children and youth whose families live in Culver City.

#### **Youth/Teen Program Activities:**

*YMCA/Culver/Palm* - Fitness classes, art and dance classes, sports and swimming activities, child-care/preschool programs, teen programs, and outdoor activities.

*Los Angeles School of Gymnastics* – Class for Toddler motor development to Olympic caliber gymnastics training

*Debbie Allen Dance Academy* – Dance instruction and other opportunities available for all ages.

*No Limits* - Providing programs to improve listening and speaking skills for deaf or hard of hearing children

*West Los Angeles Community College* -Youth oriented activities, summer camps, youth music camps, study camp

*Academy of Visual and Performing Arts* - Classes in art, film, music, theater, for students at Culver City High School

*Free Arts for Abused Children* - Arts programs, dance, drama, music, writing, and painting to help build self-esteem

*Culver City Julian Dixon Library* - Children's story time, Homework Center

*Best Buddies* - Providing opportunities for one-to-one friendships and integrated employment for people with intellectual disabilities.

**Senior Activities:**

*West Los Angeles Community College* - Classes in fitness, arts, music, hobbies, financial, career building, and business skills

**Community Service Organizations:**

- *American Legion Post #046*
- *Amvets Culver City Post 11*
- *Culver City Exchange Club*
- *Benevolent & Protective Order of Elks*
- *Boy Scouts of America-Western LA County Council*
- *Culver City Education Foundation*
- *Culver City Lion Club*
- *Culver City Rotary Club*
- *Kiwanis Club of Culver City*
- *Optimist Club of Culver City*
- *P.A.T.H. People Assisting the Homeless*

**Sports Organizations:**

- *American Youth Soccer-Region 19*
- *Culver City Babe Ruth*
- *Culver City National Little League*

- *Culver City Little League*
- *Skate Park Association, USA*
- *US Youth Volleyball League*
- *Team Santa Monica Swim Team*
- *Royal Swim Team*
- *Culver City Swim Club*

#### **4.3: PROGRAM ANALYSIS**

Public outreach plays a significant role in evaluating programs and facilities within a city. The Master Planning process involved a multi-pronged approach to community outreach.

The tools employed to gain feedback from residents included:

- *A statistically valid telephone survey*
- *Community input meetings*
- *Focus group meetings*
- *Informal responses from the community and stakeholders solicited by Parks and Recreation staff*

##### **Telephone Survey Results**

Comprehensive results of the telephone survey are included in Appendix D of this document. However, a broad look at the statistics reveals that the greatest collective response to the need for new programs (32%) was an affirmation that the City is providing adequate programs.

Requests for other programs ranging from 6% to 3% included:

- *Aerobics, Spinning, or Fitness Instruction or Classes (6%),*

- *Arts or Crafts Instruction or Lessons (6%),*
- *Dance Instruction or Classes (5%),*
- *Yoga, Meditation, or Stress Relief Instruction or Classes (4%),*
- *Preschool Care (3%),*
- *Swimming Lessons (3%),*
- *Music Instruction or Classes (3%),*
- *Computer Classes (3%), and*
- *Cooking Instruction or Classes (3%)*

Of all the programs list above, all but cooking instruction are, or have been, offered through the Recreation Department of the City. So, the responses beg the question, why didn't these respondents know about these programs?

Telephone survey results show that the majority of respondents get information about programs from the internet, including the City's website (41%). The next greatest number find their information in the City's brochure or directly from the City (28%). That leaves 31 percent seeking information from sources such as: other recreation sites, the newspaper, phone book and senior center.

One conclusion that may be drawn is that the city is doing a good job of informing the majority of its residents about programs offered by the City's Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department which is successfully filling the programming needs of its community.

### **Community Workshop Results**

Three community workshops were held during the winter of 07/08. Recreation Programming was among the topics of two of the three workshops. Summaries of the three workshops are included in Appendices B1-B3 of this document.

The general consensus among participants at these workshops gave current recreation programming a thumbs up, especially for Senior Programs. However, they also acknowledged areas where programs could be improved.

Participants characterized Culver City as a center for cultural and artistic output and enterprise and, therefore, felt that more programs and events should be added to reflect that focus. They placed an extra emphasis on programs directed toward teens and youth.

In contrast to the telephone survey results, this group expressed their concern that the Parks, Recreation and Community Service Department needed to improve its methods of communicating its programs to the public.

The group of participants also voiced that recreation programming show sensitivity to those with disabilities.

#### **Focus Group Meeting Results**

In March 2008, a focus group meeting was held to discuss “Leisure Programs.” The center point of that meeting ended up being the City’s ability to communicate with those who did not or could not access information about programs through the internet.

The focus group members felt that a more direct and proactive approach to educating potential users should be undertaken. This could be achieved by giving recreation staff a more customer service oriented role in promoting programs when interacting with clients. Holding exhibitions and demonstrations in public venues was another suggestion.

The group had some general comments about the recreation staff making some improvements in their leadership role with clients and groups, such as

participating more directly in activities, especially with children who sometimes need direction and encouragement.

The group also suggested that using non-traditional settings for classes, such as, theaters, nature trails and commercial or industrial partner venues would encourage new interest in participation among non-users and reinvigorate current programs.

Finally, the discussion moved toward the need to educate the public about, and incorporate “green” thinking and ecology into programs.

### **Informal Input**

Staff members took themselves to the people in the parks to ask about their concerns. Park visitors were asked a series of nine questions. (The questionnaire can be found in Appendix B4 of this document.) Questions were not specifically directed toward programs, but several comments addressed that subject.

The some of the responses regarding programs are summarized below:

- *Recreation programs and events serve as a great place to meet people.*
- *“Just for Kids” is a well-liked program.*
- *Program offerings cover a wide variety of interests.*
- *The City could add to its summer day care programs.*
- *Teen programs should be centralized, whereas youth programs should not.*
- *More programs are needed for “at-risk” youth and teens.*
- *Better communication/promotion about programs is needed.*
- *Increase classes scheduled for after school attendance.*
- *Provide play- for-pay sports activities.*

#### 4.4: KEY FINDINGS

The inventory of classes, events and sports provided by the City show a strong recreation program component to Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department. This seems to be reflected as well in the majority of favorable comments and opinions from all the public comment tools.

There does seem to be some contradictory information on the effectiveness of the City's ability to communicate its programs to the public. While the telephone survey shows that the City is successful at reaching 69 percent of its users either directly or through the internet, participants in workshops, focus groups or in-person interviews expressed the need for the City to improve communication about programs and services.

There also was a strong expression among participants that:

- *The cultural and fine arts be given greater prominence in programs and events.*
- *An emphasis on ecology and "green" ways of thinking should be integrated into as many aspects of recreational programming as possible.*
- *The City should find creative ways to involve at-risk youth in activities.*
- *Recreation staff should become more proactive in serving clients' needs.*

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## chapter five: needs assessment

### parks and recreation master plan update

City of  
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## chapter 5 – needs assessment

### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

THE PURPOSE OF A NEEDS ASSESSMENT is to quantify and understand both the facility and recreational program needs of the community. In order for the Culver City Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department to develop a long-range plan for providing the right recreational services and park facilities, it must understand the nature of the community, its recreational desires, its actual needs, and its ability to provide the services that are determined necessary through the Needs Assessment.

Demand and Needs are sometimes difficult to quantify. A numerical standard may not reflect the makeup of a community, its economic situation, history, traditional recreation uses, or political environment. This report assesses the recreational services and park facilities needs of the City of Culver City starting with national and state trends, past levels of service, public involvement, and identified community demands and desires.

### 5.2 SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS AND PROJECTIONS

Chapter 2 presented a demographic profile of Culver City that showed the largest percentage of the population to be households without children with a median age of 43, which is considerably older than the county average of 33.9.

Although there are low income families in Culver City, the majority of the population living in Culver City have higher incomes than the national average and have a higher education level than the average for cities of similar size.

Residents tend to stay in Culver City on average 21 years, which is considerably longer than the national average where people move every seven years. This creates a substantial level of community stability and consistency in neighborhoods.

Other demographic and planning issues for future recreation services and park facilities that the Culver City Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department must take into consideration include:

- A city where the population is aging and where its population of active retirees and senior citizens will increase
- A future that will see the city's existing population transition from higher than average incomes to a population on retirement incomes
- Increased ethnic diversity as retail and mixed-use residential developments take place
- More community involvement from a city of highly educated residents
- A need to preserve open space and neighborhood park facilities, as well as find opportunities to acquire new park acreage as density increases
- A working population that will have a need for day care for both youth and seniors
- A city that will increasingly become a destination due to the development of more upscale shopping, restaurants and entertainment venues
- A population that will want to continue to increase its opportunities for fitness and wellness due to the trends in the current lifestyles of its residents
- A community that will want the city to be environmentally and ecologically sensitive in order to address global environmental issues from a local perspective

### 5.3 METHODOLOGY

The Consultant Team, working with the City, utilized a number of tools to reach the public for their thoughts and comments about recreation needs and desires, as well as any special insights into the operation of Parks and Recreation programs and services.

### 5.4 SUMMARY OF PUBLIC OUTREACH

#### 5.4.1 Telephone Survey

Research Network, Ltd. conducted a telephone survey over a period of several weeks during September 2007. The purpose of the survey was to obtain statistically valid, community-wide input on a variety of issues related to the Master Plan. A summary report of the survey is located in Appendix D of this document. The complete survey is published as a separate document that will be available through the Culver City Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department. The summary below highlights some key findings that helped the consultant team arrive at a number of recommendations regarding park facilities and programs.

The telephone survey revealed several important factors regarding the use of park and recreation services in Culver City. Most importantly, the survey results confirmed that residents are indeed taking advantage of the City's services. Some of the key findings include:

- Over half of the respondents described themselves as "Frequent Users" of parks and recreation facilities and services.
- Three out of every 10 residents called themselves "Moderate Users" of parks and recreation facilities and programs and services.
- The facility most often used by the households polled was Veterans Park

- Residents most commonly received information regarding facilities and programs via the internet
- When asked what benefits they seek from recreational opportunities, over half of the residents polled cited physical fitness, health and well-being as most important
- Another large percentage of residents desired the opportunity to gather and socialize with others

The benefits above were evident in the activities used most frequently by residents including:

- Walking/Jogging/Running for Recreation or Fitness
- Picnicking in Developed Sites
- Swimming
- Use of Senior and Adult Services and Programs
- Participating in Fitness Classes and Arts & Crafts activities

A large percentage of the respondents did not desire any new recreation facilities or services, however, those that did desire new facilities indicated that they desired development of more bike trails, walking/running/jogging paths, swimming pools, senior facilities and dog parks. Fitness-related programs were the most often mentioned in response to desired programs.

Finally, the survey showed that the majority of Culver City residents are satisfied with the maintenance level of recreation and park facilities.

### 5.4.2 Community Workshops

Community workshops are key components to informing the consultant team and the City about the needs and desires of its residents. When conducted in an organized and structured environment, the outcomes of these workshops

are valuable and productive, and the participants are able to contribute to the process of shaping the future of their city. Complete results of the workshops will be published in Appendices B, B1, B2 and B3 of this document. However, a summary of the results is given below.

#### *Workshop #1*

For this project, three workshops were conducted over a four-month period from October 2007 to January 2008. The first workshop was designed to solicit general information from attendees about their perception of the facilities and programs offered by the City. Groups were seated at tables and asked to share with other members what they liked or disliked about existing facilities and what amenities or facilities were lacking in Culver City. The same process was repeated for programs offered by the City. The second half of Workshop #1 consisted of selecting elements listed by each table and prioritizing those items by importance.

#### *Key Outcomes from Workshop # 1:*

The community appreciates the value of the existing parks and understands the park and recreation system's potential for improving community relations and community health, safety and welfare.

Veterans Park is held in high esteem within the community. It is a major resource for the community and workshop participants clearly indicated the need to update facilities and provide efficient programming and management.

The participants saw opportunities within the park system including:

- Opportunities for the parks to provide community identity
- Community well-being and development
- Multifaceted educational prospects
- The opportunity to raise revenue

Attendees felt there is a lack of passive green spaces and trails that connect the parks in the city. They also felt the City needs to improve how it communicates programs and events to the public.

More sports fields were requested to support year-round play, especially for adult and youth soccer.

Participants felt “Artificial Turf” should be considered on fields that are heavily used.

### *Workshop #2*

Workshop # 2 participants were asked to engage in a modified design charrette of the Culver City park system. Aerial maps were placed at several tables, and groups at each table were asked to collaborate on what elements they thought were needed at each park and within the parks system as a whole. After the exercise, each table presented its findings to the entire group.

Many comments reflected those at Workshop #1, such as more passive areas for walking and picnicking, trails connecting other parks, additional field space for soccer and year-round activities, and consideration to install artificial turf to heavily used areas and fields.

### *Key Outcomes from Workshop # 2:*

- The need for development of children’s play areas using innovative forms of play for sensory and physical development
- Protecting children’s play areas with fences and controlled entry/exit
- The need to address security and safety as it is becoming a greater concern in the parks
- Additional park maintenance is needed, especially in restrooms
- The City should engage in partnerships with other agencies and even corporate entities to provide more public spaces and programs



- Cultural and fine arts programs and activities need to play a greater role in recreation and parks offerings
- Participants wanted a greater emphasis on cultural, ecological and sustainable programs offered
- There was continued support for more senior center programs
- Adjacent uses in small parks sometimes conflict with each other making it unsafe for children
- There is a shortage of parking, especially where parks are located in residential areas
- There was a consensus that there are not enough sports fields that have lighting for night play
- One group of people suggested installing an archery range and programs.

