

# CITY OF LA MESA PARKS MASTER PLAN

FINAL  
FEBRUARY 2012



# THE TEAM

## CITY OF LA MESA

Bill Chopyk, Community Development Director  
Yvonne Garrett, Assistant City Manager / Community Services Director  
Gregory P. Humora, Director of Public Works / City Engineer  
Chris Jacobs, Senior Planner  
Erin Jones, Crime Prevention Specialist  
Kaaren McElroy, Administrative Analyst  
Mike Pacheco, Project Manager / Community Services Manager

## COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER GROUP

Karen Amoroso	Janet Arnold
Kathleen Brand	Harry Doering
Christopher Geronimo	Mason Herron
Linda Johnson	Jim Langford
Jason Lee	Jefferson Isai Rosa
Patrick Valerio	Ashley Westman
Jon Wreschinsky	

## KTU+A

Michael Singleton, Principal  
Cheri Blatner, Senior Associate  
Brooke Pietz, Project Manager  
Joe Punsalan, Associate  
Catrine Machi, Senior Planner  
Tasha Davis, GIS Analyst

## KIMLEY-HORN & ASSOCIATES, INC.

Ryan Birdseye, CEQA Manager

A Healthy Works<sup>SM</sup> program made possible by funding from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, through the County of San Diego and the San Diego Association of Governments.

This publication was supported by the Cooperative Agreement Number 1U58DP002496-01 from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention through the County of San Diego, Health and Human Services Agency. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Centers for Disease Control Prevention.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## CHAPTER 1

1.0 INTRODUCTION .....	1-1
1.1 INPUT PROCESS .....	1-1
1.2 PROJECT PURPOSE .....	1-2
1.3 PARKS MASTER PLAN VISION.....	1-2
1.4 PLAN GOALS AND SUPPORTING OBJECTIVES.....	1-2
1.5 HEALTHY COMMUNITY PLANNING INITIATIVES.....	1-6
1.6 COMMUNITIES PUTTING PREVENTION TO WORK.....	1-8
1.7 EXISTING SETTING .....	1-8
1.7.1 CITY OF LA MESA GENERAL PROFILE .....	1-9
1.7.2 DEMOGRAPHIC OVERVIEW .....	1-9
1.7.3 PREVIOUS PARK PLANNING EFFORTS .....	1-9
1.7.4 ONGOING PARK DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS.....	1-10
1.8 COMMUNITY INPUT SUMMARY .....	1-11
1.8.1 PUBLIC WORKSHOP INPUT .....	1-12
1.8.2 BOARDS AND COMMISSION INPUT.....	1-12
1.8.3 COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER EFFORTS (FIELD WORK).....	1-13
1.8.4 QUESTIONNAIRE SUMMARY.....	1-13

# CHAPTER 2

2.0 EXISTING PLANNING AND POLICY FRAMEWORK.....	2-1
2.1 EXISTING POLICIES .....	2-1
2.1.1 CITY OF LA MESA GENERAL PLAN.....	2-1
2.1.2 PARK IN LIEU AND IMPACT FEES .....	2-2
2.1.3 "READY...SET...LIVE WELL" INITIATIVE.....	2-3
2.1.4 CRIME PREVENTION AND OPERATING HOURS.....	2-3
2.1.5 CITY OF LA MESA WATER CONSERVATION ORDINANCE .....	2-3
2.2 PARK AND RECREATION REQUIREMENTS .....	2-4
2.2.1 PARK CLASSIFICATIONS .....	2-4
2.2.2 POPULATION BASED PARK STANDARDS.....	2-6
2.2.3 EXISTING PROGRAMS TO ENCOURAGE ACTIVE HEALTHY LIVING .....	2-8

# CHAPTER 3

3.0 INVENTORY AND EXISTING CONDITIONS.....	3-1
3.1 EXISTING PARK PROFILES .....	3-1
3.1.1 NORTHWEST QUADRANT .....	3-7
3.1.2 NORTHEAST QUADRANT.....	3-13
3.1.3 SOUTHWEST QUADRANT .....	3-21
3.1.5 SOUTHEAST QUADRANT .....	3-29
3.2 EXISTING PARKS ADJACENT TO LA MESA .....	3-35
3.2.1 LAKE MURRAY.....	3-35
3.2.2 MISSION TRAILS REGIONAL PARK.....	3-35
3.2.3 EUCALYPTUS PARK.....	3-35
3.4 EXISTING PARKS WITHIN SAN DIEGO COUNTY.....	3-35
3.5 EXISTING JOINT USE AGREEMENTS .....	3-36

# CHAPTER 4

4.0 PARKS DISTRIBUTION AND ACCESS ANALYSIS .....	4-1
4.1 GEOGRAPHIC MODELING .....	4-1
4.1.1 MODEL OVERVIEW .....	4-1
4.2 ACCESS ANALYSIS .....	4-2
4.2.1 BARRIERS TO WALKING TO PARKS .....	4-2
4.2.2 BARRIERS TO CYCLING TO PARKS .....	4-2
4.2.3 EXISTING BARRIERS THAT ARE NOT LIKELY TO CHANGE .....	4-2
4.2.4 EXISTING BARRIERS THAT CAN BE CHANGED .....	4-3
4.2.5 ROLE OF TRANSIT IN ACCESS .....	4-3
4.2.6 EXISTING PARK SERVICE AREA ANALYSIS .....	4-4
4.2.7 WALKING SPEEDS AND ACCESS DISTANCES .....	4-6
4.2.8 RIDING SPEEDS AND ACCESS DISTANCES .....	4-7
4.3 DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS .....	4-7
4.3.1 RESIDENTIAL POPULATION DENSITIES .....	4-7
4.3.2 POPULATION GROWTH ANALYSIS .....	4-12
4.3.3 POPULATION GROWTH BY SERVICE AREA .....	4-13
4.4 PARK PROGRAM AND FACILITIES ANALYSIS .....	4-15
4.4.1 VACANT CITY-OWNED LAND .....	4-15
4.4.2 FACILITIES AND PROGRAM ANALYSIS .....	4-16

# CHAPTER 5

5.0 PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS.....	5-1
5.1 PARKS MASTER PLAN .....	5-1
5.1.1 RECOMMENDED PARK EXPANSIONS.....	5-1
5.1.2 RECOMMENDED JOINT USE AGREEMENTS.....	5-7
5.1.3 PROPOSED PARK ACCESS IMPROVEMENTS.....	5-10
5.1.1 PROPOSED PARK LOCATIONS .....	5-40
5.2 PROJECT PRIORITIZATION.....	5-46
5.3 IMPLEMENTATION.....	5-46
5.3.1 IMMEDIATE RECOMMENDATIONS .....	5-47
5.3.2 MID AND LONG-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS .....	5-47
5.3.3 IMPLEMENTATION PHASING PLAN .....	5-47
5.4 FUNDING SOURCES .....	5-48
5.4.1 PUBLIC FUNDING.....	5-48
5.4.2 FUNDING FOR ACCESS AND ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS .....	5-48

# FIGURES

FIGURE 2.1—EXISTING URBAN WALKING TRAILS.....	2-11
FIGURE 3.1—CITY QUADRANTS.....	3-2
FIGURE 3.2— EXISTING NETWORK.....	3-5
FIGURE 3.3—EXISTING CONDITIONS COMPOSITE PARK SERVICE AREA.....	3-6
FIGURE 3.4—EXISTING PARK SERVICE AREA- AZTEC PARK.....	3-8
FIGURE 3.5—EXISTING PARK SERVICE AREA- JACKSON PARK.....	3-10
FIGURE 3.6—EXISTING PARK SERVICE AREA- SUNSET PARK.....	3-12
FIGURE 3.7—EXISTING PARK SERVICE AREA- BRIERCREST PARK.....	3-14
FIGURE 3.8—EXISTING PARK SERVICE AREA- HARRY GRIFFIN PARK.....	3-16
FIGURE 3.9—EXISTING PARK SERVICE AREA- LA MESITA PARK .....	3-18
FIGURE 3.10—EXISTING PARK SERVICE AREA- NORTHMONT PARK.....	3-20
FIGURE 3.11—EXISTING PARK SERVICE AREA- HIGHWOOD PARK .....	3-22

FIGURE 3.12—EXISTING PARK SERVICE AREA- ROLANDO PARK.....	3-24
FIGURE 3.13—EXISTING PARK SERVICE AREA- SUNSHINE PARK.....	3-26
FIGURE 3.14—EXISTING PARK SERVICE AREA- VISTA LA MESA.....	3-28
FIGURE 3.15—EXISTING PARK SERVICE AREA- COLLIER PARK.....	3-30
FIGURE 3.16—EXISTING PARK SERVICE AREA- MACARTHUR PARK.....	3-32
FIGURE 3.17—EXISTING PARK SERVICE AREA- PORTER PARK.....	3-34
FIGURE 4.1—EXISTING COMPOSITE PARK SERVICE AREA- 1 MILE DISTANCE .....	4-5
FIGURE 4.2—EXISTING COMPOSITE PARK SERVICE AREA- 15 MINUTE WALK TIME DISTANCE (USING EXISTING WALKWAY NETWORK) .....	4-6
FIGURE 4.3—POPULATION DENSITIES- 0 TO 4 YEARS OLD.....	4-9
FIGURE 4.4—POPULATION DENSITIES- 5 TO 14 YEARS OLD .....	4-9
FIGURE 4.5—POPULATION DENSITIES- 15 TO 19 YEARS OLD.....	4-10
FIGURE 4.6—POPULATION DENSITIES- 20 TO 44 YEARS OLD.....	4-10
FIGURE 4.7—POPULATION DENSITIES- 45 TO 64 YEARS OLD.....	4-11
FIGURE 4.8—POPULATION DENSITIES- 65 AND OLDER.....	4-11
FIGURE 4.9—FUTURE POPULATION AND LAND USE GROWTH .....	4-13
FIGURE 4.10—VACANT CITY-OWNED LANDS .....	4-15
FIGURE 5.1— CITY QUADRANT.....	5-2
FIGURE 5.2—EXISTING JOINT USE SERVICE AREA.....	5-7
FIGURE 5.3—POTENTIAL JOINT USE SCHOOLS SERVICE AREA.....	5-9
FIGURE 5.4—SERVICE AREA EXPANDED WITH IMPROVEMENTS .....	5-26
FIGURE 5.5—COMPARISON OF EXISTING AND IMPROVED SERVICE AREA .....	5-27
FIGURE 5.6—OPEN SPACE LAND USE.....	5-30
FIGURE 5.7—RECOMMENDED COMPOSITE URBAN TRAIL LOOPS .....	5-38
FIGURE 5.8—WAITE PROPERTY .....	5-41
FIGURE 5.9—SANDAG SMART GROWTH AND MIXED USE TRANSIT CORRIDORS .....	5-42
FIGURE 5.10—PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT PARKS .....	5-43
FIGURE 5.11—SAFE ROUTES OVERLAY.....	5-47

# TABLES

TABLE 2.1—POPULATION BASED PARK STANDARDS FOR FACILITIES AND ACTIVITIES .....	2-7
TABLE 2.2— EXISTING PARK FACILITIES AND ACTIVITIES IN LA MESA .....	2-8
TABLE 2.3—BUSINESSES OFFERING FITNESS SERVICES.....	2-13
TABLE 3.1—EXISTING PUBLIC FACILITIES SUMMARY BY QUADRANT.....	3-3
TABLE 3.2—EXISTING PUBLIC AND PRIVATE* FACILITIES SUMMARY BY QUADRANT .....	3-4
TABLE 3.3—EXISTING FACILITIES- AZTEC PARK.....	3-7
TABLE 3.4—EXISTING FACILITIES- JACKSON PARK.....	3-9
TABLE 3.5—EXISTING FACILITIES- SUNSET PARK.....	3-11
TABLE 3.6—EXISTING FACILITIES- BRIERCREST PARK.....	3-13
TABLE 3.7—EXISTING FACILITIES- HARRY GRIFFIN PARK.....	3-15
TABLE 3.8—EXISTING FACILITIES- LA MESITA PARK .....	3-17
TABLE 3.9—EXISTING FACILITIES- NORTHMONT PARK .....	3-19
TABLE 3.10—EXISTING FACILITIES- HIGHWOOD PARK.....	3-21
TABLE 3.11—EXISTING FACILITIES- ROLANDO PARK .....	3-23
TABLE 3.12—EXISTING FACILITIES- SUNSHINE PARK.....	3-25
TABLE 3.13—EXISTING FACILITIES- VISTA LA MESA PARK.....	3-27
TABLE 3.14—EXISTING FACILITIES- COLLIER PARK.....	3-29
TABLE 3.15—EXISTING FACILITIES- MACARTHUR PARK.....	3-31
TABLE 3.16—EXISTING FACILITIES- PORTER PARK .....	3-33
TABLE 3.17—JOINT USE AGREEMENTS .....	3-36
TABLE 4.1—2030 AGE POPULATION DENSITY SUMMARY .....	4-8
TABLE 4.2—POPULATION ANALYSIS BY QUADRANT.....	4-12
TABLE 4.3—POPULATION GROWTH BY SERVICE AREA ANALYSIS- USING EXISTING CONDITIONS OF WALKWAY SYSTEM .....	4-14
TABLE 5.1—POPULATION GROWTH BY SERVICE AREA ANALYSIS- BASED ON IMPROVED ACCESS CONDITIONS .....	5-28
TABLE 5.2—FEDERAL PARK FUNDING SOURCES .....	5-48
TABLE 5.3—STATE PARK FUNDING SOURCES.....	5-49
TABLE 5.4—LOCAL PARK FUNDING SOURCES.....	5-49



# CHAPTER 1

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

As part of the City's Centennial celebration in 2012, La Mesa is developing this Parks Master Plan to anticipate the needs and desires of a growing and changing demographic population. A primary purpose of the plan is to identify park and open space improvements that will carry the City into the next century.

This master plan creates a roadmap for upgrades, expansions, and potential additions to the City of La Mesa's parks system to meet both current and future community needs for parks, open space, and urban respite areas that contribute to the public's health. It includes an overview of the existing parks and policies of the City of La Mesa, in addition to recommendations that will improve access to parks, improve park facilities, and identify funding sources to implement the plan.

## 1.1 INPUT PROCESS

This Parks Master Plan was developed over an eight month period from May 2011 to December 2011 for the City of La Mesa. During this period, efforts were guided by City staff and input was provided by community members of the City of La Mesa. Additional efforts after December 2011 included public hearings and public advocacy for the Master Plan and the adoption of both the Parks Master Plan and California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Initial Determination Checklists.

## 1.2 PROJECT PURPOSE

To best serve its constituents, it is important for the City to maintain a wide range of different types of parks with a broad distribution throughout the entire City. This distribution assures that parks and open spaces are easily accessible by walking or biking, especially near residential developments. This project not only identifies deficiencies of parks and access issues to parks, but it also makes recommendations on how to come closer to meeting the quantity, distribution and quality of these park resources. The plan provides tools on how the City may help to refine a park system that contributes to healthy lifestyles for its citizens.

## 1.3 PARKS MASTER PLAN VISION

A "Vision Statement" for the Parks Master Plan was developed with public and staff input. The plan and vision statement supports the City of La Mesa General Plan.

***A City that encourages active and healthy lifestyles by offering a diverse range of recreational activities and facilities in La Mesa.***

## 1.4 PLAN GOALS AND SUPPORTING OBJECTIVES

The overall goal of the Parks Master Plan is to create a roadmap for upgrades, expansion, potential additions, and improved access to the City of La Mesa's park facilities. This goal includes the community's needs for easy access to parks, open space, and urban respite areas that can contribute to the public's health.

***Goal 1: To create a network of public parks and public spaces throughout the City that are convenient, accessible and beneficial to all segments of the community.***

***Objective 1.1:*** Endeavor to provide a park, public space or open space within a 15-minute walk of all residents. This objective seeks to amend the General Plan policy of providing recreational facilities within a one-mile radius of all residential units and do a better job of achieving the goal.

**Policy 1.1.1:** Encourage the distribution of a variety of park types and sizes throughout the City.

**Policy 1.1.2:** Encourage the development of non-traditional park types, including green belts, linear parks, urban trails, mini-parks, and pocket parks, to meet this standard.

**Policy 1.1.3:** Work to develop and improve connectivity to parks.

**Policy 1.1.4:** As feasible, ensure each of the four quadrants of the City provides equal recreational opportunities and access to a broad range of recreational facilities for the residents of that quadrant.

**Objective 1.2:** *Develop a variety of park types to encourage a range of passive and active recreational uses and healthy activities.*

**Policy 1.2.1:** Include both passive and active recreational opportunities within park sites when space allows.

**Policy 1.2.2:** Design and improve parks to accommodate a community varying in age, athletic ability, physical agility and recreational interest.

**Policy 1.2.3:** Create a Community Gardening Program for all ages. Identify existing and potential community garden sites on public property, in parks, near senior and community centers, within public easements and rights-of-way, located on surplus property, or jointly managed on school sites.

**Objective 1.3:** *Continue to work with the school districts and other public agencies to cooperatively develop and maintain open space and recreational facilities on available school property that will maximize open space and recreational opportunities*

**Goal 2:** *To promote and encourage the provision of open space and recreation areas as part of private developments, thereby supplementing and complementing the City's public parks and open space system.*

**Objective 2.1:** *Encourage the use of community recreational space associated with private developments.*

**Policy 2.1.1:** Promote backyard gardens; and provide information and resources to encourage gardening.

**Policy 2.1.2:** Allow multifamily residential developments the ability to identify appropriate outdoor space to allow garden plots for residents.

**Policy 2.1.3:** Continue to require the provision of open space and recreation areas on private properties through the use of zoning and subdivision ordinances for setbacks and lot coverage.

**Policy 2.1.4:** Ensure that required on-site open spaces are usable open spaces that can serve as extensions of adjacent open space areas when applying design standards to new developments.

**Policy 2.1.5:** Continue to require multifamily residential projects to provide usable on-site open space area as a supplement to the public parks and open space system.

**Goal 3: To work with regional programs to protect the remaining areas of native vegetation and undeveloped rural areas for their significant open space, biological values, and a visual break from urban environments.**

**Objective 3.1:** Incorporate passive open space and natural areas into the design of parks to provide a balanced range of open space values for the use and enjoyment of residents.

**Policy 3.1.1:** Encourage the maintenance and preservation of the slopes within the City canyon areas.

**Policy 3.1.2:** Should the City obtain controlling interest in Padre Bay Arm, an effort will be made to preserve and incorporate the native vegetation into any recreational facilities proposed.

**Policy 3.1.3:** Continue to maintain or increase a visual and physical connection to Lake Murray and Mission Trails Regional Park where it is adjacent to the City.

**Goal 4: Provide parks, public spaces, open space, and active recreational facilities that are accessible by walking, transit, or cars.**

**Objective 4.1:** Create park sites that are easily accessible from public streets on as many sides as possible.

**Policy COS -4.1.1:** Look for opportunities to increase connectivity to parks.

**Policy COS -4.1.2:** Park entrances should be well marked with signage, well lit, easily identifiable, and universally accessible.

**Objective 4.2:** Encourage and develop the use of alternative transportation, including walking, biking, and public transportation, to gain access to parks, open space, and recreational facilities.

**Policy 4.2.1:** Reduce the number of barriers and safety issues along walkways, as well as improve bike facilities that will encourage access to parks.

**Policy 4.2.2:** Reduce the number of gaps in the pedestrian and bike networks to increase connections, safety, convenience and universal access.

**Policy 4.2.3:** Implement the policies and actions identified in the Bicycle Facilities and Alternative Transportation Plan that focus on improving access to parks, open space, and recreational facilities.

**Policy 4.2.4:** Integrate urban forestry concepts and benefits into walkability improvements, as well as into park development or renovation activities.

**Objective COS -4.3:** *Adopt a wayfinding program to direct those who live and work in La Mesa to the City's sites that provide opportunities for health and wellness programs and physical activity.*

**Policy COS -4.3.1:** Continue to enhance and develop new urban walking trails and loops to encourage walking.

**Policy COS -4.3.2:** City park and recreational facilities should be well-marked and highly visible from streets, sidewalks and bike paths to assure a safe public environment.

**Objective 4.4:** *Provide safe and appealing opportunities to walk and bike to parks in order to encourage exercise and maintain healthy living habits.*

**Policy 4.4.1:** Support the completion of infrastructure upgrades that improve pedestrian and bicyclist's safety to and from school (e.g., implementation of Safe Routes to Schools recommendations, etc.)

**Policy 4.4.2:** Locate parks near schools when possible.

**Policy 4.4.3:** Continue to pursue joint use agreements with local schools to allow school property to be available for public use outside of school hours.

### **Goal 5: To provide safe parks, open space, and active recreational facilities.**

**Objective 5.1:** *Public and private development and infrastructure should be designed, constructed, and maintained to maximize safety and security.*

**Policy 5.1.1:** Encourage developers to incorporate building and site design techniques that reduce crime, such as utilizing Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) strategies.

**Policy 5.1.2:** Increase safety and security in public parks (including parks, recreational facilities, walkways, and trails) by providing adequate lighting; maintaining landscaping to maximize visibility; removing graffiti as soon as possible; removing trash, debris, weeds, etc. from public areas with ongoing maintenance of those public areas; and conducting regular police patrols and providing public safety information.

**Policy 5.1.3:** Partner with the community through programs that activate spaces or provide more eyes on the public facility, such as neighborhood watch groups.

**Policy COS -5.1.4:** Design facilities to be universally accessible for seniors, children and those with disabilities.

**Goal 6: To provide and develop well-maintained parks, open space, and active recreation facilities.**

**Objective COS -6.1:** Continue to improve existing and new park facilities to maximize the open space and recreational benefits to the community while minimizing maintenance and operating costs.

**Policy 6.1.1:** Investigate and evaluate opportunities and incentives for other agencies, non-profits, private businesses, and user groups to participate in the maintenance and replacement costs of parks, open space, and recreational facilities.

**Policy 6.1.2:** Maintain the City's park and open space in a manner that encourages the use and enjoyment by residents and visitors while protecting the long-term aesthetic and environmental quality of these areas.

**Policy 6.1.3:** Continue to use the Capital Improvements Program to plan for the identification of available resources for park facility repair, upgrades, and replacements through the budget process.

**Policy 6.1.4:** Continue to support the Public Works Department in their efforts to maintain existing parks to the highest standard feasible, given funding limitations set through the budget process. Include budgetary considerations for the scheduling of new park acquisition and development.

**Policy 6.1.5:** Continue to search for opportunities in grants and to encourage private donations. Identify other effective funding sources for park and recreational programs, such as trusts and other fund raising activities.

**Policy 6.1.5:** Continue to utilize park acquisition and improvement fees and park in-lieu and impact fees to mitigate the impact of new development on parks.

**Policy 6.1.6:** Partner with the La Mesa Park and Recreation Foundation to expand funding opportunities through their resources.

## 1.5 HEALTHY COMMUNITY PLANNING INITIATIVES

Obesity is the largest national epidemic and public health problem facing America today. Approximately 60 million adults, or 32.9% of the adult population, are now obese, which represents a doubling of the rate since 1980.<sup>1</sup> In a little over thirty years, the rate of obesity in children has tripled,<sup>2</sup> and one in five four-year-olds are obese.<sup>3</sup> If obesity rates continue at this magnitude, the current generation of children will live shorter lives than their parents.<sup>4</sup> Obesity is as much a local issue as it is a national issue. The East Region of San Diego County is where obesity rates are highest, with 40% of the adult population overweight, and an additional 23% considered obese. The region also has the highest rates of diabetes and heart disease in the County, with 9% of adults diagnosed with diabetes and 8% diagnosed with heart disease. However, the percent of deaths in the East Region due to chronic disease decreased from 63% in 2000 to 56% in 2009, while the total number of deaths from all causes has remained stable. And while this rate reduction may not be immediately attributable to access to a healthier lifestyle, the East Region, and particularly La Mesa, has been working to improve community wellness options in the community since 2006.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ogden CL, et al. Prevalence of overweight and obesity in the United States, 1999-2004. JAMA 295: 1549-1555. 2006.

<sup>2</sup> Centers for Disease Control, National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (accessed at <http://www.cdc.gov/obesity/childhood/prevalence.html>)

<sup>3</sup> Tanner, L. Obesity: 1 in 5 kids. Child obesity apparent by age 4. Associated Press, April 7, 2009.

<sup>4</sup> Olshansky, SJ et al. A Potential Decline in Life Expectancy in the United States in the 21st Century. N Engl J Med 2005 352: 1138-1145.

<sup>5</sup> 3-4-50 Chronic Disease in San Diego Region, East Brief, 2011

The City of La Mesa Council adopted a Community Wellness Policy in July 2006 based on input provided through meetings with key community stakeholders. In 2007, the City and the La Mesa-Spring Valley School District participated in a technical assistance grant program through the National League of Cities, involving the creation of policy and work teams to develop cohesive strategies that incorporate wellness efforts into a consolidated work plan aimed at creating healthful community environments.

These efforts led to the establishment of the *ready...set...Live Well* community wellness program. By developing policy strategies for increasing healthy eating and physical activity, *ready...set...Live Well* is an initiative working to engage schools, health care, business, and faith communities to coordinate with residents and local government on actions to create healthier community environments and reverse the trends of obesity and chronic disease in La Mesa.

The strategic goals of this initiative include:

- Support policy and environmental changes that increase the capacity of neighborhood environments in La Mesa and Spring Valley to support healthy eating and active lifestyles of residents.
- Support policy and environmental changes that increase the capacity of schools, after school programs, and child care providers to promote healthy behaviors among all grade levels.
- Collaborate with health and fitness professionals to increase the promotion of healthy behaviors in professional settings and advocate for healthier community environments.
- Build on local collaboration to develop a community-wide approach, including a Community Ambassador Program, as well as faith and business sectors, that will promote and sustain the *Live Well Initiative* in La Mesa and Spring Valley.
- Employ initiative-level strategies that maximize the efficiencies of current resources for *Live Well*, while minimizing the impact on local resources.

In addition to these efforts, the updated version of the La Mesa General Plan includes a new Health and Wellness Element to address public wellness as it relates to community design.

This quality of life objective can be influenced directly by decisions the City makes in meeting a variety of needs in the community, such as walkability, safe routes to schools, parks, and transit improved access to parks.

## 1.6 COMMUNITIES PUTTING PREVENTION TO WORK

*Healthy Works*<sup>SM</sup> is a countywide initiative making environmental changes promoting wellness and addressing the nationwide obesity epidemic. *Healthy Works*<sup>SM</sup>, administered by the County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency, is funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 and included the University of California San Diego, SANDAG, San Diego County Office of Education, Community Health Improvement Partners, and San Diego State University, along with numerous community-based partners. The project is part of the County's *Live Well, San Diego!* "Building Better Health" initiative, a 10-year vision for healthy communities.

In 2011, the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) awarded \$1.04 million in grant programs to local agencies, tribal governments, community programs, and school districts to promote public health considerations in planning, active transportation, and safe routes to school projects. One of these grants included the *Healthy Works*<sup>SM</sup> Communities Putting Prevention to Work program. The City of La Mesa was awarded one of these grants under the Healthy Community Planning Grant from SANDAG for the purpose of preparing this citywide Parks Master Plan.

## 1.7 EXISTING SETTING

The City of La Mesa, called the Jewel of the Hills, is located in eastern San Diego County and is considered to be the gateway into east county. The Village of La Mesa is part of the historic downtown and is host to a variety of restaurants, local businesses, and weekly farmer's market. The downtown area is an attraction and creates a sense of community. Its mild climate, walkable, tree-lined streets, and quaint neighborhoods make it ideal for outdoor recreational activities.



*An overall view of downtown La Mesa*

### 1.7.1 CITY OF LA MESA GENERAL PROFILE

The City sits just east of the City of San Diego almost 15 miles east of the Pacific Ocean, and is bordered by Lemon Grove to the southwest, El Cajon on the northeast, and the County of San Diego to the southeast. The nine square miles that make up the city are divided by two freeways, Interstate 8 running east/west, and State Route 125 running north/south. The public transit system includes two trolley lines and five trolley stops, and six different bus routes that provide additional access throughout the City.

### 1.7.2 DEMOGRAPHIC OVERVIEW

Population and housing data estimates from 2010 SANDAG reports indicate the current population of La Mesa is at 57,650 people. The majority of the population ranges between the ages of 30-59, with a median age of 39.7, but also includes a significant number of individuals over 65 and under 14. The majority of the population lives in single-family detached and multi-family housing. Of the 25,000 housing units in La Mesa, approximately half of those units are multi-family dwellings.

### 1.7.3 PREVIOUS PARK PLANNING EFFORTS

#### Needs Assessment Plan

In 2001, the City conducted an open space needs assessment. This study mainly focused on active recreational sports fields. However, results of that study indicated the western section of the City was not well served by parks in general.

It also suggested that La Mesa needed a soccer complex based on a large number of residents participating in soccer and the reduction in availability of high school soccer fields. Sunshine Park was identified as an ideal location because of its flat topography.

The study indicated ball fields throughout the City needed refurbishment. Also, the study indicated the replacement or enhancement of: fencing; turf and irrigation system renovations; dugout and spectator areas; on-site equipment; maintenance storage; shade tree plantings; concession facilities; and other site amenities.

In addition, the report made general recommendations for the enhancement of individual parks. These recommendations included:

- **Renovated restroom facilities:** provide adequate numbers of restroom fixtures based on park usage, lighting, security, supplies, privacy, etc. Drinking fountains should also be provided at each park.
- **Identification and directional signage:** provide consistent information throughout the parks, both on the park perimeter, as with current signage, and also at a central location. This would include identification signage, park name, hours of operation, City of La Mesa identification, encouraged and restricted activities, contact information, special events, and a place for posting local announcements, flyers, etc.
- **Seating:** provide adequate areas for rest, relaxation, and observation of other park uses, especially children's play areas, as well as accommodating elderly and the physically challenged. Shade should be provide where possible.
- **Circulation:** provide clearly marked, obvious paths, hard or soft surface as appropriate, with defined edges, night lighting if appropriate, and bike racks at entry points.

- **Group picnic:** provide picnic areas on hard surface pads if appropriate, with adjacent water, barbecue and trash facilities, and, if possible, shade or developed shelters, located conveniently for local neighborhood and parking access.
- **Renovated tot lot:** provide multi-age accessible areas located within clear view of active uses and parking.
- **Security:** provide lighting and pay phone for primary use areas and parking lots.

The report indicates that La Mesa did not have a full-size baseball facility (400-foot foul lines) located in a park where several different softball and youth baseball leagues require this size facility. The study suggested that the proposed new field at La Mesita Park/Seau Center may meet this deficiency, or if not, a joint-use full-size field should be developed. During 2000 to 2006, Phases I, II, and III of the Junior Seau Sports Complex were completed to met this deficiency.

### **Public Opinion Survey**

Every three years, the City of La Mesa completes a public opinion survey. This survey is statistically accurate and helps guide the City and neighborhood development efforts, and prioritizes the needs of the City's residents. The last survey was completed in 2011 and included a Parks and Recreation section. Overall, 89.8% of respondents indicated that they would rate La Mesa's recreational and cultural programs as excellent or good. The survey indicated the biggest recreational priority included safety and security lighting at parks, with 86% rating it as a high or medium priority. The second priority was to upgrade or replace existing playground equipment at 80%, followed by upgrading and expanding community and recreational centers with 66% of the respondents rating it as a high or medium priority.

## **1.7.4 ONGOING PARK DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS**

### **Capital Improvement Plans**

There are several Capital Improvement Projects identified in the City of La Mesa that need to be considered in this study. These include:

- Projects addressing general improvements and upkeep of the parks are planned for fiscal years 2012 and 2013 with funding identified, this includes replacing the artificial turf football field at Junior Seau Sports Complex.
- La Mesita, Harry Griffen and Northmont Park are to receive new picnic pavilions.
- New trail fitness equipment and outdoor fitness equipment will be installed at La Mesita and Porter Park.
- Northmont Park will receive new playground equipment.
- New roofs will be installed on the restrooms at Sunshine Park and Harry Griffen Park.
- ADA upgrades will occur at Sunshine Park.
- Funding and a time frame for improvements to incorporate the draft Collier Park Master Plan have not been identified.
- Vista La Mesa park is currently being master planned to add new picnic areas and playgrounds.

In addition to upcoming CIPs, several projects have been completed in recent years. These include:

- Junior Seau Sports Complex Phases 1-3, 2000-2006
- MacArthur Park Tot Lot, 2002
- Highwood Park Tot Lot Replacement, 2003
- Helix Charter High School Field #2 renovation, 2003
- La Mesa Skate Park Construction, 2003
- Briercrest Park Construction, 2005
- Jackson Park Rest Room Replacement and Lighting Construction, 2005
- Teen Center Construction at Highwood Park, 2006
- Rolando Park Tot Lot, 2006
- Porter Hall Renovations and ADA Upgrades, 2007
- La Mesa Skate Park Upgrades, 2008
- Aztec Park Lighting Construction, 2009
- Jackson Park Tot Lot Replacement, 2010
- La Mesita Park Tennis Court Resurfacing, 2011

### **It's Child's Play**

*It's Child's Play* is a program to "create joyful playgrounds in La Mesa parks" and is funded by the La Mesa Park and Recreation Foundation. La Mesa Parks and Recreation Foundation is a private non-profit organization that was created in 1999. Its first major capital effort was to complete the fundraising for a master plan called The PARKS Project. Between 1999 and 2005, the Foundation and the City together raised nearly \$8 million to create a youth sports complex at the Parkway Middle School and revamp Briercrest Park. The second project was to support a new Teen Center operated by the Boys and Girls Club at Highwood Park. Since its inception, the Foundation has a successful track record in working collaboratively with the City and with other public and private entities. Now the Foundation is embarking on this new initiative.

The goal is to raise \$1 million to replace five playgrounds at Northmont, Vista La Mesa, Collier, La Mesita, and Jackson Parks. All of the playgrounds slated for completion are 25 years or older and do not meet current Americans with Disabilities Act requirements, nor do they support active or creative play for children. These new playgrounds will provide accessible, age appropriate, and stimulating playgrounds that mirror the community desires for their neighborhood parks. The Jackson Park playground opened in 2010.

## **1.8 COMMUNITY INPUT SUMMARY**

There were several opportunities for the community of La Mesa to participate in the development of the Parks Master Plan. These included participation in public workshops, field work, volunteer efforts, completing a public survey, and input to City boards and commissions.

### 1.8.1 PUBLIC WORKSHOP INPUT

A public workshop was held on July 30, 2011 at MacArthur Park. This workshop gave people the opportunity to provide input on a variety of topics relating to this project, as well as updates to specific elements of the City of La Mesa's General Plan. Attendees were asked to provide comments on a Draft Vision Statement and Draft Supporting Goals and Objectives for the Parks Master Plan. They also participated in several mapping activities to identify opportunities and constraints within the existing parks, and were asked to identify any opportunities for new parks to be developed throughout the City. Residents from La Mesa and surrounding areas were also invited to give input on parks at Kids Care Fest on September 24, 2011. Public comments and community workshop boards can be found by contacting the City.



*Workshop participants*



### 1.8.2 BOARDS AND COMMISSION INPUT

The City of La Mesa has organized a number of special commissions and boards in order to get community input and review on a number of important community wide topics. The following boards and commissions exist at the City of La Mesa and have an interest in the Citywide Parks Master Plan. These commissions include:

- Community Services Commission
- Environmental Sustainability Commission
- Historic Preservation Commission
- Planning Commission
- Design Review Board

### 1.8.3 COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER EFFORTS (FIELD WORK)

During the month of July 2011, a group of La Mesa citizens and college interns from SDSU and UCSD were broken into five groups to document the existing conditions of the walkways and bike facilities throughout the entire city. In addition, a sixth group visited every city park in La Mesa and documented access points into the parks, the number of people using the parks, and all the facilities that were located in the park. This field work was utilized to document existing conditions, but it also provided a good starting point to analyze the park deficiencies and the opportunities to improve access and park facilities.

In addition to fieldwork, volunteers helped compile and input data and issues identified in the field. They also assisted with compiling the results of the workshop.



*Volunteer Meetings*

### 1.8.4 QUESTIONNAIRE SUMMARY

In addition to the public workshop that was held at the end of July, citizens were given the opportunity to provide their input through an on-line survey. Overall, Harry Griffen was the most frequently used park in La Mesa, while several people frequently visit Balboa Park and Mission Bay to participate in recreational activities. An overwhelming number of respondents to the survey indicated that they most frequently used La Mesa's parks for walking and running. There were also a high percentage of people who utilized the parks for exercising and walking their dog, informal play, small group picnics, and children's playgrounds. Many people identified improving walkway connections and better lighting as a way to improve access and safety. A large majority of people indicated they used their cars to get to the parks they frequently visited. One of the main reasons individuals don't visit the parks within the City was that they felt they were unsafe. The detailed results of the survey can be found by contacting the City.





## CHAPTER 2

### 2.0 EXISTING PLANNING AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

For a city to provide a park system that functions smoothly and accommodates all its community members, planning and policy efforts must be put into place, understood, and followed. Without these efforts, gaps in facilities, programs and networks are likely to occur.

### 2.1 EXISTING POLICIES

The City of La Mesa maintains and follows several policies relating to open space, access to parks, park and recreational opportunities. These policies work to guide the future development of recreation in La Mesa.

#### 2.1.1 CITY OF LA MESA GENERAL PLAN

The City of La Mesa General Plan was originally adopted in 1965. As state laws and local needs changed, it has undergone several revisions and additional elements have been added since it was first adopted, which lead to the current adopted 1996 version. In order to address a variety of new issues, including sustainability, climate change, water conservation, storm water runoff requirements, and green building principles, the City has been revising the General Plan to address these trends. The new 2012 document contains three different sections or elements that relate to and guide the Parks Master Plan.

**Circulation**

The Circulation Element not only covers how people get around by car and public transit, but more importantly as it relates to this plan, it addresses how the community gets around by foot and bicycle.

**Recreation and Open Space**

The Recreation and Open Space Element addresses the need to maintain open space and parks and to provide recreational opportunities for the City of La Mesa's citizens.

**Health and Wellness**

The Health and Wellness Element is a new section in the updated General Plan and addresses walkability, access to healthy foods, and urban agriculture. It covers the link between public health and community design.

**Landuse and Urban Design**

The Landuse and Urban Design Element identifies goals and policies related to planning of the City. Within this element, there are discussions of open space and recreation.

**2.1.2 PARK IN LIEU AND IMPACT FEES**

In order to generate funds for park improvements or to acquire land for parks, the City Council accepted and approved a municipal code ordinance to add two park development impact fees; 1). The Park Acquisition and Improvement Fee; and 2). The Parkland Dedication In-Lieu Fee and Improvement Impact Fee. These impact fees are designed for single and multi-family residential developments to mitigate the impact of new development on the municipality's existing facilities and infrastructure. Residential development projects in a new subdivision are obligated to dedicate three acres of undeveloped parkland per one thousand people. The fees developed were based on population and growth projections, facility standards, amount/cost of facilities required to accommodate growth, and total cost of facilities per unit of development. By collecting these fees, the goals and priorities of the City's recreational space and facilities standards established in the general plan can be met, and the recommendations of the La Mesa Parks and Open Space Needs Assessment, along with the recommendations in this Master Plan, can be implemented.

On July 27, 2010, staff provided a status report on the Park In-Lieu and Impact Fees to Council. As part of the 2011-2012 biennium budget process and the Capital Improvement Plan, staff asked for support for the findings as required by California Government Code 66001 and approval for the suggested projects. The projects were selected based on the enhanced amenities that would be added to the park system, the location of the park in relation to the development, and potential parallel enhancements to the park from other funding sources. The projects included:

- Add a new walking path and outdoor fitness equipment at the Junior Seau Sports Complex/ La Mesita Park located in the northeast quadrant. \$15,000 is allocated for this project.
- Construct varied size shade structures/picnic pavilions at La Mesita, Northmont and Harry Griffen Park. These parks are located in the northeast quadrant. \$320,000 has been allocated for four shade structures.
- Add older adult fitness equipment at the Adult Enrichment Center/Porter Park located in the southeast quadrant. \$15,000 in Park In-Lieu fees have been allocated for this project and matched by an \$8,000 grant.
- Program remaining funds for City-wide park projects that surface during the City-wide Park Master Plan process. \$357,559 has been allocated for this project.

### 2.1.3 "READY...SET...LIVE WELL" INITIATIVE

It is the City of La Mesa's policy to promote a healthy and well city. The City created the Health and Wellness Program to improve the quality of life of its citizens, address issues with obesity, especially in children, and also provide a more walkable, bikeable city.

*Ready...Set...Live Well is an initiative that extends and integrates efforts to support healthy eating and physical activity in Spring Valley and La Mesa, focusing primarily on environmental change and policy strategies. The initiative engages multiple sectors -- schools, health care, business, and faith communities -- to coordinate with residents and local government on actions that will create healthier community environments and reverse the troubling trends in obesity and chronic disease.*

### 2.1.4 CRIME PREVENTION AND OPERATING HOURS

Design, maintenance, and the enforcement of operating hours can help prevent crime in parks. With the exception of Harry Griffin Park, which is open from 7:00 a.m. to one hour after sunset, La Mesa parks are open from 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. The City of La Mesa utilizes Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) concepts, as needed, to address issues with natural surveillance, access control, territorial reinforcement, and maintenance in City parks. Clearing sight lines across parks, thoughtful placement of park features, and effective distribution of lighting can help encourage positive park use.

### 2.1.5 CITY OF LA MESA WATER CONSERVATION ORDINANCE

In response to Assembly Bill 1881 (Water Conservation in Landscaping Act of 2006), the City of La Mesa has adopted regulations to conserve water used for landscaping. These regulations apply to a variety of industrial, commercial, institutional, or multi-family residential landscapes, and also includes public agency projects that contain a landscaped area of 2,500 square feet or more. These regulations are based upon the statewide and county model ordinances. City of La Mesa Ordinance 2009-2805 provides an overview of the program, defines the terminology, and defines under what conditions these regulations apply. The purpose of the ordinance is to:

- Promote the values and benefits of landscapes while recognizing the need to utilize water and other resources as efficiently as possible.
- Establish a structure for planning, designing, installing, maintaining and managing water efficient landscape in new construction.
- Promote the use, when available, of tertiary treated recycled water for irrigation and landscaping.
- Use water efficiently without waste by setting a Maximum Applied Water Allowance (MAWA) as an upper limit for water use and reduce water use to the lowest practical amount.
- Encourage water users of existing landscaped to use water efficiently and without waste.

