



**SECTION 5.11
PARKS AND RECREATION**

5.11 PARKS AND RECREATION

Information in this section is derived from the City of San Fernando Recreation and Community Services Division (RCS Division), City of San Fernando *General Plan*, and local, County, State, and Federal recreation facility records.

It should be noted that the analysis evaluates the potential impacts to parks associated with Development Scenarios B and D, since these two development scenarios would result in the greatest number of residential units of the six development scenarios, and therefore would generate the greatest number of residents. These scenarios are described in detail in Section 3.0, Project Description.

5.11.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO PARK AND RECREATION PROGRAM

The City of San Fernando Park and Recreation program is multi-faceted and designed to provide services and recreational options to all ages of the City's diverse population. The program offerings are year-round and seasonal and include after-school programs, reflecting the diverse interests of the City's population.

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO PARKS AND RECREATION CENTERS

The Recreation and Community Services Division maintains five City parks currently totaling 34.13 acres, which offer a blend of sports and general recreation opportunities to the public. Each park has its own mix of infrastructure that supports specific recreational activities. The smallest park is 0.34 acres and the largest in the inventory covers 11 acres of City land. The list of parks and recreational facilities, along with general recreational offerings, is listed below.

Las Palmas Park. This park is located at 505 South Huntington Street and is comprised of 7.5 acres of multi-activity sports facilities, including: baseball field, soccer field, basketball courts, and gymnasium. Additionally, the park houses several community recreation programs to include a daily senior nutrition program through shared and stand alone infrastructure including banquet room, arts and crafts room, meeting rooms, recreation lounge, senior center, picnic area, and tot lot. The nearest project site to Las Palmas Park is Parking Lot 3, which is 0.32 miles southeast of the park.

Pioneer Park. This park is located at 828 North Harding Street and is comprised of 5.37 acres of multi-activity sports facilities, including: baseball field, basketball courts, and tennis courts. In addition, there is a tot lot and picnic area. The nearest project site to Pioneer Park is Parking Lot 7, which is 0.087 miles southwest of the park.

Cesar Chavez Park. This park is located at 208 Park Avenue and is comprised of 11 acres of multi-activity sports facilities, including: baseball field, basketball courts, soccer field, gymnasium, and swimming pool. Additionally, the park provides numerous recreational services through existing infrastructure, including a senior center, meeting rooms, tot lot, and picnic area. A new year-round regionally-oriented aquatics facility is currently under construction in this park, with completion scheduled in 2008 (prior to completion of the proposed project). This facility will include three bodies of water consisting of a new 50 meter by 25-yard competition pool with three and one meter diving boards, a 4,000 square foot instructional pool with a recreational slide, and a 1,000 square foot “splash area.” It will also include a new 15,000 square foot two-story support facility building providing space for a lobby, offices, dressing rooms, classrooms, locker rooms, a multipurpose room, utility and mechanical rooms, and storage. This facility will significantly enhance aquatics-related and other recreational resources available to the community. The closest project site is Parking Lot 4, which is 0.23 miles northwest of the park.

Layne Park. This park located at 120 North Huntington Street, is comprised of 0.8 acres and houses a basketball court, picnic area, and tot lot. The nearest project site is Parking Lot 7, which is 0.25 miles southwest of the park.

Heritage Park. This park is located at 2025 Fourth Street and consists of approximately 3.2 acres of passive park and open space use. This park was recently constructed and opened to the public in 2007, thus significantly augmenting park and recreation resources available to the community.

Lopez Adobe and Grounds. The historic Lopez Adobe and grounds comprise a 0.34-acre site located at 1100 Pico Street. The City owns and operates the Lopez Adobe as a house museum with adjacent publicly accessible open space located approximately 410 feet walking distance northwest of Parking Lot 8.

Skate Park. This facility is designed and dedicated to recreational skating activity and is located on a 0.92 acre site at 1320 San Fernando Road, approximately 630 feet northwest of Parking Lot 7.

Eighth Street Park. A currently vacant 2.79-acre site located on the northeast side of Eighth Street adjacent to the Pacoima Wash has been purchased by the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, which is in the process of developing it in conjunction with the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority as a City of San Fernando public park. Such utilization of the site will be a step in implementing the *Pacoima Wash Greenway Master Plan*, prepared for the City in 2004. Completion of this park, which is expected by the end of 2008 (prior to completion of the proposed project), will also significantly augment the park and recreational resources of the community. The Eighth Street Park is part of a much larger project known as the Pacoima Wash Greenway Project, which is described in more detail below.

Pacoima Wash Greenway. The City obtained funding in 2007 through the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) to construct elements of planned greenway and bikeway improvements in the Pacoima Wash through San Fernando pursuant to the *Pacoima Wash Greenway Master Plan* prepared in 2004. Over the long-term, the Pacoima Wash Greenway will provide 50 additional acres of open space with a bicycle and pedestrian trail with pocket parks and recreational amenities. Approximately \$2.5 million in funds have already been awarded to both the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) and the City of San Fernando for the development of 5.79 acres within the area of the Pacoima Wash Greenway by 2011.