#### *Workshop #3*

Workshop # 3 was used to present the findings of the previous two workshops and the conclusions of the telephone survey. At 37 participants, this workshop had the largest attendance of the three. Also on hand were staff and elected officials to answer questions and offer comments.

It was an opportunity for those present to ask questions regarding the Master Plan process and seek clarification on results of the information gathered thus far.

#### *Key Outcomes from Workshop # 3*

- The City, with the consultants, need to investigate what elements are driving the desires in the City; not just rely on the comments from those who have spoken up. These dynamic and motivating elements need to be the focus of the recommendations in the final Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

- Parks and Recreation services need to reflect a core value or competency that is closely related to this community's characteristics. Culver City is surrounded by and involved in cultural programs and artistic endeavors. There needs to be strong cultural arts program direction for adults and youth.
- The Cultural Affairs Commission within the City needs to work with and dovetail into Parks and Recreation facilities and services.
- There needs to be an emphasis on cultural, ecological and sustainable parks, recreation and educational programs offered. The emphasis in these areas needs to be reflected within the parks and facilities themselves.
- The City should seek ways to partner with L.A. County to make Ballona Creek available to the public without destroying the ecology of the area.

### 5.4.3 Focus Group Meetings

The purpose of conducting meetings with Focus Groups was to target specific audiences within an area of interest to gain deeper insights from those familiar with the needs of those unique users of park facilities and programs. The subjects of the Focus Groups were, 1) "Parks and Facilities" 2) "Leisure Programs."

The first Focus Group met in February 2008; the second met in March 2008. A complete summary of the two Focus Group discussions can be found in Appendix B of this document. The summary below presents key discussion points that came out of the focus groups that were used by the consultant team, along with all of the other key findings from the various public outreach tools, to arrive at the recommendations in Chapter 7.

#### *Parks and Facilities Focus Group*

This group of 16 community members and two staff members began by characterizing benefits of parks as areas to inspire, nurture, educate and

provide models for sustainability. Parks in general, and Culver City parks in particular, offer opportunities for the community to reflect its unique character and culture. The group as a whole complemented the City for doing a good job with parks and facilities. In particular, they praised the “Boneyard” dog park and the skate park as a good use of appropriate space.

In making improvements, the Group had these suggestions and comments:

- The City needs to look toward acquiring additional land perhaps by redeveloping blighted areas or finding land that might already be available
- Culver City residents should be given first access to the programs and facilities
- Communication about the recreation resources is very important
- Park memorials and dedications should be visible within the park
- Arts and cultural activities are innate to this community and assets that should be showcased
- The goal should be for facility buildings to be ‘State of the Art’ and that grant funding can contribute to this goal
- Involve the community to help the City achieve goals
- Parks need to adopt sustainable practices and provide education to the community for use in their own homes
- Ballona creek land is attainable and recreational improvements are happening in other areas. Culver City needs to develop joint partnership with other Cities and agencies to take advantage of this potential asset in the community
- Issues of safety in and around parks need to be addressed
- Culver City has a shortage of available parking at public facilities

### *Leisure Programs Focus Group*

This Group began by defining what leisure meant in the context of parks and recreation activities. Some of the conclusions were:

- Pursuit of a healthy lifestyle that promotes well-being
- Athletic and physical activities
- Family time
- Nurturing activities that regenerate the spirit
- Activities that provide social opportunities

The Group had general observations about parks and recreation programming that has an impact on participation and the value these programs bring to the public:

- Availability of recreational services is an important part of what makes people want to participate and what keeps them from participating
- People like to do activities that are familiar to them through prior experience so they don't have to take time to learn new things
- Limited income, ease of transportation and inaccessibility contribute to lack of participation in programs

Areas where the Group felt the Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department could make improvements are as follows:

Communicating programs and services need improvement when it comes to those without computer access or ability.

- Digital screens for information along routes
- Kiosk centers
- Posting information in public places and private businesses

- Provide for an information channel specific to Parks and Recreation
- Place a marquee screen at Vet's park for drive by information
- Find the most economic way to reach as many people as possible
- Use movie theaters to promote and inform about Culver City and announce community activities
- Look into many avenues of communication such as inserts into utility bills and press releases to the local paper.
- Establish partnerships and relationships with local newspapers and business. Have a Parks and Recreation Section in the local newspaper once a month.
- Maintain and post the City Parks and Recreation brochure. Printed material will always be a way to distribute information. Find ways to limit the cost of publication.

The City should become more proactive in reaching non-users.

Park leaders need to be more active with park participants. The park staff needs a different dynamic; to be more engaged with the participants and be recreation leaders not just passing out equipment.

The City should find opportunities to partner with businesses and service organizations to provide scholarships or subsidies for those who can't afford to participate.

Bundle privileges with Parks and Recreation membership services: parking, lower cost of classes, special seminars, swimming card, summer sessions, special camps and free activities, etc.

The suggestions offered by the Focus Groups were integrated into the recommendations made in Chapter 7.

#### 5.4.4 In-Person Interviews with Park Visitors

The Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department created a questionnaire and conducted one on one interviews with people visiting various parks. The questions asked were:

1. *What do you value most about Culver City's parks and recreation?*
2. *How do parks and recreation services help to improve the quality of life in Culver City?*
3. *What do you see as the major parks and recreation issues facing the City of Culver City?*
4. *What do you think are the most pressing community needs in Culver City?*
5. *What improvements, if any, to parks and recreation services do you think should be the highest priority for the City?*
6. *Do you know of any ways the City can partner with other organizations or build upon an existing partnership to improve parks and recreation services?*
7. *How can the City best involve community members in parks and recreation services on an ongoing basis?*
8. *In your opinion, what is the one key goal, need or opportunity the City should keep in mind while developing its Parks and Recreation Master Plan?*
9. *Do you have any other questions or additional comments?*

The complete results of the questionnaire can be found in Appendix B4 of this document.

#### *Key Outcomes from the One-on-One Interview Process*

- In terms of value, the responses were favorable with participants stating that convenience to parks, the variety of programs and facilities catering to needs of all ages, parks that provide great meeting places to socialize

and well maintained parks all contribute to the value of living in Culver City

- Quality of life in Culver City is enhanced by parks and recreation services because it gives people places to play, it provides meeting places for the community, it promotes healthy life styles
- Improvement issues and needs among respondents included:
  - Better park maintenance and clean up needed
  - The need to reduce incidents of graffiti and vandalism
  - More parks as existing parks are heavily used
  - Better use/design of park space
  - Better lighting for security
  - Making the parks a "community center" of activity
  - Concerns about safety and security in the parks and presence of at-risk youth in parks
  - The "Transportation Triangle" is difficult
  - Better park and recreation activities with more variety
  - More staff to assist at parks and playgrounds
  - More posted announcements
  - Day care in summer
  - Accessibility to residents
  - Homeless issue -poses special concerns to moms with their children
  - Vet's Park has many amenities other parks don't have
  - Lack of improvement in some parks

- Telefson Park needs improvement in lighting, picnic and playground areas as well as a new jogging/walking trail
- For Culver City facilities as a whole, some wanted another dog park, additional trails and more soccer fields

Respondents offered many helpful and creative suggestions to improve communication, programs and funding.

Finally, they commented on the goals of the Master Planning process stating that residents' needs should be at the forefront, get input from residents, keep both short and long-term goals in mind, talk to the people who use the parks the most: mothers, and make decisions that keep the family-oriented nature of Culver City in mind.

## **5.5 ANALYSIS AND KEY FINDINGS OF THE PUBLIC OUTREACH**

As one can see, a significant effort over the past year provided the public opportunity to make their ideas and comments known as to current and future needs for the City's park and recreation system. Several types of outreach tools engaged a cross section of residents, community leaders, elected and appointed officials and all age groups in the community. The Consultants have analyzed the volume of data, comments and suggestions collected and have determined the public's key issues, policy concerns and items they, the public, would like to see addressed in the update of the Park and Recreation Master Plan. The following is the summary analysis of the key findings of the public outreach:

- The majority of the public outreach indicated that the Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Service is doing an excellent job in providing programs to youth, teens and seniors.



- The Public would like an increased level of Park and Facility Maintenance with an emphasis on improving restroom and field maintenance.
- It is important for the City to pursue partnerships with businesses and educational institutions for both programming and facilities in order to meet the needs of the community.
- The most requested new facilities were for trails, passive areas for picnicking, fitness facilities, meeting room space, and sports fields for adult and youth play.
- There was broad support for increasing volunteer opportunities.
- There were significant requests for increases in the number of cultural and fine arts, music and social activities sponsored through the Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Service to identify Culver City as a regional cultural resource.
- Veterans Park is held in high esteem for its diverse facilities and program offerings. There was major support for the City to address improvements to existing facilities at Veterans Park and look at possibilities for reuse of land space for new amenities that would serve the current and future demographic profile of the community.
- There were several requests to improve and provide additional parking at park facilities throughout the City.
- Programs that both demonstrate and educate the public about sustainability, ecology, and “green” practices seemed to be a high priority.
- Safety and security issues in and around the parks were expressed.
- Making the recreation staff more visible and interactive with visitors and program participants was a high priority.

## 5.6 PARK EVALUATIONS & FACILITY NEEDS ANALYSIS

In addition to conducting extensive public outreach to determine the public's perception of the needs and demands for the Culver City Park and Recreation system, the consultants did an overall inventory of parks and facilities (See Chapter 3 and Table 3.1). This enabled the Project Team to assess the specific needs for improvements at existing parks and facilities and provided the basis to determine what new amenities and park facilities should be considered to address comments expressed in the public outreach process.

In addition, the MIG consultants reviewed and included the facility study prepared by Cumming Corporation in June 2007, which listed the needed improvements to each park facility and the associated costs to do the recommended improvements.

The Master Plan Team noted conditions within the parks that warranted special attention. These studies and findings were used to develop the recommendations for park improvements and the financial and implementation strategies in Chapter 7.

## 5.7 FACILITY DEMAND ANALYSIS

Over the years, MIG Consultants have prepared over 100 City, County, and Park District Park and Recreation Master Plans. This experience has enabled us to develop recommended facility standards tailored to the specific demographics of the communities for which we have prepared Park and Recreation Master Plans. The facility standards we have developed were derived from previous National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) recommended standards adjusted by population, community make-up, and comparison with the number of facilities provided in similar size cities.

The following table is a comparative analysis of how Culver City Parks, Recreation and Community Services facilities relate to those of other cities. We have chosen La Quinta, Brea and Davis because they have at least three qualities in common with Culver City: area, median income, population or demographic make up. Also, these cities represent a diversity of California climates and cultures.

**Sports Field Ratios of Comparable Cities**

City	Ballfields	Soccer Fields	Pools	# of Ballfields Per 10,000 Residents	# of Soccer Fields Per 10,000 Residents
La Quinta	3	2	1	.75	.5
Brea	7	5	1	1.75	1.25
Culver City	18	11	1	4.5	2.75
Davis	21	16	11	3.5	2.7

This analysis shows that Culver City ranks well in providing needed facility for its residents.

The next table compares the number of park facilities standards developed by MIG with the number of park facilities provided in Culver City.

**Surplus or Deficit of Park Facilities Compared to  
Recommended Park Standards**

Facility Type*	Currently Available	Adjusted Standard 40,000 Population	Surplus (+) Deficit (-)
Amphitheater/Stage	2	1/20,000 = 2	0
Baseball Fields	2	1/8,000 = 5	-3
Basketball Court (Outdoor)	21	1/2,500 = 16	+5
Biking/Walking/Jogging Trail (Miles)		1mi./8,000 = 5 mi.	
Child Play Area/Tot Lot (2-12 Yrs.)	13	1/5,000 = 8	+5
Community Center	2	1/20,000 = 2	0
Dog Park	1	1/20,000 = 2	-1
Family Picnic Facilities		1/2,500 = 16	
Group Picnic Shelters	9	1/5,000 = 8	+1
Gymnasium	3	1/10,000 = 4	-1
Meeting Rooms (Available to rent)	18	1/5,000 = 8	+10
Multipurpose Field	2	1/5,000 = 8	-6
Open Space Areas	11	1/10,000 = 4	+7
Senior Center	1	1/20,000 = 2	-1
Skate park	1	1/25,000 = 2	-1
Soccer Fields	11	1/5,000 = 8	+3
Softball Fields	9	1/8,000 = 5	+4
Splash/Water Play Pools	0	1/12,000 = 3	-3
Swimming Pools	1	1/15,000 = 2	-1
Community Teen Center	1	1/30,000 = 1	0
Tennis Courts	16	1/5,000 = 8	+8
Volleyball Hard Courts	1	1/10,000 = 4	-3
Note: The "Currently Available" column only includes facilities that the Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department has access to for programming and community use. If a facility exist in the City, but the Department does not have access to use it for either scheduling reasons or cost reasons, the facility was deemed unavailable and not included in this analysis.			

