

CITY OF LA MESA

COLLIER PARK RENOVATIONS PROJECT MASTER PLAN

JUNE 2014



PROJECT CONTRIBUTORS

La Mesa City Council

Art Madrid, Mayor

Kristine Alessio, Vice Mayor

Mark Arapostathis, Councilmember

Ernest Ewin, Councilmember

Ruth Sterling, Councilmember

Master Plan Team

David E. Witt, City Manager

Yvonne Garrett, Assistant City Manager/Director of Community Services

William B. Chopyk, AICP, Community Development Director

Mike Pacheco, Community Services Manager

Chris Jacobs, Senior Planner

Käaren McElroy, Management Analyst

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1	Introduction	Page 1-1
1.2	Purpose of the Master Plan.....	Page 1-4
1.3	Plan Goals.....	Page 1-5
1.4	Location and Neighborhood Demographics	Page 1-5
1.4.1	Location.....	Page 1-5
1.4.2	Demographics	Page 1-5
1.4.3	Residential Population Density	Page 1-6
1.5	Site History.....	Page 1-9

CHAPTER 2 EXISTING CONDITIONS

2.1	Collier Park Background	Page 2-13
2.2	Spring House	Page 2-14
2.3	Collier Park Features	Page 2-15
2.4	Natural Resources	Page 2-17
2.5	Historical Resources	Page 2-17

CHAPTER 3 POLICY AND PLANNING PROCESS

3.1	Existing Policies	Page 3-19
3.2	Health and Wellness	Page 3-20
3.3	Citywide Parks Master Plan	Page 3-21
3.3.1	Introduction.....	Page 3-21
3.3.2	Vision Statement and Overall Goal	Page 3-21
3.3.3	Policies Related to Collier Park	Page 3-22
3.3.4	Existing Park Service Area Analysis of Collier Park	Page 3-23

CHAPTER 3 POLICY AND PLANNING PROCESS (continued)

3.4	Water Conservation Ordinance	Page 3-26
3.5	Planning Process	Page 3-26
3.5.1	Key Elements – Community Workshops	Page 3-27
3.5.2	Key Feedback on Collier Park – Parks Master Plan Community Sensing	Page 3-28
3.6	Recreation and Open Space	Page 3-29
3.7	Consideration of an Off-Leash Dog Run at Collier Park.....	Page 3-29

CHAPTER 4 DESIGN AND CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT

4.1	Overview	Page 4-30
4.2	Panhandle Phase 1 Design.....	Page 4-32
4.3	History Hill	Page 4-35
4.4	Collier Club House	Page 4-36
4.5	Spring House	Page 4-37
4.6	Environmental Impact Report.....	Page 4-39

CHAPTER 5 IMPLEMENTATION

5.1	Review and Approval Process	Page 5-40
5.2	Potential Revenue Generation	Page 5-41
5.3	Implementation Recommendations.....	Page 5-41
5.3.1	Spring House.....	Page 5-42
5.3.2	Site Water.....	Page 5-42
5.4	Future Funding.....	Page 5-42

APPENDICES

A	– Aerial View of Collier Park	Page 43
B	– Phase II Site Plan	Page 44
C	– Potential Funding Sources	Page 45



CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The City of La Mesa is 9.2 square miles in area and is located 14 miles inland from the Pacific Ocean. It is immediately adjacent to the eastern boundary of the City of San Diego, along both sides of Interstate 8, and 11 miles from downtown San Diego. The City also shares borders with the cities of El Cajon and Lemon Grove, and an unincorporated section of San Diego County. Natural scenic resources such as Mt. Helix and Mt. Nebo define the geography of the City and surrounding areas, and major transportation corridors divide the City; Highway 125 (north/south) and Interstate 8 (east/west). There are also two light-rail trolley lines running through the City making La Mesa a destination easily accessible from all areas of the County. Known as the Jewel of the Hills, La Mesa boasts tree-lined neighborhoods, a downtown village, and a history of family generations growing up in the community.



REGIONAL PROJECT LOCATION MAP



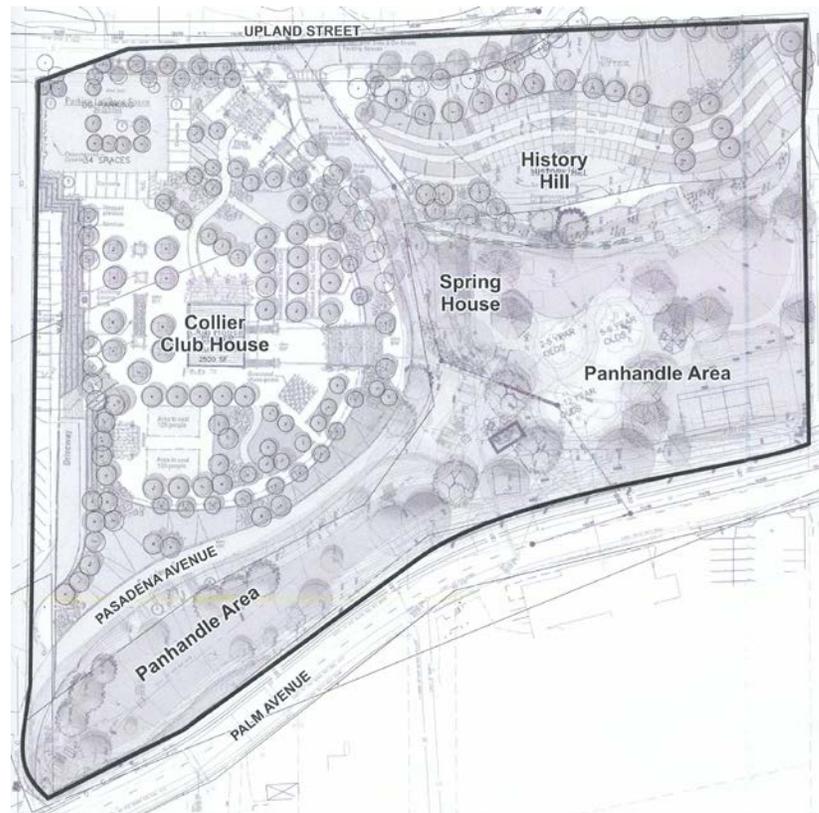
Over its first 100 years, along with the rest of the region La Mesa has experienced a substantial transformation, evolving from a primarily semi-rural bedroom community to its current status, described in the City's 2012 General Plan as an east county urban sub center. From the original 700 citizens who first formed the City, La Mesa has grown to more than 58,000 according to the 2010 census. That number is expected to increase by 13% in 2030 and 33% by 2050 according to the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) population forecast. As the population has grown, so has neighborhood and commercial development, and La Mesa is now considered built-out, lacking open space for any future large-scale development. Since incorporation, ensuring the health and safety of La Mesa's citizens and maintaining the quality of life in the community have been long standing goals. The community goal of preserving that quality of life in La Mesa's various neighborhoods has remained consistent over the City's first century with a policy of land use and urban design that calls for preservation and enhancement of residential neighborhoods and open spaces. In surveys contributing to the 2012 General Plan Update, citizens ranked safe neighborhoods and public spaces, and parks and recreation facilities as the top two healthy community topics important for La Mesa's future. The challenge for City leadership is in preserving its historical values while making those progressive improvements necessary to sustain a viable community.

In a built-out community such as La Mesa, revitalizing our neighborhoods requires a continuous reinvestment in infrastructure maintenance and improvements. Without this reinvestment, systems and facilities will deteriorate over time. It is critical to conserve our limited resources and reuse, repurpose, and renew our existing resources to continue to meet changing public demands. The number of acres of open space in La Mesa has declined over the last 100 years while the population has increased and the City has become more urbanized. These changes have created conflicting demands for the City's limited recreational open space. A citywide Parks Master Plan completed in 2012 established goals for enhancing the parks and recreational facilities in La Mesa

and increasing access to existing parks and open space. Additional details concerning the elements of the Parks Master Plan are provided in Chapter 3 of this document. The Parks Master Plan includes the suggestion to create a master plan for renovation of Collier Park, citing the need to improve safety and visibility within and into the park, increase access points into the park, and replace the aging restroom and play attractions in the oldest of the City's 14 parks.

1.2 PURPOSE OF THE MASTER PLAN

This Master Plan contemplates a phased approach to renovate an existing portion of Collier Park and provides for future development on currently undeveloped and under developed portions of the park. The plan reflects the community's desire for the construction of updated and enhanced recreational amenities in the park. The Master Plan includes a site history, description of the existing site conditions, the public input and planning process, concept designs for areas within the park, considerations for the Spring House, improvement phasing recommendations, and potential funding sources. For the purposes of phasing future improvements to Collier Park, the park site has been divided into four concept segments: the Panhandle area, situated in the southern and western portions of the park; the History Hill area, situated in the southeastern underdeveloped portion of the park; the Collier Club House area, located in the northern undeveloped portion of the park; and the Spring House, situated adjacent to the Panhandle area of the park in close proximity to Pasadena Avenue. This master plan is intended to encourage more active recreational use of the park by residents in the neighborhood.