## 2.2 PARK AND RECREATION REQUIREMENTS

The City of La Mesa maintains 14 parks within the city in order to meet the recreational requirements of its community. Specific population based guidelines and requirements have been established to guide future park developments.

### 2.2.1 PARK CLASSIFICATIONS

There are several different ways to classify the types of parks found within a city and region. The City of La Mesa's parks include facilities that can accommodate passive or active recreational opportunities. The park land area itself can be classified as a community, neighborhood, mini, or pocket park. Other parks found outside the City, but utilized by its citizens, can include regional and resource-based parks.

#### PASSIVE PARK DEFINITIONS

Passive recreation refers to recreational activities that do not require facilities like sports fields or pavilions. Examples of passive recreation are: picnicking, walking, hiking, bird watching, social interaction, sunning, reading, and general nature observation.

#### ACTIVE PARK DEFINITIONS

Active recreation generally refers to a structured individual or team activity that requires the use of special facilities, courses, fields, or equipment. Examples of active sports recreation are: baseball, football, soccer, basketball, handball, golf, hockey, tennis, skiing, and skateboarding. Other informal but active recreational activities can include jogging, running, skating, biking, swimming, diving, frisbee golf, and other non-scheduled pick up sports such as soccer, flag football, pitch and throw, kite flying and other open field activities that do not require regulation-sized specialized sports facilities.

#### REGIONAL PARK DEFINITIONS

Regional parks attract visitors from throughout the region. These parks typically have distinctive scenic, natural, historical, or cultural features that attract users. Regional parks in San Diego include Balboa Park, Mission Bay Park, Mission Trails Regional Park, and Sunset Cliffs Natural Park. Local regional parks include Harry Griffen Park.

#### COMMUNITY PARK DEFINITIONS

These parks serve a larger population within a specific single community area or multiple communities. Community parks include both passive and active recreation facilities, but will also likely contain recreation or community centers, multi-purpose sports fields, and aquatic complexes. These parks contain several acres and can include a variety of areas for car parking. These parks are typically over 15 acres. Community Parks include MacArthur Park.

### NEIGHBORHOOD PARK DEFINITIONS

Neighborhood parks serve a smaller population within an area, but still include both passive and active recreation facilities. These parks include minimum areas for car parking, encouraging its visitors to utilize alternative transportation, such as biking or walking, to access the park. Neighborhood parks range in size from one to fifteen acres. Neighborhood parks include: Aztec Park, Briercrest Park, Collier Park, Highwood Park, Porter Park, Jackson Park, La Mesita Park, Northmont Park, Rolando Park, Sunset Park, Sunshine Park, and Vista La Mesa Park.

### LINEAR PARKS

Linear Parks are long, narrow strips of land that contain more passive activity nodes, but also function as a linear walking path or route. These routes can vary in length, but are typically 2-3 miles maximum and can include thematic elements and distance markers to identify a route. Linear parks can connect two important destinations or provide several unique destinations along a loop. They include planting and trees, benches, and wide pedestrian paths.

### POCKET PARKS

Pocket parks do not include active recreational activities (except playgrounds and par-course type equipment). They are less than one acre and typically include hardscape-type plazas, seating areas, and walkways that support a variety of respite and social interaction opportunities. They also include planting and small turf areas, and could contain small children's play areas. There is no onsite parking except for disabled access. These parks are accessible by walking or biking. There are currently no designated pocket parks in La Mesa since this designation is a recommendation of this study. Existing parks that are not currently counted in the existing conditions, service area analysis or recreation standards summary, may in the future include: Walkway of the Stars and the Train Depot.

## 2.2.2 POPULATION BASED PARK STANDARDS

The City of La Mesa encompasses nine square miles or about 5,760 acres with a current population of 57,650 people. The La Mesa General Plan indicates the overall ratio of parks should be one neighborhood park (3-7 acres) for every 5,000 residents, and one community park (15-30 acres) for every 20,000 residents. Based on this criteria, the requirements are listed below:

- Recommended neighborhood parks based on current population= 11.53 parks
- Neighborhood parks currently available= 12 parks
- Recommended community parks based on current population= 2.88 Parks
- Community parks currently available= 1 park
- Regional parks currently available= 1 Park

These numbers indicate a shortage of city parks needed to support the current population. In addition to just supporting the population within the City of La Mesa, an unidentified number of people from neighboring communities and cities typically visit these parks.

Other population based standards include standards for facilities from the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), which were adopted by the Office of Planning and Research for the State of California as guidelines for developing a Parks and Recreation Element of a General Plan. The commonly accepted standard used by a majority of communities are in acres of parkland per unit of population. However, it is understood that these should only act as guidelines and local circumstances and preferences may dictate broadening or narrowing the scope. Refer to Table 2.1 for how these standards would apply to La Mesa.

The standards in the Recreation, Park, and Open Space Standards and Guidelines document published by NRPA indicate 10 acres per 1,000 as a good ratio. Based on this criteria and the 2010 land use data for the City of La Mesa, the requirements are listed below:

- Existing Park / Open Space acres in La Mesa= 135.4 Acres of Park Land + 56 Acres of Public Open Space = **191.4 Acres Total**
- Suggested Parks and Open Space Acreage based on current population= **576.5 Acres**

In addition to land area, the NRPA has established guidelines for recreational facilities and activities. These guidelines for the activities currently established or desired in La Mesa are listed on Table 2.1.

A comparison of the NRPA guidelines to the existing conditions was compiled in Table 2.2 to determine shortages in facilities.

**Table 2.1—Population Based Park Standards for Facilities and Activities**

Activity / Facility	Number of Units per Population	Service Radius	Location Notes
Basketball	1 per 5,000	1/4 -1/2 mile	Usually in school, recreation center, or church facilities. Safe walking or bike access.
Tennis	1 court per 2,000	1/4 -1/2 mile	Best in batteries of 2-4. Located in neighborhood / community parks or adjacent to schools.
Baseball - Official and Little League	1 per 5,000	1/4 -1/2 mile	Part of a neighborhood complex. Lighted fields are part of a community complex.
Football	1 per 20,000	15-30 minutes travel time	Usually part of a baseball, football, soccer complex in a community park or adjacent to a high school.
Soccer	1 per 10,000	1-2 miles	Number of units depends on popularity. Youth soccer can be accommodated on smaller fields adjacent to schools or neighborhood parks.
Golf-driving Range	1 per 50,000	30 minutes travel time	Part of a golf course complex. A separate unit may be privately owned.
1/4 Mile Running Track	1 per 20,000	15-30 minutes travel time	Usually part of a high school or in a community park complex in combination with football, soccer, etc.
Softball	1 per 5,000	1/4 -1/2 mile	May also be used for youth baseball.
Trails	1 per 10,000	1 system per region	N/A
Golf- par 3, 18 hole	1 per 25,000	1/2 to 1 hour travel time	Course may be located in a community park, but should not be over 20 miles from the population center.
Swimming Pool	1 per 20,000 (pools should accommodate 3-5% of the population at a time)	15-30 minutes travel time	Pools for general community should be programmed for teaching, competitive and recreational purposes with enough depth (3.4m) to accommodate 1m and 3m diving boards. Located in a community park or school site.

**Table 2.2— Existing Park Facilities and Activities in La Mesa**

Activity / Facility	Suggested Standard based on La Mesa's current population	Current public facilities in La Mesa	Current private facilities in La Mesa*	Current joint-use facilities in La Mesa**	Total current public, private, and joint-use facilities in La Mesa
Basketball	12 Courts	3 Courts	1 Court	9 Courts	13 Courts
Tennis	29 Courts	9 Courts	-	2 Courts	11 Courts
Baseball - Official and Little League	12 Fields	6 Field	-	17 Fields	23 Fields
Football	3 Fields	2 Fields	-	1 Field	3 Field
Soccer	6 Fields	2 Field	2 Fields	1 Fields	5 Fields
Golf-driving Range	1 Range	1 Range	-	-	1 Range
1/4 Mile Running Track	3 Tracks	-	-	1 Track	1 Track
Softball	12 Fields	1 Fields	-	2 Fields	3 Fields
Trails	6 Systems	3 Systems	-	-	3 System
Golf- par 3, 18 hole	3 Courses	1 course locally, several other courses within a 20 mile radius	-	-	1 course locally, several other courses within a 20 mile radius
Swimming Pool	3 Pools	1 Pool	2 Pools	-	3 Pools

\*Includes Kroc Center, John A. Davis YMCA, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, and Indoor Soccer Center

\*\*Includes Junior Seau Sports Complex, The Club, and Current Joint Use Agreements with the La Mesa-Spring Valley School District and Grossmont Union High School District

### 2.2.3 EXISTING PROGRAMS TO ENCOURAGE ACTIVE HEALTHY LIVING

La Mesa Community Services offers a wide range of programs, as well as informational services, to people of all ages within the community. The programs are one of the reasons residents enjoy living in La Mesa. The department's instructional classes range from dance, gymnastics, arts, and swimming, to leisure activities such as creative writing and financial planning. Special events include: the La Mesa Flag Day Parade, “Sundays at Six” summer concert series, Transportation and Mobility Expo, Intergenerational Games, Park Appreciation Day, and other seasonal activities. Scholarship programs are offered for eligible residents and include GOLF-“Good Old La Mesa Fun” golf clinics.

The Community Services Department is responsible for the rentals of the Community Center, Nan Couts Cottage, Adult Enrichment Center, and Municipal Pool.

The department has ten full time staff (one of which is a grant funded limited term employee), a large cadre of part time seasonal instructors, and a large team of volunteers. The department has three commissions under its purview: the Community Services Commission, the Youth Advisory Commission, and the Commission on Aging. The Department operates under a City Council instituted policy of an overall cost recovery objective of 60% for all of the department revenue activities.

Some of the department's current projects include support to the *ready... set... Live Well* Community Wellness Initiative, creating opportunities to expand suggested walking routes to schools through a Safe Routes to School grant, expanding the *Rides 4 Neighbors* program to provide transportation to older adults and people with disabilities, and creating a master plan for Collier Park. The department aggressively pursues grants for park expansion, upgrades, and program enhancements.

The La Mesa Community Services Department provides staff support to the La Mesa Park and Recreation Foundation. In the last eight years, the Foundation has raised \$2 million in private dollars which was leveraged for over \$7 million in public grants for new park projects. First was the Junior Seau Sports Complex at Parkway Middle School, then the Teen Center at Highwood Park, and now *It's Child's Play* – a playground renovation project in 5 community parks.

The Foundation also provides a continuing opportunity to expand programming without impacting the City's budget by acting as the fiscal conduit for donations and grant funding that are only available to designated non-profit organizations. Some of the programs offered by the Foundation include support to *Project KAST* (Kids and Seniors Together), *Sundays at Six* summer concerts and *Kids Care Fest*. The Foundation also is the fiscal agent for the La Mesa Arts Alliance, a volunteer group dedicated to creating and supporting arts in La Mesa.

Within the department, there are several divisions of services to the community, including Aquatics, Classes and Instructional Services, Facilities, Human Services, and Sports.

### **Aquatics Division**

The Aquatics Division provides programming and services at the La Mesa Municipal Pool, located in MacArthur Park. Learn-to-swim and water safety instruction is provided for ages 6 months through senior adults. Recreational lap swimming, water exercise, and open public swimming programs are offered throughout the year with expanded hours during the peak summer months. Special programs include Stroke Clinics, Adapted Aquatics, and Special Olympics Swim Team. The Municipal Pool is also available to rent for private parties and group events.

### **Classes and Instructional Services**

Classes and Instructional Services is primarily responsible for providing instructional programs and seasonal and special events for youth and families. The division provides more than 100 different weekly classes in three sessions each year. These classes include dance, gymnastics, karate, and morning out pre-school, cooking, cheerleading and sports classes. Specialty camps are offered during summer months in topics such as science, theater, tennis, dance, ice-skating, and gymnastics. The department contracts out most of its classes to ensure that they are offering the latest in community interest. This division has been instrumental in establishing and operating the Project KAST program at a local elementary school. K.A.S.T. is an inter-generational program pairing senior volunteers with selected children in an after-school program designed to provide mentoring and support to students who may be at risk.

### **Facilities Division**

The Facilities Division has primary responsibility for issuing contracts and permits for rental use of the department's banquet facilities and activities within City parks. The La Mesa Community Center Arbor View Room is a popular site for weddings and birthday parties. The rentals provide important cost recovery for the City's operations. Several of the City's parks, including Harry Griffen Park and La Mesita Park, are available for outdoor events such as weddings, birthday parties, and memorial services.

### **Human Services Division**

The Human Services Division has the primary responsibility to oversee programming at the La Mesa Adult Enrichment Center. These programs include instructional classes such as painting, yoga, tai chi, bridge, creative writing, jewelry making, ceramics, dance, and aerobics. Social activities include Friday night dances, movie matinees, chess club, bridge, and pinochle. Wellness activities targeting the senior population include various health screenings throughout the year, exercise, fitness and nutrition classes, and a daily hot luncheon program. Services offered throughout the year include health insurance counseling, tax preparation assistance, social services, and legal assistance referral. Many seasonal and special events are held each year, including a Holiday Open House and informational forums and presentations on issues of interest to the senior population.

The Human Services Division also has oversight responsibilities for the City-wide Community Participation Program that provides volunteers in a variety of positions and roles throughout the City. Oversight includes recruitment, screening, tracking, and evaluating individuals placed in all departments within the City. These volunteers enhance City services and, in some instances, provide additional services that would not otherwise be available to the community. This program has added value to City services in excess of \$6 million since its inception. In December 2007, the division launched the new *Rides 4 Neighbors* program as noted above.

### **Sports Division**

The Sports Division is responsible for scheduling the use of athletic fields located within City parks and on some school facilities through a Community Recreation Agreements with the La Mesa-Spring Valley School District. This division provides staff support to the La Mesa Athletic Council.

### **Art Walk**

This two-mile walk highlights art throughout the downtown village and is a partnership between the La Mesa Art Alliance (LMAA) and the community. This walk includes elements such as utility boxes that have been transformed by local artists.

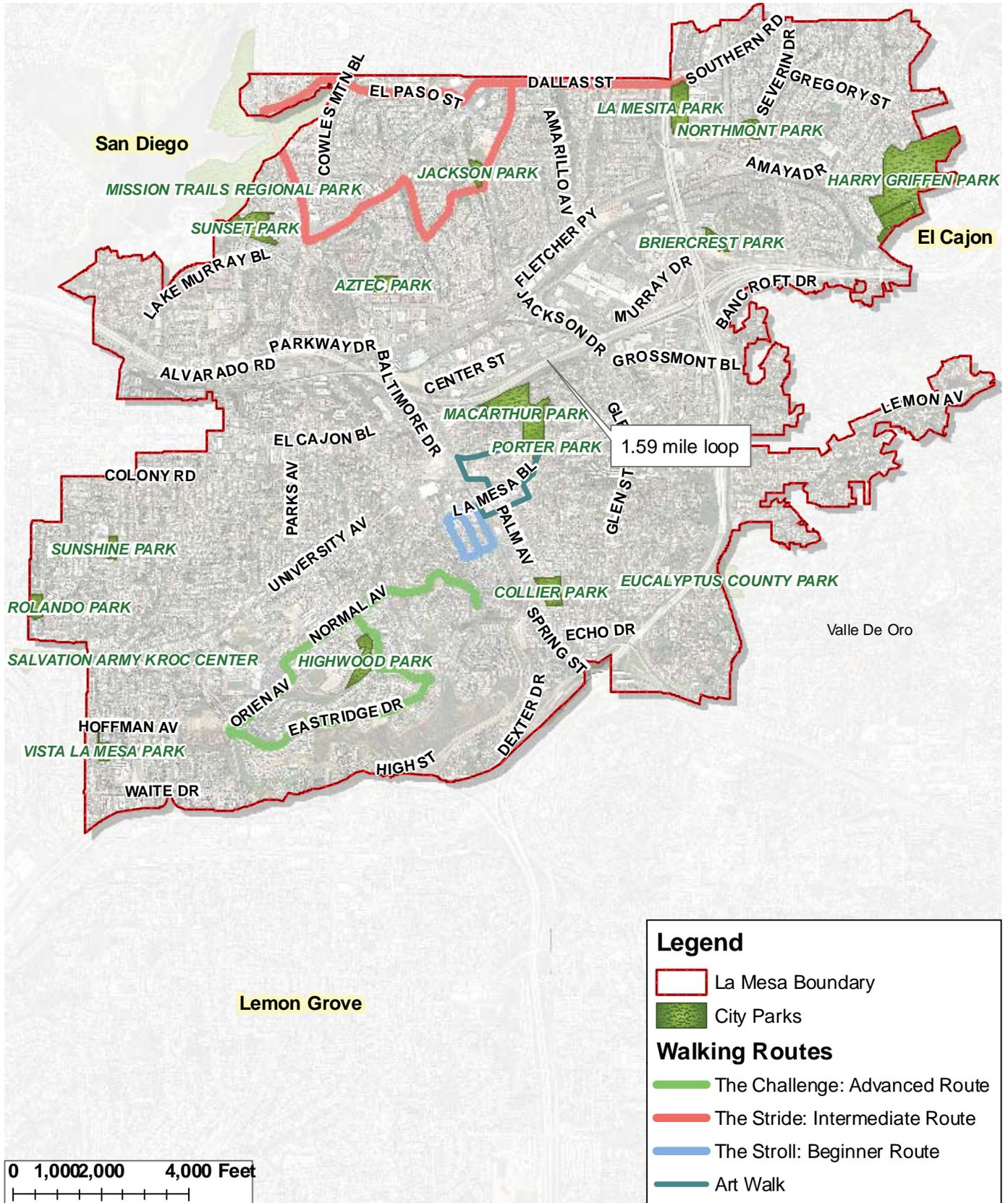
### **Walk La Mesa**

As part of the Live Well initiative, a current list of organized walks is made available by the City highlighting walks throughout La Mesa. These walks are for all ages and abilities with the goal of supporting a fit lifestyle.

### **Urban Walking Trails**

There are three different walking trails for different abilities. The "Stride" is an intermediate level five-mile route with slight hills which begins at Jackson Park. The "Challenge" begins at Highwood Park and is an advanced level, three and a half mile route with hills and steps. The "Stroll" is a flat, one-mile beginner route and starts at the La Mesa Railroad Depot. Each route is marked with color coded directional markers for the community so that anyone can walk anytime. These trails are shown in Figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1—Existing Urban Walking Trails



## 2.2.4 PRIVATELY PROVIDED RECREATION PROGRAMS

There are several privately owned recreational programs within the City of La Mesa. Not all these facilities and opportunities are available to the general public to utilize because of fees associated with usage. However, these are considered supplemental assets to the City's recreational programs.

### **Salvation Army Kroc Center**

The Salvation Army Kroc Center opened to the public on June 19, 2002 and is located in the Rolando community at 6845 University Avenue adjacent to the City of La Mesa. This facility is 12.4 acres and serves the cities of La Mesa and Lemon Grove, but is also utilized by a variety of residents in southeast San Diego County. The facility includes opportunities in art, athletics, personal development, spiritual discovery, and community service. There is an aquatic facility containing three pools, sports clubs, a fitness center, an NHL regulation-sized ice rink, a rock climbing wall, basketball courts, and an indoor skate park.



The Pool and Ice Arena at Kroc Center

### **East County Family YMCA (John A. Davis Family YMCA)**

The East County Family YMCA is located at 8881 Dallas Street in La Mesa and provides a variety of fitness programs and facilities. The YMCA is located within La Mesita Park.

### **Boys and Girls Club**

The Boys and Girls Club is located in Hollywood Park. Also called "The Club," this facility provides various activities to teens throughout La Mesa.

### **Indoor Soccer Center**

This indoor soccer center is located at Murray Drive in La Mesa and a single indoor field is available for recreational play. This field supports various leagues.



The John A. Davis Family YMCA

### **Businesses Offering Fitness Services**

Opportunities for physical fitness in the City are also provided by the business community. Each year, the City reviews business license applications for a variety of fitness-related businesses. These include full service gyms, such as 24-Hour Fitness, smaller boutique gyms, such as Curves for Women, and businesses offering body conditioning classes, such as dance, yoga, pilates, martial arts, and boxing.

**Table 2.3—Businesses Offering Fitness Services**

Business Name	Address Number	Street
24 Hour Fitness #101	7450	University Avenue
24 Hour Fitness #178	5601	Grossmont Center Drive
White Dragon Martial Arts Schools	7127	University Avenue
Bunny's School of Ballet	8062	La Mesa Boulevard
LeBlanc's Taekwondo & Kickboxing	8217	La Mesa Boulevard
BKS Iyengar Yoga Center	8285	La Mesa Boulevard
Jeri Kish School of Ballet	8241	La Mesa Boulevard
A Gentle Way	8274	Parkway Drive
Curves for Women	8677	La Mesa Boulevard
La Mesa Indoor Soccer	9586	Murray Drive
Heart & Soul Yoga & Healing Arts Center	8558	La Mesa Boulevard
The Center for Creative & Playful Acts	8241	La Mesa Boulevard
Pilates Mind and Body	8881	Fletcher Parkway
The Element Dance Center	5919	Severin Drive
East County Family Martial Arts	5288	Baltimore Drive
Bend Fitness	5264	Baltimore Drive
McKenna's Martial Arts and Fitness	8314	Parkway Drive
Lake Murray Fitness	5611	Lake Murray Boulevard
Village Gym	8227	La Mesa Boulevard
Jiu Jitsu Foundation	8674	La Mesa Boulevard
San Diego Sports	7200	Parkway Drive
B Fit La Mesa	5500	Grossmont Center Drive
Cital Boxing and Nutrition	7323	El Cajon Boulevard

Source: HDL Query for 050 (Health Spa/Fitness); 064 (Recreation-Instructor/Training); and 083 (Recreational). Does not include recreation contractors that hold classes at the Community Center or business located in public parks, such as the Challenge Center and Sun Valley Golf Course.

**Private Recreational Amenities serving Residential Communities**

Private recreation amenities serving residential communities supplement the public park system. The City's Municipal Code requires that recreation and leisure open space be provided within each residential development. The code states that common open space may include game courts or rooms, play lots, putting greens, roof gardens, sun decks, swimming pools, and similar areas that serve all residents of the development. The requirement for recreational space is not to be construed to prescribe any specific type of recreation, but rather may be for any kind of recreational use, whether it is passive or active. To satisfy code requirements, single family developments provide private yard areas to serve each home site. In addition, Planned Residential Developments (PRDs) are single family developments that feature common recreational or open space amenities. The amenities may vary from lawn areas, to tot lots, to hillsides with natural vegetation. Multi-family developments, such as condominium or apartments complexes, also provide common recreational amenities, such as a swimming pool, clubhouse or private gym.

**Private Open Space**

Private open space includes canyon lands south of I-8 and a larger open space area within the City's Eastridge neighborhood located to the north of SR-94. These areas are designated for Open Space use in the City's General Plan. In these areas, development will be restricted and open space will be managed in accordance with Council policies and the City's Habitat Conservation Plan and Implementing Agreement with State and Federal wildlife agencies.



## CHAPTER 3

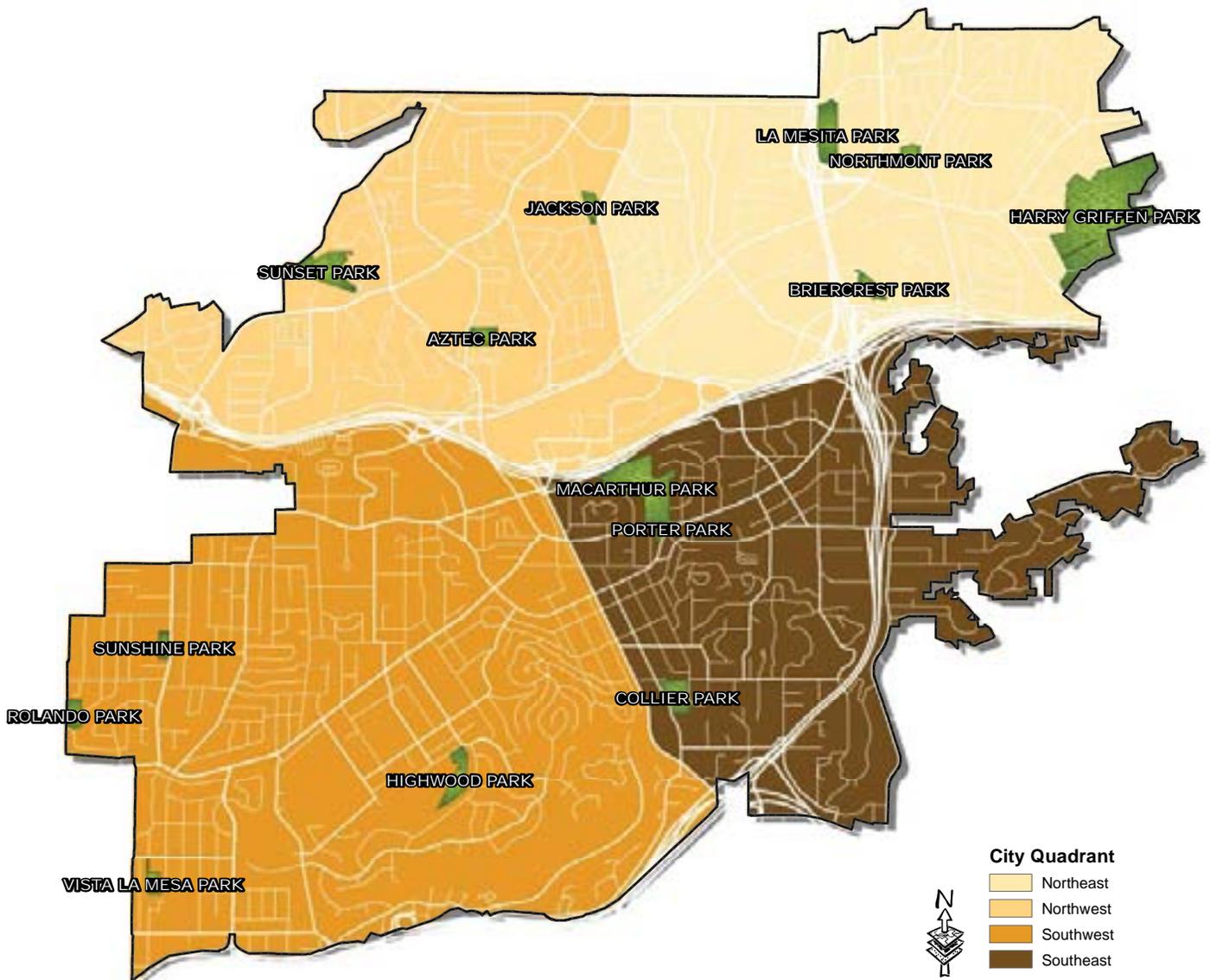
### 3.0 INVENTORY AND EXISTING CONDITIONS

An inventory of the existing park assets and existing conditions, along with access to parks, was completed through fieldwork by volunteers and the design team. These conditions were documented and analyzed against existing policies to find deficiencies and surpluses.

### 3.1 EXISTING PARK PROFILES

The City of La Mesa maintains a total of 14 public parks that provide for a variety of recreational opportunities. These parks are distributed throughout the City and all fall into one of four different quadrants of the City, as shown in Figure 3.1. These quadrants are defined by major vehicular corridors that act as barriers and include the Northwest, Northeast, Southwest, and Southeast. These quadrants are used to determine the equitable distribution of community parks and special facilities. Access to these community level parks may or may not be by foot, and a 15-minute walk time is not a criteria for their distribution.

Figure 3.1—City Quadrants



This map shows the distribution of City parks and quadrant boundaries. The City uses this quadrant map for community surveying purposes as a way to ensure that all resident input is gathered. La Mesa parks are distributed fairly well throughout the City with the exception of the northeastern part of the southwest quadrant.

The 14 individual parks of La Mesa total almost 136 acres. Each of these park's service areas, based on a 15-minute walk time within the road network, were analyzed, and an inventory of all facilities within the individual parks was completed. Facilities are also summarized in the following table by quadrant (see Table 3.1 and Table 3.2).

**Table 3.1—Existing Public Facilities Summary by Quadrant**

	Northwest	Northeast	Southwest	Southeast
Group Picnic Areas	Y	Y	Y	Y
Individual Picnic Tables	Y	Y	Y	Y
Benches	Y	Y	Y	Y
Barbecues	Y	Y	Y	Y
Tot Lots (2-5 years old)	Y	Y	Y	Y
Children's Playgrounds (5-12 years old)	Y	Y	Y	Y
Pool Facilities / Splash Pads	-	-	-	Y
Walking/Running Trails	Y	Y	Y	-
Parcourses	-	Y	-	Y
Off-leash Dog Areas	-	Y	-	-
Tennis Courts	-	Y	-	Y
Basketball	Y	-	-	Y
Soccer Field / Football	-	Y	-	-
Baseball/Softball	Y	Y	Y	Y
Skate Parks	-	Y	-	-
Horseshoes	-	Y	Y	Y
Golf	-	-	-	Y
Informal Passive Play Area (sloped)	Y	Y	Y	-
Informal Passive Play Area (flat)	-	Y	Y	Y
On-site Parking	Y	Y	Y	Y
Restrooms	Y	Y	Y	Y
Amphitheaters	-	Y	-	-

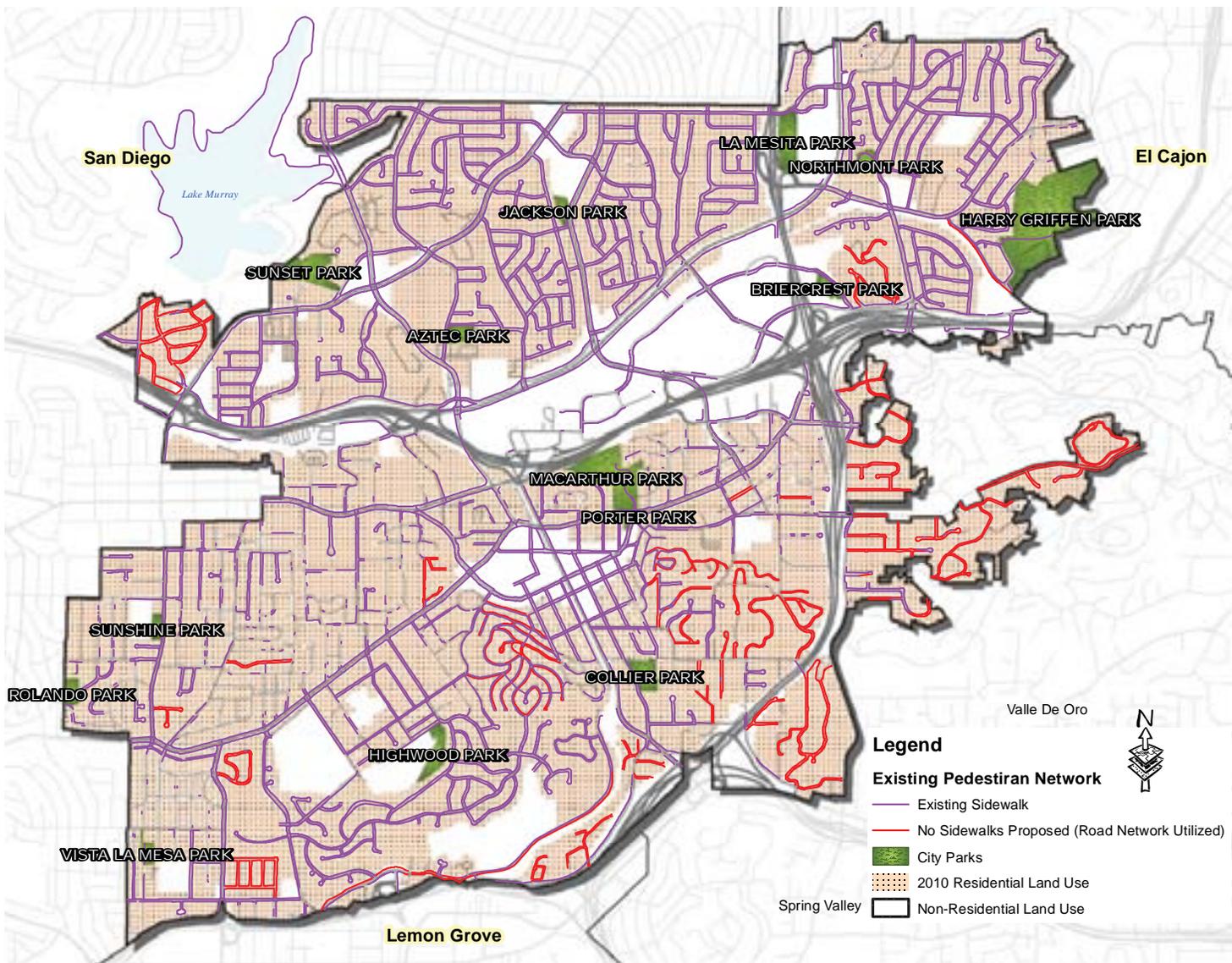
**Table 3.2—Existing Public and Private\* Facilities Summary by Quadrant**

	Northwest	Northeast	Southwest	Southeast
Group Picnic Area	Y	Y	Y	Y
Individual Picnic Tables	Y	Y	Y	Y
Benches	Y	Y	Y	Y
Barbecues	Y	Y	Y	Y
Tot Lots (2-5 years old)	Y	Y	Y	Y
Children's Playgrounds (5-12 years old)	Y	Y	Y	Y
Pool Facilities / Splash Pads	-	Y	Y	Y
Walking/Running Trails	Y	Y	Y	-
Parcourses	-	Y	-	Y
Off-leash Dog Areas	-	Y	-	-
Tennis Courts	-	Y	-	Y
Basketball	Y	-	Y	Y
Soccer Field / Football	-	Y	Y	-
Baseball/Softball	Y	Y	Y	Y
Skate Parks or Plazas	-	Y	Y	-
Horseshoes	-	Y	Y	Y
Golf	-	-	-	Y
Informal Passive Play Area (sloped)	Y	Y	Y	-
Informal Passive Play Area (flat)	-	Y	Y	Y
On-site Parking	Y	Y	Y	Y
Restrooms	Y	Y	Y	Y
Amphitheaters	-	Y	-	-

\*Includes Kroc Center, John A. Davis YMCA, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, and Indoor Soccer Center

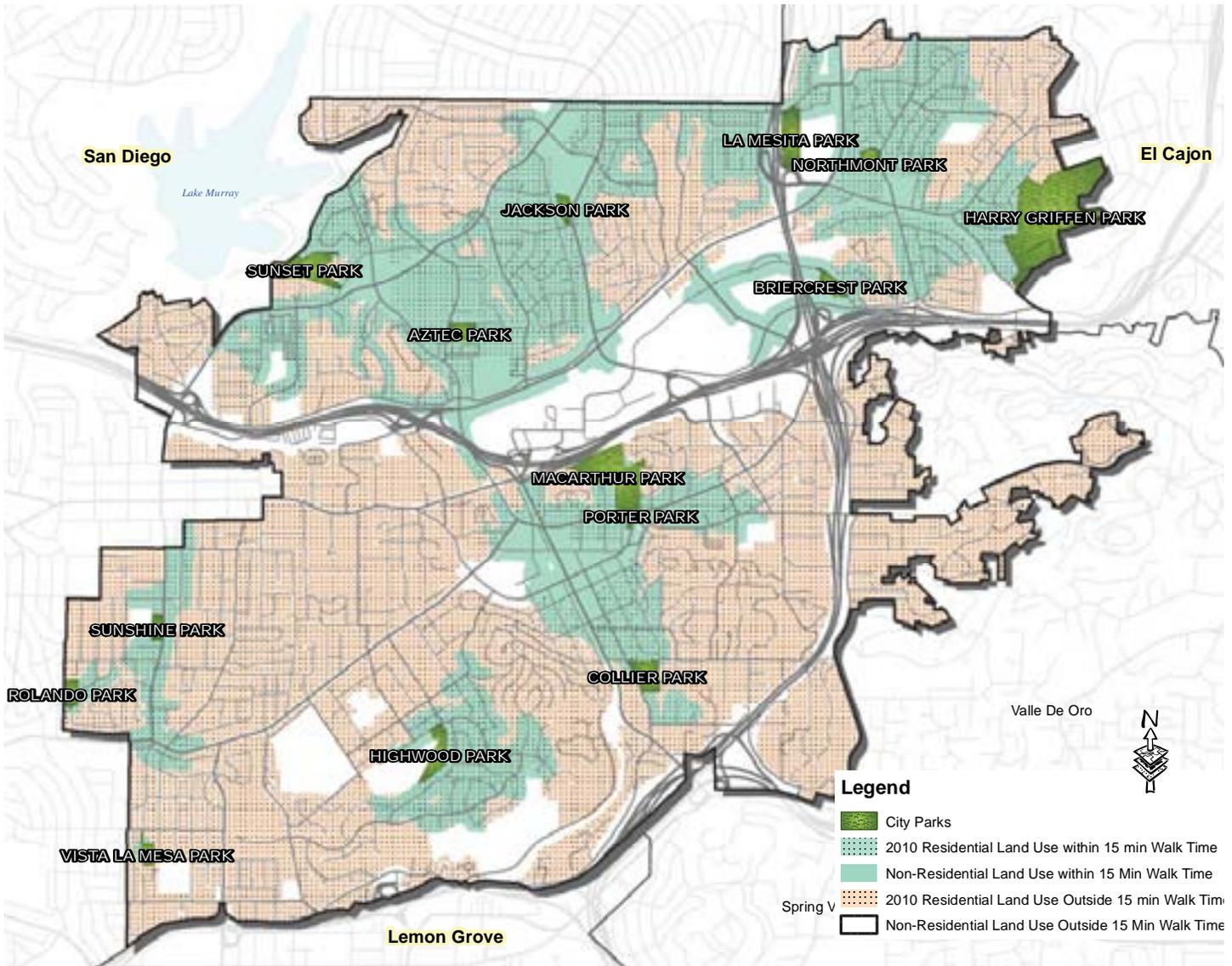
The maps in this chapter and in Figure 3.3 delineate the existing service area. The existing service areas begin at the park and utilize the existing sidewalks, or road networks in neighborhoods where there or no future sidewalks proposed, and moves out a distance which equates to a 15-minute walk time. The existing sidewalk network is shown in purple, and neighborhoods that utilize the road as a pedestrian connection are shown in red.

Figure 3.2— Existing Network



Where there are gaps in the sidewalk, the network is assumed to be broken and does not provide universal access. These gaps limit pedestrian access. Using the existing sidewalks, or the road in neighborhoods where there are no planned sidewalks, and a 15-minute walk time, a person can walk the distances indicated in green. This is the existing service and reflects any existing gaps in the network, as shown Figure 3.3. The service areas was evaluated in the same way for individual parks and can be seen in the following maps describing each park.

**Figure 3.3—Existing Conditions Composite Park Service Area**



### 3.1.1 NORTHWEST QUADRANT

The Northwest Quadrant includes Aztec Park, Jackson Park, and Sunset Park.

#### AZTEC PARK

Aztec Park consists of large, mature shade trees with large expanses of rolling turf areas for informal play. There are also group and individual picnic areas throughout, a restroom building, and children's playground. On-site parking is not available, but parking is available along the adjacent street.



**Address:**

7945 Morocco Drive

La Mesa, CA 91942

Corner of Aztec Drive & Morocco Drive

**Type of Park:**

Neighborhood Park

**Acres and Parking:**

3.96 acres

Street parking only



**Table 3.3—Existing Facilities- Aztec Park**

Group Picnic Area	Y
Individual Picnic Tables	Y
Benches	Y
Barbecue	Y
Tot Lot (2-5 years old)	Y
Children's Playground (5-12 years old)	Y
Pool Facilities / Splash Pad	-
Walking/Running Trails	-
Parcourse	-
Off-leash Dog Area	-
Tennis Courts	-
Basketball	-
Soccer Field / Football	-
Baseball/Softball	-
Skate Park or Plaza	-
Horseshoes	-
Golf	-
Informal Passive Play Area (sloped)	Y
Informal Passive Play Area (flat)	-
On-site Parking	-
Restroom	Y
Amphitheater	-

Figure 3.4—Existing Park Service Area- Aztec Park



The existing service area using a 15 minute walk time and the existing walking network reflecting existing gaps.





**JACKSON PARK**

Jackson Park is made up of large lawn areas with mature shade trees. It is situated on land owned by the La Mesa-Spring Valley School District and is operated by the City as a public park. It is the starting point for the Stride Urban Walking Trail, which is an intermediate level, five-mile walk. The park's playground was recently renovated by the La Mesa Park and Recreation Foundation. On-site parking is available, as well as a restroom facility, and individual and group picnicking.