**\* Definitions for the facility type are as follows:**

*Amphitheater/Stage* – An outdoor area containing a stage and spectator area that will accommodate performances

*Baseball Fields* – An area containing a baseball backstop, dugouts and outfield fence for the purpose of playing baseball

*Basketball Full Court* – Blacktop or concrete surface with designated basketball courts complete with backstops

*Walking/Jogging Trail* – One mile (approximately) of designated hard surface off road trail

*Child Play Area/Tot Lot* – A designated area that contains children's play equipment for 2- to 12-year-olds

*Community Centers* – A community building facility with a large multi-purpose room and adjacent rooms that can be used for classes and special activities. It should contain a service kitchen, adequate restrooms and storage areas.

*Dog Parks* – Enclosed area for exercising dogs and socializing

*Family Picnic Facilities* – An area with picnic tables for unreserved use

*Group Picnic Shelters* - An area designated for picnics that can be reserved that contains picnic tables, barbeques, and shade shelters

*Gymnasium* – An indoor facility with a minimum space that would allow for basketball, volleyball, gymnastics, dance, boxing, exercise and other indoor sports to be offered

*Meeting Rooms* – A multi-purpose room with kitchen or catering capabilities that can accommodate a variety of group functions

*Multipurpose Field* - A natural or artificial turf field with minimum dimensions that can accommodate regulation soccer, football, and other field sports

*Open Space Areas* – A grassy/turf area without formal designations that can be used for pick up games, group activities, or other semi-active uses

*Senior Center* – A facility dedicated or shared with other community uses that specifically provides recreation, human and socialization programming for senior citizens

*Skate Park* – A concrete area specifically designated for skate boarders. Usually contains ramps, bowls, or streetscapes for skaters to perform on

*Soccer Fields* - A natural or artificial turf field with minimum dimensions that can accommodate soccer

*Softball Fields* - An area containing a multi purpose backstop with field space sufficient enough to play youth through adult softball

*Splash/Water Play Pools* – Neighborhood water play features with spray and or wading area for seasonal use

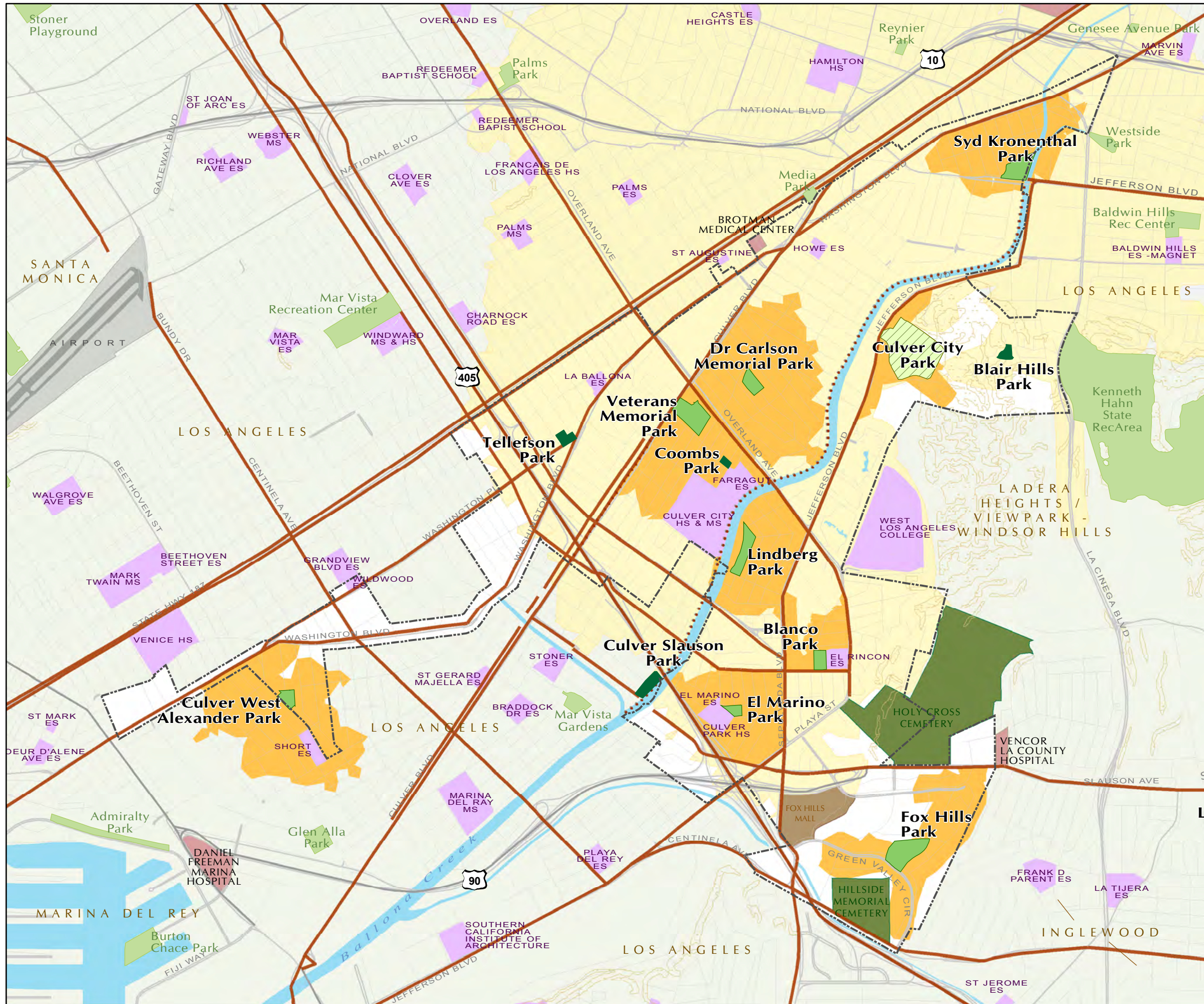
*Swimming Pool* – A swimming pool with a minimum dimension of 25 yards by 25 yards that is capable of offering swim lessons, recreational swim, and/or competitive swim activities

*Teen Center* - A facility dedicated or shared with other community uses that specifically provides recreation, human and socialization programming for teens

*Tennis Courts* - A hard surface area containing a designated tennis court with a net that may contain lights for night play

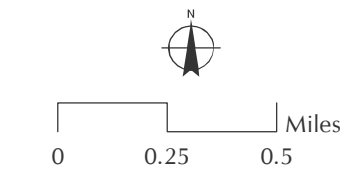
*Volleyball Hard Courts* – Either sand or grass volleyball courts for casual or organized play





City of  
**Culver CITY**  
**Parks & Recreation**  
**Master Plan**  
*Culver City, California*

- Barrier
- 0.5 Mile Service Area
- 2.5 Mile Service Area
- Community Park
- Neighborhood Park
- Mini Park
- Other Park
- Cemetery
- School
- BikePath
- Landslide Area
- City Limits
- Other City
- Water
- Highway
- Major Road

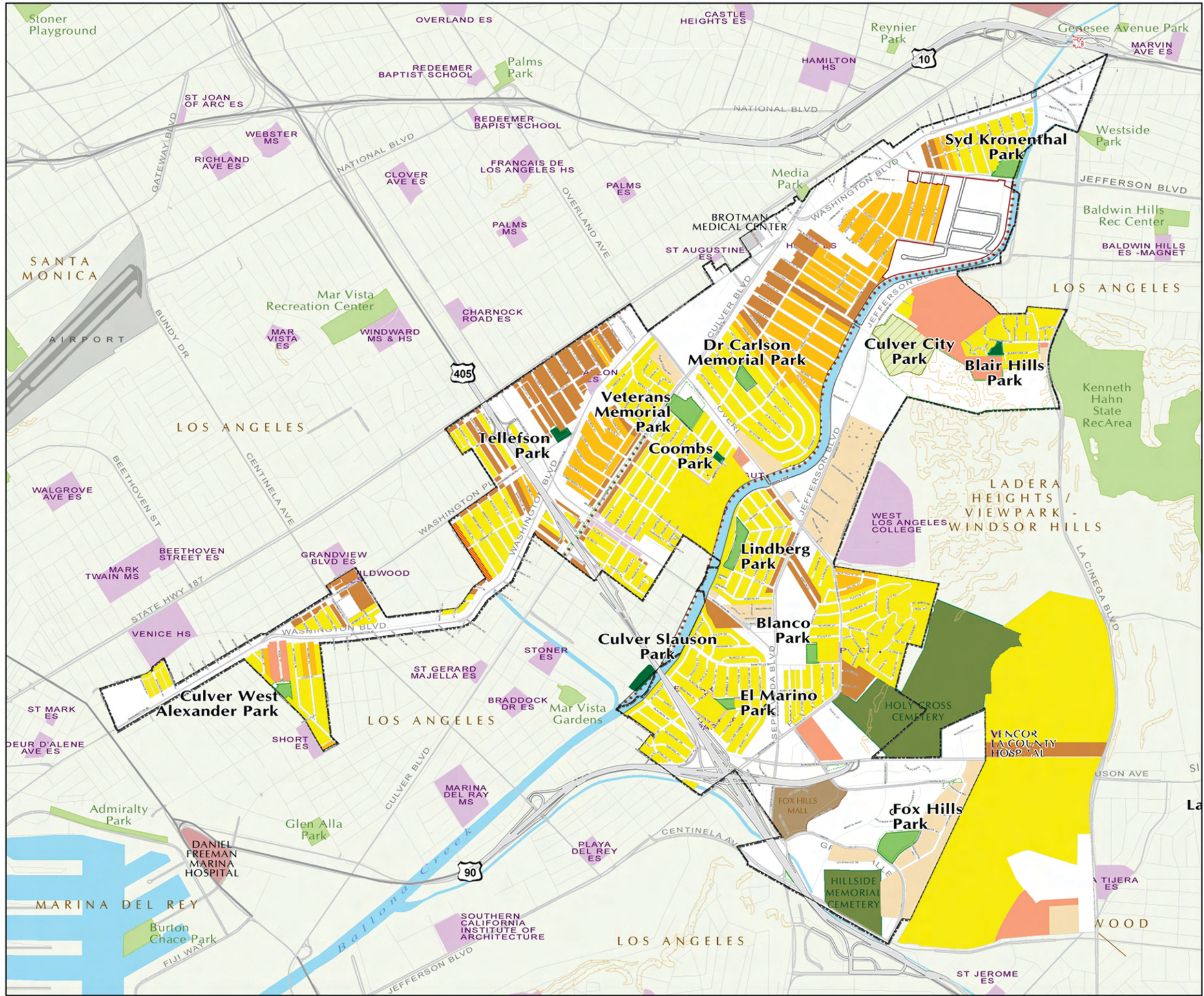


**Community & Neighborhood**  
**Park Service Areas**  
**Showing Barriers to Access**  
**Exhibit 5.1**









City of  
**Culver CITY**

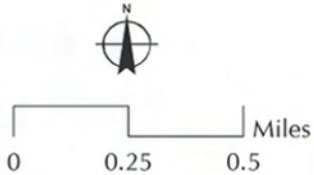
**Parks & Recreation  
Master Plan**

Culver City, California

- |                   |            |
|-------------------|------------|
| Community Park    | Mini Park  |
| Neighborhood Park | Other Park |
| Cemetery          | School     |

- |                                 |
|---------------------------------|
| Low Density Single Family       |
| Low Density Two Family          |
| Low Density Multiple Family     |
| Medium Density Multiple Family  |
| Planned Residential Development |

- |                |
|----------------|
| BikePath       |
| Landslide Area |
| City Limits    |
| Other City     |
| Water          |
| Highway        |
| Major Road     |



**Residential Land Use  
Exhibit 5.2**





## 5.8 CONCLUSIONS

By comparing the adjusted NRPA standards with the total facilities in Culver City the results show that Culver City meets or exceeds the standards in 11 of 21 categories. The City lacks a sufficient number of the following facilities based on its population of approximately 40,000. As Culver City's population increases, those deficits will also increase.

### *Needed Facilities*

- Baseball fields
- Dog Park
- Gymnasium
- Multipurpose Fields
- Senior Center
- Skate Park
- Splash/Water Play Pads
- Swimming Pool
- Volleyball Courts

An analysis of the Surplus/Deficit Park Standards comparison and the comments from the public outreach tools provided the basis for the Project Team in determining the recommendations in Chapter 7. This methodology allowed for recommendations that are balanced between the requests and demands of the public involved in the process and the actual needs determined by suggested park standards and comparisons with similar agencies.

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## chapter six: park land dedication and impact fees

### parks and recreation master plan update

City of  
*Culver* CITY



## chapter 6: park land dedication and impact fees

### 6.1 INTRODUCTION/METHODOLOGY

PARK ACREAGE STANDARDS are generally established through an acreage requirement per 1,000 residents. The Subdivision Map Act and the Quimby Act (Section 66477 of the Government Code) relating to parkland dedication allows municipalities to adopt a local ordinance establishing a citywide park standard and the requirement of parkland dedication or market value in-lieu fees when there is residential development.

Municipalities can also adopt ordinances requiring the payment of a Park Impact Fee which offsets the cost of the impact new residential development has on the Town's existing park and recreation system.

Cities, Counties and Park Districts can also adopt ordinances that establish Assessment Districts for Park and Recreation improvements and operations.

As part of the Culver City Park and Recreation Master Plan the consultant team reviewed the current Parkland Dedication and In-Lieu Fee Ordinances pertaining to park dedication and park fee requirements in order to insure that the ordinances reflect current up to date language and requirements to best position the City for implementing its Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

The Consultant Team also performed an analysis and feasibility study on establishing park and facility impact fees, in addition to the City's existing ordinances, on commercial and retail development; the feasibility of a citywide park and facilities assessment district to provide needed new parks and facilities; and the possibility of establishing park maintenance districts to generate revenue to provide the maintenance level of service desired by the community.