1.3 PLAN GOALS

The following goals were established for the Collier Park Master Plan:

- Create a safer, more active use park
- Preserve the historical aspects of the site through overall design, renovation, and interpretation
- Create an environmentally friendly facility with energy and water conservation considerations central to the design elements
- Improve and increase neighborhood connections to the park
- Evaluate the existing historic Spring House in Collier Park and make recommendations for restoration or modification
- Research and identify viable sources of funding for park improvements and historic preservation
- Support the implementation of the citywide Parks Master Plan

1.4 LOCATION AND NEIGHBORHOOD DEMOGRAPHICS

1.4.1 Location

Collier Park is located at 4401 Palm Avenue. According to the City's park definitions, it is a Neighborhood Park, which is defined as a park, typically 1 – 15 acres, serving a relatively small population within a geographic area of the City. This type of park contains both passive (open space) and active (i.e., tennis court) recreation elements. The park property lies between Palm Avenue and Upland Street, to the north of Spring Street and to the south of La Mesa Boulevard, approximately one-half mile south of the downtown La Mesa Village. A segment of Pasadena Avenue bisects the park and is used as a through street between Palm Avenue on the western border of the park and 4th Street and Upland Street on the eastern border of the park to access surrounding residences. Pasadena Avenue provides the only vehicular access to the existing parking lot, located in the southwestern portion of the park. An aerial view of the park and surrounding neighborhood can be found in Appendix A.

1.4.2 Demographics

The park is situated in a neighborhood setting. As evidenced in the following chart, there are just 2,800 households within one-half mile, and 7,300 households within one mile. A three-mile diameter ring, which extends beyond the incorporated city limits of La Mesa, contains a significant population, nearly 61,000 households with 157,000 residents. Median household income is relatively lower in these areas when compared with San Diego County as a whole (\$64,890). Similarly, residents in the vicinity of Collier Park tend to be older

than their counterparts Countywide; i.e., median ages of 36-38 years in the three-mile ring compared to 34.5 years in the County overall. Table 1 below shows the demographic comparison between the .5 mile, 1 mile, and 3 mile ring.

Table 1.

Category	0.5 Mile Ring	1.0 Mile Ring	3.0 Mile Ring
Population	6,511	17,273	156,756
Households	2,769	7,322	60,759
Median Household Income	\$60,118	\$57,104	\$58,270
Median Age	36	38	37

Source: Claritas, Inc., 2010 estimates

1.4.3 Residential Population Densities

The following excerpt from a citywide Parks Master Plan, completed in 2012, analyzed the demographics of La Mesa to evaluate trends in age distribution adjacent to existing parks and increases in future 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.”

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.

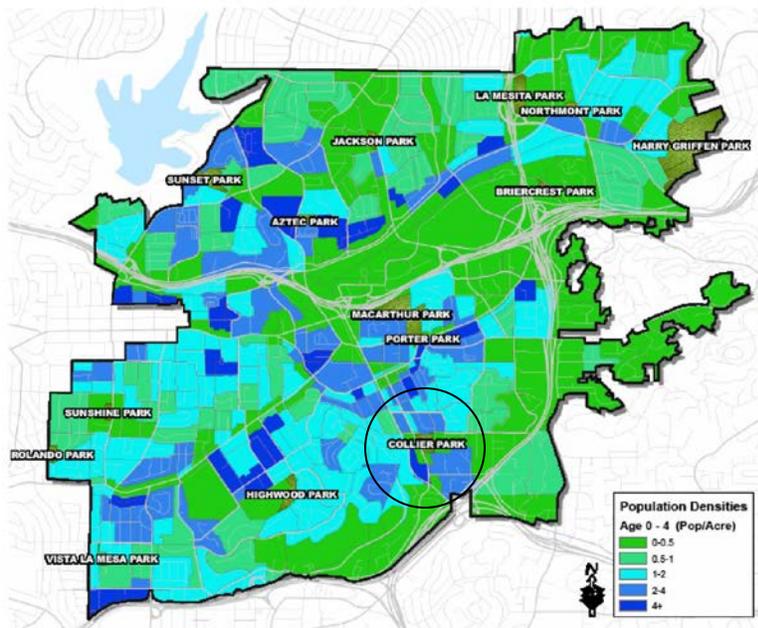


Figure 4.4—Population Densities- 5 to 14 Years Old

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.

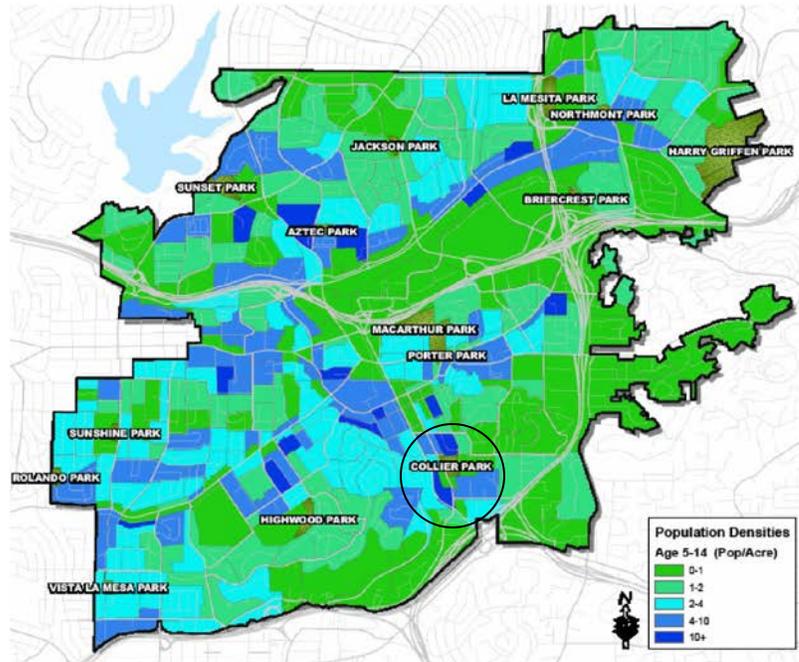


Figure 4.5—Population Densities- 15 to 19 Years Old

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

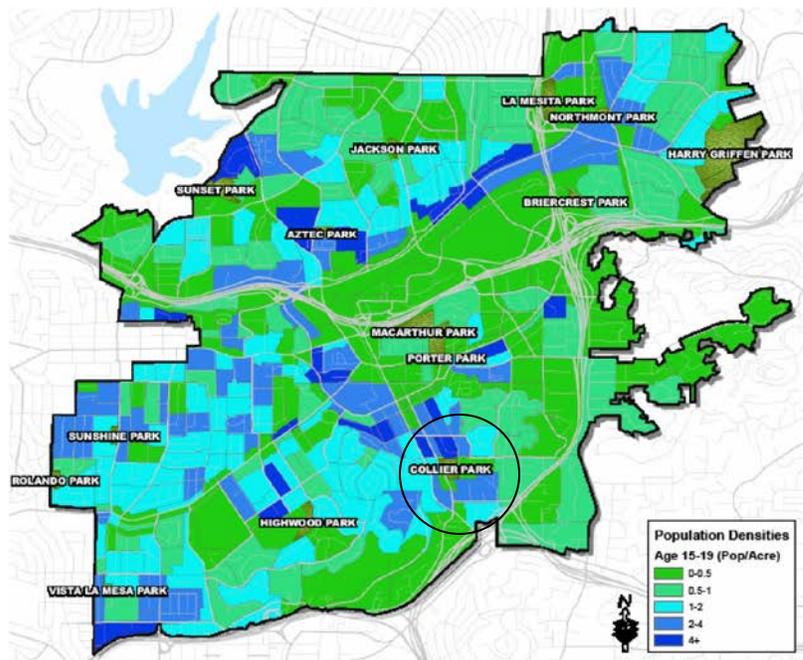


Figure 4.6—Population Densities- 20 to 44 Years Old

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.