**Address:**

5870 Jackson Drive

La Mesa, CA 91942

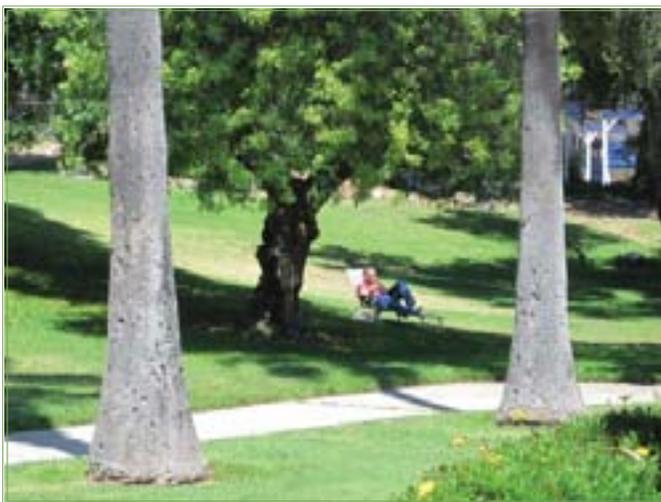
**Type of Park:**

Neighborhood Park

**Acres and Parking:**

3.68 acres

Parking for 21 cars



**Table 3.4—Existing Facilities- Jackson Park**

Group Picnic Area	Y
Individual Picnic Tables	Y
Benches	-
Barbecue	-
Tot Lot (2-5 years old)	Y
Children's Playground (5-12 years old)	Y
Pool Facilities / Splash Pad	-
Walking/Running Trails	Y
Parcourse	-
Off-leash Dog Area	-
Tennis Courts	-
Basketball	-
Soccer Field / Football	-
Baseball/Softball	-
Skate Park or Plaza	-
Horseshoes	-
Golf	-
Informal Passive Play Area (sloped)	Y
Informal Passive Play Area (flat)	-
On-site Parking	Y
Restroom	Y
Amphitheater	-

Figure 3.5—Existing Park Service Area- Jackson Park



The existing service area using a 15 minute walk time and the existing walking network reflecting existing gaps.





**SUNSET PARK**

Sunset Park is an older facility with several recreational opportunities. It is adjacent to Lake Murray, but lacks a formal connection. Historically, the site served as the San Diego Chargers training facility, but today has two ball fields, a playground, and a basketball court. It is also the site of the Challenge Center, which helps to improve health, function and quality of life for those living with severe physical disability. This building is owned by the City of La Mesa and leased to the Challenge Center on a year-to-year basis.

**Address:**

5540 Lake Park Way

La Mesa, CA 91942

**Type of Park:**

Neighborhood Park

**Acres and Parking:**

6.69 acres

Parking for 50 cars



**Table 3.5—Existing Facilities- Sunset Park**

Group Picnic Area	-
Individual Picnic Tables	Y
Benches	-
Barbecue	-
Tot Lot (2-5 years old)	-
Children's Playground (5-12 years old)	Y
Pool Facilities / Splash Pad	-
Walking/Running Trails	-
Parcourse	-
Off-leash Dog Area	-
Tennis Courts	-
Basketball	Y
Soccer Field / Football	-
Baseball/Softball	Y
Skate Park or Plaza	-
Horseshoes	-
Golf	-
Informal Passive Play Area (sloped)	-
Informal Passive Play Area (flat)	-
On-site Parking	Y
Restroom	Y
Amphitheater	-

Figure 3.6—Existing Park Service Area- Sunset Park



The existing service area using a 15 minute walk time and the existing walking network reflecting existing gaps.



### 3.1.2 NORTHEAST QUADRANT

The Northeast Quadrant includes Briercrest Park, Harry Griffen Park, La Mesita Park, and Northmont Park.

#### BRIERCREST PARK

Briercrest is a sensory park where guests can enjoy peaceful gardens and walkways. This park was redeveloped to provide seniors and the physically challenged a variety of opportunities to explore and enjoy outdoor recreation and fitness. It includes rolling hills, an herb garden, and non-traditional children's play equipment. Restrooms, benches, and individual and group picnic are also available throughout the site. Parking is shared with the adjacent Grossmont Health Care Center. On-street parking is also available.



**Address:**

9001 Wakarusa Street  
La Mesa, CA 91941

**Type of Park:**

Neighborhood Park

**Acres and Parking:**

3.0 acres

Street and shared parking



**Table 3.6—Existing Facilities- Briercrest Park**

Group Picnic Area	Y
Individual Picnic Tables	Y
Benches	Y
Barbecue	-
Tot Lot (2-5 years old)	Y
Children's Playground (5-12 years old)	Y
Pool Facilities / Splash Pad	-
Walking/Running Trails	-
Parcourse	-
Off-leash Dog Area	-
Tennis Courts	-
Basketball	-
Soccer Field / Football	-
Baseball/Softball	-
Skate Park or Plaza	-
Horseshoes	-
Golf	-
Informal Passive Play Area (sloped)	Y
Informal Passive Play Area (flat)	-
On-site Parking	Y
Restroom	Y
Amphitheater	-

Figure 3.7—Existing Park Service Area- Briercrest Park



The existing service area using a 15 minute walk time and the existing walking network reflecting existing gaps.





**HARRY GRIFFEN PARK**

Harry Griffen Park is operated as part of a Joint Powers Authority composed of the Helix Water District, Grossmont Union High School District, the County of San Diego, and the cities of El Cajon and La Mesa. It includes a large amphitheater that is utilized for special events. A large informal grass area sits on top of an underground reservoir and is currently being utilized for free play. An off-leash dog run is located in the park and used frequently, as are the extensive walking and hiking trails. Individual and group picnicking, on-site parking, a restroom facility, and children's play structure can also be found within the park. This park is scheduled to receive a new picnic pavilion and roof on the restroom through CIP funds.

**Address:**

9550 Mildred Street

La Mesa, CA 91942

Adjacent to Grossmont High School

**Type of Park:**

Regional Park

**Acres and Parking:**

53 acres

Parking for 181 cars



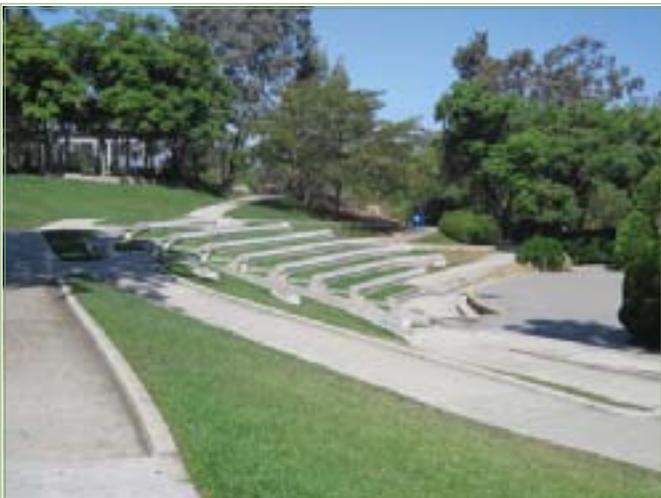
**Table 3.7—Existing Facilities- Harry Griffen Park**

Group Picnic Area	Y
Individual Picnic Tables	Y
Benches	Y
Barbecue	Y
Tot Lot (2-5 years old)	Y
Children's Playground (5-12 years old)	Y
Pool Facilities / Splash Pad	-
Walking/Running Trails	Y
Parcourse	-
Off-leash Dog Area	Y
Tennis Courts	-
Basketball	-
Soccer Field / Football	Y
Baseball/Softball	-
Skate Park or Plaza	-
Horseshoes	Y
Golf	-
Informal Passive Play Area (sloped)	-
Informal Passive Play Area (flat)	Y
On-site Parking	Y
Restroom	Y
Amphitheater	Y

Figure 3.8—Existing Park Service Area- Harry Griffin Park



The existing service area using a 15 minute walk time and the existing walking network reflecting existing gaps.





### 3.1.2.3 LA MESITA PARK

La Mesita Park houses the John A. Davis YMCA and is adjacent to the Junior Seau Sports Complex. It includes open space for informal play, large shade trees, and play equipment. There is a concrete track that is utilized by young children to ride tricycles and scooters. This park also includes recently renovated tennis courts, and a skate park for skateboarders and in-line skating. The Junior Seau Complex includes full-sized lighted ball fields and football/soccer fields. The fields are only available by permit. The park's playground has been targeted to receive renovations by the La Mesa Park and Recreation Foundation, and new picnic pavilions with CIP funds. In addition, new trail fitness equipment will be installed with CIP funds. The YMCA is in a 25-year lease agreement with the City of La Mesa, which began in 2004.

This lease is for the property and improvements on and to the property within the park, including parking with an agreement to

complete Phase I and an option to complete Phase II and III. The three phases have been completed except for an additional pool, which was optional within Phase III and based on community needs.

**Address:**

8855 Dallas Street / 9009 Park Plaza Drive

La Mesa, CA 91942

**Type of Park:**

Neighborhood Park

**Acres and Parking:**

12.85 acres

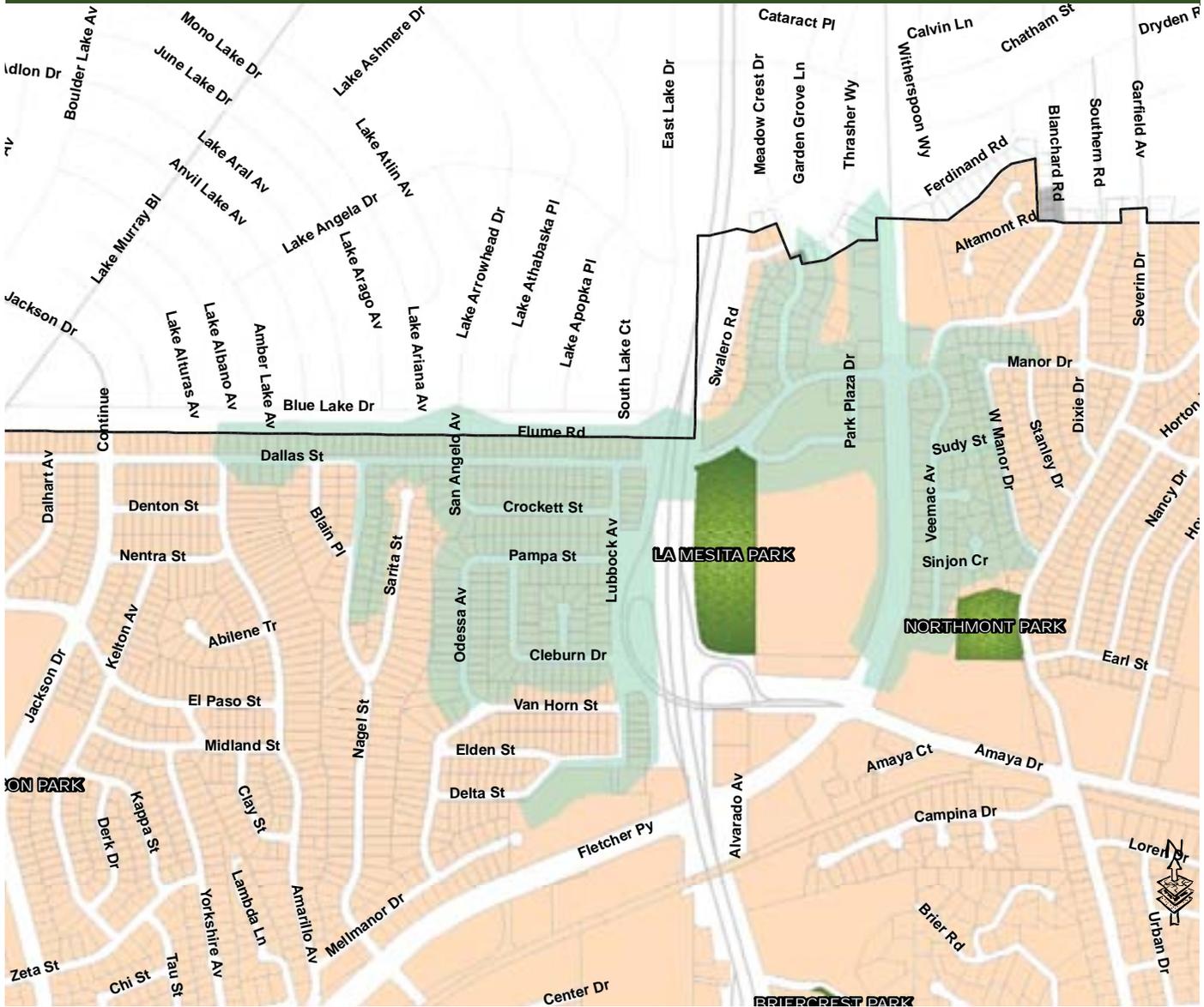
Parking for 80 cars



**Table 3.8—Existing Facilities- La Mesita Park**

Group Picnic Area	Y
Individual Picnic Tables	Y
Benches	Y
Barbecue	Y
Tot Lot (2-5 years old)	Y
Children's Playground (5-12 years old)	Y
Pool Facilities / Splash Pad	-
Walking/Running Trails	Y
Parcourse	-
Off-leash Dog Area	-
Tennis Courts	Y
Basketball	-
Soccer Field / Football	Y
Baseball/Softball	Y
Skate Park or Plaza	Y
Horseshoes	-
Golf	-
Informal Passive Play Area (sloped)	Y
Informal Passive Play Area (flat)	Y
On-site Parking	Y
Restroom	Y
Amphitheater	-

Figure 3.9—Existing Park Service Area- La Mesita Park



The existing service area using a 15 minute walk time and the existing walking network reflecting existing gaps.





**NORTHMONT PARK**

Northmont Park is a quiet park with rolling turf areas and several large shade trees. It provides space for more passive activities. The park's playground has been targeted to receive renovations by the La Mesa Park and Recreation Foundation, and CIP funds will provide new picnic pavilions. On-site parking, a restroom facility, individual picnic areas, and an older par course are also available.

**Address:**

6030 Severin Drive

La Mesa, CA 91942

**Type of Park:**

Neighborhood Park

**Acres and Parking:**

5.05 acres

Parking for 10 cars



**Table 3.9—Existing Facilities- Northmont Park**

Group Picnic Area	-
Individual Picnic Tables	Y
Benches	Y
Barbecue	Y
Tot Lot (2-5 years old)	-
Children's Playground (5-12 years old)	Y
Pool Facilities / Splash Pad	-
Walking/Running Trails	Y
Parcourse	Y
Off-leash Dog Area	-
Tennis Courts	-
Basketball	-
Soccer Field / Football	-
Baseball/Softball	-
Skate Park or Plaza	-
Horseshoes	-
Golf	-
Informal Passive Play Area (sloped)	Y
Informal Passive Play Area (flat)	Y
On-site Parking	Y
Restroom	Y
Amphitheater	-

Figure 3.10—Existing Park Service Area- Northmont Park



The existing service area using a 15 minute walk time and the existing walking network reflecting existing gaps.



### 3.1.3 SOUTHWEST QUADRANT

The Southwest Quadrant is made up of Highwood Park, Rolando Park, Sunshine Park, and Vista La Mesa Park.



#### HIGHWOOD PARK

Highwood Park is very under-utilized, but has great potential for additional programming and access connections. The park includes group and individual picnic areas, a children's playground, sloped lawn areas for informal play, and a restroom. It is the starting point for the Challenge Urban Walking trail, which continues on a 3.5 mile advanced walk through the community. "The Club" Teen Center, operated by the Boys & Girls Clubs of East County, is also located in this park.

This property is owned by La Mesa-Spring Valley School District and operated by the City as a park.

**Table 3.10—Existing Facilities- Highwood Park**

Group Picnic Area	Y
Individual Picnic Tables	Y
Benches	-
Barbecue	Y
Tot Lot (2-5 years old)	-
Children's Playground (5-12 years old)	Y
Pool Facilities / Splash Pad	-
Walking/Running Trails	y
Parcourse	-
Off-leash Dog Area	-
Tennis Courts	-
Basketball	-
Soccer Field / Football	-
Baseball/Softball	-
Skate Park or Plaza	-
Horseshoes	-
Golf	-
Informal Passive Play Area (sloped)	Y
Informal Passive Play Area (flat)	-
On-site Parking	Y
Restroom	Y
Amphitheater	-

**Address:**

7777 Junior High Drive

La Mesa, CA 91941

Adjacent to La Mesa Middle School

**Type of Park:**

Neighborhood Park

**Acres and Parking:**

8.0 acres

Parking for 42 cars



Figure 3.11—Existing Park Service Area- Highwood Park



The existing service area using a 15 minute walk time and the existing walking network reflecting existing gaps.





## ROLANDO PARK

Rolando Park is oriented around two baseball fields and is utilized by the Little League. It includes a concession stand, batting cages, restrooms, picnic tables, and a shaded area for children's play structures. There is very limited space for other recreational development. In 2009, the San Diego Padres revitalized one of the ball fields.

### Address:

6600 Vigo Drive

La Mesa, CA 91942

### Type of Park:

Neighborhood Park

### Acres and Parking:

3.56 acres

Parking for 40 cars



**Table 3.11—Existing Facilities- Rolando Park**

Group Picnic Area	Y
Individual Picnic Tables	Y
Benches	Y
Barbecue	Y
Tot Lot (2-5 years old)	Y
Children's Playground (5-12 years old)	Y
Pool Facilities / Splash Pad	-
Walking/Running Trails	-
Parcourse	-
Off-leash Dog Area	-
Tennis Courts	-
Basketball	-
Soccer Field / Football	-
Baseball/Softball	Y
Skate Park or Plaza	-
Horseshoes	-
Golf	-
Informal Passive Play Area (sloped)	-
Informal Passive Play Area (flat)	-
On-site Parking	Y
Restroom	Y
Amphitheater	-





**SUNSHINE PARK**

Sunshine Park is adjacent to Rolando Elementary School and is on La Mesa-Spring Valley School District property. It is adjacent to a highly trafficked street, 70th Street. There is no on-site parking and it consists of a multipurpose field, restrooms, and picnic area. Access to this park is difficult and it is under-utilized. It does not contain many programmed features, but has great potential for additional recreation development. ADA upgrades and new picnic pavilions have been scheduled for this park and will be installed with CIP funds.

**Address:**

4554 70th Street

La Mesa, CA 91941

70th Street and Tower Street

**Type of Park:**

Neighborhood Park

**Acres and Parking:**

2.31 acres

Street parking only



**Table 3.12—Existing Facilities- Sunshine Park**

Group Picnic Area	Y
Individual Picnic Tables	Y
Benches	-
Barbecue	Y
Tot Lot (2-5 years old)	-
Children's Playground (5-12 years old)	-
Pool Facilities / Splash Pad	-
Walking/Running Trails	-
Parcourse	-
Off-leash Dog Area	-
Tennis Courts	-
Basketball	-
Soccer Field / Football	-
Baseball/Softball	-
Skate Park or Plaza	-
Horseshoes	-
Golf	-
Informal Passive Play Area (sloped)	-
Informal Passive Play Area (flat)	y
On-site Parking	-
Restroom	Y
Amphitheater	-

Figure 3.13—Existing Park Service Area- Sunshine Park



The existing service area using a 15 minute walk time and the existing walking network reflecting existing gaps.





**VISTA LA MESA PARK**

Vista La Mesa Park includes a Little League field, as well as several other program elements. These elements include a restroom and concession stand, older and younger children's play equipment, individual and group picnic areas, and a fenced in horseshoe pit. The parking is along the main street. The park's playground has been targeted to receive renovations by the La Mesa Park and Recreation Foundation. It appears there was an existing picnic pavilion over the group picnic area that was removed, but will be replaced through Capital Improvement Plans. Concept plans are also being developed for this park.

**Table 3.13—Existing Facilities- Vista La Mesa Park**

Group Picnic Area	Y
Individual Picnic Tables	Y
Benches	Y
Barbecue	Y
Tot Lot (2-5 years old)	Y
Children's Playground (5-12 years old)	Y
Pool Facilities / Splash Pad	-
Walking/Running Trails	-
Parcourse	-
Off-leash Dog Area	-
Tennis Courts	-
Basketball	-
Soccer Field / Football	-
Baseball/Softball	Y
Skate Park or Plaza	-
Horseshoes	Y
Golf	-
Informal Passive Play Area (sloped)	-
Informal Passive Play Area (flat)	Y
On-site Parking	Y
Restroom	Y
Amphitheater	-

**Address:**

King Street and Hoffman Street

**Type of Park:**

Neighborhood Park

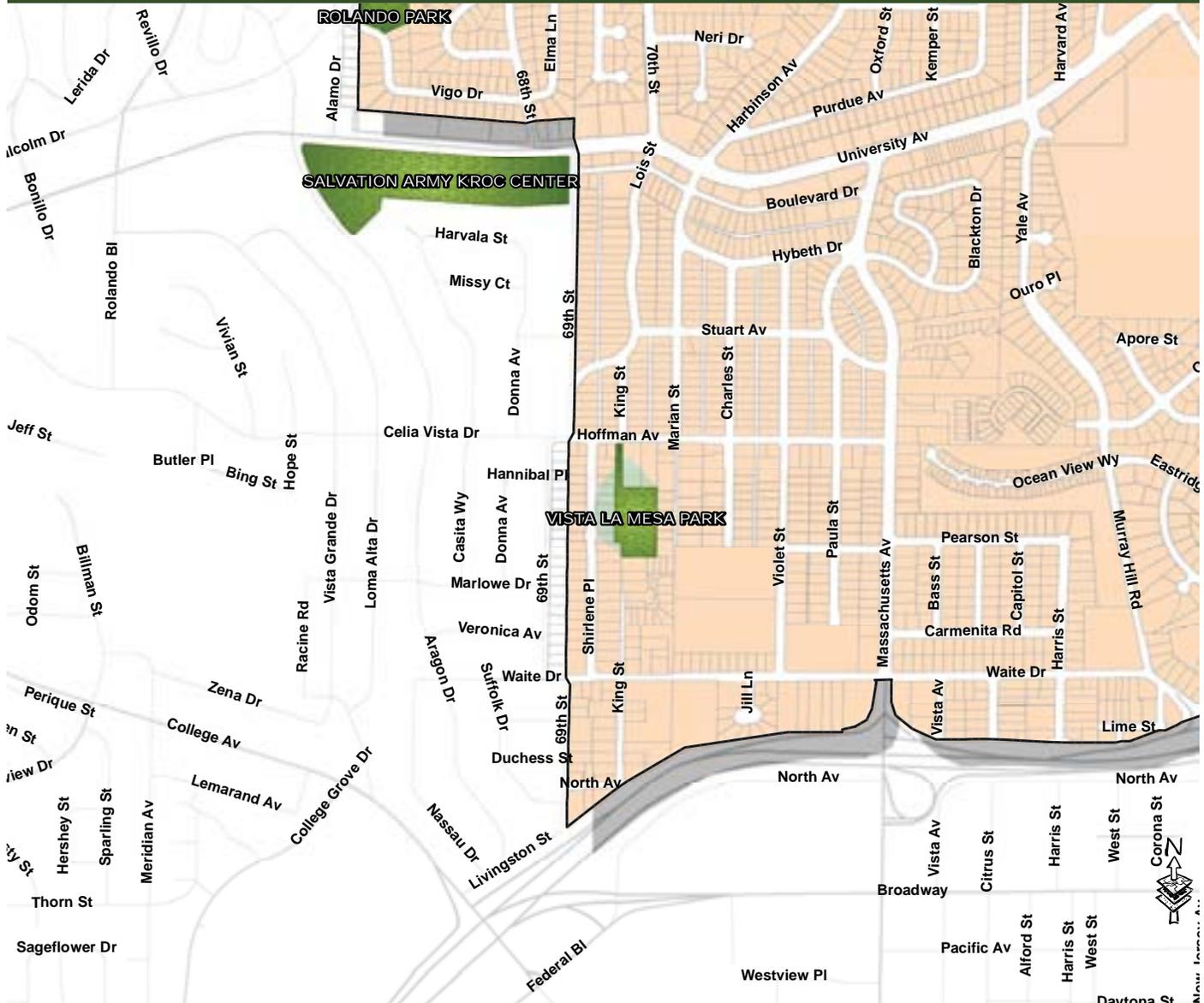
**Acres and Parking:**

2.74 acres

Parking for 25 cars



Figure 3.14—Existing Park Service Area- Vista La Mesa



The existing service area using a 15 minute walk time and the existing walking network reflecting existing gaps.



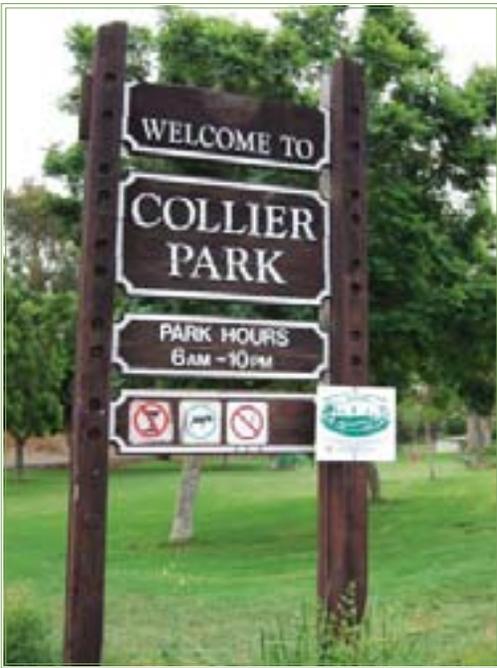
### 3.1.5 SOUTHEAST QUADRANT

The Southeast Quadrant contains Collier Park, MacArthur Park, and Porter Park.

#### COLLIER PARK

Collier Park includes lit tennis courts, children's play areas, a picnic area, and a restroom facility. Collier Park is the City's oldest park and is currently going through renovation planning. The park's playground has been targeted to receive renovations by the La Mesa Park and Recreation Foundation. It has also recently been master planned and has been divided into two phases.

Once funding is available, the implementation of this master plan will greatly encourage new visitors. It will increase the program within the park, providing both passive and active activities.



**Address:**

4401 Palm Avenue

**Type of Park:**

Neighborhood Park

**Acres and Parking:**

7.7 acres

Parking for 25 cars



**Table 3.14—Existing Facilities- Collier Park**

Group Picnic Area	-
Individual Picnic Tables	Y
Benches	Y
Barbecue	Y
Tot Lot (2-5 years old)	Y
Children's Playground (5-12 years old)	Y
Pool Facilities / Splash Pad	-
Walking/Running Trails	-
Parcourse	-
Off-leash Dog Area	-
Tennis Courts	Y
Basketball	-
Soccer Field / Football	-
Baseball/Softball	-
Skate Park or Plaza	-
Horseshoes	-
Golf	-
Informal Passive Play Area (sloped)	-
Informal Passive Play Area (flat)	Y
On-site Parking	Y
Restroom	Y
Amphitheater	-

Figure 3.15—Existing Park Service Area- Collier Park



The existing service area using a 15 minute walk time and the existing walking network reflecting existing gaps.





**MACARTHUR PARK**

MacArthur Park contains a variety of activities. It includes a municipal pool, and Nan Coutts Cottage is often utilized for events. The park includes a community center, a recreation center, and a baseball field. In addition, picnic areas, children's play equipment, on-site parking, restrooms, and basketball courts can be found within this park. The nine hole, par three golf course occupies a majority of the park and also includes a driving range and putting and chipping area. Porter Hall is also located in MacArthur Park and is the home of the Foothills Art Association Art Gallery.

**Address:**

4975 Memorial Drive

La Mesa, CA 91942

Corner of University Avenue and Memorial Drive

**Type of Park:**

Community Park

**Acres and Parking:**

22.22 acres

Parking for 290 cars



**Table 3.15—Existing Facilities- MacArthur Park**

Group Picnic Area	-
Individual Picnic Tables	Y
Benches	Y
Barbecue	-
Tot Lot (2-5 years old)	-
Children's Playground (5-12 years old)	Y
Pool Facilities / Splash Pad	Y
Walking/Running Trails	-
Parcourse	-
Off-leash Dog Area	-
Tennis Courts	-
Basketball	Y
Soccer Field / Football	-
Baseball/Softball	Y
Skate Park or Plaza	-
Horseshoes	-
Golf	Y
Informal Passive Play Area (sloped)	-
Informal Passive Play Area (flat)	-
On-site Parking	Y
Restroom	Y
Amphitheater	-

Figure 3.16—Existing Park Service Area- MacArthur Park



The existing service area using a 15 minute walk time and the existing walking network reflecting existing gaps.





**Address:**

8425 University Avenue

La Mesa, CA 91941

**Type of Park:**

Neighborhood Park

**Acres and Parking:**

0.83 acres

Parking for 21 cars (4 disabled spaces) at the Adult Enrichment Center



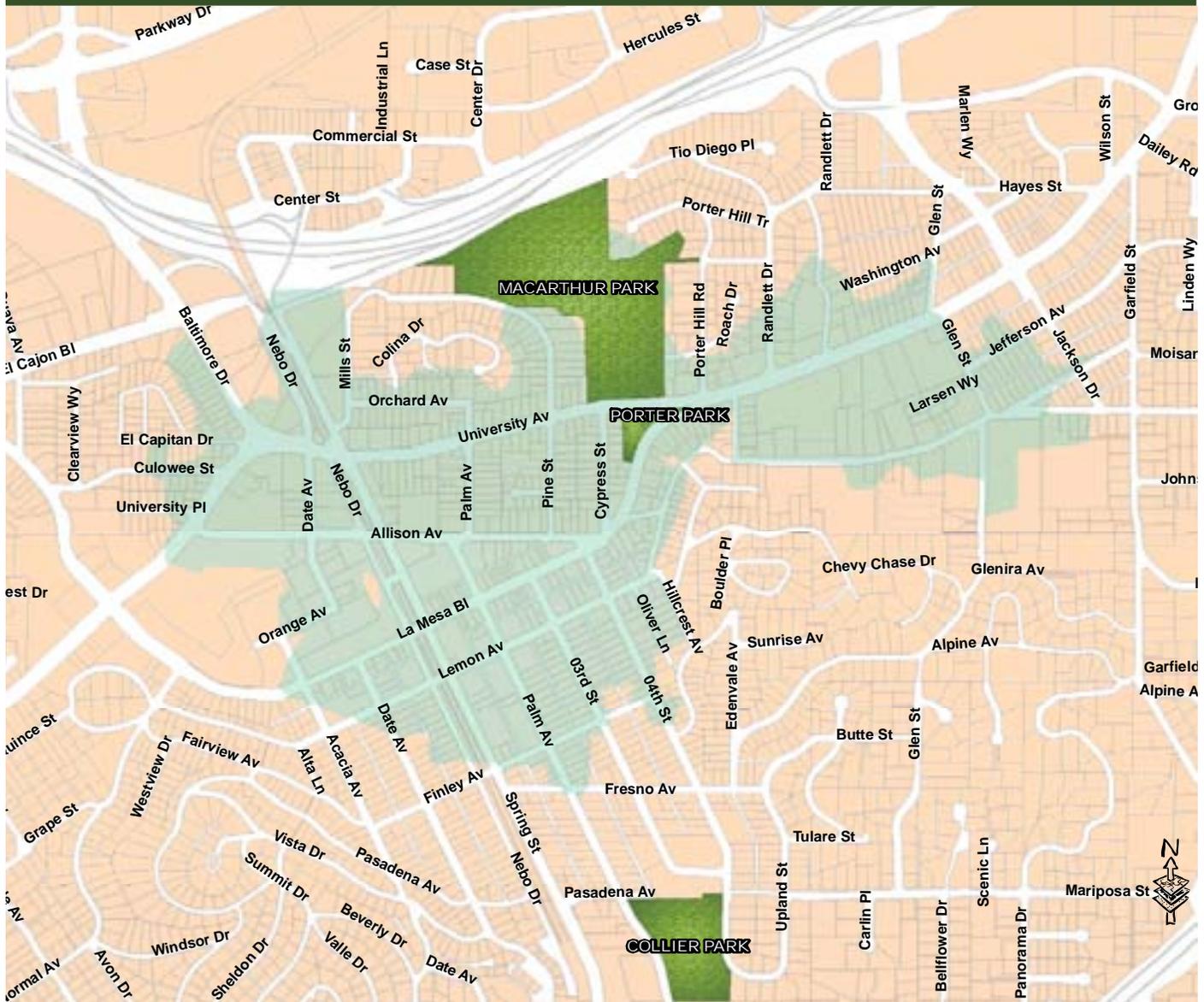
**PORTER PARK**

Porter park is extremely small, but is important to the aging community in La Mesa. Adjacent to the park is the La Mesa Adult Enrichment Center (AEC), which promotes healthy, active aging through creative and extensive programs. This building is owned and operated by the City of La Mesa. A ground-breaking ceremony occurred recently for the addition of outdoor fitness equipment funded by CIP monies and grant funds. A triangular area, across from the AEC, is a small garden area created by the street intersections.

**Table 3.16—Existing Facilities- Porter Park**

Group Picnic Area	-
Individual Picnic Tables	Y
Benches	Y
Barbecue	-
Tot Lot (2-5 years old)	-
Children's Playground (5-12 years old)	-
Pool Facilities / Splash Pad	-
Walking/Running Trails	-
Parcourse	Y
Off-leash Dog Area	-
Tennis Courts	-
Basketball	-
Soccer Field / Football	-
Baseball/Softball	-
Skate Park or Plaza	-
Horseshoes	Y
Golf	-
Informal Passive Play Area (sloped)	-
Informal Passive Play Area (flat)	-
On-site Parking	-
Restroom	-
Amphitheater	-

Figure 3.17—Existing Park Service Area- Porter Park



The existing service area using a 15 minute walk time and the existing walking network reflecting existing gaps.



## 3.2 EXISTING PARKS ADJACENT TO LA MESA

There are several parks adjacent to the City of La Mesa that are utilized daily by residents and provide unique recreational opportunities.

### 3.2.1 LAKE MURRAY

Lake Murray provides opportunities for bike riding, jogging, walking, rollerblading, and picnicking along its 3.2 miles of shore line. More unique to this area is the available fishing and boating recreational opportunities. When it is full, the reservoir has 171.1 surface acres and is 95 feet deep in areas. The reservoir is located between La Mesa, Santee, and the City of San Diego, within the boundary of Mission Trails Regional Park.

### 3.2.2 MISSION TRAILS REGIONAL PARK

Mission Trails Regional Park is just north of the City of La Mesa. It includes approximately 5,800 acres of both natural and developed recreational acres and includes Lake Murray. There are over 40-miles of trails that traverse over hills and down valleys, with habitat that is native to the San Diego region. It also includes camping at Kumeyaay Lake and a state-of-the-art Visitor and Interpretive Center where visitors can explore the cultural, historical, and recreational aspects of San Diego.

### 3.2.3 EUCALYPTUS PARK

Eucalyptus County Park is 6.45 acres and is at the southeast edge of La Mesa. It is a traditional style park and includes facilities such as horseshoe pits, playground, restrooms, and a pavilion, which is often utilized by La Mesa residents.

## 3.4 EXISTING PARKS WITHIN SAN DIEGO COUNTY

In addition to parks adjacent to the City of La Mesa, questionnaire participants also identified several other parks which they frequently visit throughout the County of San Diego. These include San Carlos, Liberty Station, Cuyamaca State Park, Mission Bay, Trolley Barn Park, and Pioneer Park in Mission Hills, Mast Park in Santee, along with Santee Lakes, Torrey Pines State Park, Silver Strand State Park, William Heise County Park, La Jolla Shores Park, Balboa Park, San Diego Botanic Garden, and the Water Conservation Garden. The parks are all too far away for residents of La Mesa to access by walking or biking, but are resources that are utilized for recreational activities and contribute to the overall goals of creating a healthy city in La Mesa.



Lake Murray and Mission Trails Regional Park are popular destinations for La Mesa residents

### 3.5 EXISTING JOINT USE AGREEMENTS

There is an existing joint use agreement with the City of La Mesa and the La Mesa-Spring Valley School District in which the District allows the City to utilize its land and facilities for recreational purposes in exchange for the use of the La Mesa Community Center. Maintenance, repairs, and improvements are divided between both the District and the City. There are also a variety of facilities at various locations available for use. The facilities and maintenance schedule is highlighted in Table 3.17. An agreement between the City and Grossmont Union High School District allows youth sports leagues to use the fields.

**Table 3.17—Joint Use Agreements**

Quadrant	Field Location by School	Type of Field	Maintenance Responsibilities	
			City	District
Northwest	Maryland Avenue Elementary	Baseball	None	All
	Murray Manor Elementary	Baseball (2 Fields)	None	All
	Jackson Park adjacent to Murray Manor	Park	All	None
Northeast	Parkway Middle School- Junior Seau Sports Complex	Football	Synthetic turf maintenance and repairs, drainage, lights	Keeping sidewalks clean
		Soccer	Natural turf maintenance to include: seeding, mowing, fertilizing, aerating, irrigation, lights	Keeping sidewalks clean
		Baseball Field #1		
		Baseball Field #2		
		Baseball Field #3		
	Miscellaneous complex amenities	Restroom/snack bar building, fences, gates, bleachers, lights, scoreboards, parking lots	None	
	Northmont Elementary	Baseball/Soccer	None	All
Southwest	Rolando Elementary	Baseball (4 Fields)	None	All
	Sunshine Park adjacent to Rolando Elementary	Park	All	None
	La Mesa Dale Elementary	Softball	None	All
	La Mesa Middle	Upper Field-Baseball	None	All
		Lower Field-Soccer	None	All
	Highwood Park adjacent to La Mesa Middle	Park	All	None
Southeast	Lemon Avenue Elementary	Baseball	None	All
	Murdock Elementary	Baseball	None	All



## CHAPTER 4

### 4.0 PARKS DISTRIBUTION AND ACCESS ANALYSIS

Based on existing conditions, La Mesa policies, and guidelines established by the National Recreation and Park Association and the California Office of Planning and Research for developing a Park and Recreation Element of a General Plan, park deficiencies and opportunities within the existing network of parks and open space in La Mesa were analyzed. Demographic characteristics of service areas, geographic distribution and access to parks throughout the City were analyzed.

### 4.1 GEOGRAPHIC MODELING

Geographic Information Systems (GIS) are often utilized to complete geographic analysis and to produce maps that communicate complex relationships. These systems use geographic data to reveal trends in demographics, deficiencies and opportunities, and gaps in systems. This information can then be used to identify new park and recreation distribution or quantitative deficiencies.

#### 4.1.1 MODEL OVERVIEW

Models and maps were generated to understand trends, opportunities, and constraints for access to parks throughout La Mesa. Population densities for different age groups, service areas within a 15-minute walk time from a park, and bike and walk barriers were analyzed.

## 4.2 ACCESS ANALYSIS

Analysis standards were created to review existing conditions for deficiencies and opportunities, as well as to analyze the distribution and equitable park access to all residents of La Mesa. Ensuring a more complete park network that connects and leads to parks is another way to improve access to parks.

### 4.2.1 BARRIERS TO WALKING TO PARKS



There are several barriers that may keep individuals from walking. Barriers to walking include the absence of walkways, a walkway that is blocked, narrow walkways, tripping hazards, busy streets, or vehicles parked on a sidewalk. Improving connections would improve access to parks. Intersections can be major barriers to walking if they are missing key design elements that make them safer and easier to use. There are also safety concerns related to high volume streets, wide streets, or streets where speeding occurs. These concerns may keep an individual from choosing to walk to a public park. Safety perception can also be affected by lighting. A large percentage of people participating in the questionnaire felt better lighting would improve access to and within parks.

### 4.2.2 BARRIERS TO CYCLING TO PARKS



La Mesa has established bike facilities throughout the City, but many of them are disjointed. The biggest barrier to cycling is the lack of bicycle facilities, including bike lanes, routes, or paths. When a lane, route, or path ends and is not connected, the rider is forced to ride in the street with cars, which makes a large percentage of cyclists nervous and may dissuade them from riding. In addition to a lack of on-street facilities, the lack of bike parking options and changing facilities in the workplace can also dissuade cyclists from using cycling as an alternative form of transportation. The Bicycle Master Plan outlines suggested bike path additions.

### 4.2.3 EXISTING BARRIERS THAT ARE NOT LIKELY TO CHANGE

Barriers to walking are the main reason many people don't walk or bike to parks. Freeways, such as I-8 and SR-125, act as major obstacles that bisect the city from north to south and east to west. As a pedestrian or cyclist, it is often difficult or sometimes even impossible to traverse these barriers. In addition to the freeways, La Mesa has several major arterial streets, including University Avenue, Spring Street, La Mesa Boulevard, Fletcher Parkway, Jackson Drive, Lake Murray Boulevard, and 70th Street, that may be easier to navigate, but still act as barriers given the scale and speeds at which cars are traveling. Well designed intersections make these barriers a little more manageable. Additionally, La Mesa has two trolley lines, plus the freeways and arterial streets, making certain areas of the City more challenging to improve access to parks. Another type of barrier that is common in La Mesa is that there are many canyons created by the varying topography, making it difficult to meet the 15 minute walking distance goal.



#### 4.2.4 EXISTING BARRIERS THAT CAN BE CHANGED

Many barriers that exist have the potential to be changed to improve access and connectivity. Often there are safety perceptions that keep people from accessing or using a park. Park enhancements can make police patrols a more effective tool. The safety perceptions can be changed by improving design and maintenance, adding lighting, and increasing the number of people utilizing a corridor or park. Gaps in walkways or bike facilities are also examples of barriers that can be improved. Perhaps the largest barrier is the assumption that a destination is too far away, or too difficult to physically get to. These walkability concerns can be personal perceptions that can be overcome with programs and education. With an increased personal and social interest in healthy activities, these distances become something sought after instead of something to avoid.

The project goal of distributing parks throughout the community is important in helping to remove the perception of too great of distances for walking. When a park is visible in a neighborhood, when people pass by the park on a regular basis, even in vehicles, they perceive that the park is closer to their home, than when it is only infrequently passed. This out-of-site, out-of-mind phenomenon can affect behavior. A person is more likely to walk or ride to the park and they are more likely to frequent the park for healthy activities when the park is familiar and has safe access.

#### 4.2.5 ROLE OF TRANSIT IN ACCESS

Well connected transit systems have the potential to increase access to parks when transit stops are in close proximity to a destination. MacArthur Park and Porter Park are both close to bus stops. Access from transit to other parks is limited in La Mesa and is not likely to bring in park visitors from outside of the community. Transit could potentially provide more access to parks and increase visitors if the existing transit system were developed further and if proposed urban trails and linear parks were to be established in areas closer to the LRT transit stops.



#### 4.2.6 EXISTING PARK SERVICE AREA ANALYSIS

An existing park service area analysis was completed using GIS modeling. The currently adopted General Plan includes a policy that park facilities should be situated so that no residential unit is more than one mile from a recreational facility. The City is currently meeting this policy (see Figure 4.1).