Cesar Chavez Memorial Park. The Cesar Chaves Memorial honors the legacy and work of the late farm worker leader. The Memorial is located at the entrance of the City of San Fernando on Truman Avenue and Wolfskill Street and services as an education and passive park setting. The Memorial was constructed on 0.5 acres and consists of four different elements, reflecting the life of Cesar Chaves and the farm workers struggle. A single life size statue of Cesar Chaves is poised in front of a series of ten figures representing the farm workers plight and eventual empowerment. Other features also include a fountain, seating areas and mural.

REGIONAL PARKS AND RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES

In addition to the parks and facilities managed by the RCS Division, there are several nearby parks and recreational facilities available to San Fernando residents, including:

- Two Los Angeles City Parks: the 19-acre open space Brand Park located opposite the San Fernando Mission and the 18-acre Paxton Park located at Paxton Street and Laurel Canyon Boulevard; and
- Hanson Dam Recreational Area, which offers roughly 1,437 acres of open space and passive parkland adjacent to Glen Oaks Boulevard.

SCHOOL FACILITIES

In addition to dedicated park space, the City has entered a joint use agreement with Los Angeles Unified School District to share the multi-purpose room, playfields, basketball courts, and practice gymnasium of the soon to be constructed Valley Region High School #5. The open space available at the new high school will be approximately 3.0 acres of playing fields and 33,5000 square feet of multi-purpose space.

The facility is scheduled to begin construction in the second quarter of 2008, with occupancy projected for the third quarter of 2011.

PARK AND RECREATION DEDICATIONS AND FEES

The dedication of parkland and/or the payment of in-lieu fees as authorized by the Quimby Act are administered in the City of San Fernando through *Municipal Code*, Chapter 78, Subdivisions, Section 78-215, Recreation Dedications and Fees. The requirements of dedication and fee payments for recreation purposes shall be as follows:

- (1) *As a condition of approval of a final tract map or parcel map for a residential subdivision, a subdivider shall dedicate land, pay a fee in lieu thereof, or a combination of both, at the option of the city, as determined at the time of approval of the tentative map. The land dedication or fee in lieu thereof shall be used for park and recreational purposes. The amount of land to be dedicated shall be three acres per 1,000 residents or a fee in lieu thereof based on the fair market value of three acres of land per 1,000 residents, as determined by appraisal. Such appraisal shall be paid for by the subdivider who shall deposit with the city an amount sufficient to cover the cost of the appraisal. The city shall select an MAI appraiser. The appraisal shall be completed prior to approval of the tentative map by the city.*
- (2) *If the subdivider is not satisfied with the values established by the first appraisal, the subdivider may request and shall pay for the preparation of a second appraisal. The subdivider shall deposit with the city an amount sufficient to cover the cost of preparing the second appraisal. The city shall then select a second MAI appraiser to conduct the appraisal. If a second appraisal is conducted, the values established by the two appraisals shall be averaged, and that amount shall be the value used for determining the in-lieu fee.*

Standards.

Standards for dedication of land or payment of a fee for park and recreation purposes shall be as follows:

- (1) *The number of people estimated to reside in a residential subdivision shall be calculated based on 3.5 persons per single-family residence; 1.8 persons per multiple-family unit; or two persons per mobile home.*
- (2) *Based on subsection (c)(1) of this section, 457 square feet of land shall be dedicated for each single-family residence; 235 square feet shall be dedicated for each multiple-family unit; and 262 square feet of land shall be dedicated for each mobile home. If a fee in lieu of dedication is required, the fee shall be based upon the fair market value of the amount of land prescribed for each unit.*
- (3) *Where private open space for park and recreational purposes is provided in a proposed subdivision and such space is to be privately owned and maintained by the future residents of the subdivision, partial credit, not to exceed 50 percent, may be given against the requirements of land dedication or payment of fees in lieu thereof if the city council finds that it is in the*

public interest to do so and provided that the use of the private open space is restricted for park and recreational purposes by recorded covenant which runs with the land in favor of the future owners of the property and which cannot be defeated or eliminated without the consent of the city or its successors.

PARK AND RECREATION DEMAND

The City of San Fernando currently has approximately 34.13 acres of existing parkland to service a present City population of approximately 25,000 residents. The RCS Division has a ratio of employees per one thousand residents of 1.76, which is well above the national average of 0.70, based upon a survey of major cities by the Trust for Public Land.¹

5.11.2 SIGNIFICANCE THRESHOLD CRITERIA

The environmental analysis in this section is patterned after the Initial Study Checklist recommended by the *CEQA Guidelines*, as amended, and used by the City of San Fernando in its environmental review process, which is contained in Appendix A of the EIR. The Initial Study includes questions relating to recreation. The issues presented in the Initial Study Checklist have been utilized as thresholds of significance in this section. Accordingly, a project may create a significant environmental impact if it causes one or more of the following to occur:

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

Based on these standards, the effects of the proposed project have been categorized as either a “less than significant impact” or a “potentially significant impact.” Mitigation measures are recommended for potentially significant impacts. If a potentially significant impact cannot be reduced to a less than significant level through the application of mitigation, it is categorized as a significant unavoidable impact.