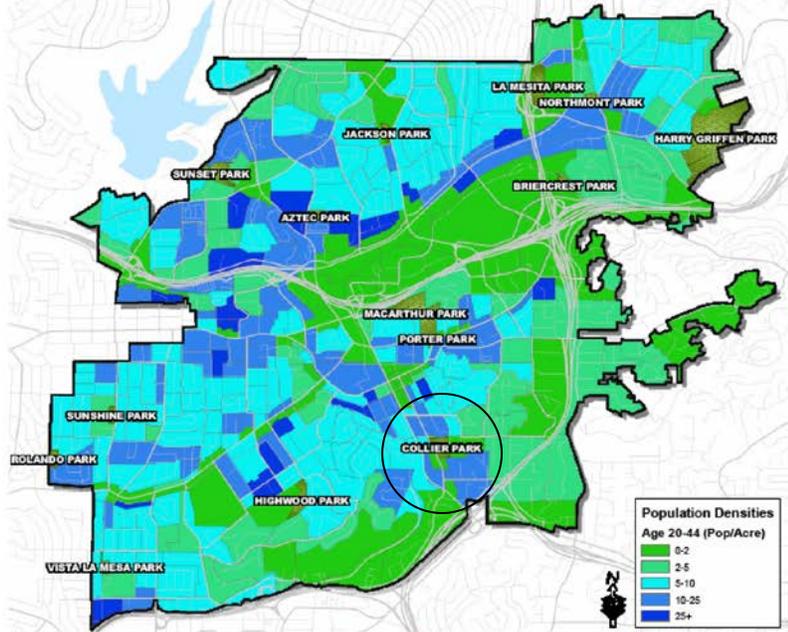
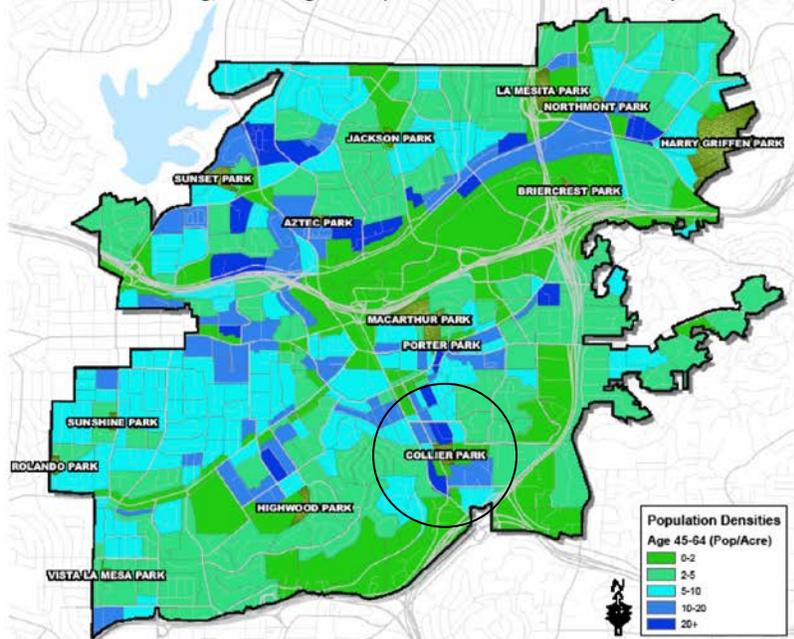


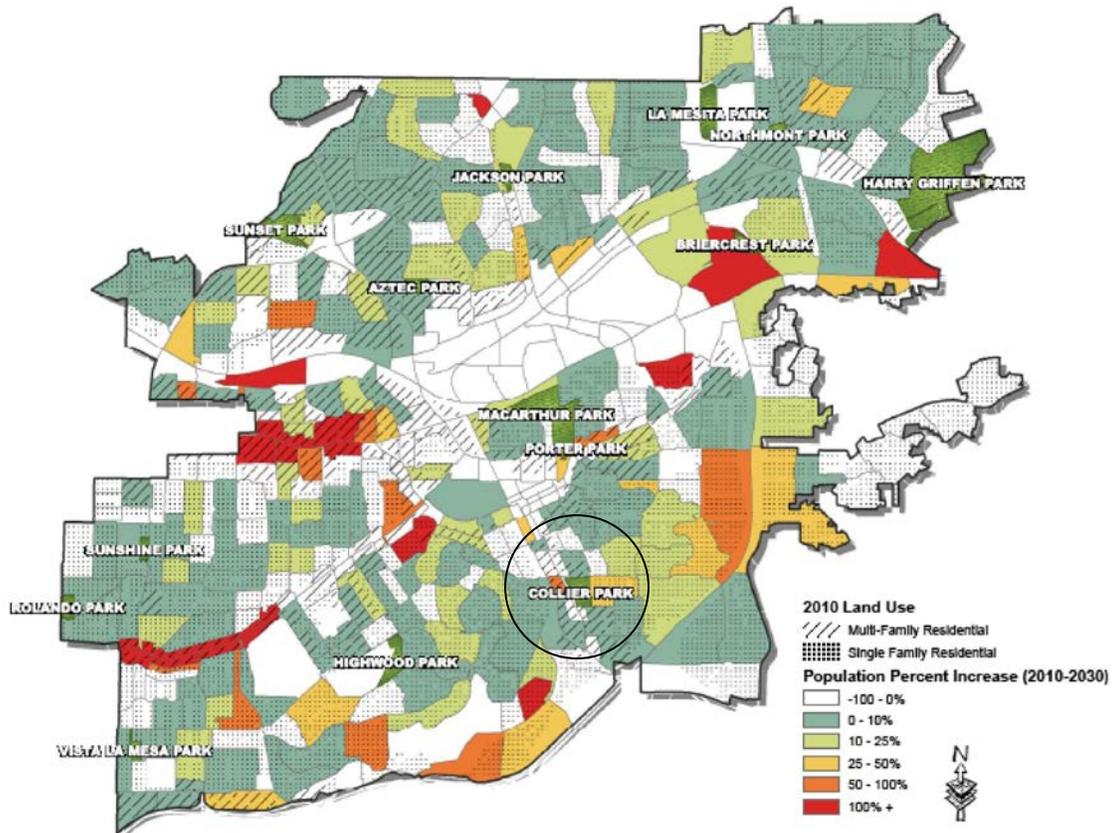
Figure 4.7—Population Densities- 45 to 64 Years Old

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.



According to the population growth analysis in the citywide Parks Master Plan the total population of La Mesa is expected to increase 13.36% and the population density within a 15-minute walk of Collier Park is expected to increase 24.96% by 2030. Residents in the 20 to 44 years of age category will represent the highest age category (32.28%) within that projected total population.

Figure 4.9—Future Population and Land use Growth



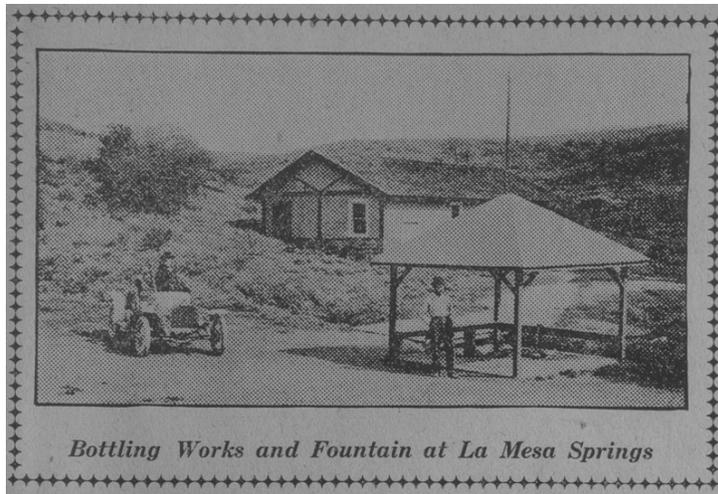
The plan states, “Enhancing existing parks and access to those parks will be the most realistic way to provide residents with adequate recreational opportunities that attempt to achieve the goals and objectives of this plan.” This analysis is helpful to recommend park facilities and program elements related to specific age groups for the park. Based on the percentage of increase in population growth anticipated in the vicinity of Collier Park both activities that appeal to families with young children (i.e., playgrounds), as well as amenities that would be attractive to those age 45 and up, (i.e., tennis or performance space), should be considered in the park planning.

1.5 SITE HISTORY

Collier Park is the oldest of La Mesa’s fourteen parks. The natural springs, located in what is today Collier Park, were first utilized by the Kumeyaay Indians for whom the springs were a seasonal stopping place because of their medicinal

qualities, and were thereafter known as Indian Springs. During the Spanish Period, the land surrounding the springs was part of the once-extensive grazing lands of Mission San Diego, established in 1769 by Spanish Franciscan missionaries. With the secularization of the missions by the Mexican government in 1832, extensive land grants were given to loyal Mexican citizens. In 1846, roughly 60,000 acres of ex-Mission land were granted to Santiago Arguello, a former commandant of the San Diego Presidio. In 1868, Robert Allison purchased 4,282 acres of land from heirs of Arguello, which included what is now the downtown area of La Mesa and present-day Collier Park. Allison used the springs as a source of water for his family's sheep herds.

In 1905, Colonel David C. Collier purchased a substantial portion of land in southern La Mesa, including the area known today as Collier Park. Collier played an influential role in the development of La Mesa. He initially purchased Allison's property with the intention of building a country estate for himself; however, his plans shifted to develop the land in other ways, which included capitalizing on the area's natural springs by erecting a bottling works from which he would sell the water. In late 1907, the bottling works was completed, the remains of which is known today as the Spring House. The bottling works contained a storage reservoir into which the spring water was pumped. The bottling works was constructed with locally quarried squared stones, with cement mortar and framing plastered in cement rubble.