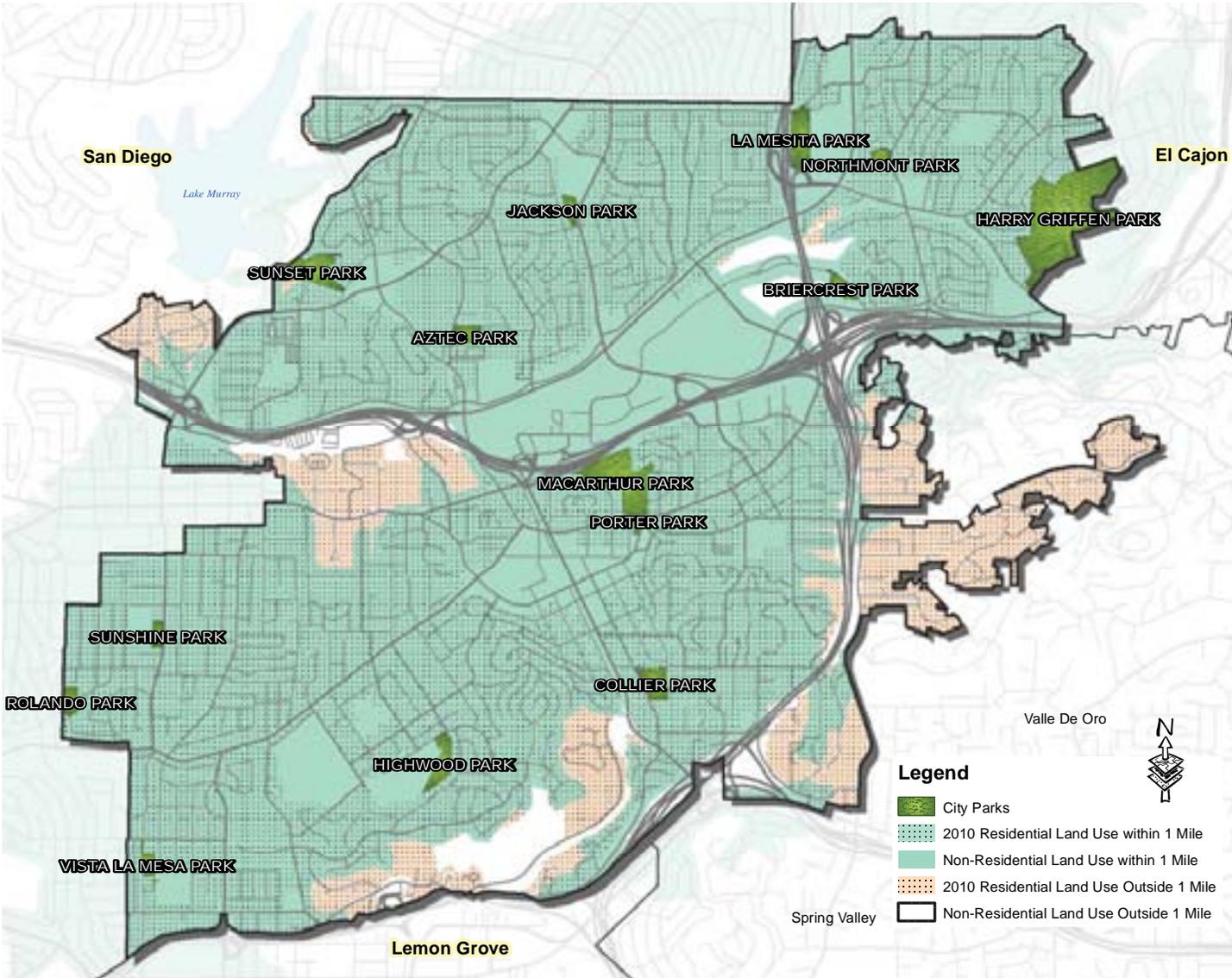
According to Active Living Research, a national program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, “Regular physical activity increases longevity, well being, helps children and adults maintain a healthy weight, and can reduce the risk for obesity and its related health consequences. Parks and playgrounds provide a wide variety of opportunities for physical activity and the have the potential to help many Americans lead a more active lifestyle.”<sup>1</sup> In the research synthesis prepared by Active Living Research quoting a study by Kaczynski and Henderson, “park proximity is associated with higher levels of park use and physical activity among a variety of populations, particularly youth.”<sup>2</sup>

A goal of this study is to convert the one-mile policy into a 15-minute walk to parks policy. Based on existing walking facilities and connections, both a one-mile distance and a 15-minute walk time distance has been calculated from existing parks to residential areas. Non-residential land uses are not included in the analysis, since the policy is based on residential access to parks. The resulting service areas take into account all access to parks via the existing walkway network, including any trails, or access across major paved areas open to the public, such as large parking lots. The road networks in neighborhoods that by current policy have been approved without the requirement for sidewalks, were included in the access study. The analysis assumes that individuals in these neighborhoods commonly walk in the street and would continue to do so. Through this analysis, gaps in service areas are quickly revealed (see Figure 4.2).

<sup>1</sup> Parks, Playgrounds and Active Living. (February 2010). Active Living Research, p.1

<sup>2</sup> Parks, Playgrounds and Active Living. (February 2010). Active Living Research, p. 2.

Figure 4.1—Existing Composite Park Service Area- 1 Mile Distance

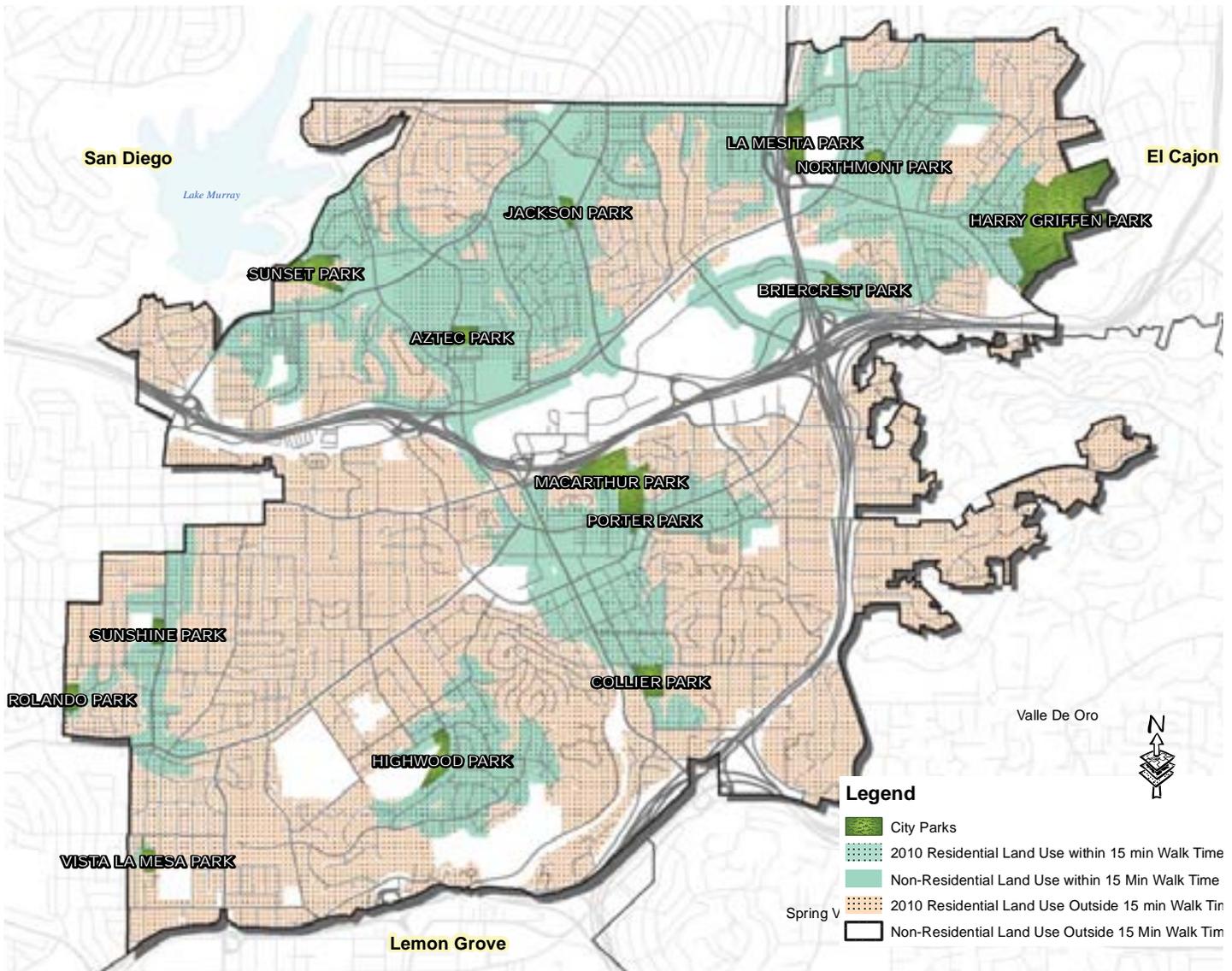


### 4.2.7 WALKING SPEEDS AND ACCESS DISTANCES

The average human walking speed varies greatly depending on the individual's fitness level, the walking surface, and the walking surface incline, but is usually about 3-4 miles per hour. However, with the addition of intersection crossings within a city, the average speed typically drops to about 2.5 miles per hour. At that pace, a human has the ability to travel .625 miles in 15 minutes, or just over one-half mile. This is a reasonable distance to expect someone to walk to a destination. This distance and time frame was utilized when reviewing the access to parks. Figure 4.2 below represents a mapped distance around each park within a 15-minute walk time using only the existing walkway networks.



**Figure 4.2—Existing Composite Park Service Area- 15 Minute Walk Time Distance (using existing walkway network)**



### 4.2.8 RIDING SPEEDS AND ACCESS DISTANCES

Bicycle riding is a great way to maneuver through a city. It is faster than walking, but also is a healthy mode of transportation. When facilities are available and safety issues have been ad-



ressed, biking can be the most efficient mode of transportation available. The average riding speed for a human varies greatly, similar to walking speeds. Not only does the individual's fitness level, the riding surface, and the riding surface incline affect the riding speed, but the type of bicycle and the cyclist experience can make a person much faster. For the purposes of this study, an average riding speed was assumed to be 13 miles per hour. At that pace, a human has the ability to ride 3.25 miles in 15 minutes using existing bike facilities. Using these distances, every residential area is within a 15 minute ride time of a park. However, the existing bike systems contain gaps or do not directly connect to existing parks.

## 4.3 DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

The demographics of La Mesa were analyzed to evaluate trends in age distribution adjacent to existing parks and increases in future population densities.

### 4.3.1 RESIDENTIAL POPULATION DENSITIES

It is important to understand population densities of various age groups when planning for parks. Different age groups have different physical abilities, interests, and coordination skills. All these relate to program elements that may be part of a park. The population density maps begin to reveal concentrations of age groups which may be located in a specific area in the City or near an existing park. It is important that the activities provided in these parks relate to the age of the user who will most likely take advantage of the recreational opportunity. This can assist in developing a program for individual parks. Figure 4.3 to Figure 4.7 shows the population densities for six key age groups. The darker areas have the greater concentration of a specific age group.

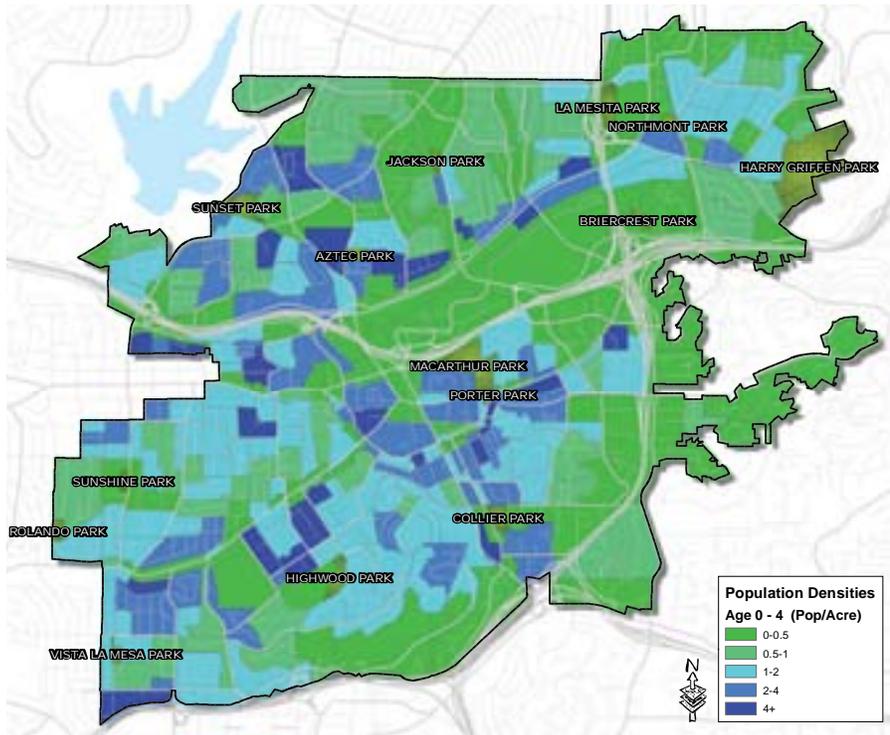
Using projected 2030 demographics, Table 4.1 represents the percentage of different age groups found within the 15-minute walk time of each park. This analysis is helpful to recommend park facilities and program elements related to a specific age group based on those found within close proximity to the parks.

**Table 4.1—2030 Age Population Density Summary**

Park	0-4 Years Old	5-14 Years Old	15-19 Years Old	20-44 Years Old	45-64 Years Old	65 and Older
Northwest Quadrant	5.67%	8.24%	3.39%	33.34%	21.56%	27.79%
Aztec	5.88%	8.05%	3.29%	35.56%	21.25%	25.97%
Jackson	5.13%	8.54%	4.01%	32.29%	21.34%	28.68%
Sunset	5.93%	8.24%	2.86%	30.86%	22.31%	29.81%
Northeast Quadrant	3.75%	9.14%	4.84%	29.74%	23.45%	29.09%
Briercrest	5.42%	10.14%	4.42%	31.58%	21.61%	26.83%
Harry Griffen	3.01%	8.89%	4.67%	28.22%	23.96%	31.25%
La Mesita	3.91%	9.36%	5.02%	31.17%	23.20%	27.35%
Northmont	3.74%	9.00%	4.94%	29.58%	23.63%	29.11%
Southwest Quadrant	6.43%	12.67%	6.46%	35.75%	19.74%	18.95%
Highwood	7.91%	12.38%	6.03%	38.36%	19.05%	16.27%
Sunshine	5.47%	11.17%	6.21%	34.81%	22.41%	19.92%
Rolando	5.51%	12.16%	6.77%	34.47%	20.38%	20.71%
Vista La Mesa	6.47%	14.96%	7.03%	34.76%	17.06%	19.72%
Southeast Quadrant	6.08%	11.67%	3.84%	32.15%	22.04%	24.23%
Collier	6.22%	11.94%	4.09%	32.38%	21.50%	23.87%
MacArthur	5.81%	11.39%	3.47%	31.37%	22.65%	25.32%
Porter	6.13%	11.63%	3.87%	32.49%	22.09%	23.79%

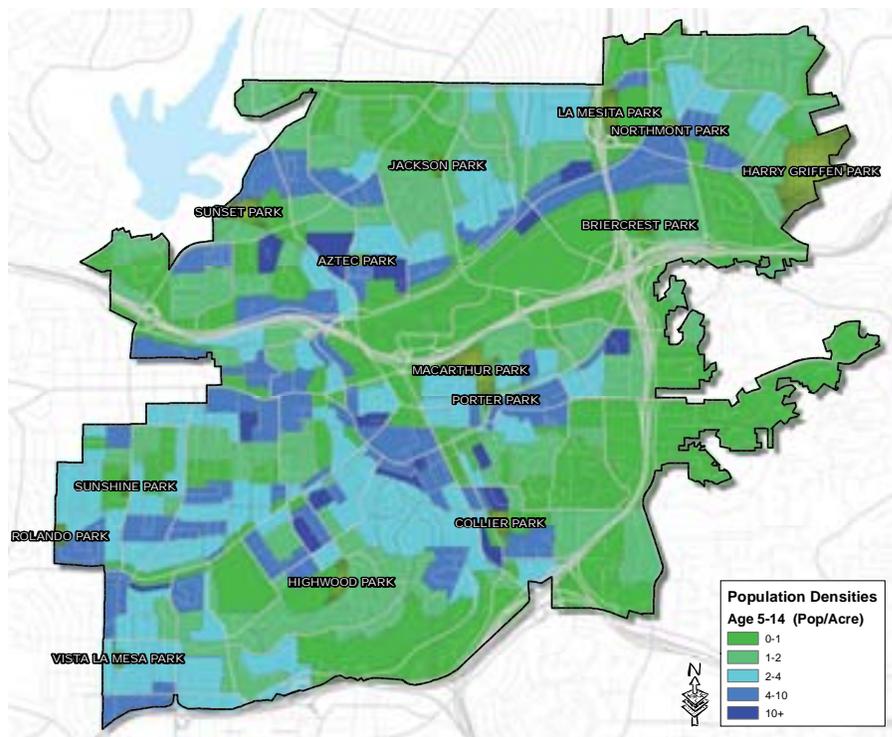
**Figure 4.3—Population Densities- 0 to 4 Years Old**

The 0-4 age group is interested in developing all types of skills, including basic motor skills, balance, coordination, core, and upper body strength.



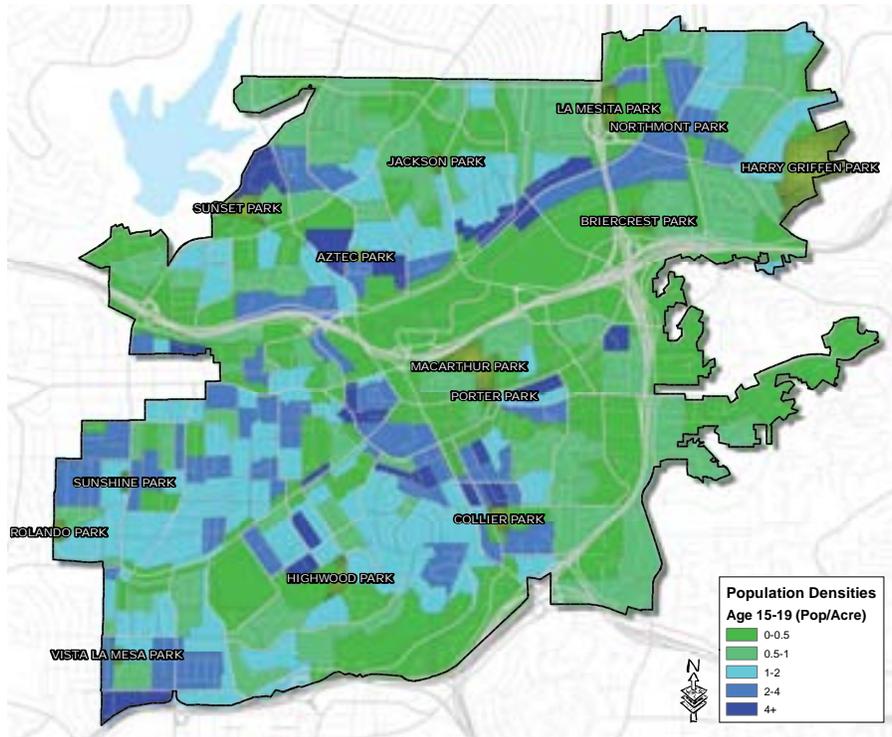
**Figure 4.4—Population Densities- 5 to 14 Years Old**

Children in the 5-14 age group are interested in exploration, refining motor skills, hiding places, climbing, spinning and movement, self challenge, testing comfort zones, and social interactions and development.



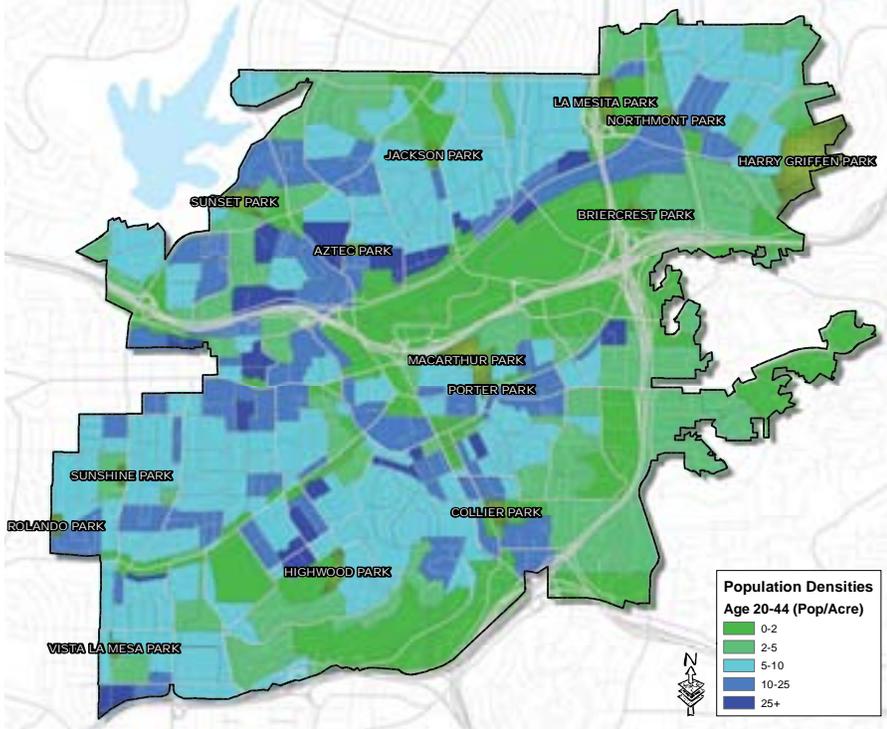
**Figure 4.5—Population Densities- 15 to 19 Years Old**

High school aged kids are interested in social activities and organized sports, This group includes the 15-19 year old age group.



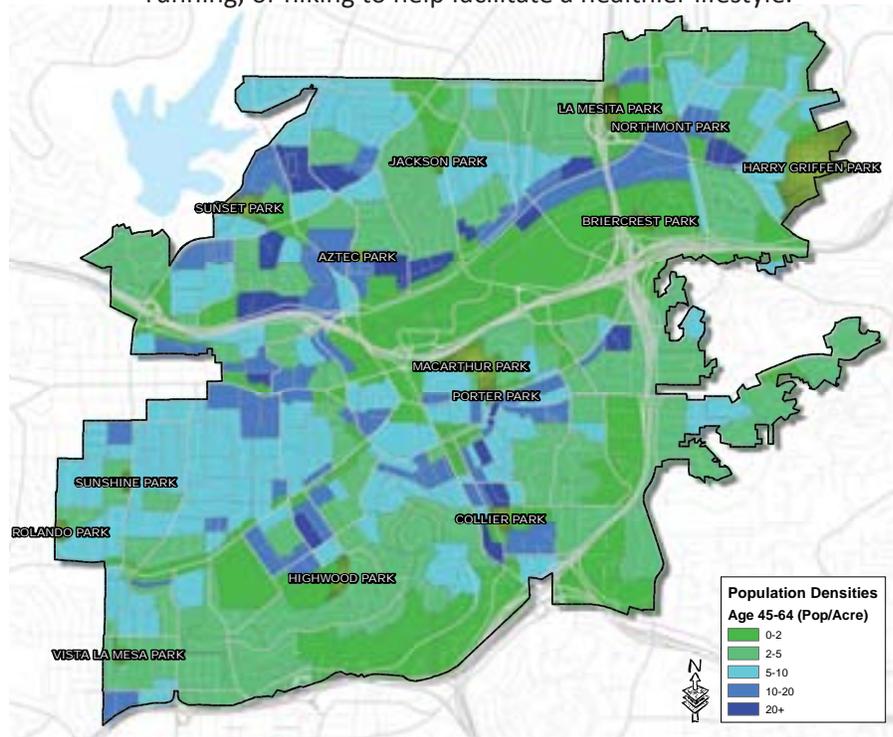
**Figure 4.6—Population Densities- 20 to 44 Years Old**

The 20-44 year old group become occupied with work and family and tends not to focus on physical activities. However, this group is associated with the 0-4 and 4-14 age groups as these groups are often their children. They need programs and activities that all three of these age groups can participate in at the same time and location.



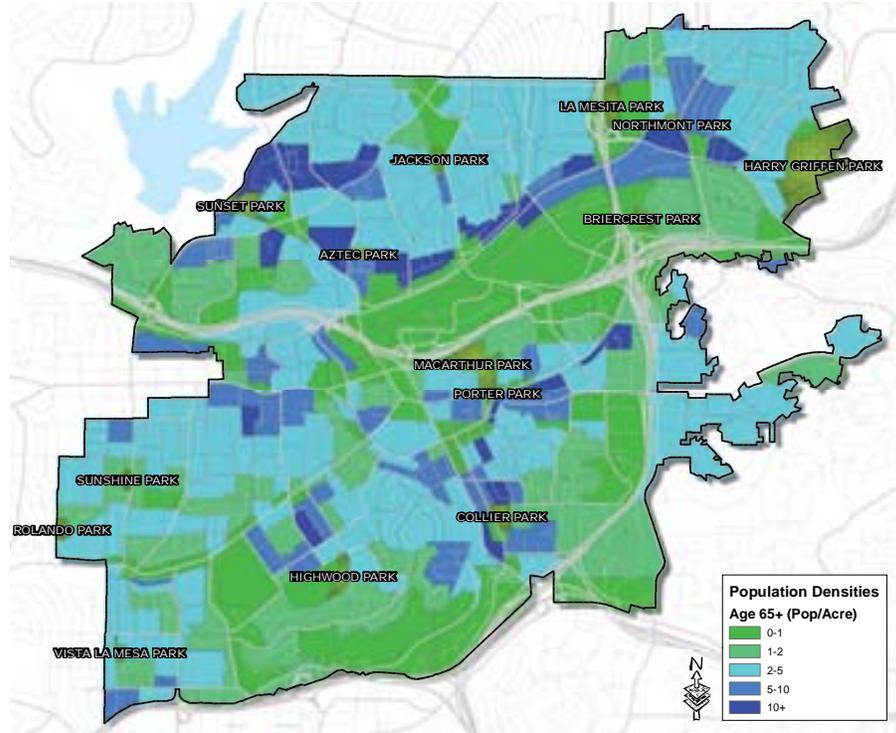
**Figure 4.7—Population Densities- 45 to 64 Years Old**

Between the ages of 45-64, individuals often find themselves with the beginning of health issues and warnings that their bodies aren't in the best shape. This group may find themselves participating in sporting activities or biking, running, or hiking to help facilitate a healthier lifestyle.



**Figure 4.8—Population Densities- 65 and Older**

The 65 and over group are made up of individuals who's motor skills have started to decline. It is important to provide outdoor activities to help maintain both physical and mental acuity for this group, and also opportunities for social interactions. Because of decreased mobility options, walking access to parks for this group is also important.



### 4.3.2 POPULATION GROWTH ANALYSIS

The projected population of La Mesa is 65,353 people in the year 2030, which is a 13.36% increase from the current population. As indicated in the previous chapter, the La Mesa General Plan indicates the overall ratio of parks should be one neighborhood park (3-7 acres) for every 5,000 residents and one community park (15-30 acres) for every 20,000 residents. Based on this criteria, the requirements to accommodate future growth are listed below:

- Neighborhood parks required based on future population= 13.07
- Neighborhood Parks Currently Available= 8
  
- Community parks required based on future population=3.27
- Community parks currently available= 1
- Regional parks currently available= 1

Because La Mesa has virtually no undeveloped land left, adding significant new park land is essentially not feasible. Enhancing existing parks and access to those parks will be the most realistic way to provide residents with adequate recreational opportunities that attempt to achieve the goals and objectives of this plan.

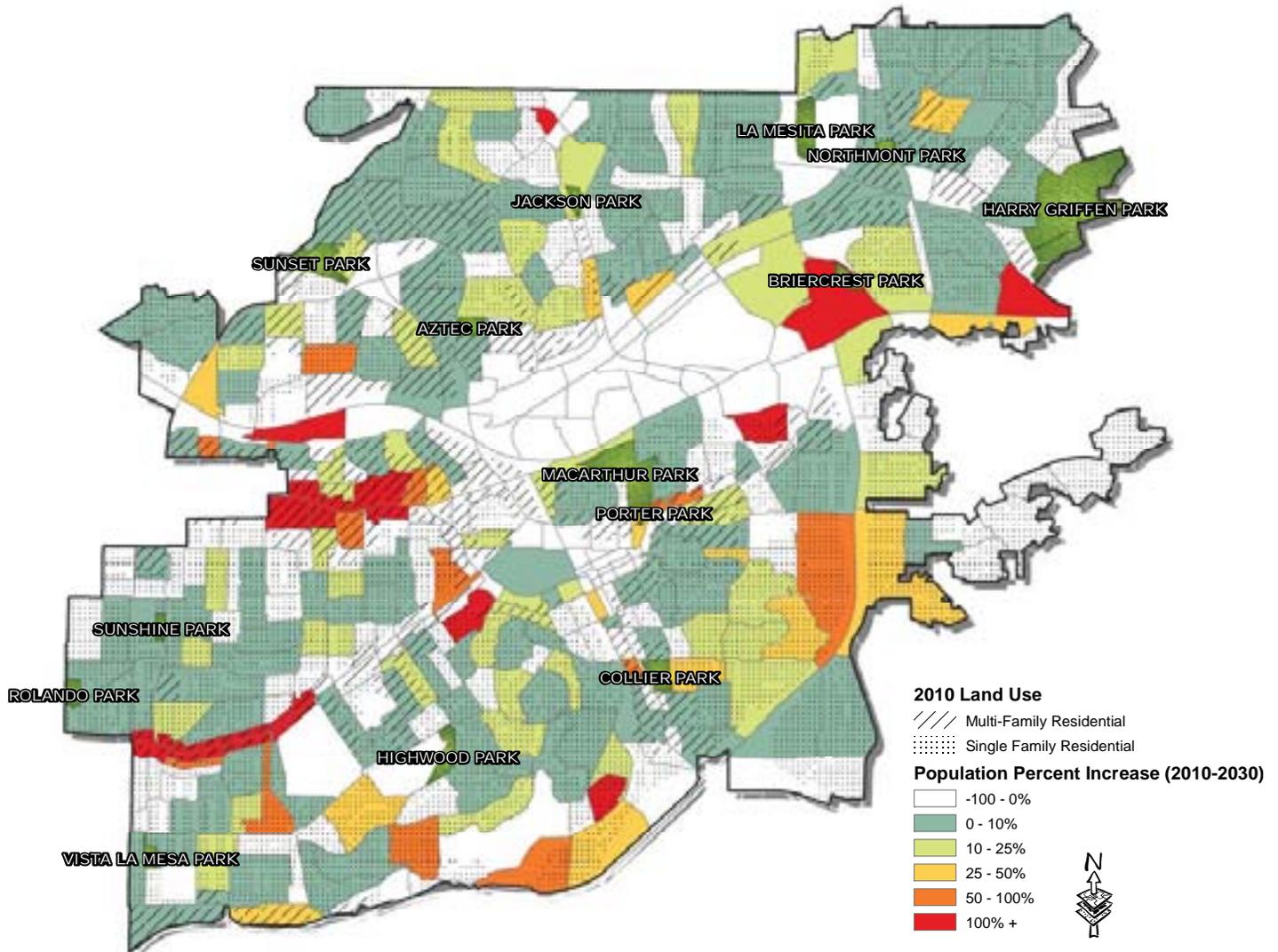
In addition, the existing and projected populations were broken down by the quadrants and summarized in Table 4.3.

**Table 4.2—Population Analysis by Quadrant**

Quadrant	2010 Population	2030 Population	Projected Percentage of Population Growth
Northeast	11,380	12,130	6.59%
Northwest	13,794	14,327	3.86%
Southeast	9,471	10,149	7.16%
Southwest	23,003	28,744	24.96%
Total	57,650	65,352	13.36%

Figure 4.9 indicates the general areas where future growth is likely to occur, based on the adopted general plan and SANDAG projections on growth and growth distribution.

Figure 4.9—Future Population and Land use Growth



### 4.3.3 POPULATION GROWTH BY SERVICE AREA

Using the existing 15-minute walk zones around each park and assuming that barriers or missing walkways are not remedied, a summary of the populations served by each park is shown on Table 4.2. This table utilizes future population, as well as a population per acre calculation, that is useful for park demand analysis. Please refer to Chapter 5 and review the maps and tables that show the changes in the service areas if the walkway system is improved or added. These numbers and service areas are more representative of the current conditions. The table below is more accurate in terms of current service area based on walkable conditions, and the population served is understated considering the numbers of persons that may drive or walk to these parks, regardless of the condition or existence of walkways.

As indicated in the service area analysis and in the future population and land use growth map, Aztec Park is currently serving the most people. Currently, the park serving the least number of people that can walk to the park is Vista La Mesa. In addition, Briercrest is also currently serving a low number of people, but is projected to see the second largest population growth resulting in an increase of park users. The projected population growth along the University Avenue corridor indicates that Sunshine Park will also be serving additional park users in the upcoming years. These tables and maps were based on future population growth within the City and can help guide the priority of future improvements and park land acquisitions if resources become available. Please refer to Chapter 5 for a more comprehensive comparison of existing and future population served, given implementation of greater walkable connections and barrier removals.

**Table 4.3—Population Growth by Service Area Analysis- Using Existing Conditions of Walkway System**

Park	2010 Population	2030 Population	Acres	Persons per Acre (2010)	Projected Increase to 2030
Aztec	4,860	4,937	256.54	19	1.60%
Briercrest	272	426	92.27	3	56.72%
Collier	2,382	2,394	141.22	17	0.51%
Harry Griffen	701	714	79.22	9	1.97%
Highwood	1,143	1,203	152.47	7	5.23%
Jackson	2,266	2,380	284.68	8	5.02%
La Mesita	1,310	1,361	137.22	10	3.91%
MacArthur	1,857	1,961	157.70	12	5.60%
Northmont	3,800	4,006	298.29	13	5.43%
Porter	2,904	3,017	216.50	13	3.89%
Rolando	122	124	12.65	10	1.05%
Sunset	4,189	4,386	207.44	20	4.71%
Sunshine	843	1,541	84.91	10	82.79%
Vista La Mesa	40	41	3.83	10	1.90%
Population within a 15-minute walk of each park (no double counting)	<b>21,347</b>	<b>22,984</b>	<b>1,720</b>		<b>7.67%</b>
Population within City boundary	<b>57,650</b>	<b>65,353</b>			<b>13.36%</b>
Population not within 15-minute walk of an existing park	<b>36,303</b>	<b>42,369</b>			
% of population within 15-minute service area	<b>37.03%</b>	<b>35.17%</b>			

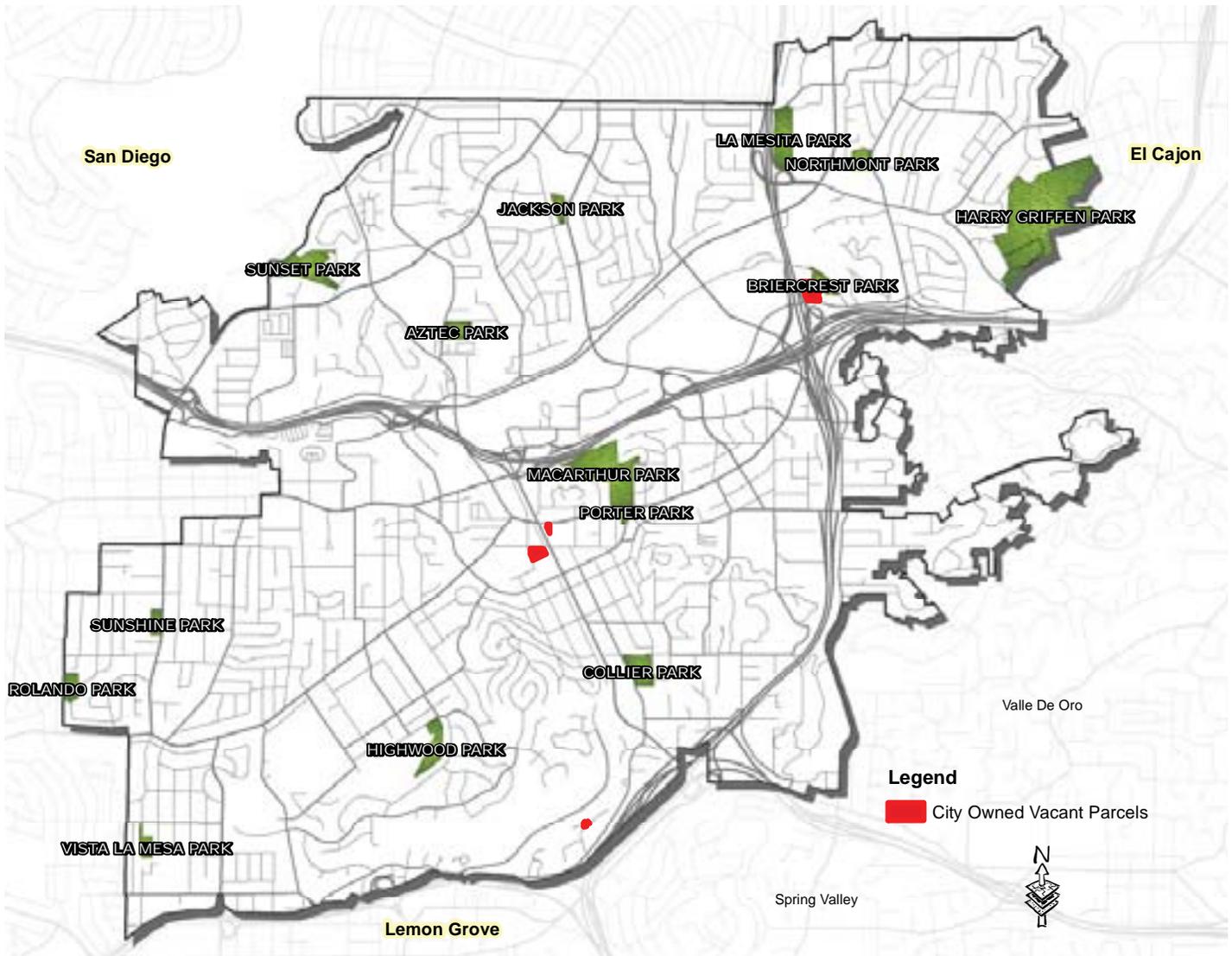
## 4.4 PARK PROGRAM AND FACILITIES ANALYSIS

Vacant land and programs were analyzed to identify opportunities within the existing park network.

### 4.4.1 VACANT CITY-OWNED LAND

Currently, the number of City-owned lands are limited to four parcels (see Figure 4.10). A future County site, referred to as the Waite property, may be available for acquisition by the City. Given available parcels and the built out nature of La Mesa, few future park opportunities exist.

**Figure 4.10—Vacant City-Owned Lands**



#### 4.4.2 FACILITIES AND PROGRAM ANALYSIS

As a result of input from surveys and community workshops, the community commented on the quality of the existing City parks. There were also opportunities for the public to comment on the quality of the individual facilities and identify potential additions to the park, or potential re-use or re-design of the park. In general, comments ranged from concerns about safety, to a desire for additional program elements, improved or upgraded existing facilities, improved distribution of park program elements throughout the City, improved access to parks and connectivity, and an increase in parking. Full comments are located in the appendix. In addition to the community input, volunteers and consultants input was also compiled during fieldwork. Existing conditions were compared against national standards and typical city policies and guidelines and opportunities and constraints were evaluated.



## CHAPTER 5

### 5.0 PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

Plan recommendations in this chapter are intended to enhance access to parks and increase park facilities within La Mesa. A secondary goal to be attained from the recommendations is to promote the City's policies promoting positive health and well-being for the general public. Potential areas for additional park amenities and potential areas for redevelopment and redesign were identified based on desired goals and input of both City staff and La Mesa residents.

### 5.1 PARKS MASTER PLAN

This chapter includes general recommendations for new parks, expansions for existing parks, park program additions, facility additions, and pedestrian and bike access improvements.

#### 5.1.1 RECOMMENDED PARK EXPANSIONS

The existing parks within La Mesa are well distributed throughout the City. They are all filled with a variety of program features. Some of the existing parks are built out, but others have the potential for additional program elements to enhance the park. There are also opportunities for the reuse or revitalization of some of the outdated or rundown existing features.

As a general recommendation, safety issues throughout all existing parks should be addressed. The City should continue to use Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design strategies. Lighting should be incorporated as necessary to increase safety within parks and might also include lighting for night time play where warranted. Lighting improvements have already been incorporated at Jackson and Aztec parks, resulting in an increased use of park facilities after dark. The City should continue to make these types of improvements. Increased use from additional facilities is another method of improving safety, as well as removing perceptual fear of using public spaces. The more eyes on the park, the safer it becomes for all users. In addition, universal access should be addressed throughout all existing parks. Upgrades to existing facilities should be completed to meet Title 24 of the California Building Standards Code, in addition to the Americans with Disabilities Act, to accommodate all individuals of varying physical ability.