The analysis and key findings were used to develop recommendations and implementation strategies for future park development and recommendations for park maintenance and improvements presented in Chapter 7.

## **6.2 EVALUATION & ANALYSIS OF EXISTING ORDINANCES**

The Culver City General Plan has established that in the public interest, convenience, health, welfare and safety there is a need for 10 acres of property, for each 1,000 persons residing within the City, which should be devoted to park and recreational purposes. The way cities determine their park acreage varies among agencies. Some cities only count city owned parkland in their calculation of total parkland acres. Others count city owned parkland and parkland that the city has access to for park purposes by agreement with other agencies, such as schools, county and state agencies.

Culver City tries to satisfy its parkland needs by providing its residents with recreational access to regional parks, school facilities and parkland it owns. The 10 acres per 1000 residents park standard is made up of 6 acres per 1000 residents of regional park space (mainly Kenneth Hahn State Recreation Area administered by the County of Los Angeles); about 30 acres of school property used for recreational purposes through a joint use agreement with the Culver City Unified School District; and approximately 78.63 acres of City owned parkland.

Using a current approximate population of 40,000 the 10 acres /1000 population standard would require the City to have access to 400 acres of parkland to meet its General Plan Parkland Standard. As shown in the table below the City only has access to 348.63 acres of parkland and therefore has a current parkland deficit of 52.99 acres.



CULVER CITY

## parks and recreation master plan

Culver City	Analysis of Current and Future Park Acreage Requirements	
	Current	Projected 2020
Population	Approx. 40,000	Approx. 50,000
General Plan Park Standard	10 Acres/1000 Pop	10 Acres/1000 Pop
Acres Required to Meet Standard	400 Acres	500 Acres
Total Parkland Acreage Available*	348.63	363.63
Surplus (Deficiency) of Park Acreage	(52.99)	(136.37)
Current Park Dedication Requirement	3 Acres/1000 Pop	

\* Includes 240 acres of Regional Parkland, 30 acres of School District Property Used for Recreational Purposes under a Joint Use Agreement, and 78.63 acres of City Owned Parkland

The City's current Parkland Dedication and In-Lieu Fee Ordinance requires a dedication of 3 acres of parkland per 1000 residents for each residential development that takes place in the City. It is estimated that the population will grow approximately 10,000 by the year 2020, and at the current parkland dedication requirement the parkland deficit will increase to 136.37 acres unless the City pursues greater parkland dedication; augments its use of school facilities for park and recreation purposes; and seeks expansion of regional park facilities in partnership with County and State agencies.

### Analysis of Parkland Dedication & In-Lieu Fee Ordinance

Park standards are generally established through an acreage requirement or facility requirement per 1,000 residents. The Subdivision Map Act and the Quimby Act (Section 66477 of the Government Code) relating to parkland dedication allows cities whose general plan contains policies and standards for park and recreation facilities to adopt by ordinance a parkland dedication requirement or in-lieu fees on residential subdivisions. It also allows cities who

have made the proper findings and determinations to extend the parkland dedication or in-lie fee requirement to non-subdivision residential development.

The Quimby Act sets a minimum of three (3) acres per 1000 of population, but allows cities to require a greater amount of parkland dedication if the city can demonstrate the need for a greater amount of parkland dedication and show that it does indeed provide more than 3 acres per 1000 of population.

Culver City's General Plan contains a goal of 10 acres of parkland per one thousand of population; however, under the authority of the Quimby Act, Culver City has adopted a parkland dedication requirement or in-lieu fees (City Ordinance No. 90-002 and No. 90-003) on residential subdivisions and non-subdivision residential development of only three (3) acres per thousand of population. As mentioned above the City augments its parkland dedication requirement with regional parks and use of school property for park and recreation purposes to try to meet its General Plan goal of 10 acres of parkland per 1000 of population.

By doing this the City is able to reach a parkland ratio of 8.7 acres per 1000 of population, which is 1.3 acres per 1000 of population below its General Plan goal. This deficiency is caused, in significant part, by residential construction that took place prior to the City's adoption of its parkland dedication requirement and residential development that took place as non-subdivisions until the City included these types of residential developments in its parkland dedication ordinance.

Another factor that contributes to the deficit is that the City's ordinance exempts low income affordable housing and senior housing from the parkland dedication requirement. The purpose of the exemption is to make these types

of housing products less costly; however, in reality these types of housing projects actually put a greater demand and impact on the Park and Recreation system and therefore contribute to the deficit problem.

In addition the City is experiencing a revitalization which includes a significant number of older, smaller, homes being replaced with larger homes on the same lot size which contributes to the need for more park and recreation facilities due to greater lot coverage and less space for backyard recreational amenities. However, these home replacements are not subject to the City's parkland dedication requirements. It is only required if an additional unit is added to the property.

The City also reduces the parkland dedication requirement if a second unit is added to a property containing a single family dwelling. In this case, development of a second unit on the same property is only required to dedicate 50% of the amount required or 1-1/2 acres per thousand of population. In actuality, a second unit most likely will house a second family and thus increase the demand for park and recreation facilities, yet not contribute to the full impact of this demand.

Commercial and retail development also has a significant impact on the City's park and recreation system. Culver City is located in the middle of a large urban area and provides for jobs and retail opportunities for persons living outside of Culver City who use park and recreation facilities either through their place of business or while in Culver City partaking of the City's retail and entertainment opportunities.

While all of the above factors contribute to the park deficit the most significant issue is the fact that Culver City's park dedication ordinance only requires the dedication of three (3) acres per one thousand of population. Most cities have

adopted ordinances requiring five (5) acres of parkland dedication for all residential development in order to avoid greater parkland deficits as their population continues to grow.

Density is another factor that affects the amount of parkland dedication the City receives from residential development projects. When determining the amount of parkland dedication required from a specific development the City uses the adopted ordinance ratio of 3 acres per 1000 of population and determines the projected population of the development project by the density factors below:

1. Single-family detached dwelling unit: Two and seventy-five hundredths (2.75) persons per dwelling unit:
2. Single-family attached dwelling unit: Two and forty-four hundredths (2.44) persons per dwelling unit:
3. Multi-family residential developed with four (4) or fewer units: Two and thirty-one hundredths (2.31) persons per dwelling unit; and
4. Multi-family residential developed with more than four (4) units: Two (2.00) persons per dwelling unit.
5. Mobile homes: One and seventy-eight hundredths, (1.78) persons per dwelling unit.

Culver City's density is actually lower than the State averages, as shown in the table below.

Type of Housing Development	Culver City Density Factor	State Average Density Factor
Single Family Detached	2.75 Per Household	3.54 Per Household
Single Family Attached	2.44 Per Household	2.93 Per Household
Multi-Family 4 or Less Units	2.31 Per Household	2.61 Per Household
Multi-Family 5 or More Units	2.00 Per Household	2.51 Per Household
Mobile Homes	1.78 Per Household	2.12 Per Household

The lower density factor in Culver City results in the City actually receiving less parkland dedication than other cities that have the same parkland dedication requirement of 3 acres per 1000 of population but have density factors closer to or higher than the State average.

For example, in comparing Culver City to another city with the same parkland dedication requirement, but an average density factor, shows the difference in required parkland dedication from the same number of units.

Example: 300 Single Family Detached Units

Culver City	Example City
300 Units X 2.75 Density = 825 Population Parkland ratio = 3 acres /1000 Required Parkland Dedication = 2.48 Acres	300 Units X 3.54 Density = 1062 Population Parkland ratio = 3 acres /1000 Required Parkland Dedication = 3.19 Acres

Even though the number of units to be developed is the same for both cities in the above example, Culver City will receive almost three-fourths of an acre less parkland for exactly the same development project. If, in the above

example, the developer was paying in-lieu fees instead of dedicating parkland, Culver City would receive approximately \$750,000 less in park fees than the average city based on a fair market land value of \$1 million per acre.

The minimum parkland dedication ratio of 3 acres per 1000 of population and the below average density factor make it doubly difficult for Culver City to reach its desired General Plan Goal of providing a total of 10 acres per 1000 residents in the community.

The City's Parkland Dedication and In-Lieu Fee Ordinance allows the City, in most cases, to determine when to require parkland dedication and when to accept payment of in-lieu fees. In general the City accepts parkland dedication if the property to be dedicated is needed for park purposes, adjacent to a school or existing park, or contains a special feature such as open space or an historical site which the City wishes to preserve. The City, per the ordinance, must accept in-lieu fees for residential development of 50 units or less.

When in-lieu fees are paid instead of actual land dedication, the amount of the in-lieu fee is based on the fair market value of the number of acres that would have been required for dedication. In Culver City's ordinance the fair market value is established by an appraisal by a licensed real estate appraiser paid for by the developer. The appraisal is not based on raw land, but rather the value of the land with an approved tentative map or tentative parcel map, which naturally increases the market value over that of raw land.

It is assumed that the property to be dedicated would be appraised with infrastructure in place, i.e. roads, curbs, sewers, water, and utilities to the site. However, this is not specifically spelled out in the ordinance. To avoid conflict the City should consider adding additional language to Section 15.10.775C explaining this requirement.

When there is a sub division that proposes to provide private open space or park and recreational facilities the developer of that project may be partially credited against the parkland dedication requirement if the City determines that it is in the public interest to allow a 50% reduction of the parkland dedication requirement. To make this determination, the City takes into consideration if the private open space or park and recreational facilities are proposed for an area that is reasonably adapted for use as recreation or park purposes; the topography will allow for use of the proposed area for park and recreation purposes; the area is accessible from the proposed development; and the maintenance and provision of the private open space or park and recreational facilities is provided for by written agreement and restricted to open space, park and recreation uses by recorded covenants on the deed.

The theory behind this section of the ordinance is that homeowners within the development will be paying for the open space and park and recreation facilities and therefore will have less of an impact on the City's open space, park and recreation facilities. Thus, the City allows a 50% reduction in the parkland dedication or in-lieu fees if, at the City's discretion, the proposed development contains sufficient open space, park and recreation facilities to serve as a neighborhood park for the proposed development. Yards, set-backs, median islands, drainage areas, hillsides, and other required open space for approval of the tract map cannot be considered as credit against the parkland dedication requirement.

Culver City's Parkland Dedication and In-Lieu Fee Ordinance allows for an alternative procedure that the City, at its discretion, may use to acquire parkland dedication of parkland not within the proposed residential development. For example, if a developer owns a parcel of property adjacent to an existing park, school, or regional park facility, that the City determines

would benefit the City's park and recreation system, the City may allow the developer to dedicate that property instead of property within the proposed residential development. Again, the City must make a determination that the proposed property dedication is needed for park purposes and that the benefits of that property dedication will reasonably serve the proposed residential development.

This section of the ordinance gives the City the flexibility it needs to acquire park parcels that benefit the park and recreation system rather than having to accept property within a specific residential development that would have less value to the over all park and recreation system.

Culver City has expanded the sections of its Parkland Dedication and In-Lieu Fee Ordinance to include all residential development, not just residential development as a result of a sub divide of land. The reason for this is that all residential development has an impact on the City's park and recreation system and residential development not part of a sub division has the same impact as residential development within a sub division.

This allows the City to collect Park In-Lieu Fees from "infill projects", additional units on the same property, and conversions of single family homes to multi-family units. The City should also consider adding language that would require the payment of Park In-Lieu Fees when a single family home is replaced or added on to whereby the square footage of the add on or replacement increases the unit size by 50% or more. As mentioned above, Culver City is going through revitalization and small homes are being replaced by large homes on the same lot size. For example, if a 1,200 square foot home is being replaced by a 3,000 square foot home then there should be a park fee requirement on the additional 1,800 square feet. The City would have to amend the ordinance language to accomplish this. Most city ordinances that



include this component in their parkland dedication requirement establish a “flat in-lieu fee” per unit addition or replacement. The “flat in-lieu fee” is generally set by a formula that uses the average appraised value of the city’s park system as the basis for the fee and the average number of units allowed for R1 development. This does require that the City do an appraisal of City owned parkland and update the appraisal every 5 years.

For example, if an appraisal of City owned parkland results in an appraised value of \$1 million dollars per acre and the average R1 unit density is 6 units to the acre the following formula would be used to establish the “flat in-lieu fee” for a residential unit addition or replacement whereby the unit size on the parcel is being increased in square footage by at least 50%:

$$\begin{aligned} & \underline{6 \text{ units/ac} \times 2.75 \text{ persons} = 16.5 \text{ persons} \times} \\ & \underline{.0003 \text{ pop/ac} = .00495 \text{ acre dedication requirement} \times} \\ & \underline{\$1 \text{ million/ac} = \$4,950 \text{ divided by } 6 \text{ Units/ac} =} \\ & \underline{\$825 \text{ per unit "flat rate in-lieu fee"}} \end{aligned}$$

A majority of older signal family homes in Culver City are approaching 40 to 50 years of age and the number of these older homes that will be added on to or replaced with larger units on the same size parcel will increase over the next 20 years. Therefore, the City should consider addressing the impact these larger homes have on the park and recreation system and take steps to mitigate the impact with the establishment of a “flat rate in-lieu fee” for this type of residential development.

In summary, Culver City’s Parkland Dedication and In-Lieu Fee Ordinance is consistent with the Quimby Act, similar to what other cities are doing with regards to requiring parkland dedication to mitigate residential impact on the park and recreation system, and fairly up to date on including all types of residential development in its ordinance.