In 1910, Collier donated five acres of land to the people of La Mesa for the establishment of a park, primarily west of Palm Avenue and south of Pasadena Avenue. Later that year, the Collier Park Association was incorporated for the purpose of acquiring additional land and improving that already donated by Collier. Only the northwestern corner of the current park, east of Palm Avenue, is part of Collier's donation. It is likely that this section of the park was the original location of an early well that drew on the spring water to irrigate the park's landscaping and supply the park's fountains. It was initially hoped that this well could also supply other city parks as they were created.

Collier sold the springs and the remaining portions of what is now Collier Park to the Union Title and Trust Corporation at some point prior to 1914. The La Mesa Springs Corporation purchased the 14-acre parcel surrounding the springs in

January of 1914. That same year, the City of La Mesa called for a special bond election to purchase that land for “water purposes.” The bond passed, and the City acquired the land on March 22, 1915. Shortly after the acquisition of the springs by the City, the water was piped to a drinking fountain 0.25-mile away in downtown La Mesa at the corner of La Mesa Boulevard and Spring Street. The City also began plans at that time to further develop the “park adjoining the springs,” although further improvements to the landscape were not undertaken until 1920. At that time, plans were announced that the City would be undertaking landscaping and the construction of driveways, restrooms, and a pool. Funds were raised by community events, and the Spring House was converted into dressing rooms for the pool. The pool, at the southwest corner of the park, was completed in 1921, and tennis courts were built directly east of the pool in 1922. The pool was plagued by walls that caved in repeatedly after heavy rains, and its use was discontinued by the mid-1930s. Although the City pursued the construction of a new pool through the Works Progress Administration, those plans did not materialize. The pool was eventually filled in and replaced by new tennis courts in the late 1940s. At one time the park contained a caretaker’s residence erected in 1924 east of the Spring House.

By the 1930s, the name Collier Park applied to the entire area currently referred to as such, including eight undeveloped acres east of 4th Street that were eventually sold in 1945. The sale of that parcel was the last change in the boundaries of the park, which today is visibly defined by Palm Avenue to the west, 4th Street to the east, and the neighborhood development that has since been erected to the north and south.

By the mid-1940s the United States had been involved with World War II on two fronts and large numbers of the maintenance workforce left employment with the City to support the war efforts. The condition of the park deteriorated, with the Spring House falling into disrepair and the landscape becoming overgrown with weeds. A group of 25 female gardening students, inspired by a Better Homes and Gardens magazine contest, received approval from the La Mesa City Council to undertake a beautification project to revitalize the then aging park. Taking their name from the old bottling works building, the Spring House Garden Club, with assistance from the City, began renovation in 1948. The group renovated the Spring House as a meeting space and added a pergola covered with bougainvillea. Landscape improvements included new flower beds and plantings, specifically succulents, on the hillside east of the springs. The roads were graded and a new restroom was constructed. The park was rededicated on September 19, 1948, and the Spring House Garden Club’s success was acknowledged with a third place award in the Better Homes and Gardens contest for its division (towns with a population of 10,000 to 100,000). A bronze plaque was placed on the interior wall of the Spring House. The Spring House received a new roof, suspended ceiling, new floors, and new glass panes during the beautification project, and shortly thereafter a fireplace was added to the east wall. A portion of the wall and foundation were also reconstructed at this time.

The park particularly served La Mesa's school-age population. A large playground was erected at the park in the late 1940s. Prior to the Spring House Garden Club's improvements, the City had already undertaken plans to move a building to the southeastern corner of the park for use as a Boy Scout camp, dedicated as the Wa-di-ta-ka La Mesa Boy Scout Memorial Camp in 1948. The building was demolished sometime post 1960. Perhaps in response to the boy's camp, the women of the Spring House Garden Club included a campfire circle for the local Campfire Girls as part of their overall 1948 park improvements. Grass was planted throughout the park at some point past 1952.

The drinking fountain erected in 1915 to bring spring water to downtown La Mesa was threatened by a street-widening project in the 1960s. In response to community support and donations, the City Council moved to disassemble and reconstruct the fountain in Collier Park, just south of the Spring House. The original roof framing and tiles were preserved, while the stucco base was replaced with brick. The relocated fountain was completed in July 1965.

The Spring House continued to be used as a meeting place for a variety of community and youth groups until its deteriorating condition forced closure to the public in 1981. Resolution No. 15191 was adopted by the City Council on October 22, 1985 designating Collier Park and La Mesa Spring House as a local historical landmark. The La Mesa Historical Landmark Nomination Form describes the bottling works (known as the Spring House) as having concrete rubble walls rising above a high foundation of locally quarried stone with an inside storage reservoir into which the spring water was piped.

The 1940s playground equipment was replaced during the 1990s and the park has continued in its original function as a recreation space for the residents of La Mesa.





CHAPTER 2

EXISTING CONDITIONS

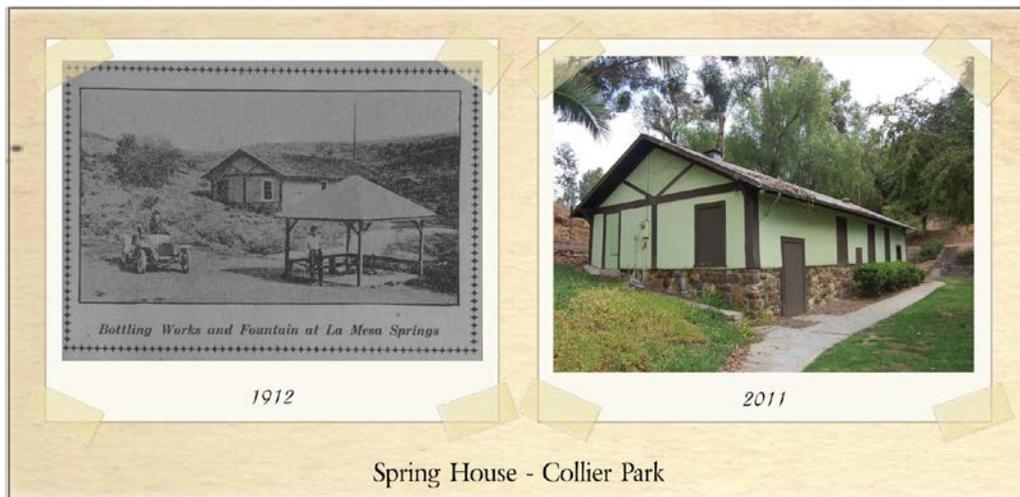
2.1 COLLIER PARK BACKGROUND

The present Collier Park is approximately 7.7 acres in size and is the oldest municipal park in the City of La Mesa, dating back to 1915. The park's recreational use is centered in the currently developed Panhandle, the most level area of the park. The irregularly-shaped flat terrain of the Panhandle area is composed of a grass lawn with scattered old-growth trees such as eucalyptus and various types of palms. The two existing buildings, restroom and Spring House, are located on this relatively flat terrain within the Panhandle area. Currently, the park consists of open green space, one lighted tennis court, a tot lot playground, several picnic tables with barbeques, the Spring House building, a water fountain, a restroom building, parking for 25 cars, and a variety of mature

trees in varying stages of health. Pasadena Avenue bisects the park and is a thoroughfare to homes in the neighborhood. The northern portion of the park, consisting of approximately 2.2 acres, is entirely undeveloped.

2.2 SPRING HOUSE

The Spring House was originally constructed in 1907 by D. C. Collier and was used as a bottling works to sell water from springs on the site. On the south side of the building a concrete walkway leads to the main entrance. The west elevation consists of one window. On the north elevation, there are no window openings. All windows have moderate casings and wood lintels. Historic photographs from 1949 show the windows were once one-over-one double hung sashes. There is a red brick chimney located on the east elevation exterior. According to a historic photograph from 1949, the south elevation roof was extended to include a pergola feature that extended over the walkway and was supported by wood posts. This is no longer in existence. Landscape features include mulch and bushes along with a stone garden located adjacent to the building. Mature trees surround the building and offer shade to the surrounding landscape.



The primary entrance to the Spring House on the south side leads to one room that spans the entire building interior. The building interior is an open truss system. On the northwest section of the interior, there is a raised cistern, the top of which is accessed by concrete steps. Surrounding the perimeter of the cistern are metal poles and chain ropes. Atop the cistern at the west end of the building is a door which leads to the exterior. Also inside at the east end of the building is a fireplace opening.

2.3 COLLIER PARK FEATURES

A water feature element is located east of the Spring House and consists of a concrete-lined drainage channel with a concrete rubble bridge and stairway that connect the eastern portion of the park (History Hill area) to the western portion of the park (Spring House and Panhandle areas). Other small-scale landscape features that have been added to accommodate this general recreational use area include picnic benches and tables, grills, trashcans, and water fountain. Decorative elements such as large boulders and smaller stones also follow the circulation patterns and border small pathways. The circulation route of Pasadena Avenue follows the natural curves of the hillside terrain and separates the Panhandle area from the rest of the park. The circulation route of Palm Avenue is situated next to the western elevated section of the park and bordered by vegetation on the western hillside. The western hillside slopes down from Palm Avenue to the flat terrain within the Panhandle area. The vegetation on the western hillside is bordered by small wood fences that line the landscape, containing the general recreational use area to the more central portion of the park.