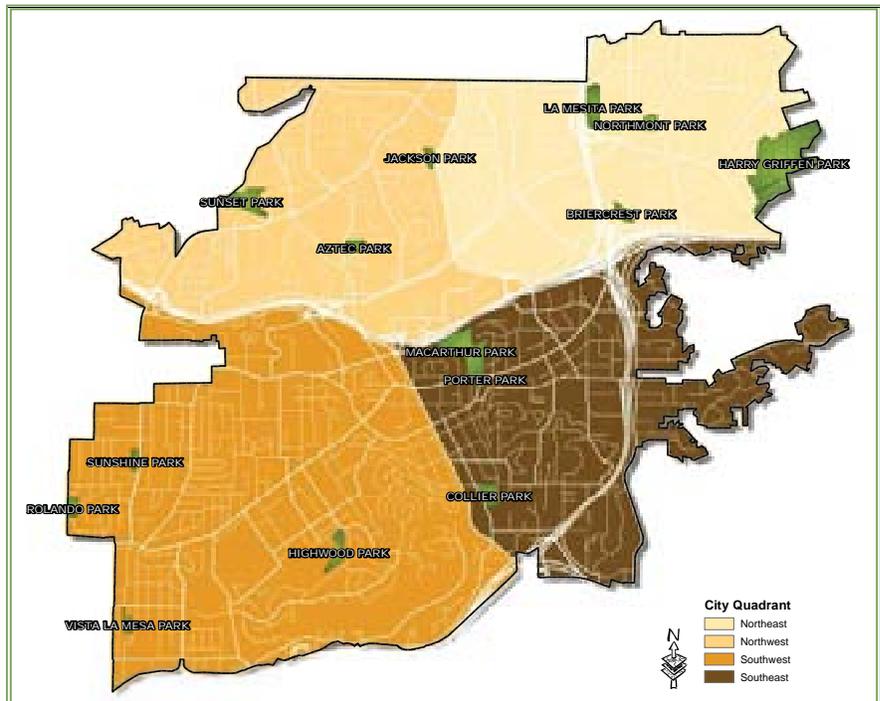
### QUADRANT EVALUATION

The City is divided into quadrants to ensure that community facilities are fairly distributed among the quadrants. The quadrants including Northwest, Northeast, Southwest, and Southeast in Figure 5-1. Existing park land and program elements were evaluated in each of these areas. The City's future park expansions and upgrades should be designed to fill gaps of program elements that may exist within these quadrants, but also throughout the entire City. These gaps were discussed in Chapters 2 and 3. Joint-use and private facilities were also considered to be recreational assets to a quadrant.

All quadrants should contain a variety of types of parks with a mix of program elements that are well distributed. At a minimum, all parks should include individual and group picnic areas, benches, informal passive play areas, outdoor fitness equipment, a restroom, and a parking area. In addition, all quadrants should provide equal opportunities for some larger recreational program elements such as tennis, basketball, soccer, baseball and softball, barbecues, tot lots and children's playgrounds, walking and running trails, and off-leash dog areas. By including private facilities at the YMCA and Kroc Center, pool facilities are well distributed throughout the City.

The City has several adjacent golf courses within a close proximity and while it is an asset to the community, a new golf course is not warranted within the City.

**Figure 5.1 — City Quadrant**



Based on the current population of La Mesa and the Recreation, Park, and Open Space Standards and Guidelines defined by the National Recreation and Park Association, the City should consider adding the following or creating a partnership with others to make these amenities available:

- 18 Tennis courts
- 3 Baseball / Softball Fields
- 1/4 Mile running track
- 3 Trail Systems
- Updated pool facility

Based on the deficit found when comparing demand with existing facilities (current public, private, and joint-use facilities), the City should consider adding the following in each quadrant:

Northwest-The City should consider adding the following to enhance the recreational opportunities in the Northwest Quadrant. Based on community input and spatial requirements, these could potentially occur at the following parks:

Northwest Quadrant Parks	Aztec	Jackson	Sunset	Future Public or Joint-use Site
Outdoor Fitness Equipment	x	x	x	x
Off-leash dog area	x		x	x
Tennis courts			x	x
Soccer field				x
Skate park or plaza	x		x	x
Horseshoes , shuffle board, or bocce courts	x	x	x	x
Amphitheater			x	x
Community Center			x	x

Northeast-The City should consider adding the following to enhance the recreational opportunities in the Northeast Quadrant. Based on community input and spatial requirements, these could potentially occur at the following parks:

Northeast Quadrant Parks	Briercrest	Harry Griffen	La Mesita	Northmont	Future Public or Joint-use Site
Outdoor Fitness Equipment		x	x	x	x
Basketball courts			x		x
Horseshoes , shuffle board, or bocce courts		x	x		x

Southwest-The City should consider adding the following to enhance the recreational opportunities in the Southwest Quadrant. Based on community input and spatial requirements, these could potentially occur at the following parks:

Southwest Quadrant Parks	Highwood	Sunshine	Rolando	Vista La Mesa	Future Public or Joint-use Site
Outdoor Fitness Equipment	x	x	x	x	x
Off-leash dog area			x		x
Tennis courts	x	x			x
Soccer field		x			x
Skate park or plaza	x	x			x
Horseshoes , shuffle board, or bocce courts	x	x	x	x	x
Amphitheater					x

Southeast-The City should consider adding the following to enhance the recreational opportunities in the Southeast Quadrant. Based on community input and spatial requirements, these could potentially occur at the following parks:

Southeast Quadrant Parks	Collier	MacArthur	Porter	Future Public or Joint-use Site
Outdoor Fitness Equipment		x	x	x
Off-leash dog area		x		x
Updated pool facility or splash pad		x		x
Running or Walking Trail	x	x		x
Tennis courts	x	x		x
Soccer field				x
Skate park or plaza				x
Horseshoes , shuffle board, or bocce courts	x	x	x	x
Amphitheater	x			x

## COMMUNITY AND NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS

There are a total of ten existing community and neighborhood parks in the City of La Mesa. Many of these parks are built out and are unable to support additional program elements. Collier and Vista La Mesa are undergoing master planning efforts and are awaiting funding for implementation. However, due to their size and potential to contain major recreational amenities, Highwood, MacArthur, Sunset and Harry Griffen should also go through a master planning effort to identify appropriate additions or re-uses. These parks are major assets to the community, but are under-utilized and have the capacity for additional uses and facilities.

## POCKET PARKS

The general idea of pocket parks is to create inviting and pedestrian-friendly outdoor spaces. Because pocket parks can be located on small, irregular, and under-utilized pieces of land, or streets with excessive widths, the opportunities to create new pocket parks that can help reduce park and recreational deficiencies is very feasible. Pocket parks are too small for large scale physical activities, but provide a space for more passive activities. Pocket parks typically include landscape, seating, and smaller children's play equipment and can revolve around a monument, historic site, or art installation.

Designated sites for pocket parks should be considered and typical size requirements are identified in Chapter 2. La Mesa should evaluate the potential for new pocket parks throughout the City within the public right-of-way, and also continue the use of pop-outs or extensions of sidewalks at intersections to increase the pedestrian public realm. The City should encourage outdoor space in front of private retail and dining facilities. The City should encourage the residents of La Mesa to propose, develop, and maintain pocket parks within their neighborhoods. The placement of these parks should assist the City in reaching the goal of a park within a 15-minute walk time of every residential area.

All opportunities to include pocket parks should be reviewed and potential project locations should be selected based on the following criteria:

- Sizeable area of under-utilized roadway
- Lack of public space in the surrounding neighborhood
- Pre-existing community support for public space at the location
- Potential to improve pedestrian and bicyclist safety via redesign
- Surrounding uses that can attract people to the space
- Identified community or business steward



22nd Street, San Francisco, CA



Rincon Hill, San Francisco, CA

Pocket Park Examples



Tweet Street Park, San Diego, CA



Guerrero Park, San Francisco, CA

**LINEAR PARKS**

Linear parks make use of long, narrow strips of public land next to canals, rail lines, streams, electrical lines, highways, and shorelines to increase parkland and provide recreational opportunities including running, walking, and cycling. These areas of land are typically not thought of as usable or developable space, but are ideal for recreational activities that require less space and are linear in design or movement.

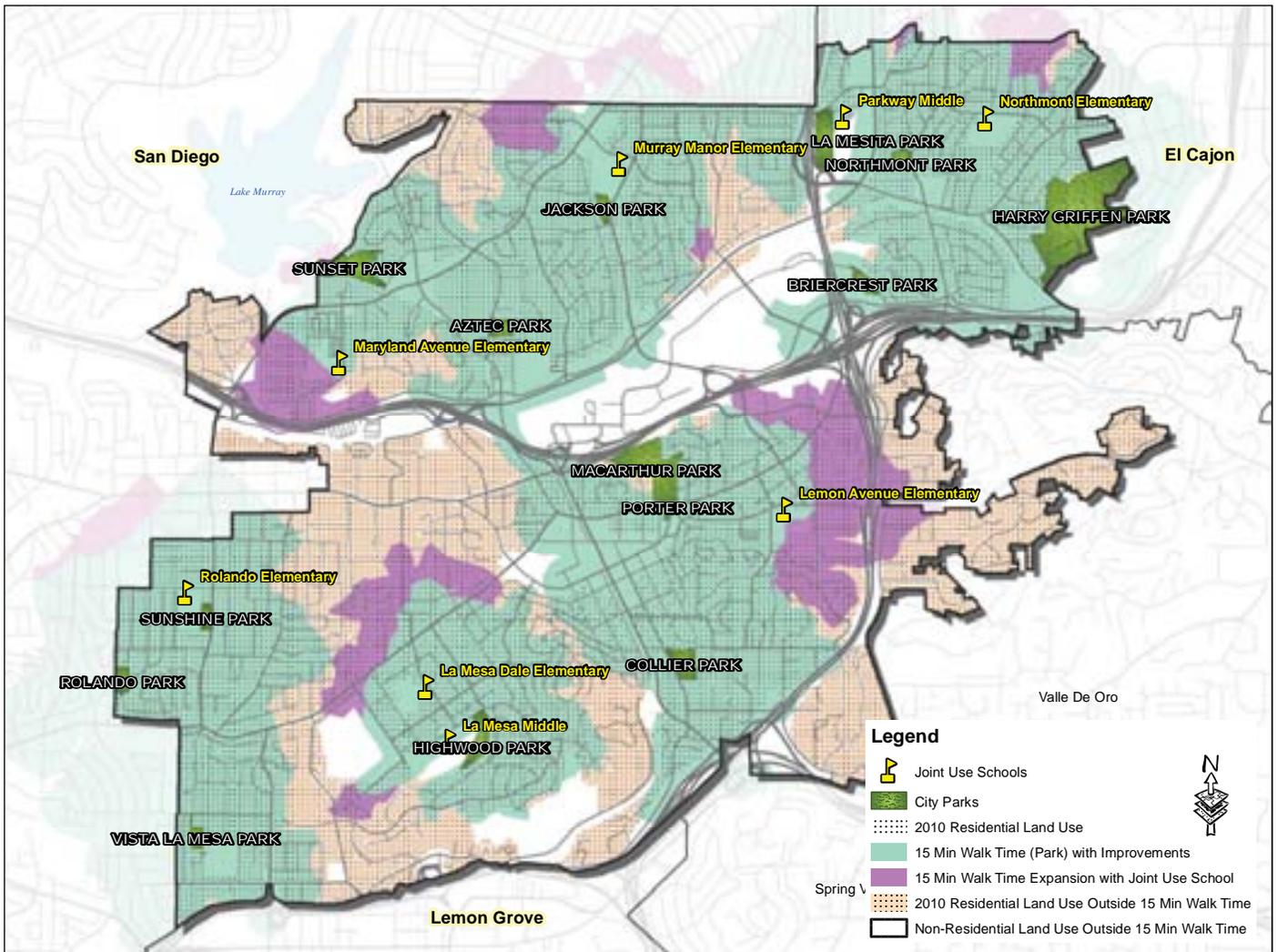


Rails to Trails: West Orange Trail, Winter Garden, FL

### 5.1.2 RECOMMENDED JOINT USE AGREEMENTS

Joint use agreements with school districts and private schools are critical to the equal distribution and quantity of recreational facilities required to support La Mesa's population. These agreements also provide children and families with safe and appealing opportunities to encourage exercise and healthy living habits. The existing agreements expand the 15 minute park service area to 4,457 more people as shown in purple in Figure 5.2 and fill a large service area gap not currently filled by existing parks.

Figure 5.2—Existing Joint use Service Area



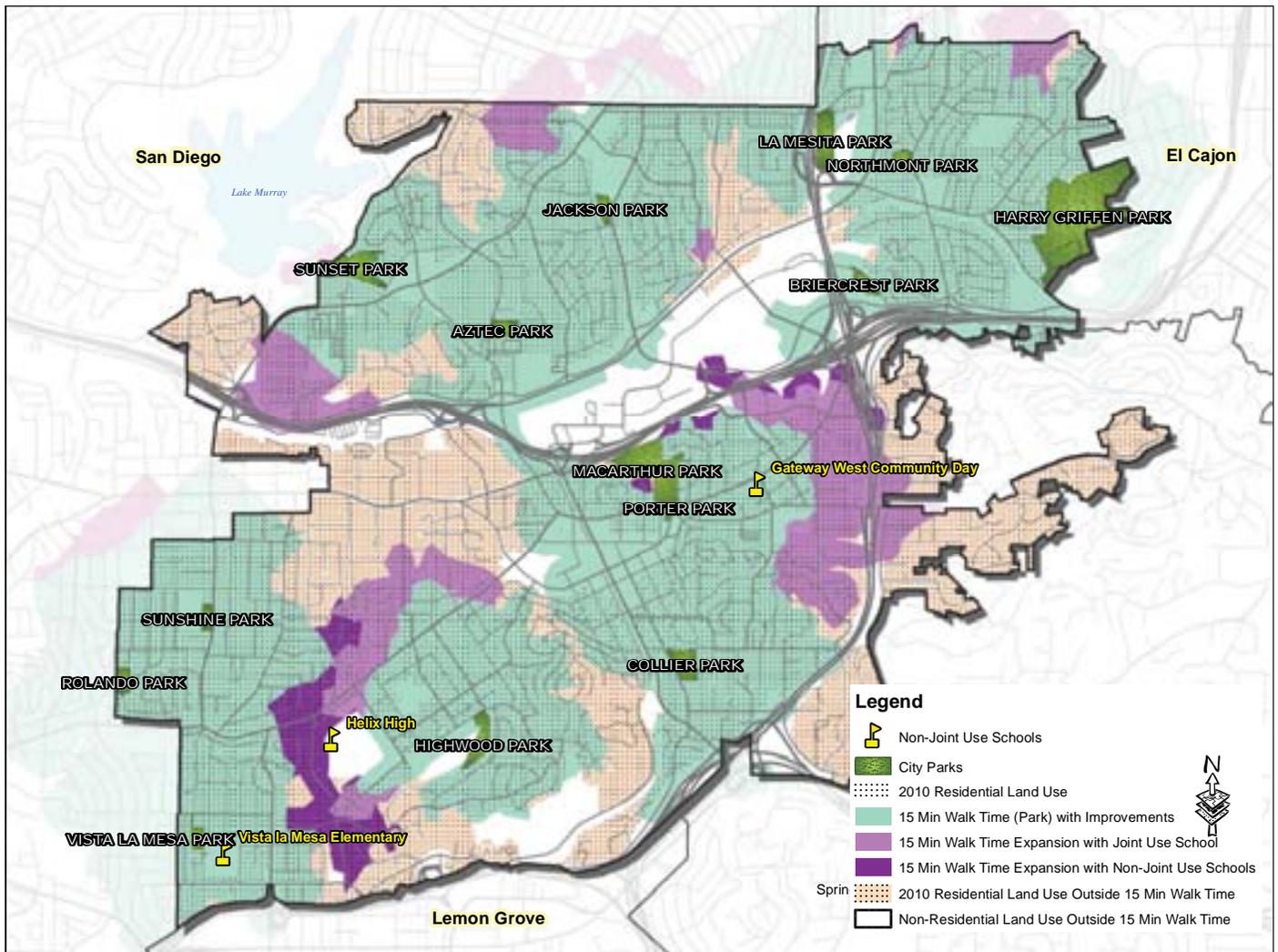
The City should continue its efforts to collaborate and maintain and expand existing facilities and agreements with Grossmont Union High School and the La Mesa Spring Valley School District. In addition to the existing agreements, the City should consider pursuing additional agreements with schools, non-profits, special districts, and state and regional governments. Based on the following assets at schools, La Mesa should consider adding the following:

**Project A.01—Recommended Joint Use Agreements**

Quadrant	Field Location by School	Type of Field
Northwest	Murray Manor Elementary	Basketball (2 Courts)
Northeast	Grossmont High School	Football Field and Track
		Baseball (4 Fields)
		Tennis (11 Courts)
Southwest	Helix High School	Pool
		Football Field and Track
		Baseball (4 Fields)
		Tennis (12 Courts)
	La Mesa Middle School	Amphitheater
		Handball (4 Courts)
		Basketball (9 Courts)
	La Mesa Dale Elementary	Baseball (2 Fields)
		Basketball (3 Courts)
		Basketball (3 Half Courts)
		Children's Play Area
	Vista La Mesa Elementary	Children's Play Area
Basketball (3 Courts)		
Baseball (2 Fields)		
Southeast	Lemon Avenue Elementary	Baseball (2 Fields)
		Children's Play Area
		Basketball (2 Courts)
		Basketball (2 Half Courts)

By adding Grossmont High School, Helix High School, and Vista La Mesa Elementary to the network of joint use schools available for public recreation opportunities, the service area is expanded as shown in dark purple in Figure 5.3. These potential agreements with schools increases the population served by another 1,461 people and could potentially fill a large service area gap not currently filled by existing parks.

**Figure 5.3—Potential Joint use Schools Service Area**



## 5.1.3 PROPOSED PARK ACCESS IMPROVEMENTS

### WALKWAY / TRAIL ADDITIONS

There are four different types of walkway or trail improvements that can be further developed within the City of La Mesa. These types of improvements can improve access to parks and also provide physical activity opportunities directly. These walkway or trail improvements include park linkages, neighborhood connections, open space links and trails, and urban trail loops.

#### Park Linkages

Park linkages are used to increase the number of entry ways into a park. These facilities can include things like ramps, stairs, or new walkways. Every park should be evaluated individually to identify potential access points including any City right-of-way or utility easements leading to a park. Access from residential areas should be emphasized. Multiple park access points can dramatically increase the extent of neighborhoods within a 15 minute walk. When additional entrances into parks are created, they should be clearly marked throughout the neighborhood. Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) strategies should always be considered for these new entrances to improve public safety and to lower fears of utilizing additional entry points and linkages into these parks. Potential linkages are identified in Projects B.03, B.07, B.11 and B.12. These linkages would increase the walking and biking connectivity from adjacent neighborhoods to parks. Additional studies and planning efforts will need to occur to determine the feasibility of these linkages and explore if other existing parks could have increased access if improved linkages and entry points were provided.



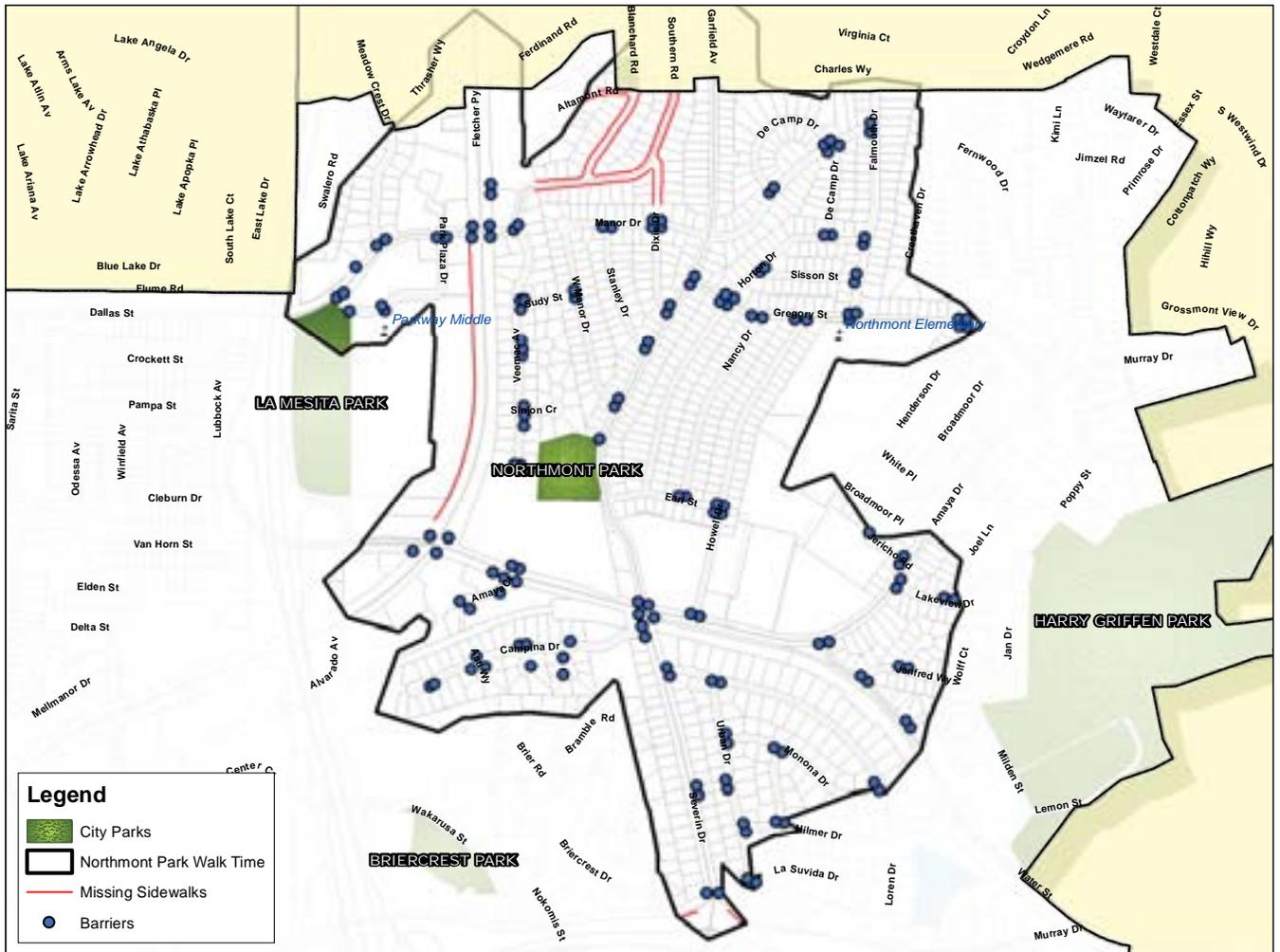
### Neighborhood Connections

Neighborhood connections are routes within a neighborhood that improve walkability, accessibility, and connectivity. These improvements focus on promoting park usage by improving connectivity within the 15-minute walk zone of a park. This can be accomplished by removing barriers and completing sidewalk connections and by filling in gaps of missing sidewalks. The following projects are proposed to enhance the existing neighborhood connections (see Projects B.01 through B.14). The projects are arranged by quadrant.





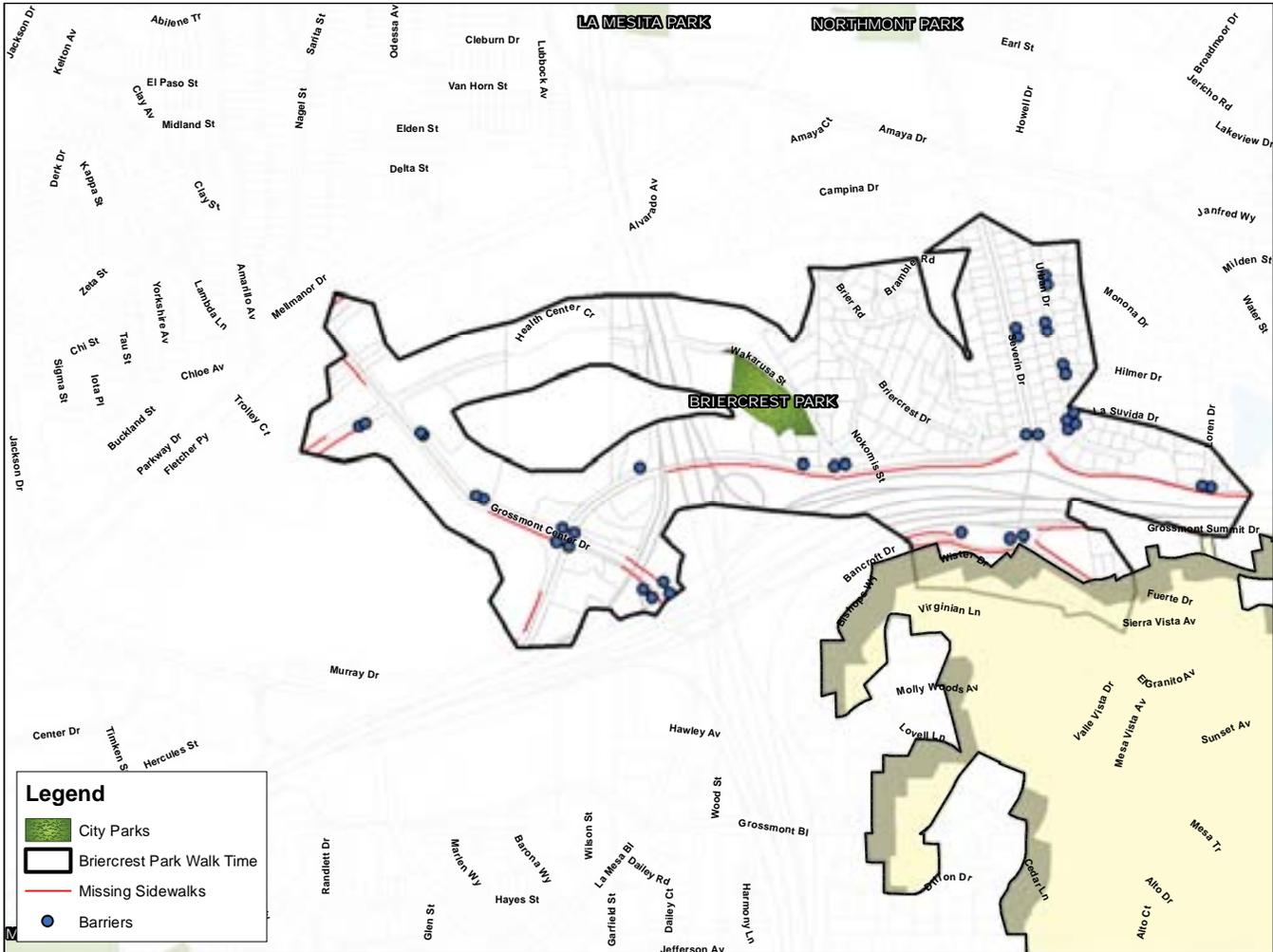
**Project B.02—Improved Neighborhood Connections to Northmont Park**



**Project B.02—Estimate**

Issue	Quantity	Unit	Unit Cost	Total Cost
Remove and Fix Barriers	1	LS	\$221,400	\$221,400
Install Sidewalks	34,926	SF	\$7	\$244,482
Access Improvement Totals				\$465,882
Contingency (30%)				\$139,765
Grand Total				\$605,647

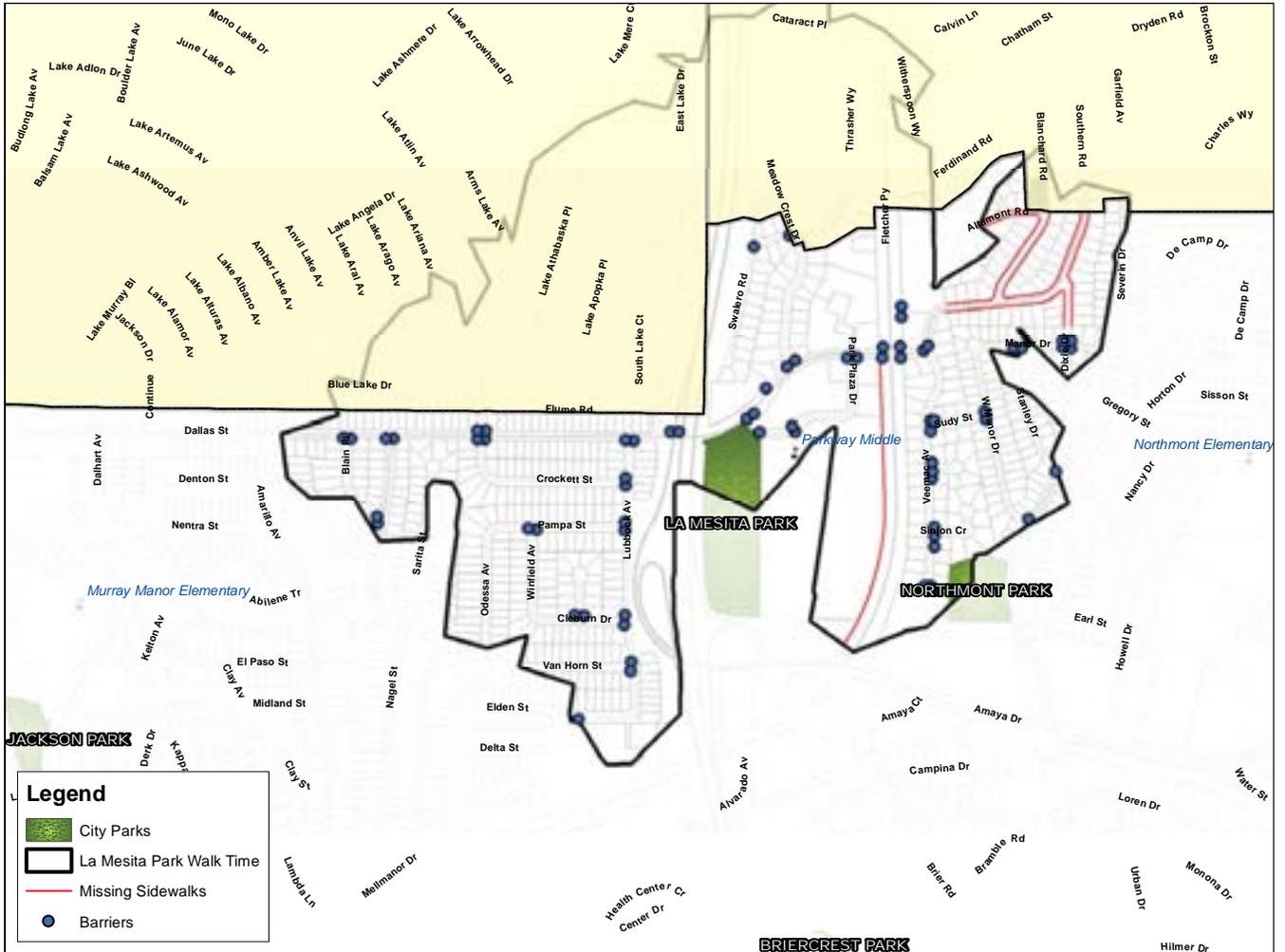
**Project B.03—Improved Neighborhood Connections to Briercrest Park**



**Project B.03—Estimate**

Issue	Quantity	Unit	Unit Cost	Total Cost
Remove and Fix Barriers	1	LS	\$32,100	\$33,700
Install Sidewalks	40,021	SF	\$7	\$280,147
Access Improvement Totals				\$312,247
Contingency (30%)				\$93,674
Grand Total				\$405,921

**Project B.04—Improved Neighborhood Connections to La Mesita Park**

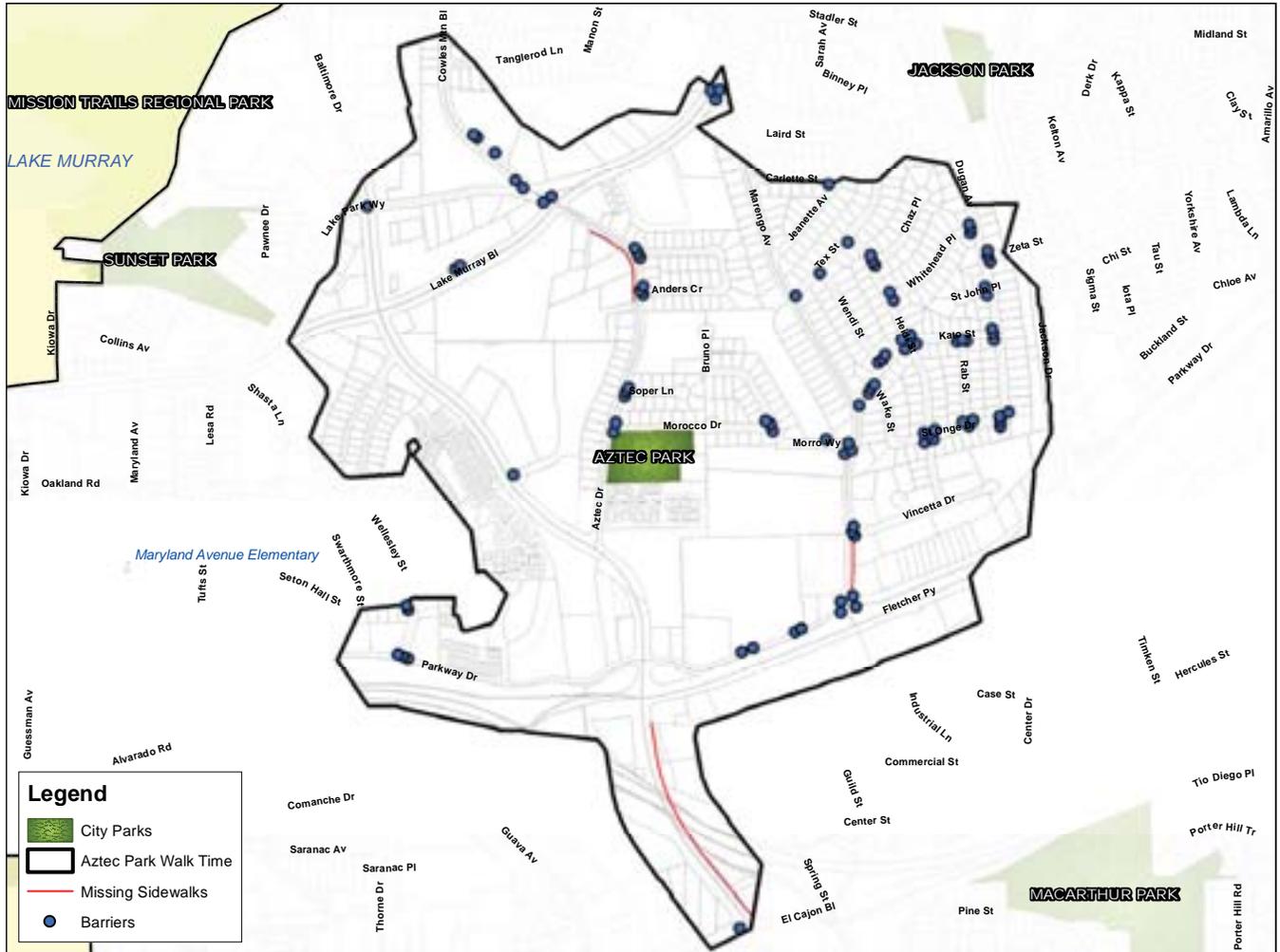


**Project B.04—Estimate**

Issue	Quantity	Unit	Unit Cost	Total Cost
Remove and Fix Barriers	1	LS	\$111,050	\$111,050
Install Sidewalks	34,565	SF	\$7	\$241,953
Access Improvement Totals				\$353,003
Contingency (30%)				\$105,901
Grand Total				\$458,904



**Project B.06—Improved Neighborhood Connections to Aztec Park**



**Project B.06—Estimate**

Issue	Quantity	Unit	Unit Cost	Total Cost
Remove and Fix Barriers	1	LS	\$130,850	\$130,850
Install Sidewalks	12,277	SF	\$7	\$85,941
Access Improvement Totals				\$216,791
Contingency (30%)				\$65,037
Grand Total				\$281,828

**Project B.07—Improved Neighborhood Connections to Sunset Park**



**Project B.07—Estimate**

Issue	Quantity	Unit	Unit Cost	Total Cost
Remove and Fix Barriers	1	LS	\$40,700	\$40,700
Install Sidewalks	30,595	SF	\$7	\$214,162
Access Improvement Totals				\$254,862
Contingency (30%)				\$76,458
Grand Total				\$331,320



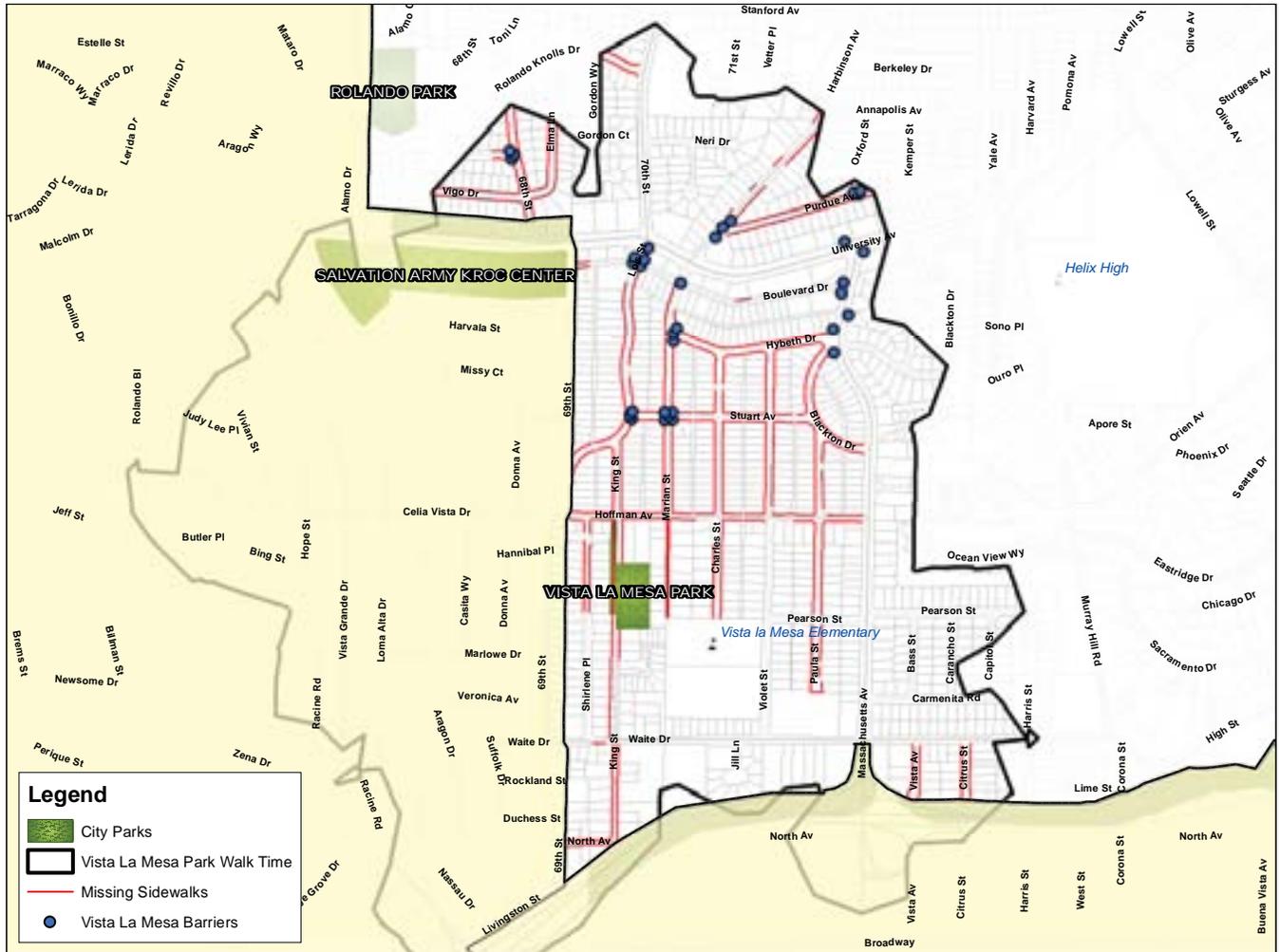
**Project B.09—Improved Neighborhood Connections to Rolando Park**



**Project B.09—Estimate**

Issue	Quantity	Unit	Unit Cost	Total Cost
Remove and Fix Barriers	1	LS	\$30,000	\$30,000
Install Sidewalks	118,157	SF	\$7	\$827,099
Access Improvement Totals				\$857,099
Contingency (30%)				\$257,130
Grand Total				\$1,114,229

**Project B.10—Improved Neighborhood Connections to Vista La Mesa Park**

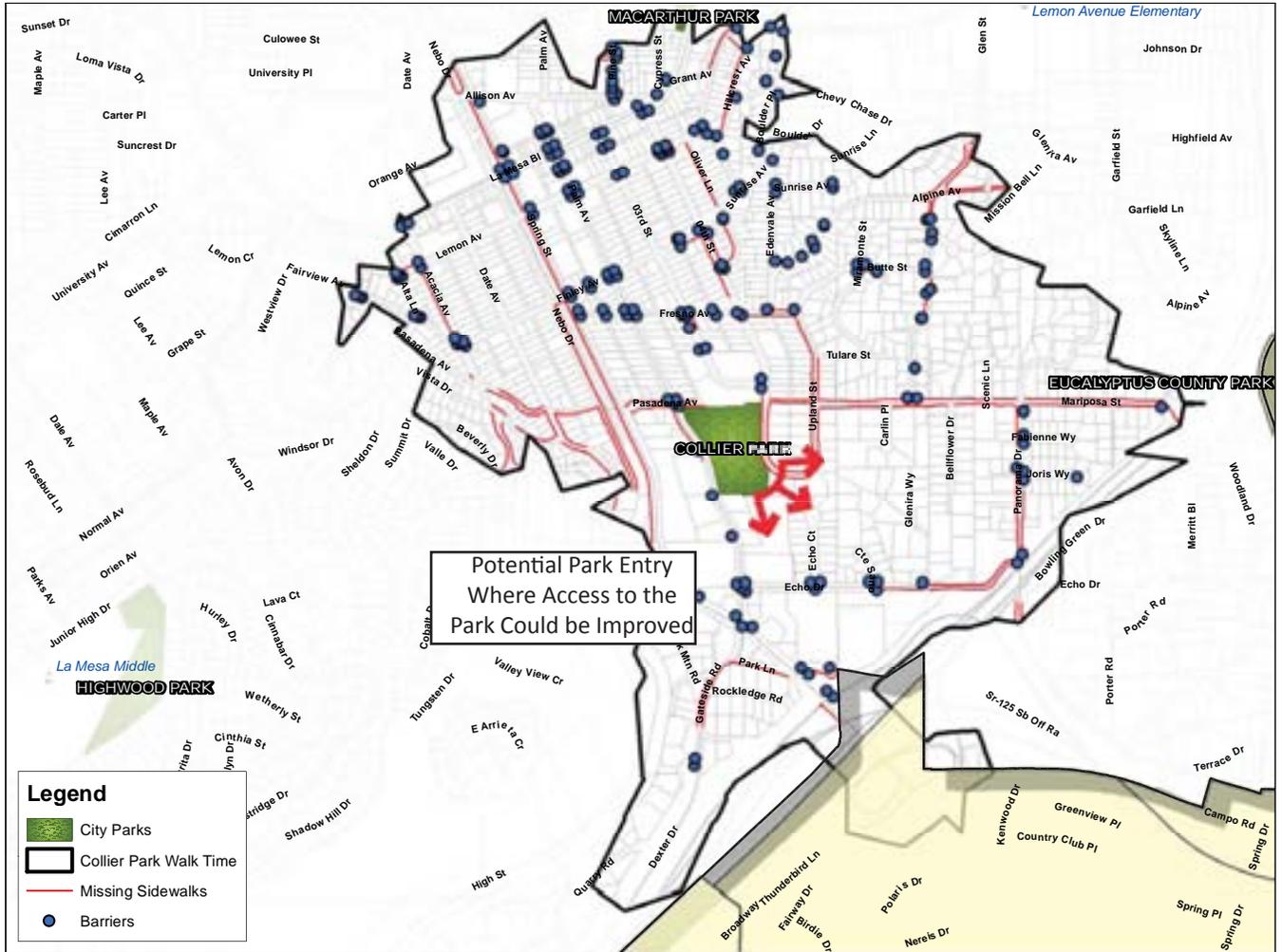


**Project B.10—Estimate**

Issue	Quantity	Unit	Unit Cost	Total Cost
Remove and Fix Barriers	1	LS	\$52,700	\$52,700
Install Sidewalks	199,960	SF	\$7	\$1,399,720
Access Improvement Totals				\$1,452,420
Contingency (30%)				\$435,726
Grand Total				\$1,888,146