Things the City should consider amending in the ordinance include:

- *Increasing the parkland dedication requirement from 3 acres per 1000 of population to 5 acres per 1000 of population*
- *Adjusting the density factor for housing types when the 2010 census is completed*
- *Spelling out language in the ordinance that defines the park property to be dedicated be appraised with infrastructure in place, i.e. roads, curbs, sewers, water, and utilities to the site*
- *Adding a section that applies a “flat rate in-lieu fee” to residential development whereby a house is being added on to or replaced with a single family unit that is 50% or greater than the existing single family housing unit on the same parcel.*

### 6.3 FEASIBILITY STUDY ON PARK IMPACT FEES

#### Park or Community Facilities District Impact Fees

Park impact fees placed on new development are different from parkland dedication and in-lieu fee requirements. In-lieu fees can only be used for park acquisition and development for park and recreation facilities that are needed to serve the additional population created by residential development. When a city establishes a park impact fee its purpose is to offset the additional impact on existing park and recreation facilities the proposed residential development will have. The theory is that while the Quimby Fee will provide new neighborhood parks and facilities to serve the proposed residential development, the population within that development will also use the rest of the park and recreation system including community parks, community centers, and special use facilities.

Park impact fees are generally determined on a basis of the City’s cost to maintain the life cycle of the existing park and recreation system. While the

formula for park impact fees may vary slightly from city to city they are generally established on a per unit basis.

Park impact fees are usually derived from establishing a Park or Community Facilities District, whereby, any new development within the district would pay both Quimby and Park Impact Fees. In most agencies the Park or Community Facilities District encompasses the City limits.

As an example, if the total cost in the Culver City Capital Improvement Program in the Park and Recreation Master Plan to maintain the life cycle of the park system is \$10 million and there are 15,000 residential units in the City the cost per unit is \$667 per unit. Consequently, the Park Impact Fee for each new unit would be \$667. By adopting both a Parkland Dedication and In-Lieu Fee and a Park/Community Facilities District Fee the City will have a revenue source to both build new parks that are needed and provide needed improvements to mitigate additional use and maintain the lifecycle of existing park and recreation facilities. Over time as properties redevelop all residential parcels will eventually help pay for existing facilities lifecycle replacement. As in the Park In-Lieu Fee the City may allow for up to 50% reduction in the Park Impact Fee for credit for private park amenities developed with the proposed residential development.

#### **Park Maintenance Districts**

A Park Maintenance District is a way for cities to address the funding gap between what General Fund revenues from property taxes to provide for park maintenance and the desired “level of service” (LOS) of park maintenance it takes to satisfy the community. Park Maintenance Districts can be established to maintain a specific area or a specific park such as a community or regional facility; or they can be established to provide funding for citywide park maintenance.

Establishing a Park Maintenance District would require voter approval. Some cities have had success in establishing Park Maintenance Districts by using authority under the Lighting and Landscaping Statutes. This enables the City to do a property tax assessment within the proposed district and conduct the vote with only the property owners within the district. A Citywide Park Maintenance District is usually an increase in all residential property taxes and requires a two-thirds vote of the general population (see Section 6.4 explanation of funding-financing alternatives).

Park Districts can also be required of new residential developments. This usually takes place when there is a development agreement between the City and the proposed developer where conditions of approval are negotiated. Neither Quimby nor other park legislation authorizes the City to require that a developer establish a Park Maintenance District for the proposed parkland dedication that is required under Quimby; however, a development agreement can be negotiated to insure that the park land being dedicated will also be maintained to an agreed upon LOS standard in the future.

A problem that is prevalent in most Park and Recreation agencies is the agency's inability to maintain their facilities to keep them safe, usable, attractive, and up-to-date. Cities build new Park and Recreation facilities and then allow the facilities to deteriorate because they defer the maintenance required to keep them in good shape due to the competition of General Fund dollars for other city services. This ultimately results in the need for major facility renovation and refurbishment and/or facility replacement. By establishing Park Maintenance Districts the City can insure that when new facilities are built they are maintained to a desired level throughout the life span of the facility and avoid falling into the deferred maintenance trap.

For example, if Culver City had a Park Maintenance District to fund the desired LOS of maintenance needed for Veterans Park, the Senior Center, Municipal Pool, and Teen Center these facilities would be insured of proper maintenance throughout their lifespan and thus be able to meet the needs and satisfaction expectations of the community. Without revenue from a Park Maintenance District these facilities are at the mercy of General Fund allocations and which must compete with public safety, public works, and other City functions.

Since parks and recreation facilities serve the entire community, it would make sense to build community support and then try to gain voter approval of a citywide Park Maintenance District to insure the desired LOS for maintenance of these facilities. Further study would be needed to determine the exact funding needed. Voter approval is usually most successful to maintain facilities that are highly used by the community, have high profile recognition, and have broad community support by all age groups and income levels.

Unless Park Maintenance Districts are established prior to development of neighborhood parks, establishing Maintenance Districts for existing neighborhood parks is usually very difficult. Property owners tend not to vote for tax increases to maintain existing neighborhood parks as they believe their current property taxes should be paying for this service. However, park facilities that serve the entire City, i.e. Veterans Park, Municipal Pool, Senior Center, and Teen Center tend to fair better in getting voter approval for increased taxes because people see them as desired facilities for the entire community.

Prior to proceeding with establishing a Park and Community Facilities Maintenance District for the above mentioned facilities or other park facilities the City will need to provide the public with sound financial information on the cost for maintaining the facilities and the maintenance program and LOS to be

provided. Timing is critical so, of course, trying to establish a tax increase in a downturn in the housing market may not be a good idea. However, building community support and establishing sound financial data and developing the desired annual maintenance programs during the downturn and then approaching the voters in an upturn can be a successful strategy.

While User Fees and Asset Management (see explanation in Section 6.4) can provide additional funding for maintenance and operations of Veterans Park, Municipal Pool, Senior Center, and Teen Center, it will take the establishment of a Park and Facilities Maintenance District for the City to avoid falling further into the “deferred maintenance trap” for these facilities and letting them deteriorate even more than they already have.

### **6.4 OVERVIEW OF FUNDING/FINANCING PARKS AND RECREATION**

Sections 7 and 8 of the document contain recommendations for new parks and facilities with suggested implementation strategies for funding or financing the recommended capital improvement projects. The following section is an overview and explanation of various funding and financing methods available to municipal agencies from which some of the implementation strategies were derived.

This information is provided to inform the reader of options the City may consider when funding needed capital improvements.

#### **6.4.1 - Use of Bonds**

General Obligation Bonds make sense when a city has several different types of facilities it needs to develop and there is strong community support. For example, if a city wanted to build a new police station, community park and library it may bundle all three into one General Obligation Bond. Hopefully this

would create a wider voter support to get the two-thirds approval required by General Obligation Bonds. General Obligation Bonds usually do not succeed for special interest facilities. For example, a General Obligation Bond to build a new aquatics facility or sports complex would probably not receive the two-thirds voter approval necessary to issue the bonds.

Some cities that need to develop a number of Recreation and Park facilities have had success selling General Obligation Bonds to support the city's implementation of its Park and Recreation Master Plan for facility development. When voters know that the bonds will only go to a Park Master Plan that they have approved, they tend to support such initiatives.

General Obligation Bonds are paid for out of the City's General Tax Allotment Fund. So the allocation of dollars to a General Obligation Bond for park purposes will compete with the City's needs for ongoing operations and other types of needed park improvements. Only cities with excess general fund capacity are really able to use General Obligation Bonds for Park and Facility Development.

#### **6.4.2 - Paying for Bonds**

The most common method for implementing Recreation and Park facility development by the use of bonds is to gain voter approval for an additional property tax assessment to pay for the debt of the Park Bonds. The bond issuing method is the same as General Obligation Bonds; they require two-thirds voter approval. However, along with the voter approval to issue the bonds, the voters need to approve an additional annual tax assessment to pay for the debt service on the bonds.

This approach is successful if there is strong community support for park facilities and implementing the Master Plan. The key to a successful Park Bond

and tax assessment approval campaign is to work with a community foundation to build support for the tax assessment and to educate the voters that the additional tax assessment can only be used for development of the approved park facilities.

Most cities have found that Park Bonds with a tax assessment are most successful when placed on a general election ballot rather than a special election ballot. It usually takes at least two years to develop a community support foundation, educate the voters, and develop enough community support to get two-thirds approval. Consequently, cities most likely will only be able to do a Park Bond with a tax assessment once every 10 to 20 years.

Before this financing approach should be undertaken, the City should allocate some resources to doing a statistically valid community survey on how the community perceives the adopted Recreation and Parks Master Plan, if they would be willing to pay additional taxes to implement it, and if so, how much additional taxes would be acceptable.

The public's perception of value is the most important element of generating a two-thirds voter approval. For example, the community may be willing to pay an additional \$30 a year on their property taxes to implement a number of facilities they believe they will use, but not \$100 a year. A statistically valid random phone survey is the only way to find out what the community's acceptance might be. This is absolutely necessary if the City wishes to finance park facility development by going to the voters for approval of a Park Bond with a tax assessment.

### **6.4.3 - Revenue Bonds**

Revenue Bonds are a popular way for cities to finance capital improvements, especially Recreation and Park facilities, when the facility being developed will



generate the necessary revenue to pay the debt service on the bonds. This method is common for development of sports arenas, convention centers, and other facilities that generate revenue through admission, concessions, and rentals. Revenue Bonds require the city to provide collateral equal to one and half times the value of the bond issue. A city must provide collateral in the form of property, or properties it owns that have a market value of at least one and a half times the amount of revenue bond it wishes to issue.

Revenue Bonds do not require voter approval but do require a four-fifths vote of the City Council. Revenue Bonds are usually combined with the establishment of an Assessment District under AB1600 and Asset Management programs which are explained later in this section.

If the City can design capital improvements with revenue generating components so that the debt service and the cost of maintenance and operations do not impact the City's general fund, Revenue Bonds are a good approach to funding facilities where there is strong City Council support and political motivation to develop the facilities.

#### **6.4.4 - Certificates of Participation (COPs)**

Certificates of Participation (COPs) are similar to Revenue Bonds in that they do not require voter approval, just a four-fifths City Council vote. And they require the City to provide collateral in the form of property equity one and a half times the market value of the proposed issue. The advantage of COPs is that they are issued in script of \$5,000 or \$10,000 which allows for smaller investors to invest, and they are tax exempt, so interest rates are lower. Again, the key to this type of financing is to design the proposed facilities with revenue generating components and/or combine it with an AB1600 Assessment District so that there is no impact on the City's existing general fund to issue the COPs.

#### 6.4.5 - Assessment Methods

There are two main methods for establishing assessments to pay for Recreation and Park facility development; these are:

- *Lighting and Landscape Assessment Districts,*
- *Mello-Roos, and other state legislation allowing cities and park districts to create assessment districts for capital improvements.*

Each of these requires approval by the property owners who are within the district and are subject to paying the assessment.

State law AB1600 allows local agencies to impose an assessment on properties within an improvement area when the agency can show a nexus that the improvements being made are a benefit to the properties being assessed. Under this method of assessment the agency sends a direct mail ballot to the property owners, if fewer than 50% of the property owners vote “No”, it could implement the assessment.

Agencies typically use enabling legislation for assessment districts for facility improvements that impact or benefit the whole city or a specific area.

Some agencies have had some success using this legislation to fund large community or regional park developments where there is broad community support for the improvements. Newer agencies have had the most success in setting up assessment districts, because they can be established when only a few property owners are within the proposed assessment district.

Established agencies where there are thousands of property owners within the proposed assessment district have had trouble getting 50% approval. This legislation requires the agency to do an engineering study to determine the proportionate benefit each property within the proposed district receives.

AB1600 has several benefits over other assessment legislation in that it is an impact fee. Unlike the benefit assessment districts, the agency does not have to do an engineering study to proportion the cost according to benefit. The agency simply has to make a finding that there is a need for recreation and park facilities based on the impact of the proposed development, and the proposed development is not contributing to mitigate the impact. This is accomplished by preparing a nexus study showing the relationship between the defined impact and the facility or facilities the proposed developments impact.

For example, if the City wanted to use AB1600 to impose an impact fee on new commercial and industrial development, it would need to do nexus studies to determine if existing commercial and industrial properties have an impact on its recreation and park services and facilities. If the City finds that employees in commercial and industrial businesses use the City's recreation and park facilities, employers use the park system and/or recreation programs as recruiting tools, and as a result commercial and industrial property increases in value due to a well developed and maintained park system, the City could use the authority under AB1600 to impose a park fee on new commercial and industrial development within its jurisdiction.

If the nexus study shows that commercial and industrial development causes 15% of the impact on the Culver City Park and Recreation services and facilities; then new commercial and industrial development should be charged for 15% of the amount needed for new facilities and upgrades of existing facilities within the City.

#### **6.4.6 - Lease Purchase Financing**

A newer concept in financing Recreation and Park improvements being used successfully by cities is a form of lease/purchase financing. Under the

lease/purchase financing method the City would contract with a financial institution that would put together an investment group. The City would then lease the proposed site and facility improvements to the investment group who would provide the funding for the development of the site and facility. The investment group then leases the site and facility back to the City at a lease rate equal to the cost of the financing the investment group provides to the City for the development of the site and facility.