A drinking fountain in the central area of the park was constructed in 1915 and has features of the Spanish Colonial Revival style. It is an approximately 8-foot structure located southeast of the Spring House. The fountain is a brick structure with two tapered columns adjoined in the center where the drinking fountain is located. Underneath the fountain is a pipe system accessed by a small opening in the brick façade. The structure is covered by a side gable roof that has a wood

truss system with exposed rafters and is clad in red clay tiles. The drinking fountain was previously located on Spring Street and was moved to Collier Park in 1965 as part of a conservation effort in response to a road-widening project.

An existing tennis court was constructed sometime in the 1950s and has remained a tennis court to date. It is located in the southwestern portion of the park and is the standard size and shape of a contemporary tennis court. In the last year additional striping has been added to the court to accommodate Pickleball play. The tennis court is surrounded by a chain-link fence and has likely been repaved and repainted since its original construction. An earlier tennis court was located east of the existing tennis court, and there was a pool located where the existing court currently stands. The pool was demolished sometime in the late 1940s and the existing tennis court was constructed in its place in the 1950s.



Typical of the hillside topography of La Mesa, the grade of the park varies a great deal from the relatively flat lower developed portions, (i.e., playground area, Spring House, and tennis court), to the steep undeveloped slopes to the north and east. From south to north, elevations range from about 500 feet above mean sea level (MSL) to about 545 feet MSL. Land uses bordering the park site include an office complex to the south, single-family homes to the east and west, and an apartment complex to the north. Zoning for Collier Park areas is Suburban Residential with the Scenic Preservation Overlay Zone (R1S-P). The Scenic Preservation Overlay Zone establishes regulations for land use and development within recognized scenic areas of the City to preserve the aesthetic value of those areas. The La Mesa General Plan designates Collier Park as a Neighborhood Park Recreation Use. The classification of Neighborhood Park is further defined in Chapter 1, Section 1.4.1.

Pedestrian access to Collier Park is provided via sidewalks along Palm Avenue and 4th Street. It is noted that there are missing segments of these sidewalks on the western side of 4th Street, south of Pasadena Avenue and on the eastern side of 4th Street, north and south of Pasadena Avenue. Pedestrian circulation within Collier Park is provided by several sub-standard paved and unpaved pathways.

2.4 NATURAL RESOURCES

A biological resources field survey was conducted as part of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR). That survey covered the entire park and extended approximately 100 feet beyond the park property boundary. The EIR notes significant disturbances to existing biological resources that are attributed to park use or development near the park and include: encroachment into undeveloped areas, litter, exposure to pets, non-native plant species, and water runoff. No special status vegetation or wildlife species were observed in the survey, nor was any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural communities observed.



The park site contains natural underground springs that have contributed to the historical use of the park site. A spring under the Spring House discharges into a concrete-lined drainage channel and flows into an underground storm drain to a catch basin at the southern boundary of the park. Public input concerning the underground springs within the park indicated a strong community desire to utilize this

natural water source, if possible, as a conservation measure for park irrigation. The EIR determined that due to the configuration of the drainage channel and storm drain within the park, the runoff does not discharge into any navigable waterway and; therefore, does not fall within any regulatory jurisdiction.

Additionally during the community input phase of this master plan process, workshop participants placed particular importance on preservation of the large ficus tree located in the Panhandle area of the park near the drinking fountain.

2.5 HISTORICAL RESOURCES

Resolution No. 15191 was adopted by the City Council on October 22, 1985 designating Collier Park and La Mesa Spring House as Local Historical Landmark #3. The La Mesa Historical Landmark Nomination Form prepared at that time describes the bottling works (know as the Spring House today) as having concrete rubble walls rising above a high foundation of locally quarried

stone. Inside was a storage reservoir into which the water was piped. By 1912 a fountain, covered by a hipped roof, had been constructed to the west of the bottling works for the convenience of those who came to get water. Other planned improvements apparently were never carried out. The Spring House continued to be used as a meeting place for a variety of community and youth groups through the Park and Recreation Department until its deteriorating condition forced its closure to the public in 1981.

The Spring House is structurally damaged from a series of events, including: fires, being hit by cars, water damage, and vandalism. Due to the advanced deterioration of the building, a stop-gap measure of 2x4 posts was installed in the interior to stabilize the collapsing roof. The Building Official closed the building for occupancy in 1981. A structural assessment was conducted in 1988 and structural improvements were made to the Spring House in 1989 to stabilize the building at that time.





CHAPTER 3

POLICY AND PLANNING PROCESS

3.1 EXISTING POLICIES

In 2006 and again in 2011, the City of La Mesa conducted citizen surveys to garner resident satisfaction with city services. Over 90% and 92% of the residents respectively thought the city was well run, but residents did indicate that improved community park playgrounds and restrooms would be the best way to invest limited resources in parks. In December 2006, the non-profit La Mesa Park and Recreation Foundation requested approval from the City Council to embark on a \$1 million capital campaign to raise funds to renovate five community park playgrounds. The campaign called “It’s Child’s Play” includes funding a new playground for Collier Park. The Foundation requested the City to coordinate with the Foundation for additional improvements and upgrades in the identified parks to maximize the Foundation’s gifts.

3.2 HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Overweight and obesity has become epidemic at a national level. The County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency reports the East Region, which includes the City of La Mesa, has the highest rates of obesity with 40% of the adult population overweight, and an additional 23% considered obese. In 2006 the City of La Mesa embarked on a campaign to address this issue on a local level. Initial dialogue with the La Mesa-Spring Valley School District and other community partners resulted in the establishment of “ready...set...Live Well” (Live Well). Live Well is an initiative that extends and integrates efforts to support healthy eating and physical activity in the community, focusing primarily on environmental change and policy strategies. The collaborative mission of all partners is to enhance environments to promote physical activity and healthy eating. Practices employed in support of this mission include Communities of Excellence in Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity Prevention (CX3), and Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED). A CX3 study, conducted through the La Mesa Park and Recreation Foundation with a grant from the Grossmont Healthcare District, identified physical barriers to park access as well as access to healthy food choices at markets in the area surrounding Collier Park. A representative from the La Mesa Police Department’s Crime Prevention Unit participated in the public workshops to assist with incorporation of CPTED elements into the design concepts as a proactive way to discourage illicit activities and increase safety in the park, as well as improve the effectiveness of public safety personnel responding to any incident that might arise.



In 2009 the City received a \$50,000 Kaiser Foundation grant to incorporate policies related to health and sustainability into the General Plan to address new laws and initiatives related to childhood obesity and sustainability. The firm of CityPlace Planning was retained to assist with drafting a Health and Wellness Element for incorporation into the City’s General Plan. Community input was solicited through a series of

surveys, walk audits, and public workshops, and a Health and Wellness Element was added to the 2012 General Plan Update.

The Health and Wellness Element describes the measures that La Mesa will take to make the health of the community a priority and to achieve its vision of being the healthiest and most livable city in the San Diego Region. The Health and Wellness Element offers policy guidance that enables La Mesa residents to achieve an active lifestyle; have access to healthy food choices; enjoy a safe,

livable community; and raise healthy, active children. Key objectives and policy points within the Health and Wellness Element, specifically with regards to parks and recreational facilities, include:

- Adopt a way finding 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 activities, such as designated routes for walking and biking, stairs, and parks and recreational facilities.
- Increase safety and security in public places – such as parks, recreation facilities, sidewalks, transit stops and facilities, and trails – by providing adequate lighting, maintaining landscaping to maximize visibility and reduce hiding places, removing graffiti immediately, removing trash, debris, weeds, etc. from public areas with ongoing maintenance of those public areas, and conducting regular police and volunteer (crime watch) patrols.
- Ensure that all City park and recreational facilities are well-marked and visible from streets, sidewalks, and bike paths.

3.3 CITYWIDE PARKS MASTER PLAN

3.3.1 Introduction

In 2011 a \$75,000 Healthy Communities Planning Grant, administered through the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG), was awarded to the City and provided funding for a citywide Parks Master Plan. The completed Parks Master Plan enhances the Recreation and Open Space Element in the 2012 General Plan Update. The goals of the citywide Parks Master Plan were as follows:

- Provide the public outreach and documentation of meaningful public input through the planning process.
- Evaluate and make recommendations regarding open space, recreation facility needs, and circulation in and around Collier Park.
- Evaluate the existing historic Spring House in Collier Park and make recommendations to optimize its value as an historic interpretive center.
- Research and identify viable sources of funding for park improvements and historic preservation.
- Finalize a master plan for future development of Collier Park to create a more effective use of open space and recreational opportunities.

3.3.2 Vision Statement and Overall Goal

The Collier Park Master Plan aligns with the following citywide Parks Master Plan vision statement which 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.”

The Collier Park Master Plan also aligns with the overall goal of the citywide Parks Master Plan which is the following:

“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.”