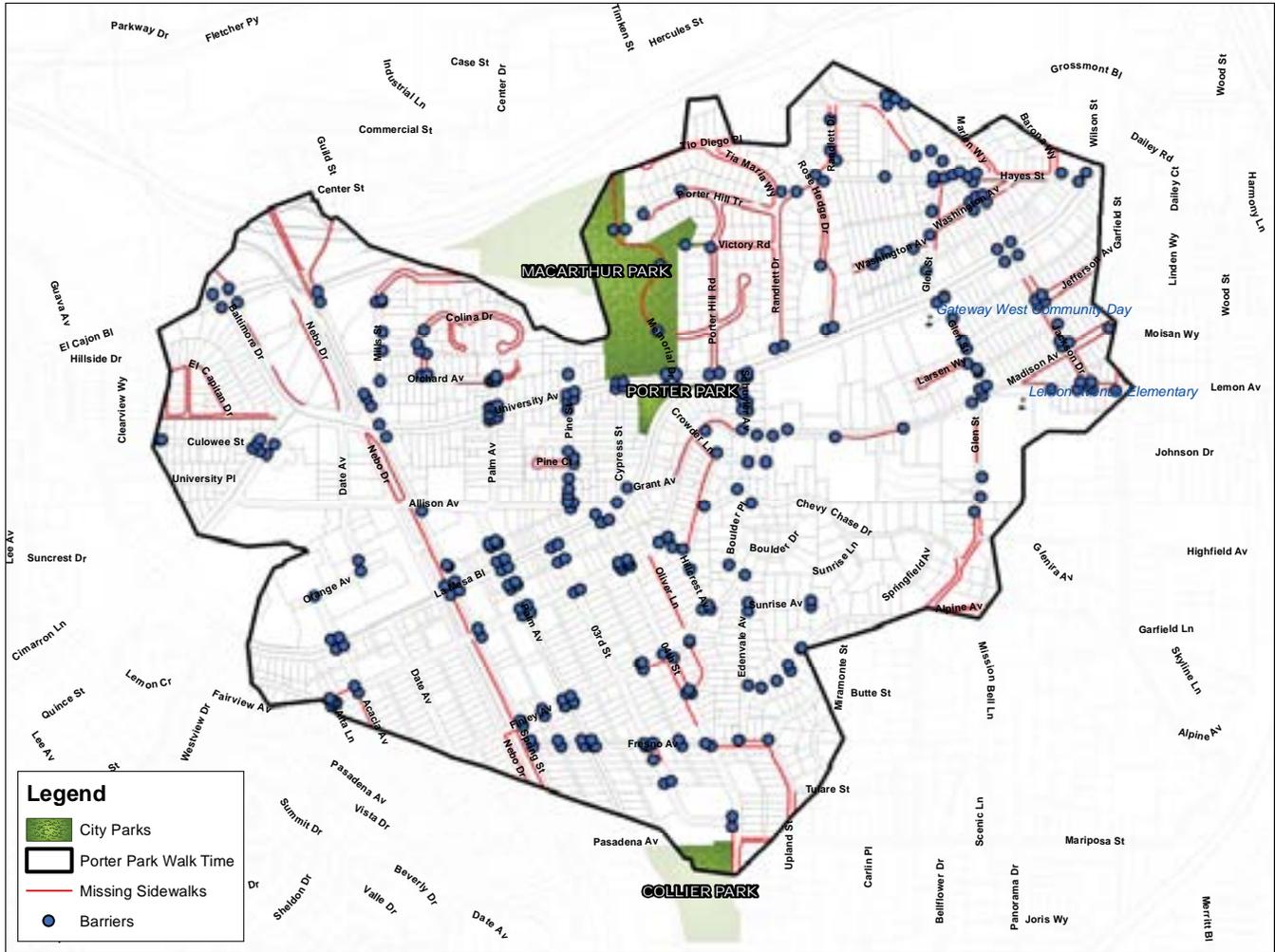
**Project B.12—Improved Neighborhood Connections to Collier Park**



**Project B.12—Estimate**

Issue	Quantity	Unit	Unit Cost	Total Cost
Remove and Fix Barriers	1	LS	\$269,050	\$269,050
Install Sidewalks	161,223	SF	\$7	\$1,128,561
Access Improvement Totals				\$1,397,611
Contingency (30%)				\$419,283
Grand Total				\$1,816,894

**Project B.13—Improved Neighborhood Connections to Porter Park**



**Project B.13—Estimate**

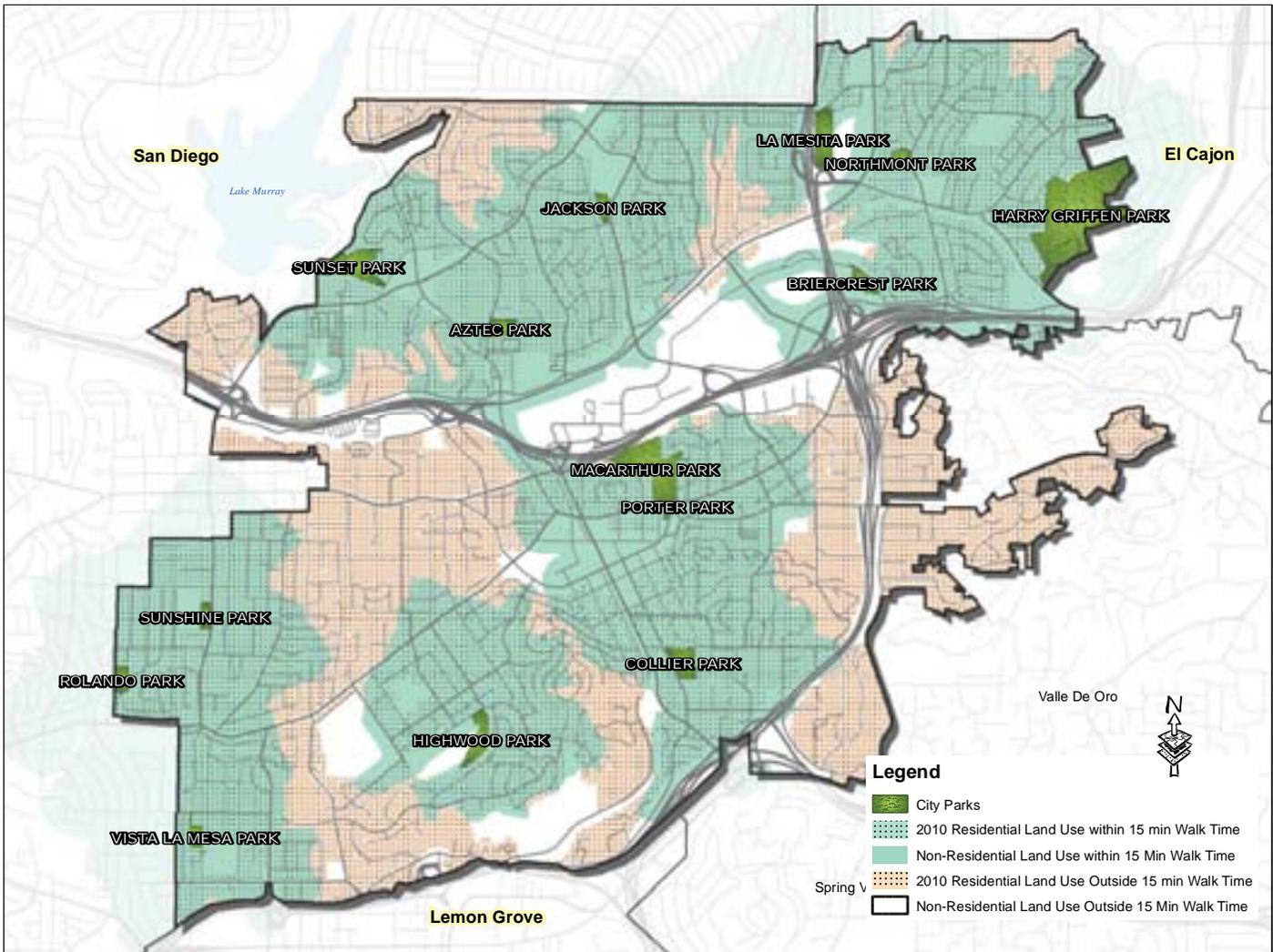
Issue	Quantity	Unit	Unit Cost	Total Cost
Remove and Fix Barriers	1	LS	\$378,100	\$378,100
Install Sidewalks	220,577	SF	\$7	\$1,544,039
Access Improvement Totals				\$1,922,139
Contingency (30%)				\$576,642
Grand Total				\$2,498,781



Service Area Expansion

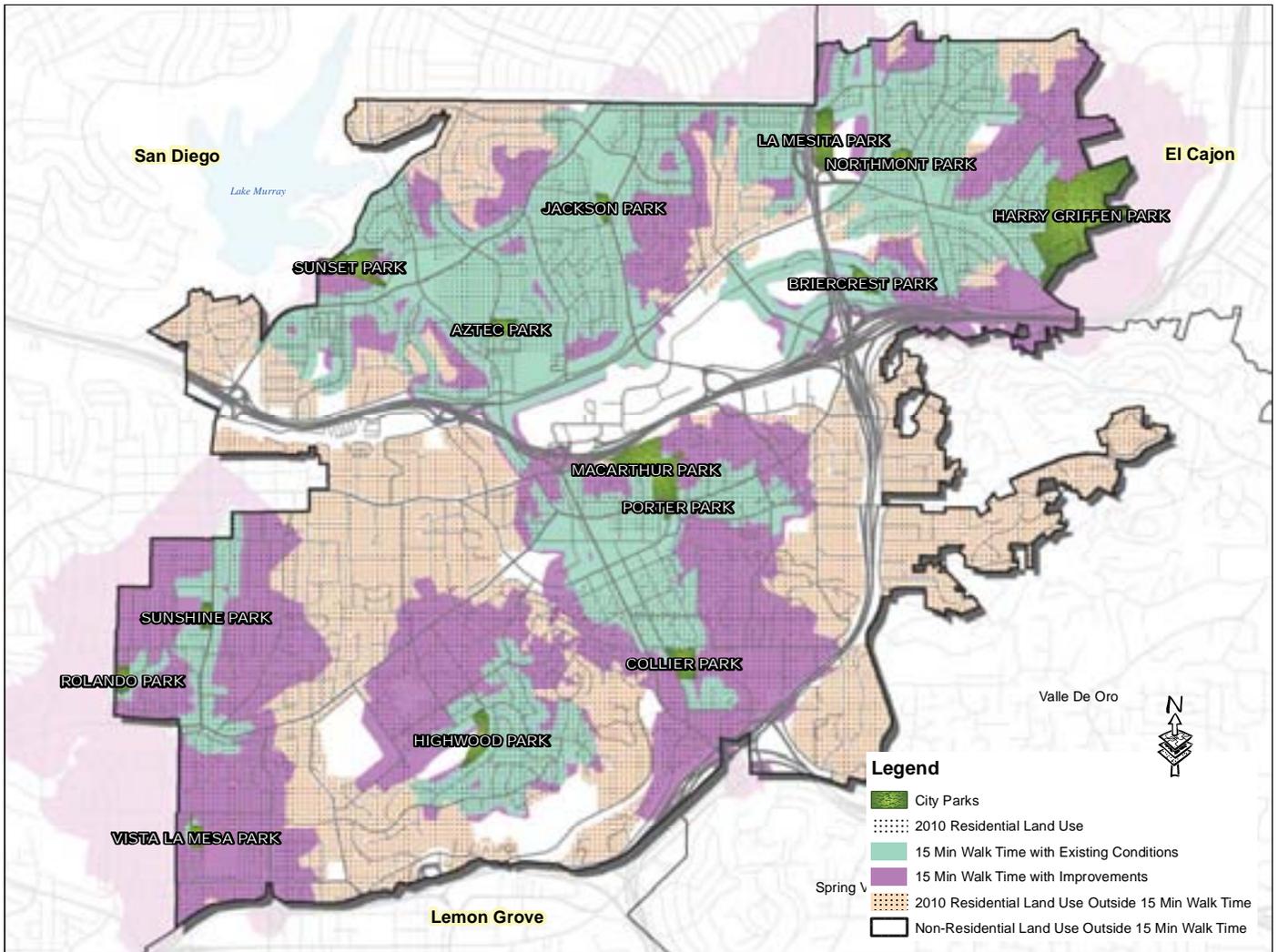
By incorporating all these improved neighborhood connections to individual parks, including installing sidewalks and removing barriers, the service areas to parks based on a 15-minute walk time will be expanded (see Figure 5.4).

**Figure 5.4—Service Area Expanded with Improvements**



These improved neighborhood connections and access points increase the number of people served at each park. A comparison of the existing service area and the improved service area is shown in Figure 5.5. The increased service area is represented in purple. In some cases, these walkable service areas increase dramatically because of walkway improvements near the parks that prevent most all in the normal service area from walking, or they provide alternative routes that decrease the overall distance to the parks that the user previously had to utilize out of direction routes for a connected walkway system.

**Figure 5.5— Comparison of Existing and Improved Service Area**



Using each improved 15-minute walk zone around each park and assuming all barriers and gaps in the walkway network were fixed, a summary of the populations served by each park was summarized in Table 5.1. This table utilizes future population, as well as a population per acre calculation, that is useful for park demand analysis.

**Table 5.1—Population Growth by Service Area Analysis- Based on Improved Access Conditions**

<i>Based on Existing Disjointed Walkways</i>						<i>Based on Improved Walkway Conditions</i>			
Park	2010 Population	2030 Population	Acres	Persons per Acre (2010)	Projected Increase to 2030	2010 Population	2030 Population	Acres	% Change (between unimproved & improved for 2030)
Aztec	4,860	4,937	256.54	19	1.60%	6,728	6,887	383.11	39.50%
Briercrest	272	426	92.27	3	56.72%	608	851	189.43	99.77.%
Collier	2,382	2,394	141.22	17	0.51%	4,970	5,144	434.47	114.87.%
Harry Griffen	701	714	79.22	9	1.97%	2,223	2,263	304.78	216.94%
Highwood	1,143	1,203	152.47	7	5.24%	4,451	4,609	381.45	283.13%
Jackson	2,266	2,380	284.68	8	5.02%	4,328	4,559	423.83	97.53%
La Mesita	1,310	1,361	137.22	10	3.91%	1,691	1,770	202.43	30.05%
MacArthur	1,857	1,961	157.70	12	5.60%	3,856	4,036	327.97	105.81%
Northmont	3,800	4,006	298.29	13	5.43%	4,298	4,523	360.22	12.91%
Porter	2,904	3,017	216.50	13	3.89%	5,727	5,948	463.55	97.15%
Rolando	122	124	12.65	10	1.05%	1,651	2,375	146.89	1,815.32%
Sunset	4,189	4,386	207.44	20	4.71%	4,427	4,636	221.02	5.70%
Sunshine	843	1,541	84.91	10	82.79%	4,157	4,999	351.93	224.40%
Vista La Mesa	40	41	3.83	10	1.90%	3,223	4,367	263.17	10,551.22%
Population within 15 minute walk of each park (no double counting)	<b>21,347</b>	<b>22,984</b>	<b>1,721</b>		<b>7.67%</b>	<b>38,522</b>	<b>41,267</b>	<b>3,347</b>	<b>79.55%</b>
Population within City Boundary	<b>57,650</b>	<b>65,353</b>			<b>13.36%</b>	<b>57,650</b>	<b>65,353</b>		
Population not within 15 minute walk of an existing park	<b>36,303</b>	<b>42,369</b>				<b>19,128</b>	<b>24,086</b>		
% of population within 15 minute service area	<b>37.03%</b>	<b>35.17%</b>				<b>66.82%</b>	<b>63.14%</b>		

With barrier removals, walkway additions and new access points added, the population being served within a 15 minute walk time, is substantially improved. A comparison of Table 5.1 to Table 4.2-Population served with the existing network found in Chapter 4 shows significant changes. Just by fixing the walkway network and filling in gap and removing barriers, an additional 17,175 people or an additional 80.46% would be within a 15 minute walking distance of a park based on the current City's population. The number of acres served also go from 1,721 to 3,347.

### Open Space Links and Trails

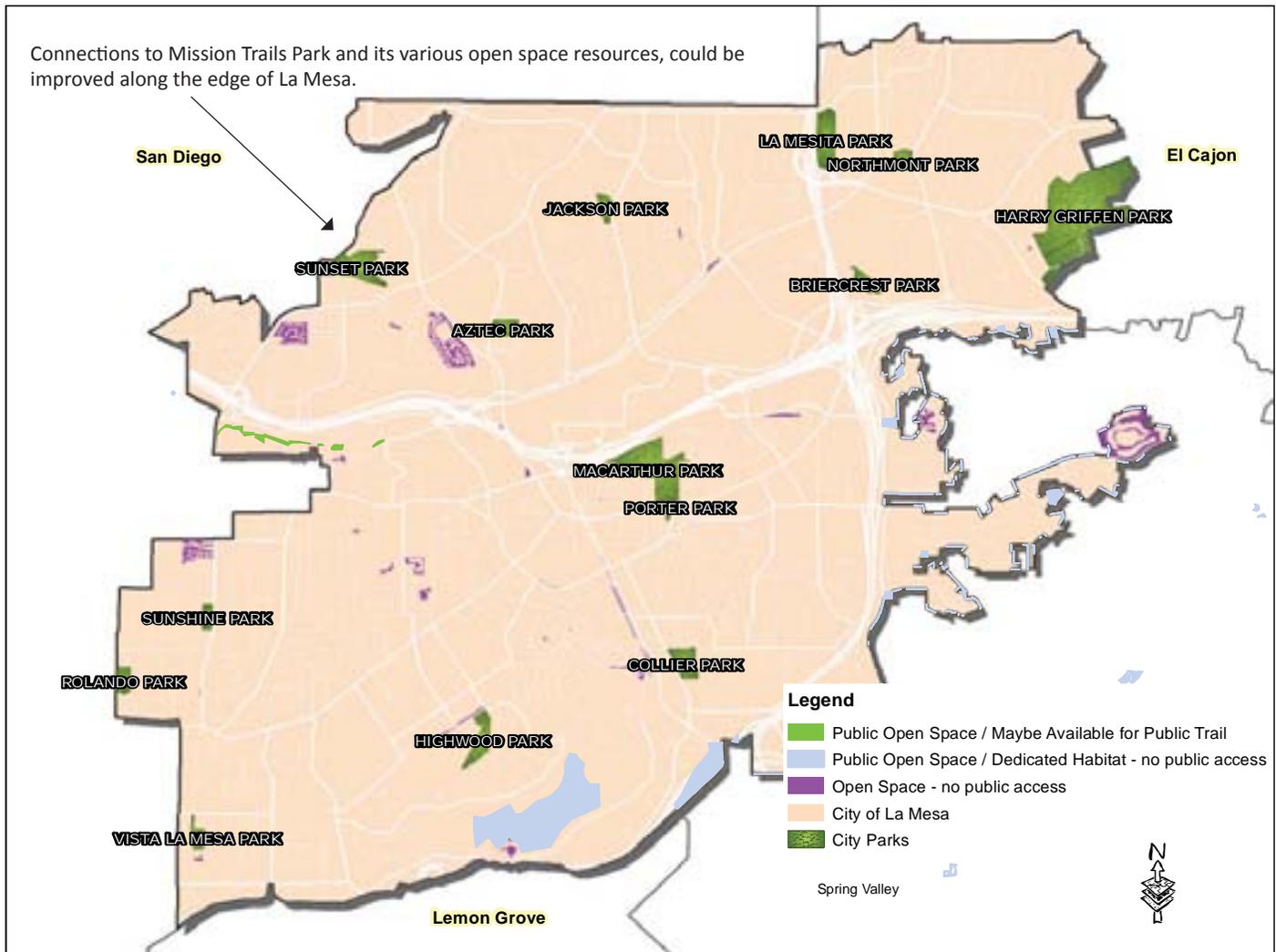
Open space links and trails are routes within or leading up to an open space. They are typically used for exploring flora and fauna and can also be used for exercise. It is important to designate trails and linkages within open space areas in such a way to limit impact on habitats and natural areas. There are limited opportunities within the City of La Mesa to develop these types of trails because open space is limited and is either privately owned or has been protected under regional and local efforts as part of the Multiple Species Conservation Plan (see Figure 5.6). Many of the open space areas shown are designated open space, but were set aside as part of private developments without an intent to allow the public to utilize these areas. They are often small and do not connect with other open space areas. One opportunity may exist, however. The City is adjacent to Mission Trails Regional Park and Lake Murray, and residents have easy access to open space facilities within a short walk, bike, or car ride.



Recreational opportunities at Lake Murray  
and Mission Trails Regional Park



Figure 5.6—Open Space Land Use



### Urban Trail Loops

Urban trail loops are marked routes that are used to connect destinations or provide a start and end loop system for walking or running. They are used to promote exercise by providing a marked route with marked distances. Three urban trail loops already exist within La Mesa. Additional loops are suggested to increase accessibility to parks and incorporate an urban loop within every quadrant of the City (see Project C.01 through C.06 and Figure 5.5). The proposed new loops are tied to significant public destinations and places that provide additional outdoor recreational opportunities, including parks, hospitals, the civic center and the downtown area, historical places, art, and private recreation facilities.

When an urban trail loop is along a street, complete streets concepts should be incorporated. All users of the roadway, including motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists, children, seniors, individuals with disabilities, and users of public transportation should be accommodated within the section of the street. In addition, a theme should be tied to each loop to make them identifiable and unique. Each theme could be incorporated into the wayfinding signage, distance markers, plant material, art-work, seating, lighting, hardscape, and any other special amenities along the route.

The routes should also include distance and directional markers at every quarter mile. The City should also consider publishing these routes on their website so they are easily accessible. Additional information on complete streets can be found in the *City of La Mesa Bicycle Facilities and Alternative Transportation Plan*.

Additionally, street trees should be incorporated into the loops to enhance visual quality, improve the pedestrian experience, increase pedestrian safety, influence traffic speeds, further efforts with greenhouse gas reduction (carbon sequestration), reduce urban heat island effects through shading, and to decrease water quantity runoff and water quality improvements. This would be consistent with goals in the *La Mesa Downtown Village Specific Plan* for creating urban forests and increasing the number of trees in the City.



Project C.01—Urban Trail Loop- Northeast Quadrant 1



Project C.02—Urban Trail Loop- Northeast Quadrant 2



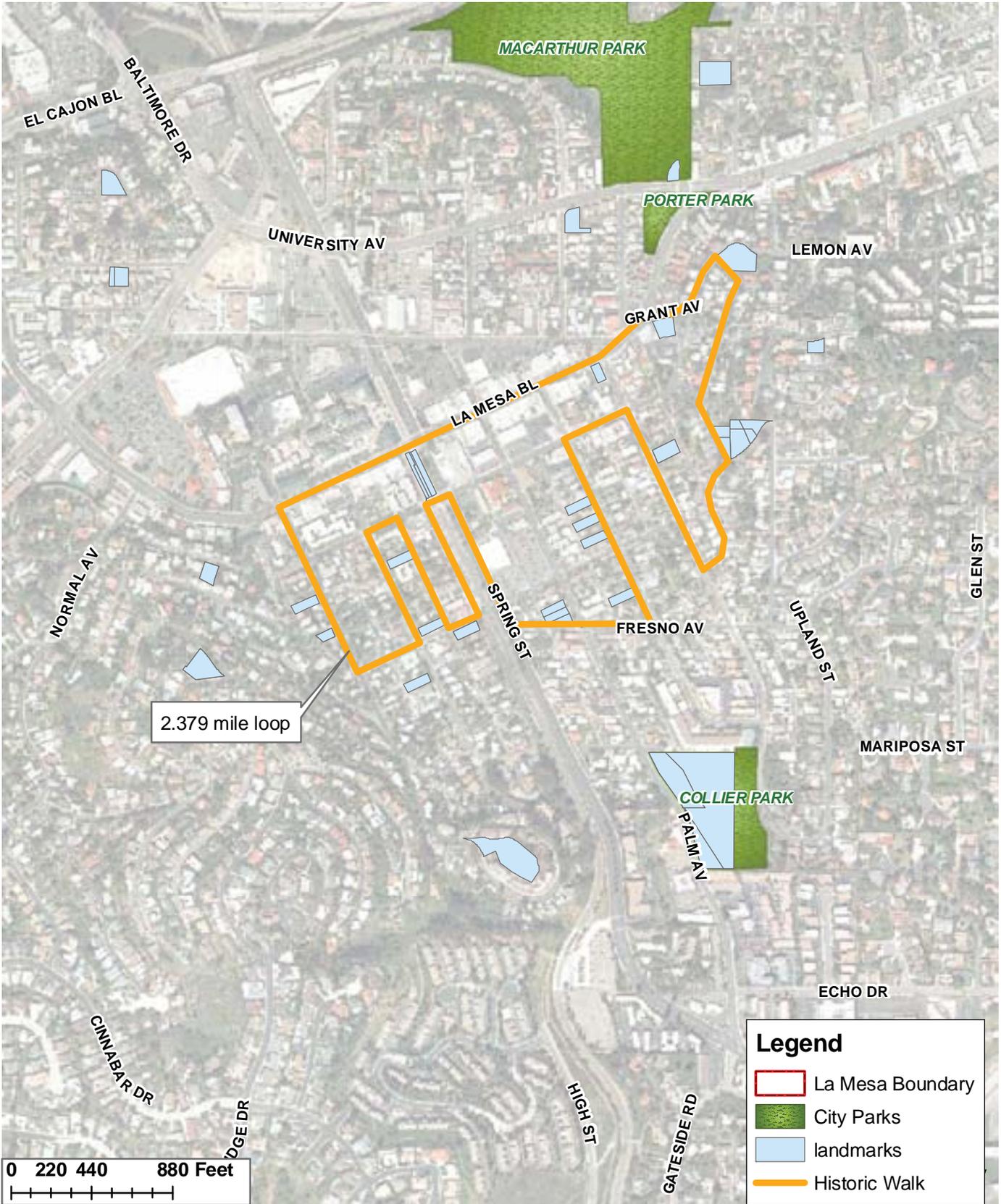
Project C.03—Urban Trail Loop- Southwest Quadrant



Project C.04—Urban Trail Loop- Downtown



Project C.05—Urban Trail Loop-History Walk



Project C.06—Urban Trail-Park Linkages

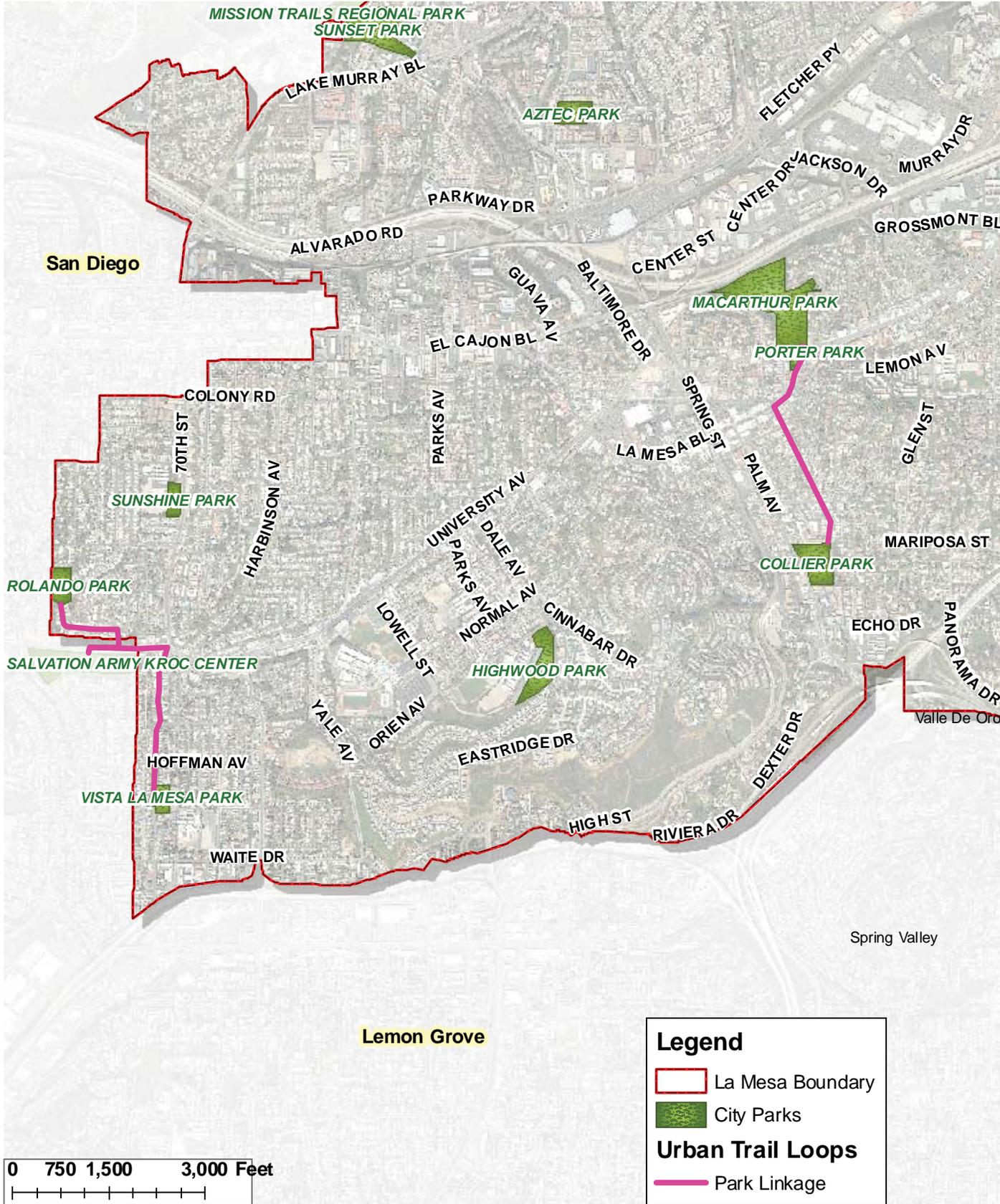
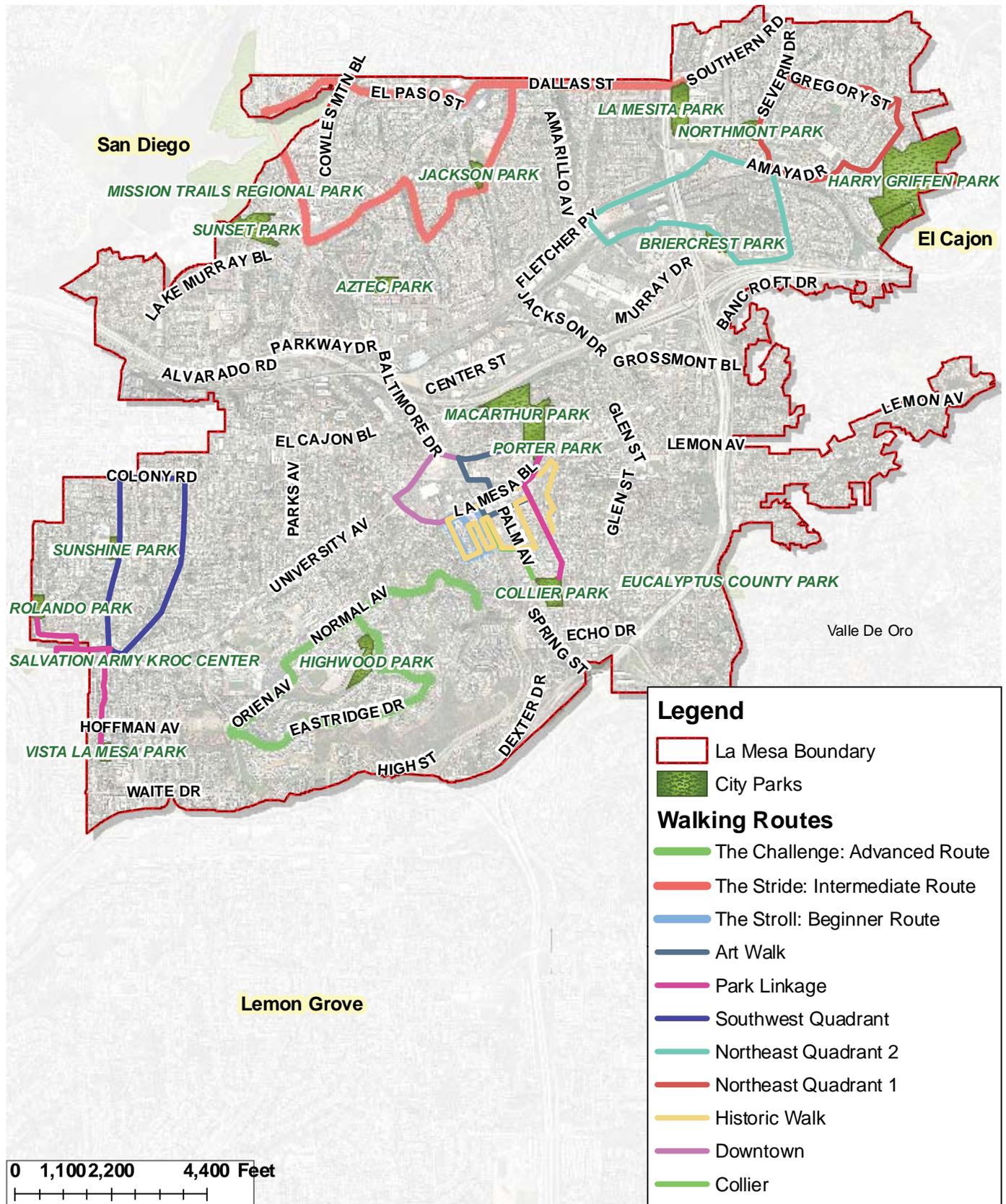


Figure 5.7—Recommended Composite Urban Trail Loops



0 1,100 2,200 4,400 Feet

### BIKE FACILITY IMPROVEMENTS

It is important to provide safe and connected bicycle routes, paths, and lanes throughout a city to promote the use of bicycling as an alternative method of transportation. In addition to routes, lanes and paths, providing bike storage in the form of racks or lockers at key locations is essential to support the use of bicycles.



There are three different types of bicycle facility classifications: Class 1, Class 2, and Class 3. Class 1 bikeways (frequently referred to as bike paths) are facilities physically separated from motor vehicle routes, with exclusive right-of-way for bicycles and pedestrians, and with motor vehicle cross flows kept to a minimum. Class 2 facilities are marked bicycle lanes within roadways adjacent to the curb lane, delineated by appropriate striping and signage. A Class 3 facility is a suggested bicycle route marked by a series of signs designating a preferred route between two destinations.

In addition to a network of routes that can provide access to destinations throughout the community, it is also important to provide bike storage at key locations and destinations. Bike storage can be provided through racks or lockers and can come in a variety of forms, shapes, and colors to match the local context. To encourage residents to utilize bicycles to access parks, every park within the City should have a minimum of one bike rack or locker. Additional facilities should be added where there are multiple access points into a park.

Additional bicycle facilities and design information for the entire City of La Mesa can be found in the *City of La Mesa Bicycle Facilities and Alternative Transportation Plan*.



### 5.1.1 PROPOSED PARK LOCATIONS

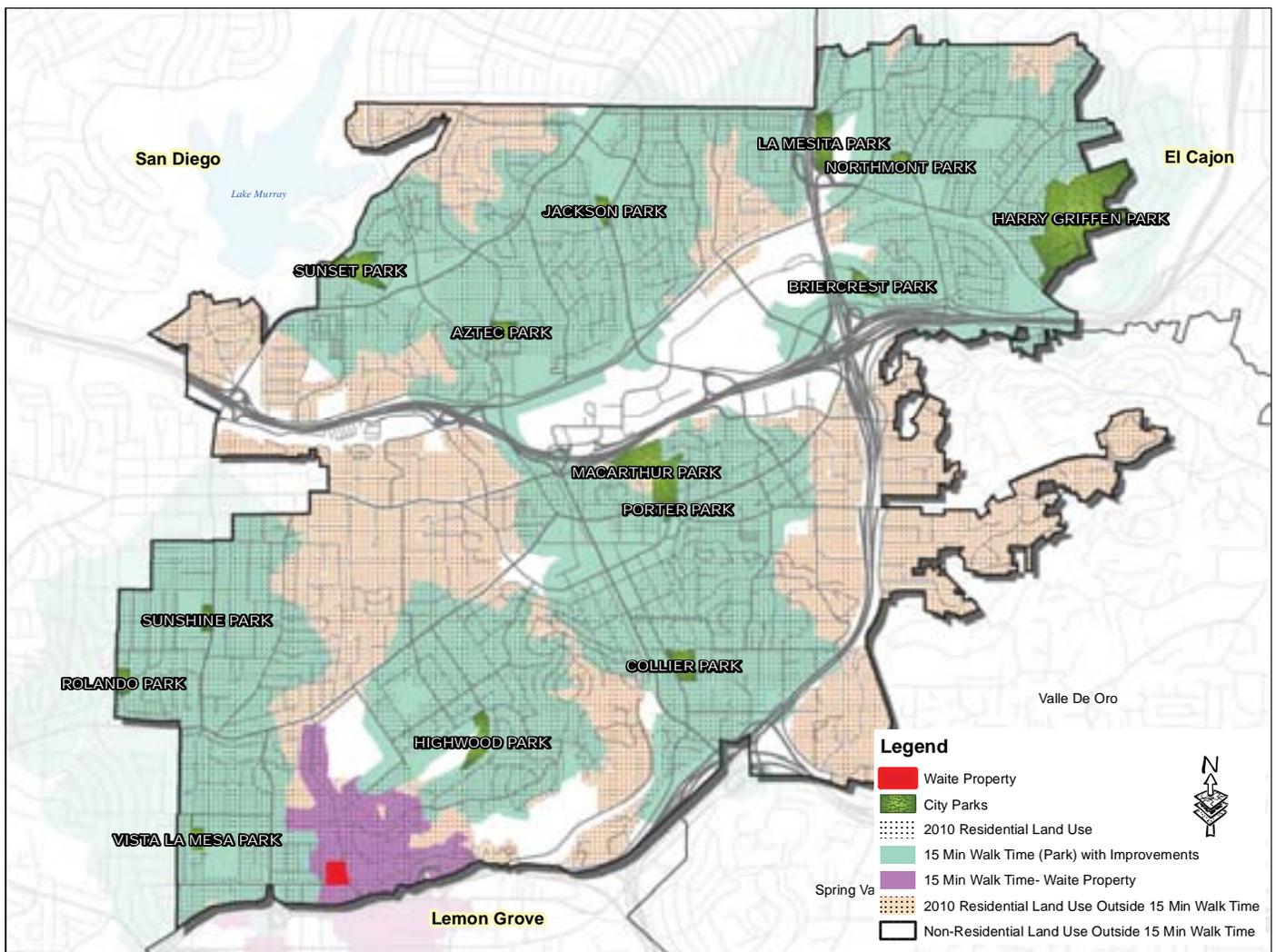
The City of La Mesa is mostly built out and there is limited vacant, city-owned land. Therefore, the potential for new park locations is also very limited. Non-traditional parks (including pocket parks and green linear parks along roadways and sidewalks) are becoming popular alternatives in cities with limited available land. Since new parks will be difficult to acquire and finance, it may be more cost effective to stretch limited funding to provide additional or enhanced program features within existing parks instead.

However, future project site acquisitions in quadrants that are park deficient or in neighborhoods that do not meet the 1-mile and the 15-minute walk time goal should continue to be a goal. Likewise, major developments in these areas may need to provide additional in-lieu park funds to assist in land acquisition or should include new usable open space / recreational facilities as part of the development. In addition, should any programmed, vacant city-owned land become available or developments opportunities change, the City should consider the development of new park space, especially when the parcels are within a significantly under-served area.