The lease serves as the collateral for the financing, not other real property, as is the case in issuing revenue bonds or COP's. If the City defaults on the lease payments, the investment group would own the lease and could operate the facility or contract the operation of the facility to a third party.

The City owns the site throughout the lease purchase period, and at the end of the lease period, the City owns the improvements free and clear.

This form of financing currently has very attractive interest rates, is tax exempt for investors, and does not impact the City's bond indebtedness or credit rating.

This type of financing is best used for facility development whereby the facility generates revenue. Sports complexes with Asset Management Programs and concessions, municipal parking structures that charge for parking, and community centers with rental facilities are types of facilities that cities and other public agencies have been very successful in using this financing method.

It can be used for non revenue producing facilities whereby the lease payments are paid from the general fund; however, with competing needs it may be politically difficult to dedicate general funds for lease payments. The term of the lease is set by the City and can be any length. Another attractive

feature of this form of financing is the low cost of issuance compared to Bond issues.

The City could also use non tax exempt lease purchase financing to acquire commercial or industrial property. As a lessee, the City could lease to a commercial recreation developer/operator for the development and operation of major commercial recreation facilities, such as batting cages, sports complexes, dance studios, fitness/health centers, community theatres, skateboard parks and BMX courses.

#### **6.4.7 - Grant Programs**

Culver City has used State Grant money in the past for both acquisition and development of parks. The City should continue to apply for and make use of both state and federal grant programs. Per capita grant programs such as Proposition 12, Proposition 40, and Roberti-Z'berg can provide the City with funding for both improvement of existing facilities and acquisition and development of new facilities. Most of these grant programs are based on a per capita distribution and some require matching funds by the local agency.

Federal grant programs such as Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) and Urban Recreation and Park Programs can provide funding for specialized facilities that meet the criteria for these particular grant programs.

The City could also consider combining several different grant programs for the development of a single project. For example, the City could apply for several different beautification grants, trails grants, storm drain improvement grants, urban park development grants, open space grants, and per capita grants to match a State grant to accomplish the funding necessary for one single project.

### 6.4.8 - Public Private Partnerships

Communities can sometimes meet their recreational needs by encouraging the development of private recreation facilities. This can be in the form of partnerships with pre-school and day-care centers, churches, non-profit organizations, schools, or commercial recreation companies.

For example, if the City has a need for recreational swim opportunities, it may be able to lease public property to a water park operator for a commercial water park to meet the community needs.

In today's political and economic climate many cities are partnering with school districts for joint development and sharing of such facilities as sports fields, gymnasiums, swimming pools, skate parks, stadiums, theaters, and outdoor community event space. Partnering with non-profits such as the YMCA could also provide funding opportunities for facility development.

### 6.4.9 - Community Foundations

A key element of funding Recreation and Park facilities is community support. Whether the funding method is bonds, assessment districts, asset management, or joint partnerships, it will be necessary to build community support in order to implement facility development. The best way to build community support for facility development is by establishing a non-profit community foundation made up of concerned volunteers to support the City's implementation of its Park and Recreation Master Plan. In addition, a Recreation and Parks Community Foundation can also provide the following:

- *An organization that can accept donations that are tax deductible to the contributor*
- *An organization that can apply for grants that are not eligible for government application*
- *An organization that can put on fundraising campaigns and recruit a large*

*volunteer base to implement the campaigns*

- *An organization that can partner with other non-profits, such as churches, service clubs and organizations and private companies to jointly develop Recreation facilities*

The key to developing a successful Community Recreation and Parks Foundation is in the development of by-laws establishing the foundation, recruitment of board members and training of volunteers. The by-laws should be developed so that they are very specific about the role and duties of the foundation. Board members should represent all segments of the community and not be controlled by any one special interest group.

The above methods are typical ways municipalities fund park and recreation capital projects. Strategies for specific projects may combine several of the methods. When exploring possible funding for a project the City can refer back to this information to see if one or more of these methods might fit the proposed project to be funded.

## **6.5 SUMMARY ANALYSIS & KEY FINDINGS**

The above information should be helpful to the City when determining how to fund recommended capital projects for new parks and facilities and how to pay for providing desired levels of park maintenance. The following analysis and key findings were used to develop recommendations and implementation strategies in Chapter 7.

- *Culver City has a general plan goal of providing 10 acres of park land for each 1,000 persons residing within the City.*
- *The City meets this goal by providing City park land, use of school district property, and use of regional park land to deliver its Park and Recreation system.*

- *There is a deficiency of approximately 53 acres of park land using the above approach, which will grow to approximately 136 acres when the population in Culver City reaches 50,000 if no additional park land is added to the system between now and then.*
- *The most significant issue contributing to this deficit is the City's Park Dedication Ordinance that only requires a dedication of 3 acres per 1,000 of population.*
- *Because of the way the Quimby Ordinance is written, which uses density as the multiplier to determine the amount of park acreage, Culver City actually receives less park land dedication than the state average because of its lower density per household.*
- *Increasing the parkland dedication requirement from 3 acres per 1000 of population to 5 acres per 1000 of population will help off-set the projected deficit but will still not meet the stated goal of 10 acres/1000 population.*
- *Adjusting the density factor for housing types when the 2010 census is completed will be necessary.*
- *Spelling out language in the Park Dedication and In-Lieu Fee ordinance that defines the park property that is to be dedicated to be appraised with infrastructure in place, i.e. roads, curbs, sewers, water, and utilities to the site should be considered.*
- *Adding a section that applies a "flat rate in-lieu fee" to residential development whereby a house is being added on to or replaced with a single family unit that is 50% or greater than the existing single family housing unit on the same parcel should be considered.*
- *The City needs to look at the possibility of establishing a Park and Facilities Maintenance District to secure funding to avoid deferring maintenance which will lead to even greater deterioration of Veterans Park, Municipal Pool, Senior Center, and Teen Center.*





## chapter seven: policies, recommendations and strategies

### parks and recreation master plan update

City of  
*Culver* CITY



## chapter 7 – priority needs, recommendations, policy guidelines and implementation strategies

### 7.1 INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER SEVEN PRESENTS PRIORITY NEEDS, recommendations, policy guidelines and implementation strategies the City can use to set its priorities for programs and capital improvements that meet the short-term and long-term demands and needs identified in Chapter Five.

It also presents a Capital Improvement Work Program that prioritizes the 10 most significant recommendations so that time and resources remain focused on those recommendations that will have the most impact on meeting the most critical needs first. Implementation Strategies with estimates of the costs and funding that will be necessary to realize the priority recommendations and possible funding and or financing strategies the City could pursue to fund the recommended projects is also included.

Actual funding, design, and implementation will be determined during the City's annual Capital Improvement Program budget process. The proposed Capital Improvement Work Program presented in Section 7.5 provides an annual projects priority program for City consideration that would theoretically have the City implement all recommended capital improvements over the next 20 years. In actuality, it is unrealistic to think the City will be able to secure all of the funding necessary to implement every capital project listed; therefore, the Project Team developed the list of the 10 highest priorities if resources are limited.

The implementation strategies contain references to alternative funding and financing methods that could be available to the City if there is community

support for implementing a capital project or several projects. Thus, the reader may need to review Section 6.4, which explains the various funding sources available to the City to implement the recommended facility improvements, acquisition of future park property and development of new facilities.

### **7.2 SUMMARY LIST OF SHORT TERM AND LONG TERM PRIORITY NEEDS**

The Consultant Team, working with the City, utilized a number of input tools to reach the public for their input about recreation needs and desires, as well as their special insights into the operation of Parks and Recreation programs and services. These are analyzed and presented in Chapter 5. In order for the Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department to focus on meeting the needs that will have the greatest impact on improving the park and recreation delivery system the Project Team has summarized the findings into priority short-term and long-term needs for programs and facility development. These identified priorities form the basis for the recommendations and policy guidelines that follow.

#### **Summary List of Short-Term Needs**

- Change in policy for how fees are established for fee based programs
- Completion of a specific plan for improvements to Veterans' Park
- Increased maintenance standards for parks and facilities
- Introduction of more cultural and arts programming
- Increased methods for informing the public of programs and activities
- Additional sports fields

- Improvements to Blair Hills Park, Blanco Park, Carlson Park, Culver West Alexander Park, El Marino Park, Tellefson Park, Fox Hills Park, Syd Kronenthal Park, and Lindberg Park
- Addressing park funding as outlined in Chapter 6

#### Summary List of Long-Term Needs

- Development of an additional Senior Center
- More children's play areas with controlled access
- More passive park areas with picnic facilities
- Expansion of the trails system
- Additional parking at public facilities
- Long term program for ADA compliance

### 7.3 RECOMMENDATIONS TO MEET IDENTIFIED NEEDS

This Section presents recommendations with respect to existing parks, unimproved parkland, and joint use opportunities. Recommendations address the priority short-term and long-term needs identified above and are the result of analysis of existing inventory and demand, community outreach, and consideration of the City's General Plan established goals and policies.

#### Recommendations to Address Short-Term Needs List

**7.3.1 – Fee Based Programs** – One of the key findings in the program analysis was that there is tremendous potential in Culver City for the expansion of fee based recreation programs. This is particularly true in the areas of fitness, self-improvement, social activities, and cultural activities. The major deterrent in the Recreation Division's ability to implement new classes, add additional class sessions, and develop fee-based activities that respond to current trends for specific types of activities is the cumbersome system for establishing fees and rates for charging for activities.

The current system of establishing the rate for class fees requires City Council approval of every fee and every fee change by City Council resolution. This means that if the department wants to add a requested class in mid session it must wait until a fee resolution pertaining to that class is adopted by City Council. Since fee resolutions are generally adopted on an annual or bi-annual basis, it makes it very difficult for the Recreation Division to respond to community demands for fee-based activities and programs in a timely and entrepreneurial manner.

The theory behind the current method is to insure that the public and the City Council have the opportunity to review all fees and charges so that the City Council can determine their fairness and accessibility for Culver City residents. While the theory is good, in practice the system is cumbersome and unresponsive to community needs.

A recommended more efficient approach is to have the City Council adopt an annual Park and Recreation Fee Schedule that allows the PRCS Director to establish market rate fees and charges consistent with City Council policy that fee-based programs should cover a certain percentage (minimum) of the cost of providing the activity. This would allow the City Council to continue to set priorities for fee-based programs during the City's annual budget process and provide the Parks, Recreation and Community Service Department with the flexibility it needs to initiate new programs, add additional sessions to popular programs, and meet community demands for activities currently requested. The fee resolution could also contain policies that would provide discounts for Culver City residents, low-income residents, and other categories of individuals of the City Council's choosing to make sure that fee-based programs are accessible to all residents.

Modifying the system for establishing fees and charges should be a top priority if the Parks, Recreation and Community Service Department is going to meet the identified demand for increased fee-based activities and quicker response for requested programs.

**7.3.2 – Conceptual Plans for Veterans’ Park** – Concurrently with the development of the Park and Recreation Master Plan the City is also proceeding with completing conceptual plans for Veterans’ Park. Making recommendations to improve Veterans’ Park and add needed amenities is a high priority for the community. The process for developing the Veterans’ Park conceptual plans includes additional public workshops and public comments. Concepts based on those public workshops and community and staff comments are incorporated into Concepts 1, 2 and 3 in Appendices C, C1, and C2

**7.3.3 – Maintenance Standards** – There is an important connection between budget and park maintenance. In order to determine the necessary budget to provide a level of park and facility maintenance satisfactory to the community the City must know what level of park maintenance is actually acceptable. To do this the City must establish park maintenance standards that utilize safety, functionality, and attractive outcomes as its framework and shows how budget appropriations affect outcomes.

The intent here is to clearly demonstrate the relationship between budget and the quality of park and facility maintenance. Appendix E “Quality Standards for Park and Facility Maintenance” defines the desired conditions of fields, facilities, park features, etc. so that all employees can identify the level of park and facility maintenance that will satisfy community expectations and set the standard for evaluating the conditions of parks and facilities.

While the quality standards are somewhat subjective they have been made simple so that inspection audits can be done with a series of “yes” and “no” questions, which then can be rated as to the level of satisfaction with the level of park and facility maintenance. Each year staff can then develop its park and facility maintenance budget based on the available resources and the percentage of community satisfaction the City wishes to provide.

In addition to providing quality standards that translate into budget requests, the standards also provide clear expectations to staff relative to the maintenance of those physical features for which they are held responsible and provides direction to staff as to the provision of service levels expected by the community and City Council.

By adopting the “Quality Standards for Park and Facility Maintenance,” the City will have:

- A clear understanding of the level of Park and Facility Maintenance the community expects,
- Be able to translate those expectations into budget requests,
- Be able to evaluate the level of success in providing for those expectations, and
- Be able to provide consistent, planned maintenance service.