Ultimately, the desired outcome of the citywide Parks Master Plan is to create more access to physical activity by creating new parks where possible, expanding existing parks, creating more access points to parks, and eliminating walking barriers to parks.

3.3.3 Policies Related to Collier Park

The following policies from the citywide Parks Master Plan should be considered as they relate directly to Collier Park:

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

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 4.1.1: Look for opportunities to increase connectivity to parks.

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

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

Policy 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.

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 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 6.1.5: 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 fundraising activities.

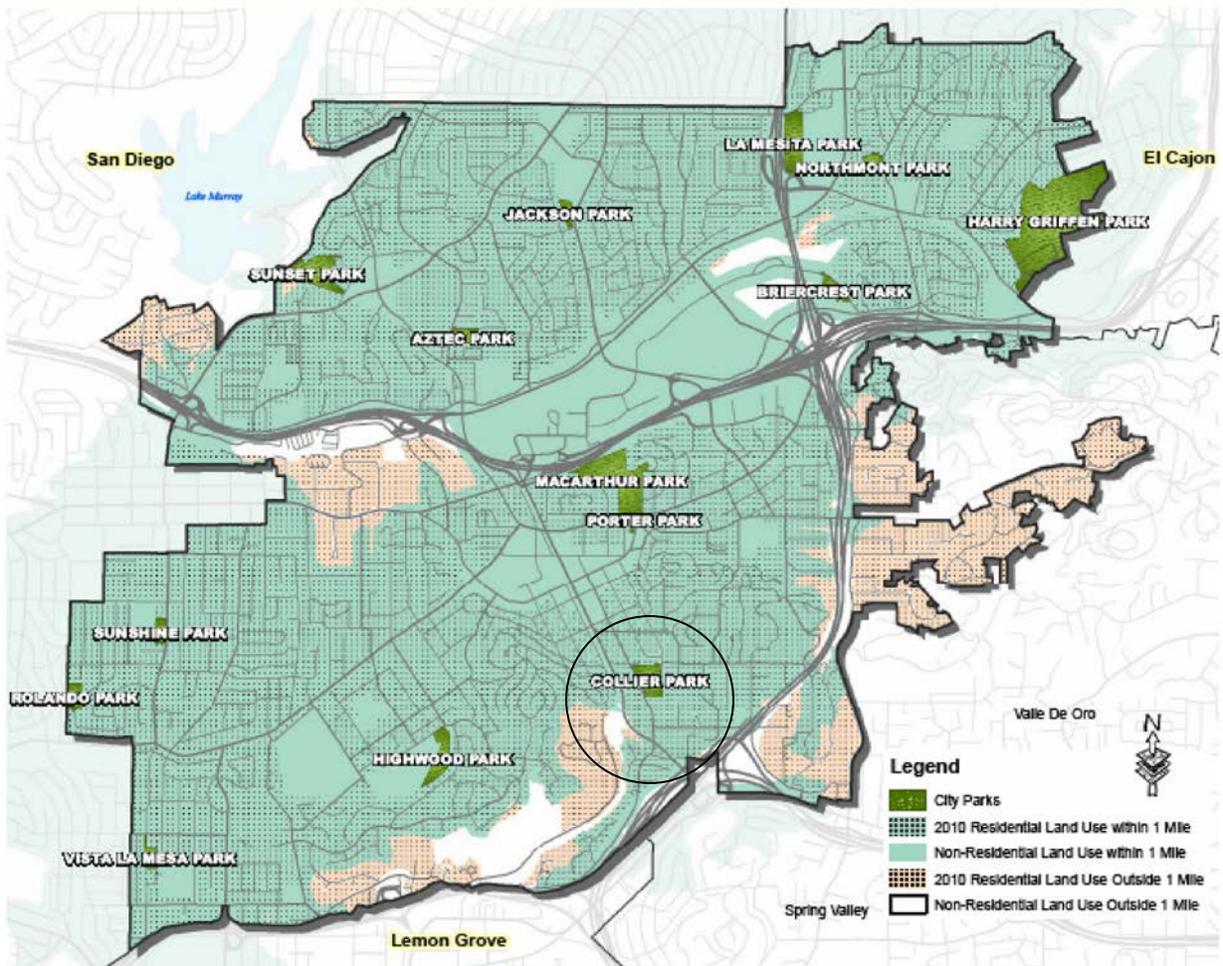
3.3.4 Existing Park Service Area Analysis of Collier Park

The following information extracted from the Parks Master Plan identifies an existing gap in service for residential access to Collier Park:

“The existing park service area analysis was completed using GIS modeling. The [previously] adopted General Plan [1996] 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,

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

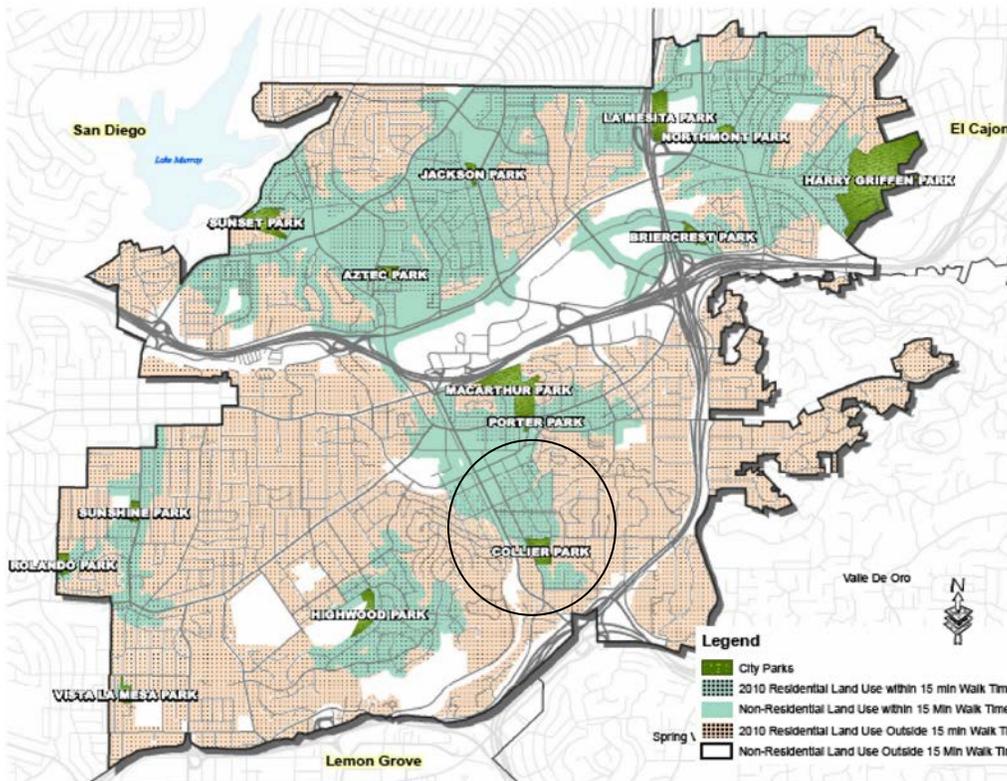


helps children and adults maintain a healthy weight, and can reduce the risk for obesity and its related health consequences. Parks and playgrounds provide a wide variety of opportunities for physical activity and they have the potential to

help many Americans lead a more active lifestyle.”¹ 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.”¹

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 below)¹.