## LAND ACQUISITIONS

Vacant, City-owned property is being considered for other uses and is not available for parkland. However, the Waite Property at the corner of Waite Drive and Murray Hill Road is currently owned by the County of San Diego and may become available in the future. The City of La Mesa has the first right of refusal to purchase this property. The City should consider purchasing this parcel and developing it as parkland as it would serve to fill a gap within the park service area and increase recreational opportunities in the Southwest quadrant. The parcel is 128,160 square feet and is shown in Figure 5.8. This parcel could be developed as a neighborhood park if it were purchased. If developed, the Waite property could potentially fill a large service area gap not currently filled by existing parks as indicated in purple in the graphic below. The development of a park on this parcel would result in an additional 1,228 people served within a 15-minute walk time to a park.

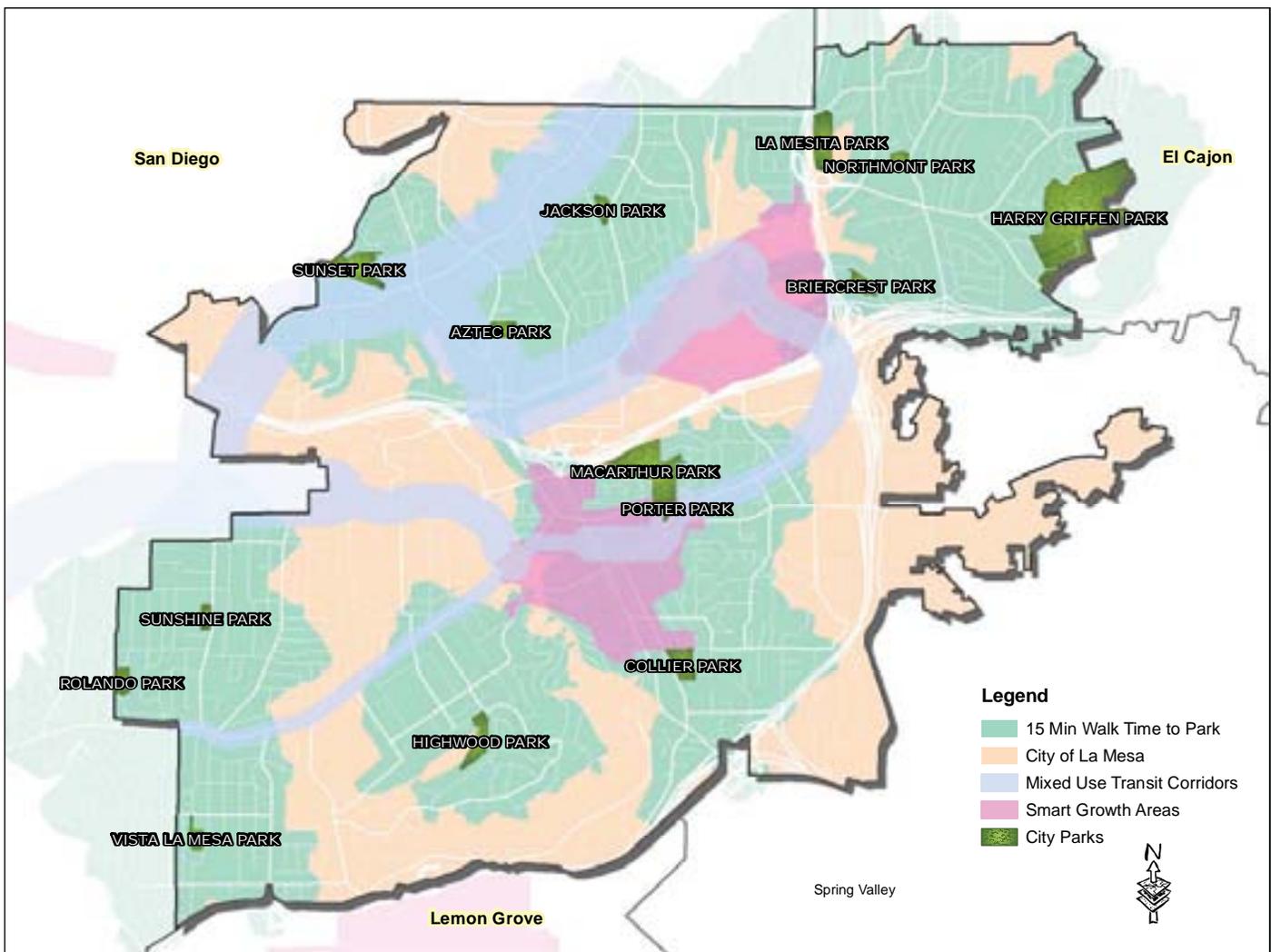
Figure 5.8—Waite Property



## COORDINATION WITH FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

Certain areas of the City are designated to receive infill projects and mixed use developments. Most of these areas are long corridors designated by SANDAG as smart growth areas (See Figure 5.9). Some of these areas are transit corridors and others are smart growth town or urban centers. These areas are intended to be higher density, mixed land uses and more reliant upon transit and walkable conditions. It will be important to identify park opportunities for all of the projects that are situated in park deficient areas (see the corridors and smart growth areas that do not overlap with the green walkable park service areas on Figure 5.9).

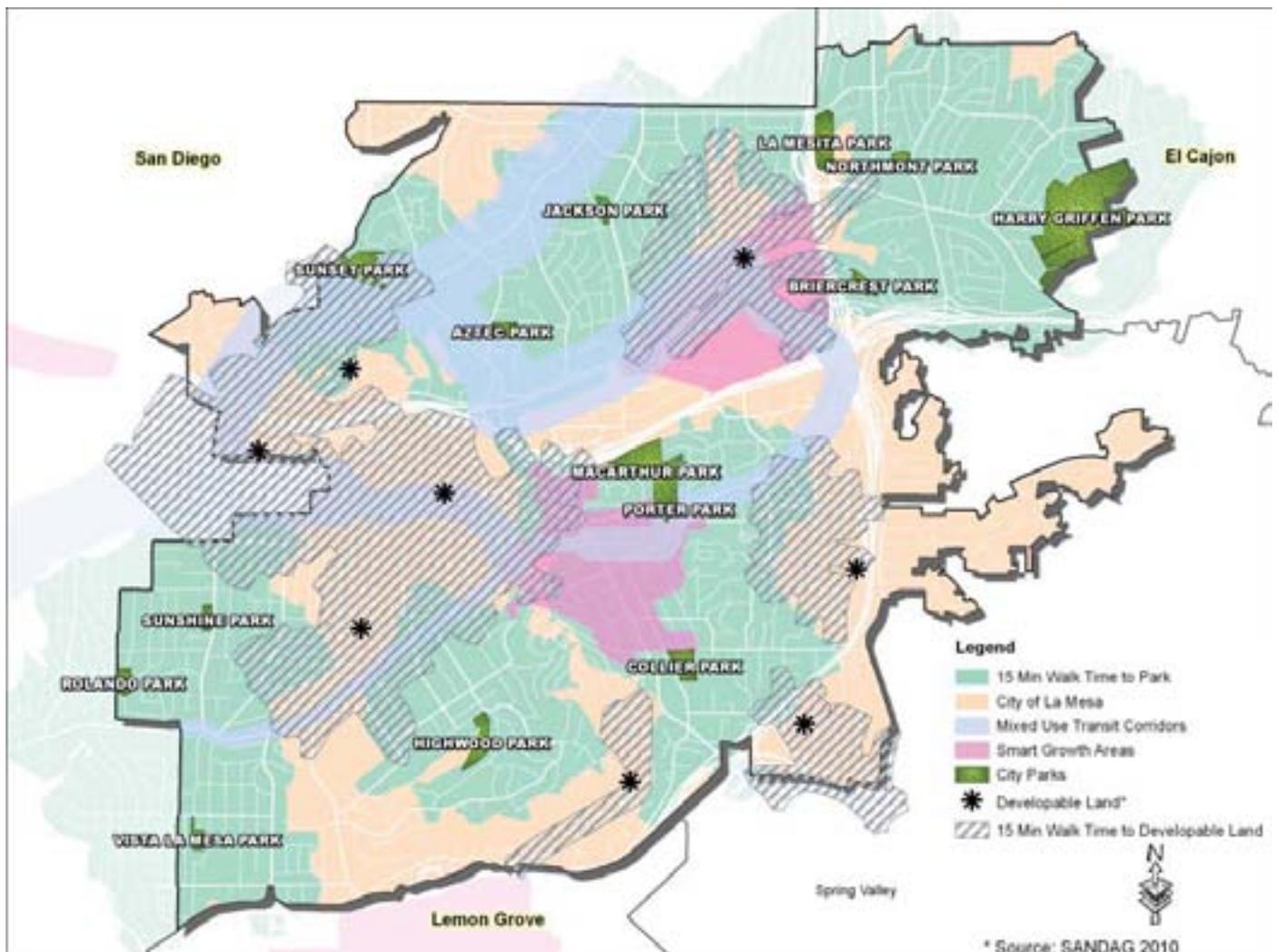
**Figure 5.9—SANDAG Smart Growth and Mixed Use Transit Corridors**



In addition, SANDAG has identified several parcels within the City of La Mesa as developable land. The map below in Figure 5.10 identifies a few of those developable lands that fall in an area that is not currently serviced by an existing park with an asterisk. From there, a 15-minute walk time is extended outward to demonstrate the potential additional service areas that could begin to fill in critical gaps. The City should closely monitor the development of the City and look for opportunities for park facilities. Park development opportunities that should be explored related to major project development should include:

- 1) Portions of developable sites dedicated for park or active recreational use
- 2) Inclusion of active recreation (though not public) internal to these developments
- 3) Requirement to pay into a park in-lieu fee that could help acquire land or enhance existing park amenities in these park deficient areas
- 4) Inclusion of plazas, linear parks, community gardens or green streets as part of the development
- 5) Pursuit of smart growth funds, CDBG, low income housing or other grants and other partnerships to support parkland development in association with smart growth mixed use, walkable and transit supportive projects

**Figure 5.10—Private Development Parks**



### CIVIC PLAZA OR SQUARE

There have been significant changes within the downtown area of La Mesa recently. Many of these changes have resulted from the *La Mesa Downtown Streetscape Master Plan* and the *La Mesa Downtown Village Specific Plan*. Improvements have included a new library, a new police station, and improvements on University Avenue and Allison Avenue. La Mesa should continue their efforts to improve the downtown area by encouraging more development and including outdoor public spaces. In order to strengthen the urban core and civic center, the City should set aside land to develop a civic plaza or square in this area.



The plaza or square should provide both social and recreational activities. It should function as a destination that people can walk and bike to and use as a gathering space. Program elements such as a stage, a farmer's market area, an outdoor movie theater space, a small children's splash pad or play structure, a half court basketball area, community gardens, small food vendors, outdoor shuffle board courts, bocce ball courts, outdoor chess tables, and seating areas should be considered and could be incorporated into the design.



## COMMUNITY GARDENS

Community gardens can range from simple to complex depending on the site requirements of the proposed program. La Mesa should consider incorporating community gardens into the network of parks and encourage residents to build gardens to encourage healthy eating. Community gardens can be stand-alone garden plots, but as a public amenity, can include additional recreational elements. These can include public art, children's play areas, garden plots, food and produce stands, demonstration kitchens, restaurants, benches and seating, bee keeping units, compost and green waste bins, interpretive signage, and smaller courts including bocce and shuffle board. These types of facilities foster a strong community, provide opportunities to involve a range of age groups, and contribute to a healthy lifestyle.



Community gardens can be stand-alone garden plots, but as a public amenity, can include additional recreational elements. These can include public art, children's play areas, garden plots, food and produce stands, demonstration kitchens, restaurants, benches and seating, bee keeping units, compost and green waste bins, interpretive signage, and smaller courts including bocce and shuffle board. These types of facilities foster a strong community, provide opportunities to involve a range of age groups, and contribute to a healthy lifestyle.



## 5.2 PROJECT PRIORITIZATION

Prioritization of projects and improvements should be set by staff and elected officials based on input from residents in La Mesa. However, funding opportunities that present themselves should always move projects to a higher priority. Likewise, areas of the community that are not as well served by park facilities should take priority over other areas that are generally well served. Priorities for missing park facilities and program additions should be based on user demand, not just based on a comparison of existing facilities with national or state standards.

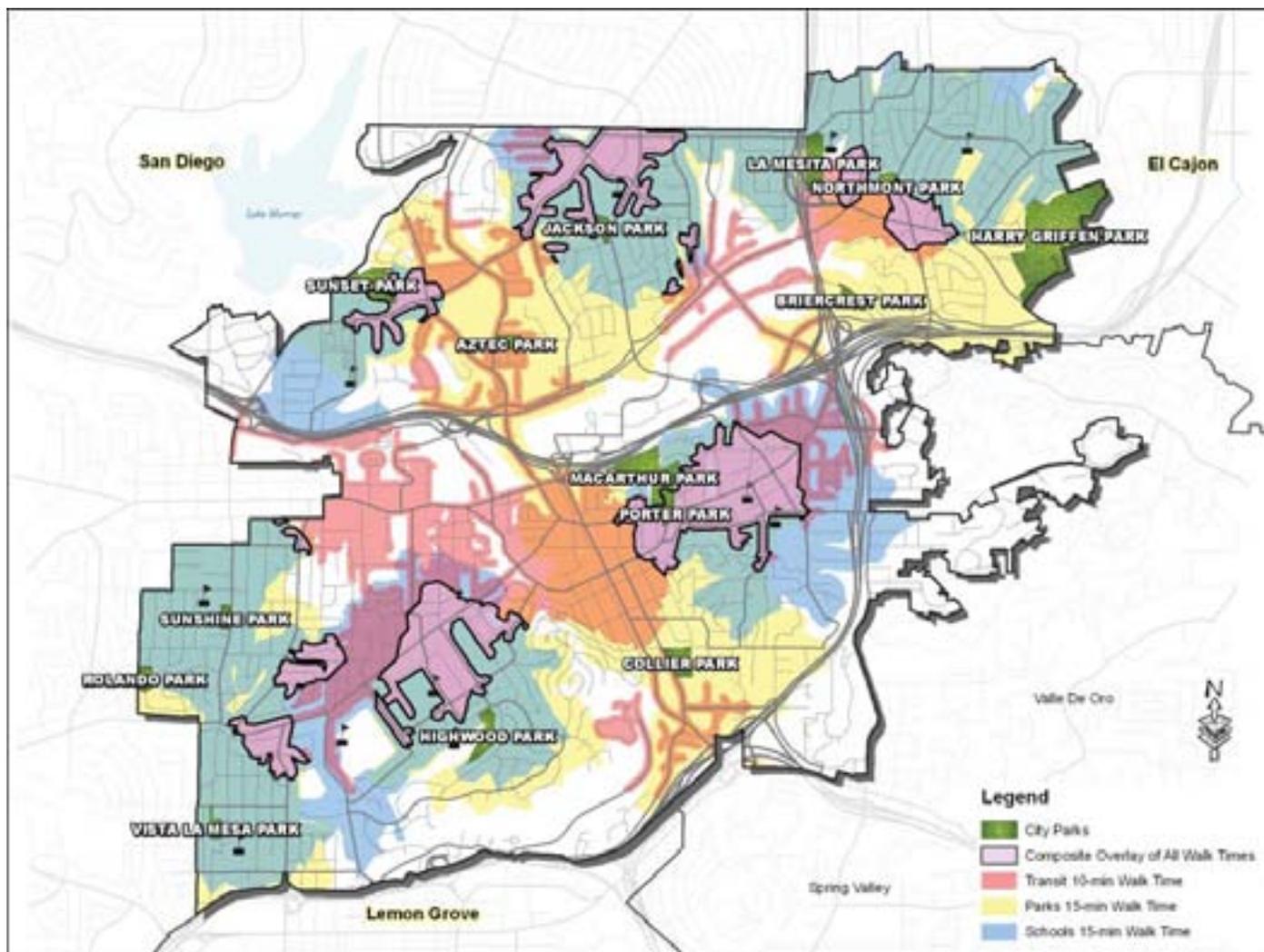
Implementing small portions of access improvements to park,s such as reducing some barriers but not all, or adding some sidewalks while leaving other segments missing, should be avoided when feasible. Any missing link in connectivity for walking or biking to parks will prevent access, so full connection links should be pursued. Improving park entry access points should take the first level of priority in improving connections. Second priority should go to walkways systems immediately around the park and decreasing the further away an area is from the park.

Park access projects identified in the plan may benefit Safe Routes to School, Safe Routes to Transit, as well as Safe Routes to Park, and should be considered high priority projects because of their ability to improve walkability to multiple destinations. Figure 5.11 includes a composite overlay of the walk times to schools, parks, and transit stations. The pink areas outlined in dark black indicate where these plans overlap. By fixing barriers and filling gaps in sidewalks, pedestrians traveling to any of the three destinations will benefit. The City should work to coordinate, find funding, and implement the improvements within all three of these plans for maximum accessibility.

## 5.3 IMPLEMENTATION

The implementation of projects in this master plan should be part of ongoing capital improvement program development, grant application efforts, and other budgeting discussions ongoing at the City. The master plan will need to be integrated and incorporated into the General Plan Update and the Recreation Element prior to implementation of most of the projects contained in this document. Some projects will require further design, engineering, and public review, while others may require more environmental review. The implementation process should also consider the available resources and funding for maintaining additional facilities as they are developed.

Figure 5.11—Safe Routes Overlay



### 5.3.1 IMMEDIATE RECOMMENDATIONS

Projects in this category primarily deal with changes in policies and research into funding sources that may be available in the immediate future. Projects should be simple and supported by the community, and should not require further environmental review nor exhaustive design or engineering.

### 5.3.2 MID AND LONG-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

The more complex, costly or environmentally challenging projects, or those that may require the prioritization and support of staff, elected officials and the general public, should all be considered mid or long term projects.

### 5.3.3 IMPLEMENTATION PHASING PLAN

Staff should be assigned to monitor funding cycles, grant opportunities and community priorities in order to take advantage of windows of opportunities. An overall phasing and strategy plan should be considered a priority for staff assignment so that logical priorities can be made early.

## 5.4 FUNDING SOURCES

There are several opportunities for funding park, open space, and connectivity projects. As with most grant programs, the more goals and attributes the project can meet, the more likely it will be selected for funding. Multiple benefits and multiple solutions offered by a project can often utilize multiple sources of funding. Project development processes should keep in mind appropriate funding strategies when defining, designing, and packaging a project.

### 5.4.1 PUBLIC FUNDING

The City should collaborate with other jurisdictions, as well as federal, state, and local agencies, to identify regional, long term funding mechanisms that achieve common resource management goals. Tables 5.2 to 5.4 identify federal, state, and local funding source opportunities for parks.

### 5.4.2 FUNDING FOR ACCESS AND ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS

The City should seek outside funding opportunities for improvement projects, particularly those that provide safe and continuous pedestrian and bicycle routes to parks and recreation facilities. Grant funding from active transportation funding sources (bike and pedestrian), Smart Growth funding sources, ADA improvements, stormwater runoff, urban greening, urban forestry and healthy communities should all be reviewed for potential matching with projects recommended in this study. Funding sources from federal, state, local, and private opportunities for improving the walking and bicycling networks are detailed in the *City of La Mesa Bicycle Facilities and Alternative Transportation Plan*.

**Table 5.2—Federal Park Funding Sources**

Grant Source	Annual Total	Agency	Funding Cycle	Match Required	Remarks
Land and Water Conservation Fund (LCWF)	\$900 million (authorized) \$37.4 million (2011)	National Park Service/California Dept. of Parks and Recreation	Annual	50%	Apportionment to California in 2011 was approximately \$1.7 million.
Urban Park and Recreation Recovery (UPRR) Program	\$725 million (authorized)	National Park Service			Has not been funded since 2002.
Urban Revitalization and Liveable Communities Act	\$445 million (proposed)	U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)	Annual	15%-30%	Previous version of the bill did not advance in the 111th Congress (2010). New bill (H.R. 709) is currently under review by the House Financial Services Committee.
Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)		U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)/City Councils	Annual		HUD awards grants to entitle- ment community grantees to carry out a wide range of com- munity development activities directed toward revitalizing neighborhoods, economic development, and providing improved community facilities and services.

**Table 5.3—State Park Funding Sources**

Grant Source	Annual Total	Agency	Funding Cycle	Match Required	Remarks
Land and Water Conservation Fund (LCWF)	See Federal Funding Above	California Department of Parks and Recreation			
Proposition 12 - 2000 Parks Bond Act	Approx. \$502 million Bond Initiative	California Department of Parks and Recreation			Provided local assistance grants. The state has distributed all funds from Proposition 12; unspent funds may remain at the local level.
Proposition 40 - 2002 Resources Bond	\$2.6 billion Bond Initiative	California Department of Parks and Recreation			Provided local assistance grants. The state has distributed all funds from Proposition 12; unspent funds may remain at the local level.
Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Program (EEMP)	\$10 million	California Natural Resources Agency/CALTRANS	Annual	None	Eligible projects must be directly or indirectly related to the environmental impact of the modification of an existing transportation facility or construction of a new transportation facility.
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) Urban and Forestry Program	Varies	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)	Annual	10% - 25%	Various grants available for differing aspects of urban forestry.
Proposition 117 - Habitat Conservation Fund	\$2 million	California Department of Parks and Recreation	Annual	50%	Established 1990. Provides grants for nature interpretation and non-capital outlay programs which bring urban residents into park and wildlife areas, to protect fish, wildlife and native plant resources or to acquire or develop wildlife corridors and trails.

**Table 5.4—Local Park Funding Sources**

Grant Source	Annual Total	Agency	Funding Cycle	Match Required	Remarks
Capital Improvement Programs (CIP)	Varies	City of La Mesa	Annual	Varies. Some non-City funds may be required as a match.	
La Mesa Park and Recreation Foundation	Project Specific	Community Gifts	Project Specific	None	Currently raising \$1 Million to revamp five community playgrounds at Collier, Jackson (complete), La Mesita, Northmont (in process), and Vista La Mesa.



# APPENDIX "A"- QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS



The online survey provided an opportunity for the community to comment on the quality of the existing City parks. A summary of the facility and program analysis based on quadrants is listed below. The detailed comments and responses to specific questions follow.

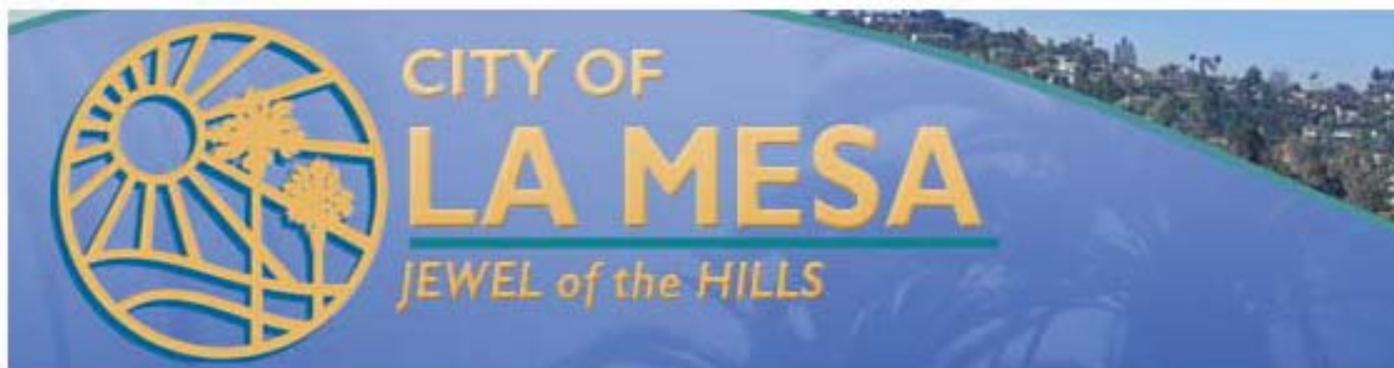
**Park Deficiencies & Opportunities Analysis- Community Input**

Parks	Group Picnic Area / Picnic Pavilion	Individual Picnic Tables	Benches	Barbecue	Tot Lot (2-5 years old)	Children's Playground (5-12 years old)	Pool Facilities / Splash Pad	Walking/Running Trails	Parcourse	Off-leash Dog Area	Tennis Courts	Volleyball	Basketball	Soccer Field / Football	Baseball/Softball	Skate Park	Rollerskate Pad	Horseshoes	Golf	Informal Passive Play Area (sloped)	Informal Passive Play Area (flat)	On-site Parking	Restroom	Amphitheater	Lighting
NW Community	NC	NC	NC	NC	~	~	NC	A	NC	A	≠	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	~	NC	≠	
Aztec	A	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	A	NC	NC	NC	≠	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	≠
Jackson	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	≠	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	A	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	≠
Sunset	≠	≠	≠	≠	NC	NC	NC	A	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	≠	~	NC	NC	NC
NE Community	NC	NC	NC	NC	~	~	≠	A	NC	√	≠	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	~	NC	≠
Briercrest	NC	NC	NC	NC	√	√	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC
Harry Griffin	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	~	NC	~	NC	~	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	A	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC
La Mesita	≠	NC	NC	NC	~	~	NC	NC	NC	NC	√	NC	NC	NC	NC	~	R	NC	NC	NC	NC	≠	NC	NC	NC
Northmont	NC	NC	NC	NC	~	~	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC
SW Community	NC	NC	NC	NC	~	~	NC	A	NC	A	≠	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	~	NC	≠
Highwood	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	A	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC
Sunshine	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	R	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	≠	NC	NC	NC
Rolando	NC	≠	NC	NC	≠	≠	NC	A	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	R	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC
Vista La Mesa	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	~	NC	NC	NC	NC
SE Community	NC	NC	NC	NC	~	~	NC	A	NC	A	≠	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	~	NC	≠
Collier	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	~	NC	NC	NC	NC	~	NC	NC	NC	NC	A	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	A	NC	NC
MacArthur	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	A	≠	A	NC	A	NC	NC	R	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	√	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC
Porter	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC

Key:

- √ -Acceptable (Meets qualitative and quantitative expectations)
- ~ -Lacks quality
- ≠ -Lacks quantity
- A -Potential Addition
- R -Potential Re-Use / Re-design
- NC -No Comment / Not Applicable

Results and comments from a computer generated, on-line public survey were compiled. The survey questions, responses and comments are on the following pages. All comments are verbatim and some comments contain spelling and grammatical errors.



### Constant Contact Survey Results

Survey Name: Parks Survey - La Mesa

Response Status: Partial & Completed

Filter: None

9/6/2011 10:35 AM PDT

---

TextBlock:

The City of La Mesa is conducting a City-wide Park Master Plan to guide current and future parks and recreational needs. Your input is important to us. Please fill out the attached survey. It will only take a few minutes of your time.

1) How often do you use the following La Mesa parks?

1 = Daily, 2 = Weekly, 3 = Monthly, 4 = Quarterly, 5 = Don't Use

Answer	1	2	3	4	5	Number of Response(s)	Rating Score*
Aztec Park						133	4.5
Briercrest Park						135	4.6
Collier Park						135	4.5
Harry Griffen Park						145	3.6
Highwood Park						133	4.7
Jackson Park						137	4.4
La Mesita Park & Junior Seau Sports Complex						143	4.0
MacArthur Park						135	4.5
Northmont Park						135	4.8
Porter Park						134	4.7
Rolando Park						136	4.7
Sunshine Park						135	4.8
Sunset Park						135	4.5
Vista La Mesa Park						133	4.8
Other (indicate park below)						89	4.6

Collier Park needs regular policing to be safe for kids and families. Right now it's more of an outdoor drug den and homeless shelter.
La Mesa Memorial Park & Rec playground for young children
The La Mesa Pool
Municipal Pool
Sunset Park I am assuming is where the little league and softball field are? if so, during softball season, we use it almost daily.
Lake Murray.
I mainly use Harry Griffen park because of their great dog park. Don't ever take that away. It's wonderful for all dog walkers and dog lovers alike. And the dogs have a great time too!
Chollas Lake
I do visit several once or twice per year.
We used to go to collier park because it is within walking distance to our house but we will no longer use that park for the safety of our children. There are some rough groups that frequent that park and made it their own. Police are called there all too often. Its a shame
King Street Park
Lake Murray
Lake Murray park
I use to take my son to Collier park almost daily but now a bunch of thugs hang out there drinking and smoking their drugs and yelling foul language it is no place for children anymore.

<p>Collier Park is very close by to walk to but hugely unattractive and often crowded with hooligans. This park is easily accessible because it is in the heart of La Mesa but rarely do I see children or families there because it is in need of a severe upgrade. I would recommend removing the worn out tennis courts and replacing it with a new skate park or better playground equipment. This would allow the people to take back their neighborhood park from the homeless and hooligans currently there.</p>
<p>King St. Park</p>
<p>The fact I don't use the parks is not indicative of my belief that others do and should have them available.</p>
<p>I go to Lake Murray often. Wish there was a dog park there since quite a few people walk their dogs and it is recommended that you walk a dog before you take them to the dog park.</p>
<p>Between pit bulls, drug addicts and gangs I wouldn't go to any of the parks.</p>
<p>Lake Murrey &lt;&gt;Walk 4 times a week 5+ Mi each time Plus Bike 1 extra Day Total 5 Days</p>
<p>Most important factor is to provide security with plenty of lighting, not dim amber lights. There's a high crime element in La Mesa, I suspect because of the available trolley line, easy in, easy out.</p>
<p>Member of YMCA. Use park for walking/running and child's play. Very disappointed with the skate park. It's very dirty with lots of trash thrown about everyday. Would like to see better upkeep or convert to basketball courts. Also there have been people (primarily men) sleeping in the park and is alarming to the children.</p>
<p>On rare occasions I attend an activity at one of our parks.</p>
<p>Use Lake Murray (Mission Trails) every day</p>
<p>Too Many Vagrants</p>
<p>All these parks are important for the overall health and recreation of those who live nearby them. The entire city needs these areas for the oxygen-giving trees and plants they contain as well as the beauty and recreation they allow for all La Mesans. As the city continues to evolve into a more densely populated area with the increased number of condominiums going up, these areas of green grass and free space become more priceless and necessary for both physical and psychological well-being.</p>
<p>Lake Murray</p>
<p>please clean up this park and this neighborhood.</p>
<p>It is very good of you to ask people who don't necessarily live within the city limits but may use your parks what they think. It's appreciated.</p>
<p>Rather than such set time frames, perhaps an optional response should be "occasionally" or "have never been".</p>
<p>I don't even know where most of these parks are-never heard of several.</p>
<p>Helix High School public use tennis courts</p>
<p>"We live near Collier Park and would use it if it there weren't homeless types there.</p>
<p>My grandson uses the La Mesita skate/bike park daily but it's not that safe either. Two recent incident: A boy asked to take a turn on his bike. My grandson let him. When he finally asked for it back, the boy gave it but punched him and said his parents were ""bloods"" and would get him. Another day an older boy took his bike and hid it but his mother happened to be watching and saw where they put it."</p>
<p>Lemon Avenue School's site</p>
<p>Used parks A LOT more when our sons were growing up and they were in soccer and Little League.</p>

2) How often do you use parks near the boundary of La Mesa?

1 = Daily, 2 = Weekly, 3 = Monthly, 4 = Quarterly, 5 = Don't Use

Answer	1	2	3	4	5	Number of Response(s)	Rating Score*
Mission Trails Regional Park						150	3.5
The Kroc Center						142	4.3
Eucalyptus Park						144	4.6

\*The Rating Score is the weighted average calculated by dividing the sum of all weighted ratings by the number of total responses.

Mission Trails Regional Park has been wonderful for our son who is a boy scout. And it's museum is wonderful. Never take that way either!
I walk Lake Murray weekly and on occasion walk Mission Trails.
I like Eucalyptus Park but there are too many transients there. It is not really safe.
I work at Mission Trails.
Parks are really vital to a community. Please continue to fund and maintain these wonderful parks and expand as possible.
For hiking.
Never heard of Eucalyptus Park
Excellent parks. Be sure their well lit.
"also visit wildlife habitats at:
Del Cerro Park
Chollas Creek
Alvarado Creek
Chollas Lake Park
Lake Murray"
Lake Murray is used weekly for walking and picnicing.

3) How often do you travel away from La Mesa to more distant parks?

1 = Daily, 2 = Weekly, 3 = Monthly, 4 = Quarterly, 5 = Don't Use

Answer	1	2	3	4	5	Number of Response(s)	Rating Score*
Mission Bay						147	3.8
Balboa Park						148	3.5
Steele Canyon						129	4.9
Cuyamaca State Park						139	4.5
Other						82	4.6

\*The Rating Score is the weighted average calculated by dividing the sum of all weighted ratings by the number of total responses.

Lake Murray
San Carlos Park is our favorite park. We like the sand, gated playground, trees, grass, picnic tables, clean restroom, sidewalks, basketball court and ample parking.
We love Balboa Park and Mission Bay park. They are both so lovely and so much goes on there. Please don't cut these parks!
We really like the parks/playgrounds at Liberty Station in San Diego.
Lake Murray
Visit Cuyamaca State Park one to two times a year (annually)
"I utilize Cuyamaca State Park to hike during the fall and winter.
Mission Bay I visit mostly in the summer."
I go to Mission Bay a couple of times a year for the beach, and Cuyamaca several times a year for hiking.
Liberty Station, San Carlos Park, Hilton Head, Trolley Barn Park, Pioneer Park in Mission Hills
I use these when it's hot in La Mesa
I often go to Mast Park in Santee because they have good bike paths for my kids.
la jolla shores playground
"Santee Lakes Quarterly
Lake Murray Quarterly"
Mission Bay - semi-annual
Frequent Anza Borrego State Park...campsite
"Sweetwater wildlife refuge
Torrey Pines State Park
Water Conservation Garden
Southwestern College
SouthBay Botanic Garden
San Diego Botanic Garden
Silver Strand"
I go to the park for Museum activities rather than for the park features themselves
"Torrey Pines State Beach
William Heise County Park"

4) How often do you use private gyms, common area pools, clubhouses and exercise facilities?

Answer	0%	100%	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Daily			20	12.3 %
Weekly			48	29.6 %
Monthly			13	8.0 %
Quarterly			7	4.3 %
Don't Use			63	38.8 %
Other			6	3.7 %
No Response(s)			5	3.0 %
<b>Totals</b>			<b>162</b>	<b>100%</b>

Too old, too disabled
often when my kids take swim lessons
summer
Pools during summer
no set schedule
5 days a week

5) What activities do you frequently do at La Mesa's parks? (check all that apply)

Answer	0%	100%	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Large Group Picnics (greater than 8)			21	14.4 %
Small Group Picnics (8 or fewer)			51	35.1 %
Use the Tot Lot (for children 2-5 yrs old)			39	26.8 %
Use the Playground (for children 5-13 yrs old)			59	40.6 %
Recreational Open Swimming			22	15.1 %
Disc Golf			6	4.1 %
Lap Swimming			16	11.0 %
Walking / Running			91	62.7 %
Skateboarding			7	4.8 %
Informal / Multi-use Play Area			39	26.8 %
Tennis / Handball			17	11.7 %
Golf			10	6.8 %
Volleyball			4	2.7 %
Basketball			7	4.8 %
Organized Team Sports			18	12.4 %
Personal Activity (reading, thinking)			69	47.5 %
Soccer / Lacrosse			18	12.4 %
Football			3	2.0 %
Baseball / Softball			13	8.9 %
Exercise or Walk my dog			73	50.3 %
Other			20	13.7 %
<b>Totals</b>			<b>145</b>	<b>100%</b>

mountain biking
Movie in the Park and other City Events
Bocce
Dog Park
free concerts
Visit with friends
Bicycling
Harp Fest - organized events
Harry Griffin Dog enclosures socialize
Biking
occasional event held at park
Swim Lessons
None. Too many Bums
dog park
take disabled adults on outings to enjoy the parks
it's a meeting/starting point for group bicycle rides
swing sets
concerts
enjoy natural beauty: birds, butterflies, wildlife, plants
Where is Lake Murray???

6) How do you usually get to the park you most often visit?

Answer	0%	100%	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Drive by yourself			69	42.5 %
Drive with others / carpool			45	27.7 %
Dropped off			0	0.0 %
Walk			30	18.5 %
Bus			0	0.0 %
Bike			4	2.4 %
Other			3	1.8 %
No Response(s)			11	6.7 %
<b>Totals</b>			<b>162</b>	<b>100%</b>

Drive by myself, sometimes with my family, other times with a friend, just depen
I have to since I don't live that close.
Drive and Bike

7) How far away do you live from the park you most often visit?

Answer	0%	100%	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
0 - 1/2 mile			34	20.9 %
1/2 - 1 mile			27	16.6 %
1 - 5 miles			69	42.5 %
over 5 miles			20	12.3 %
No Response(s)			12	7.4 %
<b>Totals</b>			<b>162</b>	<b>100%</b>

8) How long does it take you to reach the park you most often visit if you walk?

Answer	0%	100%	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
less than 5 minutes			22	13.5 %
5-10 minutes			28	17.2 %
10-15 minutes			24	14.8 %
greater than 15 minutes			64	39.5 %
No Response(s)			24	14.8 %
<b>Totals</b>			<b>162</b>	<b>100%</b>

9) How long does it take you to reach the park you most often visit if you drive?

Answer	0%	100%	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
less than 2 minutes			21	12.9 %
2-5 minutes			39	24.0 %
5-10 minutes			66	40.7 %
greater than 10 minutes			23	14.1 %
No Response(s)			13	8.0 %
<b>Totals</b>			<b>162</b>	<b>100%</b>

11) How can access to La Mesa's Parks be improved?

Answer	0%	100%	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Improved walkway connections			53	43.0 %
More lighting			47	38.2 %
Improved street crossings			34	27.6 %
Better bike lanes			31	25.2 %
More directional signs			19	15.4 %
New walkway connections where they are missing			31	25.2 %
Improved entry signage			17	13.8 %
More entry points to park			18	14.6 %
Other			31	25.2 %
<b>Totals</b>			<b>123</b>	<b>100%</b>

traffic safety - reduce speeding
more Parking
Build a couple more parks is obvious especially on the western side of La Mesa
bathrooms, playground equipment
You need to take out the rocks to put in a walkway to go to the dog park.
Safety - PROACTIVE crime preventive steps / protection.
More handicapped parking
Elimination of the bad element
get the riff-raff under control
All of the above
Access is fine the way it is
Improved security
improve restrooms
encourage trash pick-up by users
Kick out the criminals and enforce dogs on leash laws
more play equipment, tennis courts
Collier Park - less creepy people hanging out
post opening & closing time of park.
more tennis courts
La Mesita Park better upkeep of skate park
creation of neighborhood pocket parks
Get rid of the losers
add grass to dog run at Harry G.
keep the homeless out
another dog park
Better street connectivity

I-8 freeway crossing needed
routine visits or at least drive-bys from police
The access is fine for me now...
closest park is only a soccer field
adequate parking

12) What park improvements are most important to you to make them more attractive?

1 = Least

Answer	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Number of Response(s)	Ranking Score*
More shade									121	5.6
Better lighting									121	4.8
Improved Security Features									121	5.7
Better street crossings near parks									121	3.9
Better bicycle access to parks									121	3.6
More pedestrian connections to parks									121	4.2
More parking									121	3.8
More recreational amenities									121	4.7

\*The Ranking Score is the weighted average calculated by dividing the sum of all weighted rankings by the number of total responses.

improve restrooms
encourage trash pick-up by users
Kick out the criminals and enforce dogs on leash laws
more play equipment, tennis courts
Collier Park - less creepy people hanging out
post opening & closing time of park.
more tennis courts
La Mesita Park better upkeep of skate park
creation of neighborhood pocket parks
Get rid of the losers
add grass to dog run at Harry G.
keep the homeless out
another dog park
Better street connectivity
I-8 freeway crossing needed
routine visits or at least drive-bys from police
The access is fine for me now...
closest park is only a soccer field
adequate parking

13) Do you have any suggestions to improve access to La Mesa's parks? If you have a particular park in mind, please indicate which park.

I used to play tennis at Collier Park but never felt safe there. It's too hidden from the road and if someone were attacked there, it's possible no one would hear them.
none
Maybe more signage as a form of advertising?
There is no access to the pool other than driving oneself which is unfortunate.
There should be a Boys & Girls Club in Highwood Park
Sunset Park - closer access to softball field. it is a long walk from parking to field, especially if assisting the league with sports equipment. Lighting is needed at the softball field.
Build more tennis courts. Don't rebuild parks by increasing parking pavement. When re-designing parks, remember it's a park not a parking lot.
We live closest to Highwood Park. Sadly it is not a very safe park and walking near Helix High when school is letting out can be unsafe due to the speed of teenage drivers.
"Most parks seem to be maintained well. Two exceptions are Harry Griffen, turf is under maintained, under irrigated for the amount of activity on weekends Dog Park is under maintained and also not irrigated properly as it is a dust bowl.
Highwood Park behind the Boys & Girls club needs to be completed or at least something done towards the back."
Sunshine Park is the absolute worst! I don't know what the solution is because there is no parking lot but 70th street is so dangerous in that area. Whenever we use it, I hate crossing the street there.
N/A
The Poppy Street entrance to Harry Griffen Park could look nicer, rather than the chain link fence that's there now. But since I live across the street, I like that the park is chained up at night. Occasional police patrols at Harry Griffen would be good too.
La Mesa parks are becoming crime areas. The parks are only used by thugs in the evening. I.E. Aztec park - HORRIBLE lighting at night - might as well be NYC Central Park in the 60's. This environment INVITES punks to this area.
Treesm treesm trees,,,
walking to Harry Griffen is a bit scary when I get close to the park as there are no sidewalks in areas and I must use the street
Briercrest is fabulously accessible. In terms of use by children, please consider child development that allows more nature in play like they do in Europe (i.e. the logs that the county removed from Eucalyptus park), and that allow children to explore the laws of physics by spinning, bouncing etc(i.e. playground on Park Blvd. by Balboa Park).
Dog Poop Bags at the parks.
I think our parks are wonderful
Eucalyptus park needs a safer entry and exit off Bancroft Rd.
"Pool needs a tall tunnel like slide. A few more pools in other parks.
More dog waste pickup at lake Murray.
Briercrest is a model for future renovations. Also like the variety of activities and landscapes at harry grif park.