**7.3.4 – Cultural Arts Programming** – A key finding from the public outreach tools was that consideration should be given to cultural and fine arts and that they be given a greater spotlight in programs and events in Culver City. The public also wanted an emphasis on ecology and “green” ways of thinking and that this emphasis be integrated into the Department whenever possible. Finally, the public indicated that the City should find ways to involve “at-risk” youth in cultural activities as a possible avenue to building self-



esteem. Attendance at citywide events is strong and there is a large community support for festivals. The needs analysis shows that residents are interested in arts education and cultural programming. There is also a vibrant music and art scene in the region and a wide variety of private sector commercial music and art establishments. All of the above are the reasons the community would like to see the City integrate cultural and arts programming into its programs and activities. Recommended ways to accomplish this include:

- Using cultural and ethnic themes for community festivals and events
- Expand fee based classes in the creative arts, music, and dance
- Host talent events or competitions open to all types of ethnic talent
- Collaborate with the library and schools to provide targeted programs and outreach to “at-risk” youth
- Use public fourms and community center wall space for exhibitions of local artist’s work

**7.3.5 – Public Information** – Increasing public awareness of programs the Department offers is key to increasing participation and involving more residents in park and recreation activities. Areas where the Parks, Recreation and Community Service Department could consider making improvements are as follows:

- Digital screens for information at high traffic locations
- Information kiosk’s in parks
- Posting information in public places and private businesses
- Provide for an information channel on local cable specific to Parks, Recreation and Community Services.

- Place a marquee screen at Vets' park for drive by information
- Use movie theaters to promote and inform about Culver City and announce community activities
- Look into inserts with utility bills
- Establish partnerships and relationships with local newspapers and business. Have a Parks, Recreation and Community Services Section in the local newspaper once a month
- Increased customer training for park leaders to be more interactive with park participants to provide program information

**7.3.6 – Sports Fields** – The Needs Assessment and other public outreach tools identified the need for more sport's fields, particularly for soccer programs. There are no identified large parcels of available land to acquire and build a centralized sports complex. However, there are steps the City could take to provide new fields and to extend use times on existing fields. These include:

- Working with the School District to improve and light fields located on school property
- Acquisition of surplus school property if school enrollment declines to insure fields and open space are preserved
- Adding sports field use when designing the new Specific Plan for "Veterans" Park
- Reconfiguration of existing field space to accommodate multi-use by overlaying soccer fields in the outfield of softball diamonds
- Continue to monitor industrial property that may come on the market for acquisition and development of sports fields
- Pursue the feasibility of a commercially developed and operated indoor soccer facility

**7.3.7 – Improvements to Existing Parks** – The Facilities Condition Report and other public outreach efforts provided priorities for improvements to existing parks and facilities. The following is a list by park of the priority recommendations for improvements. The City is aware of such needs and several recommendations may be in the works as of this writing. Others may be planned for as soon as financial resources allow:

**Blair Hills Park:**

Blair Hills Park is nestled within a quite residential area located on a hillside. It has one access point from a sloped street, which provides the only available parking. Observation of the site revealed that the park is showing its age and needs the following attention:

- Replace storage building with more functional structure
- Replace chain link fence and gates at entry
- Replace pavement at entry
- Resurface basketball court and repaint court lines
- Renovate turf areas and maintain on a regular basis
- Replace counter at picnic shelter
- Complete rubberized surfacing at play area

**Blanco Park:**

This park is located adjacent to school grounds and needs the following short-term improvements:

- Main building needs refurbishing, which includes upgrading the mechanical equipment, plumbing improvements and servicing the building fixtures.
- Replace exterior light fixtures

**Carlson Park:**

- This Park is in good condition, however, the maintenance standards contained in Appendix E should be adopted to prevent future deferred maintenance issues.

**Culver City Park/Botts Field:**

- Replace sand in tot lot with a better “ safety-fall” surface
- Replace older play equipment
- Provide maintenance standards in Appendix E

**Culver West Alexander Park:**

This park has recently been refurbished and is in good condition. The maintenance standards in Appendix E should be applied to keep the park well maintained.

**El Marino Park:**

- Remove old barbeque
- Remove concrete from under swings
- Repair surface of handball court
- Trim/remove Ficus trees at Berryman Ave

**Fox Hills Park:**

- Replace outdated play equipment
- Add shade structure to play equipment area
- Replace wooden gazebo

**Syd Kronenthal Park:**

- General refurbishing for building including painting, window refurbishment and fixture upgrades
- Seek to create connection to park from regional bike path

**Lindberg Park:**

- Consider redesigning the park for better functionality and maximum usage of turf areas and to add parking
- Consider installing a water play/splash park feature

**Tellefson Park:**

- Screen trash area and alley from view
- Renovate field turf
- Consider installing water play/splash park feature

**7.3.8 – Park Funding** – Chapter 6 contains an analysis and a number of key findings pertaining to the various park dedication, in-lieu fee and park development fee ordinances. Pursuing the recommendations in Chapter 6 will help the City position itself to better pay for the desired park improvements and new amenities recommended in the master plan.

**Recommendations to Address Long-Term Needs List**

**7.3.9 – Senior Center** – Population trends indicate that although this is a community of many young families and adults, there is a growing population of seniors. All demographic reports for the region and state indicate this number will greatly increase with the aging of baby boomers. The public outreach process identified senior services as a very high priority. In the future, in order for the City to meet senior needs and keep Culver City's seniors from traveling to outside communities to participate or take advantage of senior programs and services the Department will have to establish a comprehensive Senior Services program that includes recreational, educational, and socially targeted activities. More types of programs that include active recreational activities for the growing population of baby boomer seniors will be necessary. Specific program areas the Department will need to consider should include:

- Aquatics
- Senior sports
- Health and wellness programs
- Social clubs
- Cultural activities
- Physical fitness activities
- Computer education
- Environmental education and awareness
- Meals and food distribution
- Transportation
- Independent living support

The Department currently offers some programs and activities in all of the above areas so the recommendation is to start planning now for the next 20 years to meet the increase in demands for more programs and greater participation. This may include looking at possibilities for expanding the existing senior center facility and possibly building or acquiring an additional senior center in another area of town.

**7.3.10 – Children’s Play Areas** – There were numerous requests in the public outreach and the survey instruments for both improved children’s play areas and new children’s play areas. Safety of existing children’s play areas was also a concern. The City currently has a children’s play equipment replacement program that is ongoing which has resulted in a number of areas receiving updated play equipment in the past few years. Continuing to replace older play equipment or vandalized play equipment is an important priority. The following are additional long-term steps the City could take to meet this requested need:

- Initiate a program to provide decorative fencing or walls around children's play areas to increase security
- When replacing play equipment consider developing a theme for the play area and provide equipment that enhances the chosen theme
- Consider adding water play/splash amenities to children's play areas where appropriate
- As play equipment is replaced look for opportunities to expand the size and the amount of equipment and to separate the areas into space for two to five year olds and 6- to 12-year-olds
- Where feasible add benches and shade shelters for parents and grand parents to watch their children

**7.3.11 – Passive Space and Picnic Areas** – Residents in Culver City value the rural atmosphere at Ballona Creek and Kenneth Hahn State Recreation Area and the green space and picnic areas of their local parks. It is important to develop a thorough understanding of the natural ecosystem in these areas and how to manage these lands to maintain, protect and preserve the open space.

The City must look at all aspects of the open space land it controls and that of agencies within the service areas of Culver City to identify and determine:

- Habitat Preservation
- Scenic Value
- Fire Management
- Recreation Potential
- Economic Potential

Ballona Creek land has the greatest potential for collaboration to preserve open space, develop trails and make recreational improvements. The value of

Ballona Creek and other green space within Culver City is certainly related to the scenic quality, but also includes the natural resources and recreation potential. The long-term need to protect and provide open space and passive recreation opportunities makes it imperative for the City to begin now to collaborate with other agencies on how this can be accomplished.

**7.3.12 – Trails** – There were a wide range of needs associated with requests for trails. Some wanted bike paths for commuting; others wanted trails for running and jogging for exercise, while others wanted connections between parks and schools. The following recommendations represent significant planning efforts the City could undertake to meet these expressed needs:

- Provide a trails connection between Blair Hills Park and Kenneth Hahn State Recreation Area
- Connect Syd Kronenthal Park with the Regional Trails System
- Include walking paths in the new specific plan for Veterans’ Park
- Plan for trails in the future development of Ballona Creek
- Seek to secure “safe routes for kids” grants to connect parks to the Regional Trail
- Explore ways to work with Cal Trans to develop a bike commuter lane within the 405 Freeway right of way

**7.3.13 – Parking** – Parking is a concern at all parks. Most parks have only “on-street” parking which is limited and, if the park becomes crowded, adjacent neighborhoods are impacted. Long-term planning efforts should look at possible parking solutions such as property acquisition, parking structures and public transportation access to major facilities. When designing new recreation facilities, providing adequate parking should be a primary goal. Providing safe bike routes to parks and facilities is also important.



As more mixed use residential and high rise residential is developed, which is projected for the future as people return to the city from the suburbs because of increasing transportation and commuting costs, parking will be at a premium. The recommendation is for the City to start planning for the need for parking and take steps to meet the future demand before it becomes a greater problem than it is now.

**7.3.14 – Program for ADA Compliance** – The City has been implementing ADA improvements over the past several years and continues to dedicate a substantial portion of its annual Capital Improvement Budget towards ADA compliance. The Facilities Condition Report contains recommendations for ADA improvements and the Facilities Inventory identifies needed ADA improvements in existing parks. Making children’s play areas, public rest rooms and older facilities ADA accessible should be the priority for ADA compliance.

## **7.4 TWELVE PRIORITY POLICY GUIDELINES FOR THE PARKS, RECREATION AND COMMUNITY SERVICE DEPARTMENT**

The Culver City Park and Recreation system is comprised of the Parks, Recreation and Community Service Department offering direct programs and services and developing park facilities while overseeing and coordinating the services of community organizations and various non-profit groups. Policy guidelines play an important role in operating efficiently and effectively. While the department may have a multitude of policies and guidelines for its operation, the Project Team has developed twelve specific priority guidelines that will help the department move in the right direction to implement the goals and recommendations of the park and recreation master plan. Following

these 12 policies and guidelines will insure that decisions and actions taken by the Department will contribute to the successful implementation of the parks and recreation master plan:

1. *The aspiration of the Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department's efforts is to develop and improve park facilities, to expand recreational programs and enhance the quality of life in the community.*
2. *It is everyone in the department's responsibility to promote and market recreational activities to increase the level of community participation.*
3. *The Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department will work with other agencies, such as the School District, County and State to develop joint use plans for Culver City that includes guidelines for sharing facilities and determining a process for development of joint projects that will serve public park and recreation needs.*
4. *The Department will develop its annual capital improvement plans based upon the recommendations of the Park and Recreation Master Plan.*
5. *The Department will continue implementation of customer service program and objective-based management practices with all park and recreation staff.*
6. *The Department will continually review hours of operation and types of recreation classes to address the changing needs of the community.*
7. *The Department will strive to adopt maintenance standards shown in Appendix E that provide for park maintenance standards, sports field renovation and facility maintenance that meets the public's expectations.*
8. *The Department will work with public safety agencies to enforce, to the extent possible, all regulations regarding public health, safety, and welfare and to repair vandalism and remove graffiti in as timely a manner as possible.*
9. *The Department will seek out and encourage the provision of volunteer assistance from civic organizations, special interest groups, and individuals*

*to provide support to programs and facility development and to augment recreation opportunities.*

- 10. The Department will monitor program needs through surveys of neighborhood residents or other participation mechanisms.*
- 11. The Department will seek opportunities to satisfy field space demands of sports leagues by considering artificial turf so that increased use does not negatively affect park and school fields, and by lighting fields, where appropriate, and by making fields multi-use, where possible.*
- 12. The Department will review and revise operational plans to ensure that programs and services can be offered effectively, efficiently and be available to all residents without barriers or limitations.*

## **7.5 COST METHODOLOGY**

The methods used by the consulting team to determine probable costs and funding requirements include looking at similar projects being done by other agencies, building industry cost estimates, inflation and economic factors, determining desired quality of construction, level of service needed to implement the recommendations and the types of funding sources that will be used to implement the proposed recommendations.

The organization of facility recommendations is according to key findings identified through the community outreach and needs analysis process presented in Chapter 6. Year 2008 dollar amounts were used to calculate projected costs and required funding estimates for going “green” with “LEED Compliant” (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) construction. The cost estimates represent the following LEED compliance:

- 1. Sustainable sites*
- 2. Water efficiency*

3. *Energy and atmosphere*
4. *Materials and resources*
5. *Indoor environmental quality*
6. *Innovation and design process*

Although the cost estimates are for standard quality “green” construction for the recommendations, there are less expensive ways of implementing the recommended facilities if political and financial concerns limit the ability to be LEED compliant.

In order for the City to develop cost estimates to determine potential funding needs for facility development, the following data published in July 2008 from the United States Office of Construction and Facilities Management (Los Angeles Area) pertaining to per square foot construction costs for the typical types of municipal facilities is provided:

Standard Community/Senior Center - \$409 Square Foot

Library - \$420 Square Foot

Park Rest Room - \$364 Square Foot

Parking Structure - \$15,232 per Space

Artificial Turf U14 Soccer Field \$600,000

Aquatic Complex - \$524 Square Foot

The construction market is subject to rapid changes brought on by natural disasters and global events. The cost estimates are for standard LEED compliant construction and could increase significantly if construction was in a Federal Flood Plain, on fill or slopes requiring pilings or retaining walls, or

containing exotic architectural features. When specific plans are developed for facilities, adjustments may be required, based on most current market surveys and industry reports.

Contractors of field improvements, turf, sports courts, and park amenities provided cost estimates for such amenities.

Estimated costs for program recommendations are based on current costs for staff, supplies and facility maintenance and also include a 20% administrative overhead cost factor.