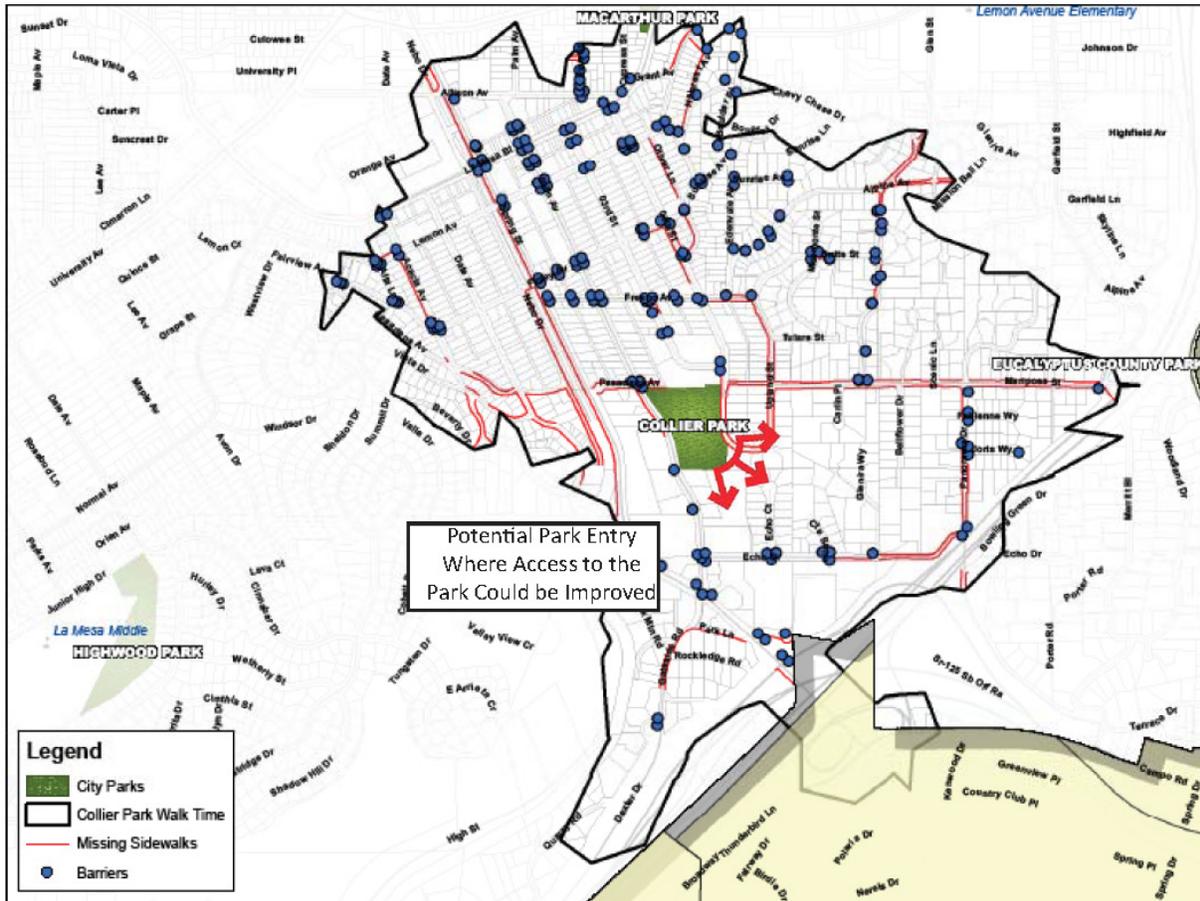
Figure 4.2—Existing Composite Park Service Area- 15 Minute Walk Time Distance (using existing walkway network)



¹ Parks, Playgrounds and Active Living. (February 2010). Active Living Research

As part of the analysis of the citywide Parks Master Plan, it is recommended that access points into the parks be added, obstacles in existing sidewalks be removed, and new sidewalks be added. The diagram below from the citywide Parks Master Plan shows potential additional entry points that would improve pedestrian access to Collier Park from the surrounding neighborhood.

Project B.12—Improved Neighborhood Connections to Collier Park



3.4 WATER CONSERVATION ORDINANCE

Ordinance 2009-2805 creating La Mesa Municipal Code Section 14.29 – Water Efficient Landscape Regulations, was adopted in response to Assembly Bill 1881 (Water Conservation in Landscaping Act of 2006) to address California’s limited water supply and the need to utilize this limited resource in the most efficient way possible. La Mesa’s regulations under this section apply to industrial, commercial, institutional, and multi-family residential landscapes as well as public agency projects that contain a landscaped area of 2,500 square feet or more. The area of Collier Park under consideration for renovation exceeds 2,500



square feet; therefore, making water efficient landscaping and irrigation a required consideration within the master plan. The potential for use of spring water, possibly available on the park site, for irrigation and water conservation education opportunities were important elements brought forth during public workshops.

3.5 PLANNING PROCESS

Based on direction from City Council, a project team was created and a consultant hired to assist with public outreach and creation of a draft park master plan. The consultant worked with City staff to compile a cross section of community stakeholders who were then invited to provide input via a combination of written surveys, individual interviews, and public workshops. A summary of all survey and interview comments was compiled and became the starting point for community workshops. In the preliminary surveys and interviews, the following items were identified as common issues of concern or desirable concepts to be considered as part of a master plan for Collier Park:

- Increase feeling of safety to encourage legitimate park use and discourage homeless encampments and illicit activities
- Provide additional gates and pathways from surrounding neighborhoods for easier access
- Preserve the historical nature of the site
- Explore the possibility of using onsite spring water to provide or supplement landscape irrigation and/or a water feature

3.5.1 Key Elements - Community Workshops

Community workshops were held on March 1, and April 26, 2008, and July 16, 2009. Residents and property owners in the vicinity of Collier Park were invited to participate in the workshops. Additionally, a general invitation was extended through the City website to anyone who was interested in participating in the planning process. Following are key elements that were developed during these workshops:

- Improve accessibility, walkways, lighting, recreational opportunities, and divided parking to strengthen the feeling of park safety
- Incorporate a variety of open space and outdoor facilities for individual and groups into the new design
- Modify the topography of the site to improve drainage and limit the amount of water that leaves the site
- Emphasize the use of native, low maintenance, and drought tolerant landscaping
- If feasible, use existing spring water flow for irrigation
- Develop the eastern terraced portion of the site with various forms of native plant and drought tolerant gardens, accessible paths, and provide for possible future community gardens
- Retrofit Pasadena Avenue for traffic calming through the park to reduce vehicle speeds and cut through traffic
- Expand the green space to the northern portion of the park site rather than consider adding a potential development
- Explore options for the Spring House that would acknowledge the historical significance of the structure and the entire park site
- Consider including educational activities and interpretive installations for local history and water conservation
- Explore opportunities for revenue generation to assist with master plan implementation and ongoing maintenance of the park

During the public input process there was much discussion concerning the possibility of a community garden in the eastern undeveloped portion of the park, now referred to as the History Hill area. Workshop participants acknowledged that a community garden would require a significant amount of management and supervision and concluded that unless an organization comes forward offering to provide such



services the specifics of such a use should not be included in the Master Plan. It was further suggested that if a community garden were to become a future reality, it should emphasize low water and indigenous plantings for food, flowers, and herbs.

When asked to rank proposed improvements, workshop participants listed security, Spring House, playground, and new development as the most important elements they would like to see in a new park design and gave lower rankings to parking, traffic calming, walking paths, and gathering areas.

3.5.2 Key Feedback on Collier Park - Parks Master Plan Community Sensing

As a result of input from surveys and community workshops during the citywide Parks Master Plan process, the community commented on the quality of Collier Park and provided input concerning potential additions, reuse, and redesign of the park. Following is a sampling of the feedback comments received during the Parks Master Plan that are specific to Collier Park:

- 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
- I used 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 any more
- We live near Collier Park and would use it if there weren't homeless types there
- Collier Park [needs] less creepy people hanging out
- 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
- 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 Park [needs to be] safer and updated play equipment
- Collier Park has an unsafe and not family friendly feel due to a lack of playground equipment and worn out tennis courts
- Collier Park needs a better access path from the south
- Feel unsafe at park (this comment only applies to Collier Park. Other parks feel safe)
- The nearest park (Collier) has no special attraction and seems unsafe when transients are present
- Collier Park has the potential of becoming a terrific community park

3.6 RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE

The mandated Recreation and Open Space Element of the City's General Plan establishes goals, objectives, and policies to meet the City's current and future open space and recreational needs. The backbone of the City's open space plan is the City's 14 parks and open space resources provided at school sites located in La Mesa. In addition, private open space within residential developments and commercial recreational opportunities are important components of the recreation and open space resources needed to maintain a high quality of life in



the City. The open space section of the Recreation and Open Space Element establishes policies for balancing the demands placed on the City's parks and open space areas. There is a close relationship between measures needed to conserve natural resources and those needed to provide open space to sustain the quality of life for La Mesa's citizens.

3.7 CONSIDERATION OF AN OFF-LEASH DOG RUN AT COLLIER PARK

On July 27, 2004, the Friends of Canine Corners received City Council approval of expanding the off-leash area in Harry Griffen Park. During the same City Council meeting a resident requested that the City Council consider a second off-leash dog run area at Highwood Park. That request was later denied by the La Mesa-Spring Valley School District, property owner of the Highwood Park site. City Staff identified Collier Park as an alternative location and the City Council directed staff to solicit community input regarding that location.

On January 12, 2005 the Community Services Commission hosted a community workshop to solicit input on establishing an off-leash dog run in the park. The people who spoke were against the dog park. Becky Rice, volunteer coordinator at that time from Canine Corners at Harry Griffen Park, spoke about her concerns over the financial and volunteer capacity of La Mesa to support two dog runs. After consideration of public comments, the Community Services Commission voted unanimously that the City Council should not pursue a proposed dog run in Collier Park.



CHAPTER 4

DESIGN AND CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT

4.1 OVERVIEW

An overriding theme gleaned from the public workshops was a community desire for a design that would create a historically significant park to honor the site's history of water bottling through interpretive features. Consideration for potential revenue generating enhancements was also expressed to help ensure continuing optimum maintenance of the park.

The following are specific elements that emerged from the workshops:

- Improving accessibility, walkways, lighting, recreational opportunities, and divided parking would strengthen the feeling of park safety.