Additionally, the State of California (California Government Code, Section 66477 [Quimby Act]), has established a minimum standard of three acres per 1,000 population as the proportionate amount of land necessary to satisfy the park requirement for new subdivisions. The City’s *Municipal Code* Section 78-215 provides specific requirements for new subdivisions that are consistent with this standard. If it is determined by the City that land dedication is not

¹ Personal communication dated February 14, 2008 from Ron Ruiz, Director of Public Works and Parks, City of San Fernando.

required, the applicant may pay fees in-lieu of the dedicated parkland or construct amenities on dedicated parkland that are of equal dollar value to the park fee, or a combination of the two alternatives to satisfy the requirement.

5.11.3 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

- ◆ **DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT COULD INCREASE THE USE OF EXISTING NEIGHBORHOOD AND REGIONAL PARKS AND OTHER RECREATIONAL FACILITIES, THEREBY CREATING THE POTENTIAL FOR PHYSICAL DETERIORATION OF EACH FACILITY.**

Level of Significance Before Analysis and Mitigation: Potentially Significant Impact.

Impact Analysis: Development of the proposed project would create additional demand on the existing parks and recreational facilities within the City of San Fernando. Per the *Municipal Code* Section 78-215, the proposed project would generate approximately 490 potential park and recreation facility patrons, and would require the project to provide approximately 63,920 square feet of dedicated parkland, or an in-lieu fees payment based on fair market value of the required dedication. The proposed project would provide some private open space areas within the project site(s) for project residents. However, these on-site open space areas do not offset the potential for impacts to park and recreation facilities.

The RCS Division has reviewed the proposed project and determined that there is capacity within the existing parks and recreational facilities to accommodate the marginal increase in demand for services. Thus, the proposed project is not expected to substantially deteriorate existing facilities or require the expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse impact on the environment. The RCS Division has also indicated that the proposed project would not negatively impact park facilities or recreation services as they are currently provided, nor would the proposed project require the addition of staff to the Division.² Moreover, the payment of park impact fees by the project developer, as referred to in Mitigation Measure PR-1, would be consistent with State standards for mitigating park impacts of new development and would also contribute to reducing the potential for a significant impact on parks and recreation services to a less than significant level.

As noted in the Environmental Setting section, Brand Park, Paxton Park, and the Hanson Dam Recreational Area are in close proximity to the City of San Fernando. It is too speculative to note if the proposed residents would use either Brand or Paxton Park in the City of Los Angeles. With respect to the Hanson Dam Recreational Area, it is a regional facility and would be able to serve residents of the proposed project. Thus, less than significant impacts would occur in this regard.

² Ibid.

Mitigation Measures:

PR-1 Prior to approval of the final tract map, the project applicant shall dedicate land, or pay to the City of San Fernando in-lieu fees, or some combination thereof as determined by the City pursuant to Municipal Code Section 78-215.

Level of Significance After Analysis and Mitigation: Less Than Significant Impact.

5.11.4 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

- ◆ **DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATED WITH THE PROPOSED PROJECT AND OTHER RELATED CUMULATIVE PROJECTS COULD RESULT IN CUMULATIVELY CONSIDERABLE IMPACTS TO PARKS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES IN THE CITY OF SAN FERNANDO.**

Level of Significance Before Analysis and Mitigation: Potentially Significant Impact.

Impact Analysis: Although the proposed project would marginally increase the demand for park facilities and recreation services in the community, it would also provide new on-site private open space and the project developers would pay park impact fees consistent with the City's Municipal Code requirements. Such fees can be used by the City to acquire and develop additional parkland or to augment the recreational facilities in existing public parks and open spaces as necessary to mitigate the potential of the project to substantially deteriorate existing facilities or require the expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse impact on the environment.

With respect to cumulative impacts of the project in conjunction with related projects, the inclusion of recreational amenities into the development of related projects would be assessed on a project-by-project basis, but all such projects within the City of San Fernando would be required to pay park impact mitigation fees at the same proportionate rates as the proposed project. Thus, cumulative impacts related to the demand for parks and recreation services are expected to be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: Refer to Mitigation Measure PR-1. No additional mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance After Analysis and Mitigation: Less Than Significant Impact.

5.11.5 SIGNIFICANT UNAVOIDABLE IMPACTS

Potential impacts related to parks and recreation services resulting from implementation of the proposed project would be reduced to a less than significant level with the imposition of mitigation measures. As such, no significant unavoidable impacts would result from development of the proposed San Fernando Parking Lots Project.