## **7.6 FUNDING REQUIREMENTS AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES**

The following funding requirements and suggested implementation strategies should help staff and City Council develop their work programs for both the immediate future and the long-term. This is not a priority list of actions to take, although the Capital Improvement Program presented in Section 7.7 is prioritized based on the priorities derived from the Facilities Condition Report and other public outreach tools.

Changing the City's policy for establishing fees for fee-based programs will have the most significant positive impact in allowing the Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department to meet short term and long-term program needs identified above. To make this change, the Parks, Recreation, and Community Services Department will need to prepare a new ordinance for City Council adoption that describes the City Council's policies and protocols for cost recovery, discounts, and categories of user types. The ordinance should be accompanied by a resolution authorizing the Director of Parks, Recreation, and Community Services to establish fee-based programs and activities based

on the aforementioned Council ordinance that will provide the flexibility needed to accomplish the goals of:

- Increasing cultural arts programming
- Adding requested classes and activities in a timely manner
- Responding to popular activities with added classes
- Implementing classes and activities for “at-risk” youth
- Establishing market rate fees to increase attendance
- Adjusting fees to insure access by all residents

There is no additional funding required to implement this recommendation and, if implemented, the Department should see an increase in revenue from fee based programs. Preparation and adoption a new fee ordinance and resolution should be one of the first recommendations implemented upon adoption of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

Funding needs and implementation strategies for Improvements to Veterans’ Park are not included in this section because it will be included the Specific Plan process for Veterans’ Park when the details of what improvements and new amenities are determined.

Implementing the recommended maintenance standards contained in Appendix E may require increased funding for park maintenance. The Department will need to do a maintenance assessment per the recommended standards and determine the level of compliance to the standards the Department is currently meeting and if it is not meeting certain levels the Department will have to determine what additional resources it will take to reach the desired level. Chapter 6 outlines possible funding options the City might want to consider if additional funding is needed to meet the

recommended maintenance standards. These include implementing asset management programs to raise revenue for additional maintenance, looking at the possibility of establishing a Park & Facilities Maintenance District and/or implementing a park impact fee on retail & commercial development by making the nexus that well maintained parks and facilities keep property values high and the city a desirable place to work and shop.

There were several suggestions in 7.3.5 to address the need to inform the public of Park, Recreation and Community Services programs, activities and services. Some of the recommendations will require substantial new funding, such as, implementing a digital screen for information at a high traffic location. This could cost upwards of a \$100,000. This City could look to collaborate with a commercial business or the Community College, or even a service club to acquire and implement a digital screen. Digital reader boards are very effective because they attract attention and have the capability of providing continuously updated information, unlike flyers, posters or billboards that contain static information.



Three column kiosk (KSK)

One of the most cost effective recommendations is to put information kiosks in parks. This is one form of Asset Management. There are a number of vendors that will provide the design and installation of three or four sided information kiosks, maintain them in exchange for the right to include advertising on the kiosk. The usual financial deal is the City gets one side to post City information and the other sides contain commercial advertising. The City would have control over the content of the advertising and would actually receive monthly revenue from the kiosk company to use toward park maintenance or program support.

Producing a local cable program on Parks, Recreation and Community Services is an effective way to reach local residents with parks and recreation and community services information. It takes funding of about \$3,000 per 30-minute show to produce a quality program for cable television. The City could solicit sponsors to cover the cost who would get recognition under the guidelines for public television. The City could also offer them official sponsor status and include their logos as official sponsors on Department letterhead, brochures, programs, etc and on the kiosks mentioned above if that program is implemented.

Implementing a cable program on parks, recreation and community services is no simple task so further study will be needed if this is a direction the Department wishes to pursue.

Another recommendation was to look into advertising activities and programs in movie theaters. This type of advertising is purchased through a marketing company and requires a substantial allocation of administrative time to track and keep the messages current. This type of marketing should be aimed at promoting annual events, facility rental information and/or general information on who to contact regarding parks, recreation and community services.

Inserts in utility bills and be an effective way to communicate with residents. However, it tends to be expensive if the Department has to pay for the printing, delivery, inserting costs and a portion of the mailing costs. If the Department explores this method, a cost/benefit analysis will be needed to see if it would actually make financial sense. If the utility or another sponsor can be secured to cover the costs, this method could be very effective in getting the word out on a monthly basis about programs and activities offered by the Department.



Working with local newspapers or organizations that publish weekly or monthly newsletters to provide a Parks, Recreation and Community Services column of information is a good way to reach targeted audiences. The difficulty is that this requires dedication of staff time to write and produce the column and coordinate the logistics of getting it included in the paper or newsletter. A consistent column of PRCS information will, over time, provide a “go-to” source for the community to find out about services and program information, but then again, it will take someone giving a substantial amount of their time to keep the column going.

Increasing customer training for park leaders to be more interactive with park participants to provide program information is the best form of grass roots advertising. Nothing sells programs or interests participant’s more than friendly staff that is knowledgeable and helpful. Customer service training, weekly staff meetings and developing protocols for being proactive with program information to participants are important tools the Department can use to encourage face-to-face communication to pass on program information.

Addressing the community’s need for sports fields will be a difficult need to fulfill. As mentioned in Section 7.3.6, there are no currently vacant large parcels of land the City could acquire to build a sports complex. However, the City should keep their eye out for surplus school property or industrial property that may become available for acquisition in the future to use for the development of sports fields.

There are two alternatives for extending the playing time and the multi-purpose capabilities of existing City and School fields. Adding lights and reconfiguring fields with overlays for two or more sports could help with meeting the field demands for practice and games.

Lighting a sports field to a practice level lighting standard will cost between \$75,000 to \$200,000 per field depending on field size, location, number of foot candles and the degree of lighting shields that are required to prevent glare. Game standard field lighting can run from \$200,000 to over \$500,000 depending on the type of field, degree of lighting level and location.

The City will need to consider energy costs and additional field maintenance costs when extending playing times on fields. Passing on at least a portion of this cost to the various sports groups that use the fields and leasing space on the light poles for telecommunication equipment could offset costs.

Installing artificial turf could be an option at existing fields where maintenance costs are high due to heavy use caused by several sports groups and adjacent schools sharing fields. Artificial turf provides year-around play with no maintenance down time. Artificial turf fields need to have access control because substantial damage to artificial turf can result if improper use happens.

There are a number of ways to fund installing lights on fields or converting natural turf fields to artificial turf. One of the most popular ways in recent years is through Lease Purchase Financing as explained in Chapter 6.4.6. This type of financing requires no upfront money from the City. The City can structure the Lease-Purchase of field lights or artificial turf for five years, ten years, or even fifteen years. This method of funding is very desirable if the City has a funding source to pay the lease payment for the lights or artificial turf field. User fees, concession income, advertising programs, or Park Impact Fees are ways to generate revenue to implement a lease purchase program.

Lighted fields and/or artificial turf for Veterans' Park, if included in the upcoming Specific Plan for Veterans' Park, could be funded using this option.

The recommended improvements to Blair Hills Park, Blanco Park, Culver West Alexander Park, El Marino Park, Tellefson Park, Fox Hills Park, Syd Kronenthal Park, and Lindberg Park will need to come from city funds, park fees, grants or donations. If the City decides to seek a park or revenue bond for the redevelopment of Veterans' Park, it may want to include the improvements to all of the city parks to make the Bond issue more desirable to all residents, not just those who use Veterans' Park.

The long-term recommendations deal with a variety of future improvements and new amenities.

The demand for an additional Senior Center in another area of the city will continue to grow and will be needed in the next 5 to 10 years. Beginning the planning now on how to meet this need in the future will allow the City time to find the right location and secure the funding necessary for acquisition and development. While the exact size of an additional Senior Center will have to be determined by a specific plan process, the City should find that it needs about 12,000 square feet to provide a multi-purpose room for large group social activities; smaller meeting rooms/classrooms; a media room; card room; game room; reading room/lobby; and administrative office space. If meals programs are planned, then additional square footage for kitchen facilities and refrigerated storage will be needed.

In year 2008 dollars, a 12,000 square foot senior center would cost an estimated \$5 million, not including property acquisition. Over the next several years, the City should begin looking for a location and explore ways to secure funding.

Providing fencing or wall barriers to control access and improve safety at existing tot lots and children's play areas and adding additional children's play

areas with controlled access are projects that would have a positive impact on the community and be popular with parents and grand parents. A typical children's play area has two sections, one for 3 to 5 year olds and one for 5 to 12 year olds. An ADA and CPSA compliant tot lot with either wrought iron fencing or masonry wall should cost between \$150,000 and \$250,000 depending on the size and amount of play equipment. Benches, shade structures and custom landscaping would be additional.

Children's water play features are very popular and Lindberg Park may be a good location for one in the city. There are numerous types of water play features ranging from spray features to splash pools. In this case the City should determine how much funding it can allocate to such a project and then design the feature to meet that budget. Collaborating with local service clubs and local businesses to raise funds for children's play areas has been successful in other cities and should be explored as a funding option for Culver City.

Securing more passive park areas with picnic facilities will not only help the environment but also improve family recreation opportunities and provide relief to the concrete and asphalt in the city. Blair Hills and El Marino parks need improvements to their picnic areas, but the city has consistently made improvements and maintained its picnic areas even though they receive a tremendous amount of use and wear and tear.

Acquiring parcels for mini parks, for green space, working with other agencies to develop more green space and open space in the Ballona Creek area and expansion of the trails system into Kenneth Hahn State Recreation Area are all ways to meet this future need. Funding these projects will require grants, city park funds and funding from other agencies through cooperative development agreements.

Funding a long-term program for ADA compliance will be difficult. Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding could be used for some improvements, but the City most likely will have to allocate a portion of its General Funds each year to making the most critically needed ADA improvements to parks and recreation facilities.

Again, funding these long-term needs will most likely require combining funding sources, applying for grants and collaborating with other agencies. As these needs become more critical in the future, the City can use the funding and financing options outlined in Chapter 6 to address them. Implementing the recommendations in Chapter 6 regarding increasing park dedication and in-lieu fee requirements, applying park impact fees to in-fill or replacement housing and implementing a citywide Park Maintenance Assessment District would help the City to provide the needed funding to address the City's long-term park needs.

These things will not be politically easy to do, so public awareness of the needs, building community support and making the nexus that parks define the City's quality of life is very important.

## **7.7 PRIORITIZED CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM**

Time lines that indicate what year projects should be undertaken on an annual basis are the most common municipal Capital Improvement Programs. Some cities develop their Capital Improvement Program according to benchmarks tied to growth in population. Still others develop priority based Capital Improvement Programs. The main drawback to developing a Capital Improvement Program established by what year a project should be completed is that funding availability, property acquisition, political issues and

development agreements required to move forward with projects cannot always be resolved within a predetermined time line. Therefore, a city may not be able to adhere to specific years in a CIP time line.

For the purpose of this Master Plan, it makes the most sense to develop a Capital Improvement Program by priorities. Obviously, trying to determine time frames and funding requirements is difficult and somewhat subjective; however, the suggested prioritized capital improvements should serve as a starting place for City staff to proceed with future park improvements and facility development.

In order for staff and City Council to allocate their financial resources to the most urgent priority the Master Plan recommendations were given the following classifications:

- *Urgent Priority* – should be completed within the next budget cycle
- *Somewhat Urgent* – planned for now and completed within 3 years
- *Needed Soon* – start planning within 3 years to implement within 5 years
- *Needed – Not Urgent* – plan in next 5 years to implement over next 10 years

Again, the recommended Capital Improvement Program is a guideline for staff and City Council to develop its annual work program so that it can make every effort to accomplish the recommendations as resources permit.

**Capital Improvement Priority Timeline Chart**

<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Urgent</i>	<i>Somewhat Urgent</i>	<i>Needed Soon</i>	<i>Needed But Not Urgent</i>
<b>Veterans' Park</b> - Specific Plan	■			
<b>Blair Hills Park</b> – Entry Improvements	■			
Storage Replacement		■		
Resurface BB Court		■		
Turf Renovation	■			
Picnic Shelter Counter	■			
Tot Lot Surface Replacement	■			
<b>Blanco Park</b> – Building Refurbishing		■		
Replace Exterior Lights		■		
<b>Culver City Park</b> – New Tot-Lot Surface	■			
Replace Play Equip		■		
<b>El Marino Park</b> – Remove Old BBQ	■			
Fix Surface Under Swings	■			
Resurface Handball Court	■			
Trim/Remove Ficus Trees		■		
<b>Fox Hills Park</b> – Replace Play Equip		■		
Add Shade Structure		■		
Replace Gazebo		■		
<b>Kronenthal Park</b> – Refurbish Building		■		
Connect Regional Trail			■	
<b>Lindberg Park</b> – Reconfiguring & add Pk'ing			■	
Water Play Feature			■	
<b>Tellefson Park</b> – Screen trash Enclosure	■			
Turf Renovation		■		
Water Play Feature				■
New Senior Center				■
Additional Children's Play Areas				■
ADA Improvement Program	Ongoing for Next 10 Years			
Trail Improvements	Ongoing for Next 10 Years			
Ballona Creek Improvements	Ongoing for Next 10 Years			

While there is a need for lighted sports fields, artificial turf fields and additional sports fields, no specific locations were identified during the process to place these improvements. The Department will have to work with the schools and other agencies to identify possible locations, then place these projects in the Capital Improvement Program as their priority is established.

The recommended priorities, if completed, should have the most positive impact on users of the City's parks and meet community expectations for quality parks.