Tennis court renovattion terrific project."
more off leash are for dogs
Again, I believe more individuals especially those with children would walk to the neighborhood parks if there were sidewalks leading up to the parks throughout La Mesa.
Highwood Park needs to get "un-ghetto". La Mesa is so pretty and we natives have pride in living here.
More signs indicating there are parks in the area. Most the time the parks in La Mesa I have found just by driving by randomly, or through suggestions by friends.
Better and more lighting at both Jackson and Aztec parks. They are difficult to use in the winter months when it gets dark early.
If possible for grass in dog park areas would be nice to reduce the dust in the summer; best would be to put in fake grass that can stand up to heavy dog traffic at Harry Griffith. Love that park it is great.
Dog park at Lake Murray and dog run at MacArthur near Memorial Dr...many dog walkers in the area. More rollerskating,walkways, tennis courts where possible at the parks. Frisbee golf at Harry Griffen park...lots of room there. Need more benches at some of the parks.
I currently use the basketball courts above the municipal pool on Saturdays for dog training. There is always some trash, etc left for us to pick up Saturday morning. In other words, the area is secluded, dark and used for more than basketball at night.
Collier Park is a haven for homeless and loitering teens. It's ok during the day, but at night it turns into a drug drive thru and we really like playing tennis here in the evening. I guess the drugs and randoms keep other people from going to the park, maybe that is the only reason we are usually able to get on the court.
It would be nice to have shade canopies over the playgrounds and seating areas with shade.
I would visit Harry Griffen Park during summer concert series if the performing groups were better quality similar to El Cajon or Grossmont Center. More parking is needed for the summer concert series also.
Better upkeep of skate park located at La Mesita Park on Dallas. Always dirty and shows signs of destruction. Convert or do away with skate park.
Kick out the bums
see above
I don't know the names of the parks. That said, the city should promote or host events at all of the targeted parks to generate interest in them. You could do anything from private (weddings, birthday parties) and community (graduations, memorial services, city meetings) to corporate (food/beverage companies, clubs, etc.).
Bike racks for locking.
eucalyptus park is very close to us but to cross bancroft street is dangerous. we need a crosswalk and pedestrian light to access it from mariposa st.
A park.footbridge across creek to dog park and Griffith
I feel all of them could benefit from better signage. If you didnt already know where most of them were, you wouldnt be directed in by signage in the area. The one exception might be Harry Griffen Park.
Collier Park entrance is confusing and easily missed. Plus, driving down that little road adds to the unsafe feeling of being trapped down there with your car out of view from the street.
collier-safer and updated play equipment
Collier needs a better access path from the south.

<p>Highland would benefit from western access. Sunshine is nearly barren. All La Mesa parks would benefit from more areas left natural, less pre-fab tot areas and more places to roam and explore nature. City parks filled with beautiful plant material could showcase the richness of the wide range of plants that can grow here.</p>
<p>"pedestrian bridges over busier streets such as University Ave./La Mesa Blvd., sidewalks with a buffer between the motor vehicle traffic, more trees.</p>
<p>Griffin is the most tucked away, so I am not sure how to make that one more accessible. Bicycling is a challenge because of the street hills. This makes it difficult for young children to peddle."</p>
<p>"More police presence in the parks.</p>
<p>Use the bike routes as green belts (street trees, contiguous sidewalks, parkways, bike signage) that connect neighborhoods to schools and parks.</p>
<p>You have to include the schools as recreation facilities as well. The City and School District need to further develop joint use facilities"</p>
<p>"I love Mac Arthur park with Sun Valley Golf Course</p>
<p>and the swimming pool. I have been using it for 40+ years since I was a little girl! I hope it stays around forever..."</p>
<p>The park behind Rolando School has no amenities.</p>

14) What keeps you from visiting the La Mesa's parks? (select all that apply)

If you have a specific reason for a particular park, please write it in the comments box.

Answer	0%	100%	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Too far to walk			20	16.8 %
Too far to bike			8	6.7 %
Inadequate walking connections to parks			15	12.6 %
Inadequate car parking spaces at the park			13	10.9 %
Poor lighting at the park			22	18.4 %
Park is overcrowded			16	13.4 %
High speed / high volume of traffic near the park makes me feel unsafe			18	15.1 %
There isn't enough room or the right equipment to do what I want (please indicate what activity and what park in comments field)			17	14.2 %
Fields or Courts are too busy			8	6.7 %
Feel unsafe at park			53	44.5 %
Trash, graffiti present			26	21.8 %
Other			16	13.4 %
<b>Totals</b>			<b>119</b>	<b>100%</b>

unsafe or broken play equipment
Too busy with other activities
Not sure where they are all located
see below
Time
easier pedestrian access from Baltimore to Lake Murray
Own personal schedule too busy
Too much homeless activity
Time
Nothing
use lake Murray
Street/sidewalk connectivity
Haven't gotten around to it
not a lot of variety at the parks
Aztec is always being used by soccer teams -crowd out others
No bicycle storage
Disc golf at MacArthur/ Porter is only useful for those who play or are willing to pay. I don't conser it to be a useful park for that reason.
This comment only applies to Collier Park. Other parks feel safe.

"There are no major hiking trails in La Mesa parks due to the terrain, so I go to Mission Trails. Also go to Mission Bay for the aquatics and to Balboa Park for events and museums and gardens.
Can't compare La Mesa's parks to these. If I had kids I would definitely use La Mesa's parks more."
I never go to Collier Park anymore because there are always homeless people hanging out there. In my opinion it's one of the prettiest parks in La Mesa. It's too bad moms and kids don't feel safe there!
Trash is a problem at Harry Griffin, especially on the playground, because of all the parties at that park. Maybe fine parties that don't clean up after themselves? And the park on Severin just north of Amaya has a notorious crime problem, as well as outdated and unsafe playground equipment.
Crime is increasing in these La Mesa park especially in the evening due the decision of poor lighting.
There is not a park close to our home. Aztec Park is within 10 minutes by car. To walk or ride a bike we would have to cross Fletcher Pkwy and Baltimore to get to it. The traffic at these intersections can be a challenge.
Feel unsafe at park - 10am Friday morning Collier Park was full of bums. I did not stay. Did not feel safe to walk my dog there.
I would love to see more shaded seating for folks like me who like to just sit and read.
felt very unsafe playing tennis at Collier park in the evening. Regular police patrols would probably help. Also the court there is in horrible condition.
"La Mesita is WAY too crowded on weekends with too many parties and no parking
Colier does not feel safe- I've had to leave many times"
Collier Park
i use a school playground instead
Softball Games at night.
I would like to see childrens playground
"Too busy working in my back yard, making it park-like.
Harry Griffen doesn't have enough parking during the Sunday evening summer concerts."
My kids love to run and roll in the grass. Their favorite park is Briercrest because they can do just that, plus it's just a gorgeous park. We need more parks like that.
Not enough "big kid" swings.
Collier and Highwood
Again, Collier Park has an unsafe and not family friendly feel due to a lack of playground equipment and worn out tennis courts. MacArthur Park is great but only available for children up to 5 years of age. Aztec Park is a nice neighborhood park but in need of more shade and tables for picnic parties. Briercrest Park is amazing and fabulously planned! I especially like the very natural feel to the park.
"Sunshine has no lighting and I know more people would use it, if there were some lights present.
Jackson Park is a great park, but there is not enough room for a game of soccer."
Bathrooms are too far for me to watch one child go to the bathroom while the other three are at the playground at Eucalyptus Park.
"Mission Trails Regional Park - Not enough parking spaces and No playground.

La Mesita Park - Rundown playground. Needs to be fixed. Kids miss the removed swings."
Unitl this survey, I didn't realize that La Mesa had 14 parks.
Not many off leash dog parks.
When I took my Grandson to the parks in La Mesa I encountered homeless people who were obviously on drugs, teens who were causing trouble and pit bulls off lead. I grew up here using Collier Park, I would never go to that park now. However I now live in Lake Murray and it is getting bad now on this side of town. La Mesa needs to clean up all of La Mesa and take it back from the bad elements
Would love additional tennis courts. Cannot take my kids to Collier in the evening. Love Briercrest, but no play equipment for the kids.
I just need more time to enjoy our parks!
Collier Park is the closet La Mesa Park to me and it can be a creepy place with lots of people just hanging out.
La Mesita Park located on Dallas
I can walk around the neighborhood more easily. The nearest park (Collier) has no special attraction and seems unsafe when transients are present.
Harry G park... I'm handicapped and have to walk all the way around to get to the dog park. Why not have a direct route (bridge?) from the parking to the dog runs?
There is a bit of ghetto vibe at the La Mesa parks I visit. You have loud, poor-excuses-for-mothers barking at their children in incomprehensible street English, or worse smacking their kids. I don't want to expose my children to that. Plus, maintenance of the grounds/aesthetic are typically not up to the standard of my own backyard.
Use Lake Murray to walk dog. Likes length of walk and the nice view
No reason to be at the parks
need off leash areas - larger too
Note: Children have now "aged out" of AYSO, and birthday parties- so do not get to these parks anymore-- a large part of the clientele are there for soccer practices/games for those appropriate parks with fields. Clean restrooms a must! Police supervision for unwanted clientele a must! (not necessarily in that order..)
I dont go in the early evening at dusk and would never go into the night as they are too dark. Jackson and Aztec come to mind as they are two near my home. I will walk in my well lit neighborhood, but not in those parks
Need more tennis courts, swing sets, equipment.
I really feel no need to go to a park.
I would walk if there were a more direct, better connected walking path to the park (as the crow flies). Instead I drive because it is faster.
Collier Park has begun to feel unsafe with the homeless people and groups of teenagers hanging out.

<p>I go out of my way to visit natural space parks. I recently discovered Del Cerro Park by car. A hidden gem. The only truly beautiful park in La Mesa is Harry Griffin, but I live in west La Mesa, and it is far east. There are no public tennis courts in the west region of La Mesa; even the Kroc center has no tennis or natural park space. Rolando Park is strictly a ball field and there isn't much else. Lake Murray is alluring but ridiculous, as freeway overpass is daunting to walk or bike over.</p>
<p>We are busy and do a lot of walking around La Mesa. We love the stairs on Mt. Nebo. As I said, my grandson uses La Mesita daily. We just don't spend much time at parks except for the zoo and museums in Balboa Park.</p>
<p>"I would like more walking trails at the larger parks, Harry Griffen, dg lined paths with shade trees.</p>
<p>More urban walking trails, like the stairs, or streets with parkways and street trees.</p>
<p>I would also like a running track. These are only available at the high schools, which are not open early in the morning (5am)</p>
<p>Natural areas, such as at highwood park and Collier. Collier park has the potential of becoming a terrific community park"</p>
<p>This is a limited use park.</p>
<p>"Highwood Park is the closest park to us, it only is for limited, passive recreation (except for the small children's playground) since it is all sloping terrain, is small. What more can a park have like this...I know- seating! That's passive...but can several park benches be installed?</p>
<p>If I want to ride my bike to a park, I need to have secure parking/storage for it. Is it possible to have secure bike storage and/or bike racks I can safely park my bike?"</p>

## Additional comments:

Thank you for all you do for our parks and for your care and concern in preserving them.
"The pool locker room needs soap, TP & clean drains daily. Shower curtains need to be laundered or replaced for sanitary reasons.
Annual passes need a larger expiration date put in bold, large font on back or front so guards can easily read so that we all don't waste time in line. Put pool cover on daily. Staff never listens to suggestions."
"The pool is poorly maintained. Locker rooms dirty.
During noon lap swim in the summer, the number of lanes is reduced to make room for swim lessons. Then the pool manager has the instructors have the kids jump off the diving board which prevents 2 people from swimming. It is also dangerous if a kid slips because the lane ropes stay in place."
I would love to see more parks in La Mesa.
La Mesa Parks are pretty well kept. We need to be sure they aren't taken over by homeless people and gangs.
JUST KEEP THE HARRY GRIFFEN PARK GOING. WE DON'T WANT TO LOSE OUR DOG PARK. THANKS.
Help reduce La mesa crime - increase lighting in these parks and increase patrols in these parks.
Thank you for the survey.
Need more off leash dog areas. The off leash dog areas in Balboa Park are not fenced.
Thank you for accepting public input. La Mesa has some beautiful parks...and some that need attention. This is a wonderful way to get ideas and opinions.
When we use parks we go for playgrounds, shade for picnics, and exercise at Lake Murray. Thanks for the survey!
More evening team sport games held at parks that have night time lighting. Please put in lights for evening Softball and Baseball games. Especially Little League games in the Spring and Summer. Much cooler in the evenings and with lights on, then the games are comfortable to enjoy. Oh yes, snack bars are a great revenue.
We need a good park by the village. It would be awesome to have one near the library. The old police dept. & the old post office would be decent spots for a small, fenced-in park, but the spot where the Windmere Real Estate office is would be better (or that huge area between the VFW and the 8...without all that commercial property once proposed.
More shade would be great over the playstructures. Also, the playground equipment at Northmont Park could be updated!
Thanks. Love the parks!!!!!!
I wish there were more swings available at parks, and when there are swings at parks like Jackson, and Harry Griffith majority of the time they are occupied.
La Mesita Park keeps getting broken items removed and not replaced. The playground needs a renovation. The parks around it have nicer playgrounds. More people would utilize if the playground were more attractive. It's a great family spot otherwise.
Our city has great parks. I see them used and they should be. I hope the City publishes the results of this survey. I may have missed it, but I did not see the Senior Center Listed. My wife uses that facility often.

would be ideal to be able to reserve covered picnic table areas for parties like at Santee parks. Also, need to have cleaner bathrooms like Santee parks
La Mesa has some of the best kept parks in San Diego. I just wanted to thank you for that.
"I love Briercrest Park. It is a fun place to walk. Beautiful place. Love the shade trees that are growing bigger each year.
Most often use park by the Rec Center. Walk my dogs there daily.
I love La Mesa."
This survey is nicely done, in that it provides lots of opportunity for input. But, it does not address what I think is an important question. "Do you support parks in your city, even though you do not use them?" The answer is yes, parks are a vital part of our community. Keep up the great work you do in providing them. Thank you.
Thanks for the opportunity to add to this discussion. I am a senior who no longer uses as many of the facilities as I did before but nevertheless, I appreciated them as a younger person and believe they are important to all generations.
Aztec Park is closest to my home. It needs more patrolling. Often dogs are off leash in spite of the new signs. Also, some of the pavement needs improvement, and one area of the walkway near the playground floods in rainy season.
I understand that many parks have playground equipment, as when we think of parks, we typically think children. However I would like to see more multi-age use offerings for teenagers and older adults. It could be exercise classes or concerts, although I know some parks have these.
Need to plant more shade trees in all parks, especially Sunset Park, near the ball fields. The two that were there were cut down and not replaced!!!!
A Boys & Girls Club is a great necessity in La Mesa, perhaps Highwood Park.
"There is evidence that a nature connection and trees in cities can significantly improve public health and safety.
<a href="http://www.naturewithin.info/consumer.html">http://www.naturewithin.info/consumer.html</a>
<a href="http://www.naturewithin.info/transportation.html">http://www.naturewithin.info/transportation.html</a>
<a href="http://www.arborday.org/programs/treeCityUSA/bulletins/057Supp.cfm">http://www.arborday.org/programs/treeCityUSA/bulletins/057Supp.cfm</a>
<a href="http://depts.washington.edu/hhwb/">http://depts.washington.edu/hhwb/</a> "
I hope La Mesa can continue keeping all of its parks safe and available for families. Even if I personally don't use all of them, each one is a beautiful addition to our neighborhoods.
I do not want to see the City spend tax dollars to purchase more land for parks, when I feel the parks we have are underdeveloped. I want community gardens, local theater, trails (along the streets and segregated), street lined streets, contiguous sidewalks to schools and parks. Parks that have natural areas, as well as recreation facilities.
Good and plentiful parks in a city are so important - La Mesa is such a great city in large part due to its parks and green spaces.
some of your use questions should have included "annual" as an option.

# APPENDIX "B"- WORKSHOP BOARDS AND COMMENTS

---



# CITY OF LA MESA PARKS MASTER PLAN



## DRAFT VISION STATEMENT:

DEVELOP A DIVERSE RANGE OF RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES AND FACILITIES WITHIN THE CITY OF LA MESA THAT ARE EASILY ACCESSIBLE BY WALKING OR BIKING TO SUPPORT THE CITY'S EFFORTS TO ENCOURAGE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND ACTIVE LIVING.

Starburst pattern for sticky notes


### DIRECTIONS FOR THE VISION STATEMENT STATION:

1. Read the draft vision statement above. This is only a starting point, please help us develop it further.
2. Put a star next to the vision statement if you like it.
3. Re-write or add to the vision statement on a post-it and stick it to the board.
4. Create your own vision statement on a post-it and stick it to the board.

PUBLIC INPUT COMMENTS ON DRAFT VISION STATEMENT BOARD:

# CITY OF LA MESA PARKS MASTER PLAN



## DRAFT VISION STATEMENT:

DEVELOP A DIVERSE RANGE OF RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES AND FACILITIES WITHIN THE CITY OF LA MESA THAT ARE EASILY ACCESSIBLE BY WALKING OR BIKING TO SUPPORT THE CITY'S EFFORTS TO ENCOURAGE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND ACTIVE LIVING.



<p>I would add the work "safely" after "... are easily (and safely) accessible"</p>				<p>Add " and a healthy lifestyle" or better public health</p>	
		<p>Parks Vision Statement should also include social/family goals not just physical activity. Recreation can promote healthy interaction, keep families together etc. Team sports teach much more than physical activity.</p>			<p>Work with San Diego to develop 1-8 overpass for 70th S bike, walk to trolley and across</p>
<p>Draft V. Statement ... Activities and facilities within the City of La Mesa that promote healthy families, social interaction, and individual growth which are easily accessible...</p>					

**DIRECTIONS FOR THE VISION STATEMENT STATION:**

1. Read the draft vision statement above. This is only a starting point, please help us develop it further.
2. Put a star next to the vision statement if you like it.
3. Re-write or add to the vision statement on a post-it and stick it to the board.
4. Create your own vision statement on a post-it and stick it to the board.

# CITY OF LA MESA PARKS MASTER PLAN



## DRAFT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES IN SUPPORT OF VISION STATEMENT:

### GOAL 1: IMPROVE WALK AND BIKE ACCESS TO PARKS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Barriers in sidewalks and bike routes often prohibit people from walking or biking to their destinations. By reducing the number of barriers and adding access on as many sides as possible, these facilities become easily accessible and usable.

### GOAL 2: PROVIDE A PARK OR OPEN SPACE WITHIN A 15 MINUTE WALK TIME OF EACH RESIDENTIAL UNIT

A 15 minute walk time from a recreational facility is considered a convenient walking distance. Therefore, people living within that walkable area will more likely visit that facility.

### GOAL 3: INCLUDE A VARIETY OF RECREATIONAL FACILITIES AND OPPORTUNITIES WITHIN PARKS WITH A WIDE DISTRIBUTION THROUGHOUT THE CITY

Not every individual has the same physical abilities and interests. By creating a variety of recreational facilities and opportunities with a variety of ways to access these activities, the City will be able to reach a larger group of the community varying in age, ability, and interest.


### DIRECTIONS FOR THE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES STATION:

1. Read the draft goals and objectives above.
2. Put a star next to the goals and objectives you like.
3. Re-write or add to any of the draft goals and objectives on a post-it and stick it to the board.
4. Create your own goals and objectives on a post-it and stick it to the board.

PUBLIC INPUT COMMENTS ON DRAFT GOALS AND VISION STATEMENT BOARD:

# CITY OF LA MESA PARKS MASTER PLAN



## DRAFT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES IN SUPPORT OF VISION STATEMENT:

### GOAL 1: IMPROVE WALK AND BIKE ACCESS TO PARKS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Barriers in sidewalks and bike routes often prohibit people from walking or biking to their destinations. By reducing the number of barriers and adding access on as many sides as possible, these facilities become easily accessible and usable.



### GOAL 2: PROVIDE A PARK OR OPEN SPACE WITHIN A 15 MINUTE WALK TIME OF EACH RESIDENTIAL UNIT

A 15 minute walk time from a recreational facility is considered a convenient walking distance. Therefore, people living within that walkable area will more likely visit that facility.



### GOAL 3: INCLUDE A VARIETY OF RECREATIONAL FACILITIES AND OPPORTUNITIES WITHIN PARKS WITH A WIDE DISTRIBUTION THROUGHOUT THE CITY

Not every individual has the same physical abilities and interests. By creating a variety of recreational facilities and opportunities with a variety of ways to access these activities, the City will be able to reach a larger group of the community varying in age, ability, and interest.



Since safety - or the places of being safe is a major reason why people do not go to Rec. facilities. A goal should be to improve the image that parks are safe. This can be done through increase use - P.R. working with police etc.

Would like access from 70th St. to Lake Murray bike/ bus/walk/ hover craft?


### DIRECTIONS FOR THE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES STATION:

1. Read the draft goals and objectives above.
2. Put a star next to the goals and objectives you like.
3. Re-write or add to any of the draft goals and objectives on a post-it and stick it to the board.
4. Create your own goals and objectives on a post-it and stick it to the board.

# CITY OF LA MESA PARKS MASTER PLAN



## TELL US ABOUT YOUR EXISTING PARKS:



### SAFETY ISSUE OR CONCERN

(Indicate with a yellow dot.)

### SAFETY ISSUE OR CONCERN

Is there a safety issue or concern that keeps you from utilizing a specific park? There may be an opportunity to improve the design of the park to increase the physical and even the perceived safety concern.



### UNDER UTILIZED SPACE

(Indicate with a blue dot.)

### UNDER UTILIZED SPACE

No one can anticipate exactly how a space will get used over time. Sometimes planned facilities become outdated or unpopular, or a space might be perfect for another use. Identify both developed and undeveloped under utilized land areas.



### OVER UTILIZED SPACE: CONFLICTING RECREATIONAL PROGRAMS

(Indicate with a red dot.)

### CONFLICTING RECREATIONAL PROGRAMS

It is important to provide both passive and active recreational opportunities in a park. However, sometimes there are conflicts with adjacent uses. Maybe someone is reading in an open field that would be ideal for a game of soccer. Identify where these conflicts occur regularly.



### PARK FACILITY OPPORTUNITIES NOT CURRENTLY AVAILABLE

(Indicate with a green dot.)

### PARK FACILITY OPPORTUNITIES NOT CURRENTLY AVAILABLE

Parks can consist of a variety of different activities. Identify all innovative and/or traditional park facility opportunities that are currently not available and potential locations for these facilities.



### RECREATIONAL PROGRAM DEFICIENCIES

(Indicate with an orange dot.)

### RECREATIONAL PROGRAM DEFICIENCIES

In 2001, La Mesa conducted a parks needs assessment. The study indicated the City was deficient in a soccer field and a full-size baseball facility. It also made general recommendations for the enhancement of individual parks and existing baseball fields. Identify all program deficiencies in the current parks.

## DIRECTIONS FOR THE PARK MAPPING STATION:

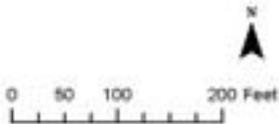
1. Utilize the dots above to identify opportunities and constraints and stick them where they occur for each specific park.
2. Write on the map adjacent to the dot to specify all concerns or opportunities.

PUBLIC INPUT COMMENTS ON MAP BOARDS:



**AZTEC PARK**

- Street Light
- Sidewalks
- ▭ La Mesa Boundary
- ▭ Park Boundary
- Existing Bicycle Facilities
- Class 1: Bike Path
- Class 2: Bike Lanes
- Class 3: Bike Route

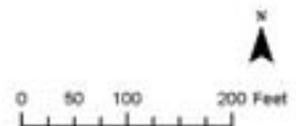


PUBLIC INPUT COMMENTS ON MAP BOARDS:

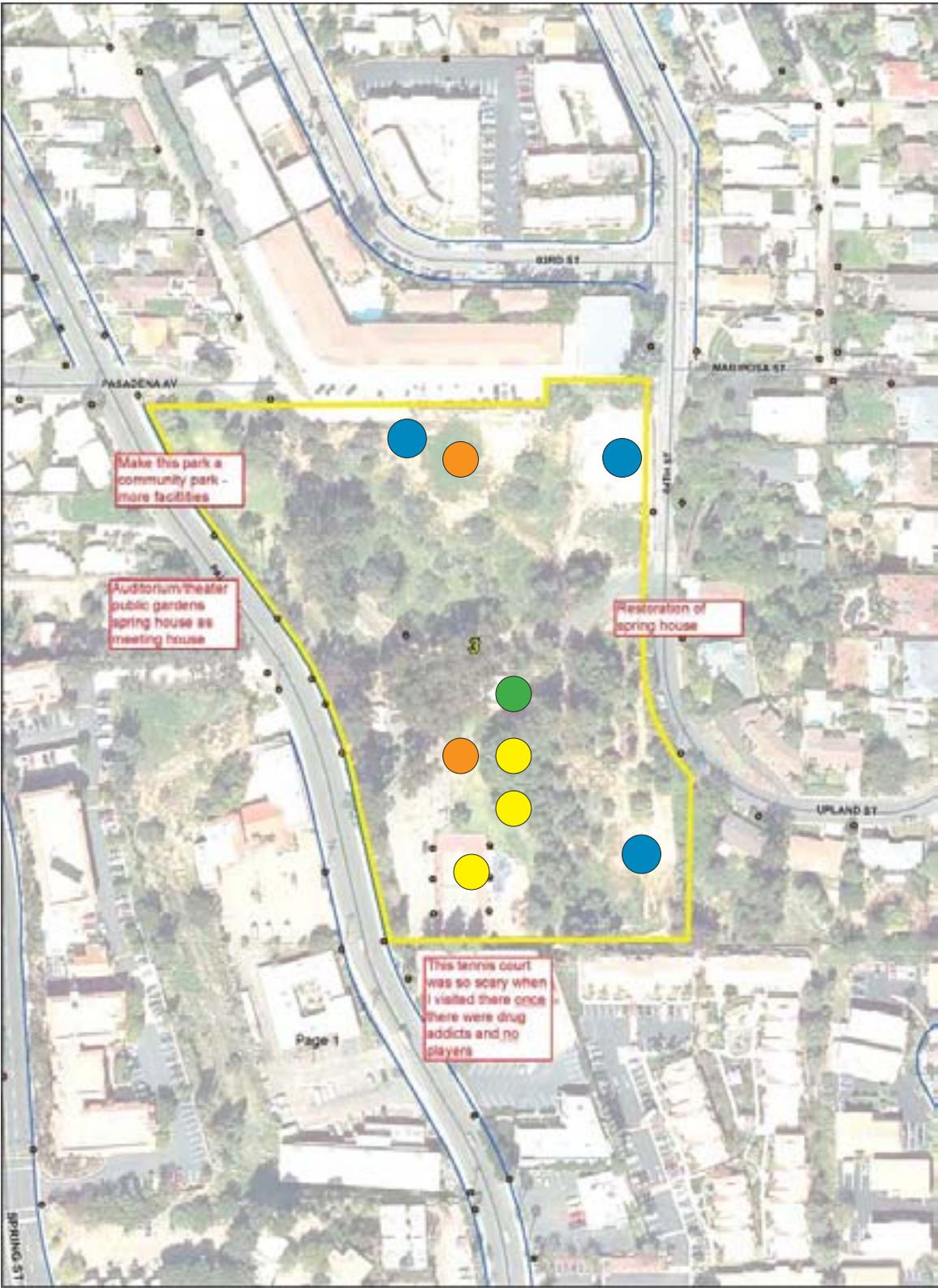


**BRIERCREST PARK**

- Street Light
- Existing Bicycle Facilities
- Sidewalks
- Class 1: Bike Path
- La Mesa Boundary
- Class 2: Bike Lanes
- Park Boundary
- Class 3: Bike Route

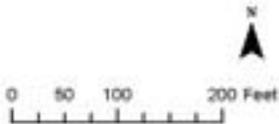


PUBLIC INPUT COMMENTS ON MAP BOARDS:



COLLIER PARK

- Street Light
- Sidewalks
- ▭ La Mesa Boundary
- ▭ Park Boundary
- Existing Bicycle Facilities
- ▬ Class 1: Bike Path
- ▬ Class 2: Bike Lanes
- ▬ Class 3: Bike Route

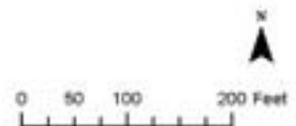


PUBLIC INPUT COMMENTS ON MAP BOARDS:



**EUCALYPTUS COUNTY PARK**

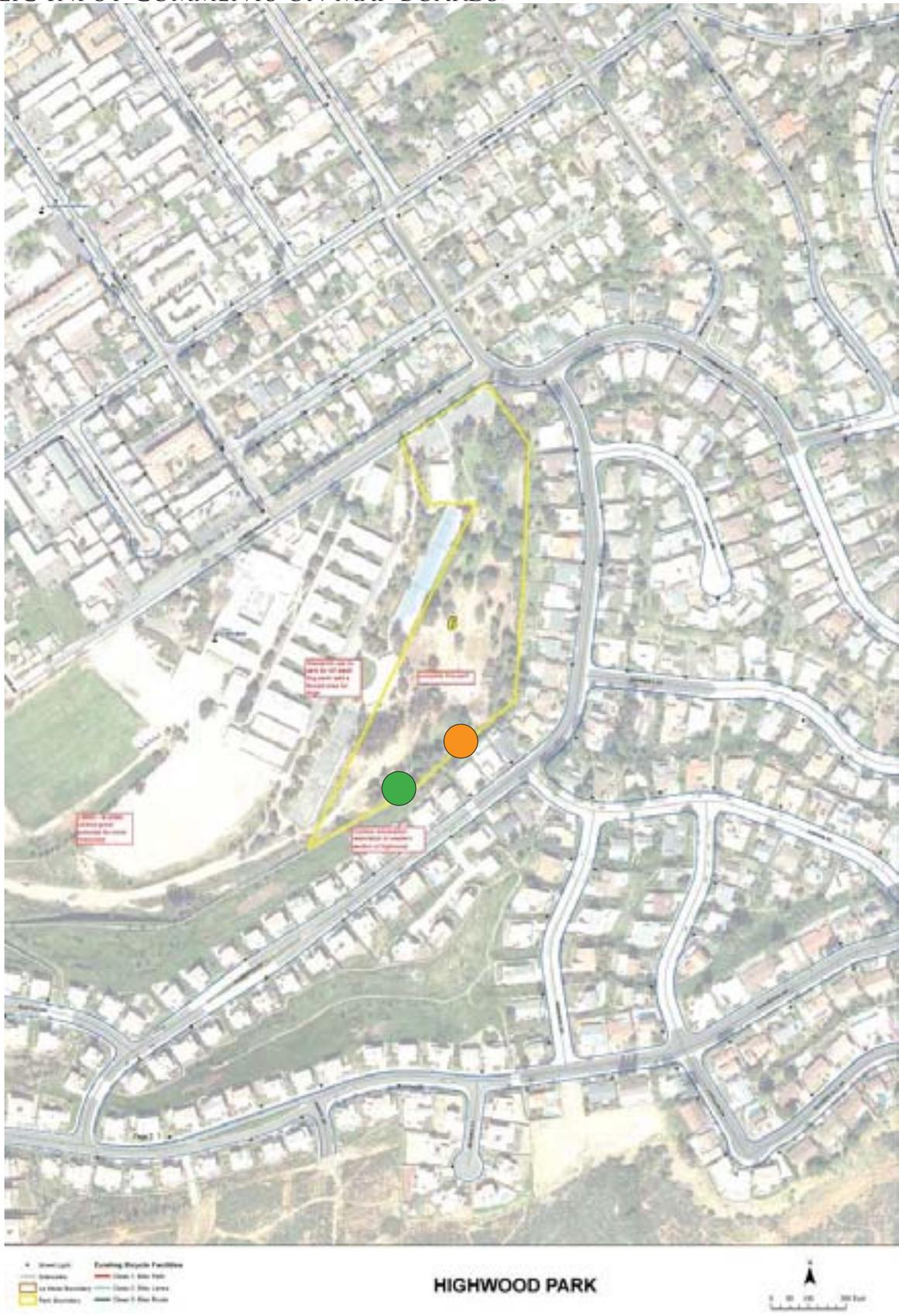
- Street Light
- Sidewalks
- ▭ La Mesa Boundary
- ▭ Park Boundary
- Existing Bicycle Facilities
- Class 1. Bike Path
- Class 2. Bike Lanes
- Class 3. Bike Route



PUBLIC INPUT COMMENTS ON MAP BOARDS:



PUBLIC INPUT COMMENTS ON MAP BOARDS:

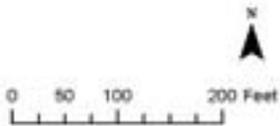


PUBLIC INPUT COMMENTS ON MAP BOARDS:



**JACKSON PARK**

- Street Light
- Sidewalks
- ▭ La Mesa Boundary
- ▭ Park Boundary
- Existing Bicycle Facilities
- ▭ Class 1: Bike Path
- ▭ Class 2: Bike Lanes
- ▭ Class 3: Bike Route



PUBLIC INPUT COMMENTS ON MAP BOARDS:



PUBLIC INPUT COMMENTS ON MAP BOARDS:

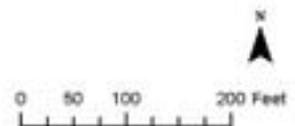


PUBLIC INPUT COMMENTS ON MAP BOARDS:

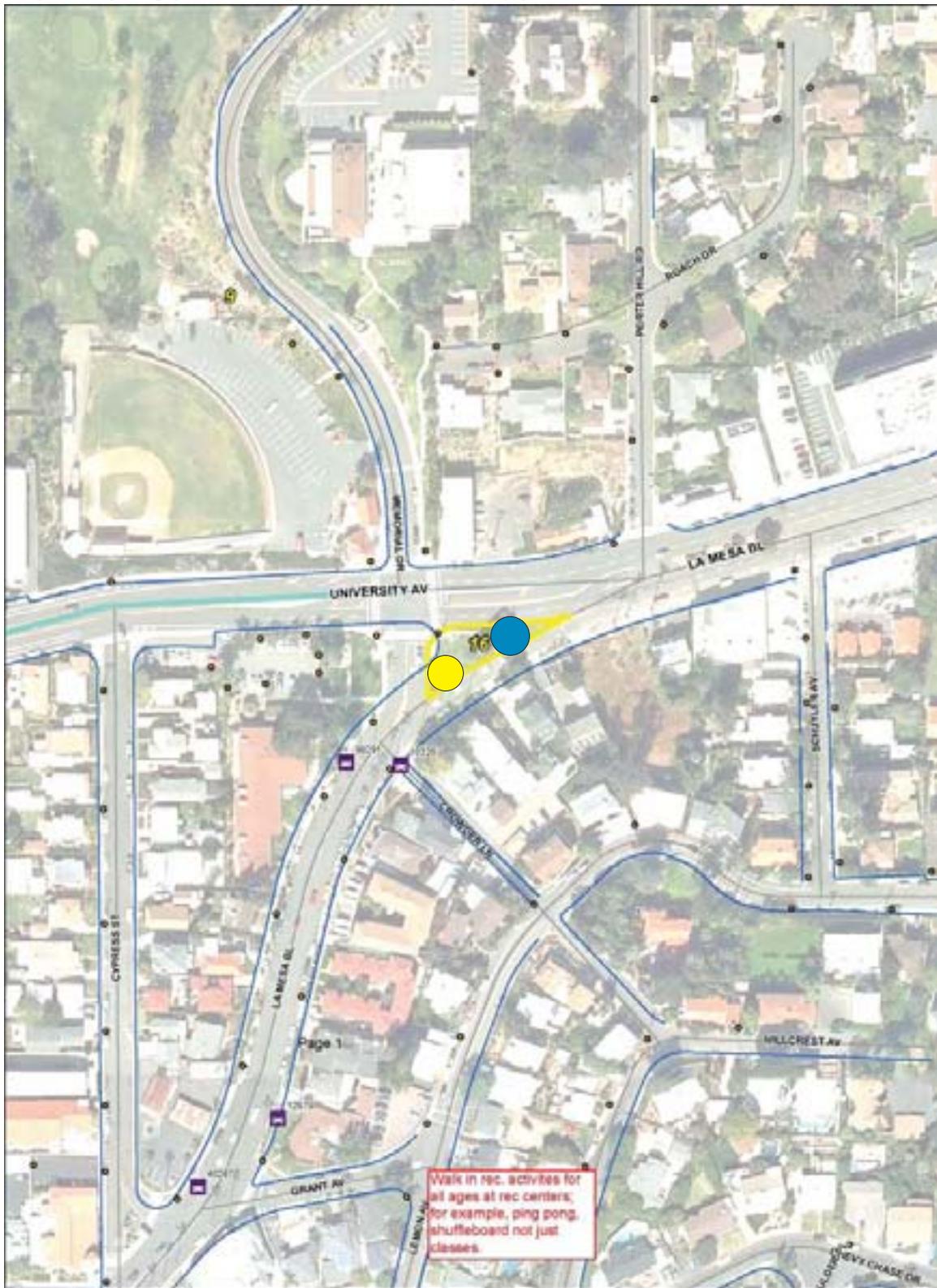


**NORTHMONT PARK**

- |                    |                                    |
|--------------------|------------------------------------|
| ● Street Light     | <b>Existing Bicycle Facilities</b> |
| — Sidewalks        | — Class 1. Bike Path               |
| ▭ La Mesa Boundary | — Class 2. Bike Lanes              |
| ▭ Park Boundary    | — Class 3. Bike Route              |

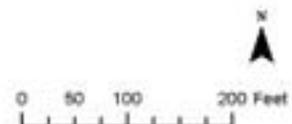


PUBLIC INPUT COMMENTS ON MAP BOARDS:



**PORTER PARK**

- Street Light
- Sidewalks
- ▭ La Mesa Boundary
- ▭ Park Boundary
- Existing Bicycle Facilities
- ▭ Class 1: Bike Path
- ▭ Class 2: Bike Lanes
- ▭ Class 3: Bike Route

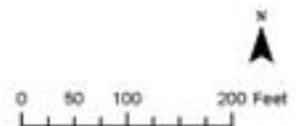


PUBLIC INPUT COMMENTS ON MAP BOARDS:



**ROLANDO PARK**

- Street Light
- Existing Bicycle Facilities
- Sidewalks
- Class 1. Bike Path
- La Mesa Boundary
- Class 2. Bike Lanes
- Park Boundary
- Class 3. Bike Route





PUBLIC INPUT COMMENTS ON MAP BOARDS:

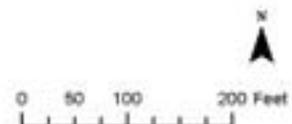


PUBLIC INPUT COMMENTS ON MAP BOARDS:



**SUNSHINE PARK**

- Street Light
- Sidewalks
- ▭ La Mesa Boundary
- ▭ Park boundary
- Existing Bicycle Facilities
- ▬ Class 1: Bike Path
- ▬ Class 2: Bike Lanes
- ▬ Class 3: Bio Route

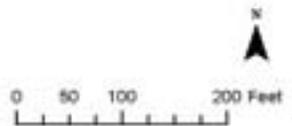


PUBLIC INPUT COMMENTS ON MAP BOARDS:



VISTA LA MESA PARK

- Street Light
- Existing Bicycle Facilities
- Sidewalks
- Class 1. Bike Path
- La Mesa Boundary
- Class 2. Bike Lanes
- Park Boundary
- Class 3. Bike Route





# CITY OF LA MESA PARKS MASTER PLAN



## THERE ARE MANY DIFFERENT TYPES OF PARKS



### REGIONAL

Regional parks attract visitors throughout the region. These parks typically have distinctive scenic, natural, historical, or cultural features that interest users. Local Regional Parks include: Balboa Park, Mission Bay Park, Mission Trails Regional Park, Presidio Park, and Sunset Cliffs Natural Park.



### RESOURCE BASED PARKS

Resource based parks are located at, or centered on a notable natural feature and are intended to serve the citywide population as well as visitors. Local Resource based parks include: Lake Murray.



### COMMUNITY PARK (USE RED DOT ON TABLE TOP MAP)

These parks serve a larger population within a specific single community area or multiple communities. Community parks include both passive and active recreation facilities, but will also likely contain recreation or community centers, multi-purpose sports fields, and aquatic complexes. These parks contain several acres and can include a variety of areas for car parking. These parks are typically over 15 acres. Local Community Parks include: Harry Griffin Park, MacArthur Park, and the Salvation Army Ray & Joan Kroc Center.



### NEIGHBORHOOD PARK (USE BLUE DOT ON TABLE TOP MAP)

Neighborhood parks serve a smaller population within an area but still include both passive and active recreation facilities. These parks include minimum areas for car parking encouraging its visitors to utilize alternative transportation such as biking or walking to access the park. Neighborhood parks range in size from three to fifteen acres. Local Neighborhood parks include: Collier Park, Eucalyptus County Park, Highwood Park, La Mesita Park, Northmont Park, Rolando Park, Briercrest Park, Sunset Park, and Vista La Mesa Park.



### MINI-PARKS (USE GREEN DOT ON TABLE TOP MAP)

These parks include smaller active courts and fields, but are mostly made up of passive activities. There is minimal to no onsite parking except for disabled access. Mini-parks range in size from one to three acres. Local Mini-Parks include: Aztec Park, Porter Park, Jackson Park, and Sunshine Park.



### POCKET PARKS (USE YELLOW DOT ON TABLE TOP MAP)

Pocket parks do not include active recreational activities. They are less than one acre and are mostly made up of hardscape type plazas and walkways. They may also include planting, small turf areas, and could contain small children's play areas. There is no onsite parking except for disabled access. These parks are accessible by walking or biking. Local Pocket Parks include: Walkway of the Stars.

## ACTIVE VS. PASSIVE RECREATION

Passive recreation refers to recreational activities that do not require prepared facilities like sports fields or pavilions. Examples of passive recreation are: picnicking, walking, hiking, swimming, bicycling, climbing, running or jogging, and fishing. Active recreation refers to a structured individual or team activity that requires the use of special facilities, courses, fields, or equipment. Examples of active recreation are: baseball, football, soccer, golf, hockey, tennis, skiing, skateboarding.