- A variety of open space and outdoor facilities for individual and groups should be incorporated into a new park design.
- The topography of the site should be modified to improve park drainage and limit the amount of water that leaves the site.
- Emphasize the use of native, low maintenance, and xeriscape landscaping.
- The existing spring water flow (estimated at approximately one gallon per minute) should be used for irrigation or a water feature if feasible.
- The eastern terraced portion of the park should be developed with various forms of native plant and xeriscape gardens, accessible paths, and allow for a community gathering spot.
- Options for the future of the Spring House should be explored that would acknowledge the historical significance of that structure and the entire park site. Consider the inclusion of educational activities and interpretive installations, alternative recreational uses, and possible revenue generation. The Spring House history as the site of an early water bottling facility was identified as a unique opportunity to educate the public and promote water conservation.
- Retrofit Pasadena Avenue for traffic calming to reduce vehicle speeds and cut through traffic.
- Residents preferred expanding the green space in the northern portion of the park rather than adding a potential development.



Upon direction from the La Mesa City Council, the services of Gary F. Hoyt Landscape Architecture, Inc. were retained to design improvements for the first anticipated phase of park renovation in the southern and western Panhandle area of the park utilizing recommendations that evolved from the various public input methods utilized. While the design for the Panhandle area was being

developed, the services of Keyser Marston Associates were retained to evaluate the potential for revenue-generating land uses that would be compatible with the park; and explore options for restoration, reconstruction, or replacement of the Spring House.

4.2 PANHANDLE PHASE 1 DESIGN

The Panhandle area, situated in the southern and western portions of the park, has been primarily developed for recreational use with existing facilities such as a tennis court, playground, restrooms, picnic area, and parking lot. Suggested improvements in the Panhandle area made during the public input process were: relocation and reconstruction of the drinking fountain structure; relocation and replacement of the playground; an updated accessible restroom facility; replacement of the tennis court; additional parking; and installation of walking paths, landscaping, improved drainage, and additional security features.

The improvements proposed for the Panhandle area in the Phase 1 design documents seek to redevelop the existing Panhandle area with similar recreational amenities and changes the topography to enhance safety and mitigate drainage and vandalism issues. It includes more accessibility to various elements within the park and greater visibility throughout the park site to allow for better proactive enforcement by public safety personnel as well as increase the feeling of security for park users. The design elements are described below in further detail.



Drinking Fountain. The existing reconstructed drinking fountain structure would be relocated to the entrance of the park at the intersection of Palm Avenue and Pasadena Avenue to serve as an enhanced entry feature focal point to the park. Preserving as much of the original roof as possible, the drinking fountain structure would be reconstructed at the new location.

Playgrounds. The existing playground area would be replaced with three separate, age-specific playgrounds for 2-5 years old, 5-9 years old, and 9-12 years old, respectively. The new playgrounds would be located in the central portion of the Panhandle area of the park, easily visible from the parking area. A larger, passive turf area would be constructed east of the new playgrounds. Two

shade structures would be constructed adjacent to the new playgrounds and would provide shaded tables for use during special events or group picnics.

Plaza and Restroom. Improvements to the Panhandle area include the construction of a main plaza area adjacent to the new playgrounds. The plaza area would be equipped with a new accessible and secure restroom and storage facility. The plaza would be raised and would allow for a separation of active and passive activities while also serving as a buffer area to keep children safely away from the main parking area. The restroom building would be oriented to be highly visible from all areas of the park including parking areas and surrounding roadways. This orientation would make it easier for people entering the park to view current activities and for parents to monitor children's restroom use while keeping an eye on children at play.



Walking Paths. Three pedestrian entrances would be constructed along Palm Avenue, replacing two existing steeply sloped stair/ramp paths. At least one entrance from Upland Street would be added to encourage pedestrian use by residents in the neighborhood to the east. Another walking path would be constructed from the park's main entrance at the corner of Palm Avenue and Pasadena Avenue, extending southeast to the new playgrounds. This walking path would also extend to the Navy housing project adjacent to the south side of the park. To the extent possible, all walking paths within the park would be handicap accessible and appropriate for all abilities, and would create internal park connections for pedestrian circulation throughout the park as well as connections to surrounding streets.

Tennis Court. The existing tennis court would be removed and replaced with a new tennis court to the west of the current location closer to Palm Avenue. This new location allows for greater visibility from the street.



Parking. The existing 25 space parking lot would be removed and replaced with 21 on-site parking spaces distributed throughout the park. The east side of Palm Avenue adjacent to the park has capacity for an additional 32 on-street parking spaces. The intent of spreading out the parking spaces throughout the park is to encourage recreational activity in all areas of the park and improve park security.

Landscaping and Other Enhancements. Excluding turf areas, the Panhandle area would be landscaped with native vegetation using low water demand techniques consistent with the City's Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (La Mesa Municipal Code Chapter 14.29). Invasive non-native shrubs, trees, and other vegetation, as well as dead and dying landscape materials, would be removed. New plants would require low water and minimal maintenance. Turf areas within the Panhandle area would be located in the northwestern portion of the park, along Palm Avenue, and east of the new playgrounds.

Drainage. A large portion of the park would be regraded and replanted to better manage site drainage and limit the amount of water that leaves the site. Drainage improvements would include the installation of grass swales and cobble drainage swales, as well as the replacement of the existing concrete-lined channel with a proposed bioswale and biofiltration basin. A bioswale is a type of natural storm water filtration system. There are many types of storm water filtration and management systems that can be applied to urban environments to remove storm water pollutants, generally referred to as a "best management practice," or BMP. The adoption of BMP, the use of the spring water for park irrigation, and use of xeriscape landscaping provide opportunities to include educational and

interpretive displays in the park, and correlates with the public's desire for sustainable design elements. Regrading of the Panhandle area would result in removal of all the trees currently in the park with the exception of one large ficus as noted in Chapter 2, Section 2.4.

Security Features. The project proposes to enhance park security by creating activity areas throughout the park, installing plantings that do not block views of the park from public rights-of-way, installing lighting throughout the park, and installing new fencing along the southern and eastern boundaries of the park. Project grading would recontour the natural bowl located in the Panhandle area of the park to allow for better visibility from Palm Avenue and Pasadena Avenue.



4.3 HISTORY HILL

The area designated as History Hill, situated in the southeastern portion of the park, currently consists of mostly undeveloped parkland. Proposed improvements to the History Hill area, which are conceptual in nature and subject to change, include conversion of undeveloped parkland into a grassy amphitheater built into the hillside. The natural elevation would be utilized for “stadium-style” seating, composed of pavers and decomposed granite or other natural materials, fronted by a flat area for recreation or performances. The amphitheater would offer casual seating capacity for approximately 50 park visitors and would be suitable for intimate performances, educational opportunities, and social gatherings. A small portion of the History Hill area would be designated as rental space for weddings or similar events. The amphitheater would be located adjacent to the Spring House, creating an option for the two features to be used together as a single special events venue.

The entire History Hill area would be terraced and planted with new landscaping to provide natural spaces for informal gatherings along the unpaved paths meandering through the amphitheater area. Project grading would lower the

existing topography of the History Hill area. Three walkways would be constructed within the amphitheater area. These paths would be composed of decomposed granite and terraced to accommodate the topography. The decomposed granite walkways would be interspersed with grass and sandstone steps. The southern portion of the History Hill area would include a walkway providing access to the southern portion of the Panhandle area.

4.4 COLLIER CLUB HOUSE

The Collier Club House area, situated in the northern portion of the park, currently consists of mostly undeveloped parkland. Improvements in this area, which are conceptual in nature, could include construction of a club house building, an outdoor event area, a plaza area, and parking, as well as the installation of walking paths, landscaping, and security features. The Collier Club House concept addresses the desire to create an ongoing source of revenue to assist with maintenance of park amenities as well as increased presence of positive activities in the park that would serve to discourage illicit activities.

Club House. The Collier Club House area could be developed to contain a new club house building for public use. West of the proposed club house building, an outdoor event area (including two outdoor seating areas and a ceremony stage) could be constructed. A plaza area could be located east of the club house building that would contain benches, an unpaved pathway, and green space. A water feature, fire pit, and outdoor cooking and dining area would be located



north of the building. Optional passive exercise areas, such as an oversized chess game and bocce ball courts or similar types of activities, could also be located south of the club house building.

Walking Paths. Two pedestrian crossings are proposed across Pasadena Avenue. One crossing would provide access between the Collier Club House and History Hill areas near the intersection of Upland Street and Pasadena Avenue. The other would provide access between the Collier Club House area and the Spring House area in the central portion of the park. A concrete sidewalk would be constructed along the western side of Upland Street for the length of the park boundary along this roadway. A connected sidewalk

would extend from Upland Street into the center of the park along the northern side of Pasadena Avenue, terminating at the pedestrian crossing in the Collier Club House area. The portion of the sidewalk within the park boundary would

include a handicap ramp and landing system. A separate, unpaved path would be constructed between the plaza area, near the intersection of Upland Street and Pasadena Avenue, and the club house building. Benches would provide respite spots throughout the Collier Club House area. To the extent possible, all walking paths would be handicap accessible and appropriate for all abilities, and would provide connectivity within the park as well as to surrounding streets. Walking paths would be placed to encourage physical activity and pedestrian circulation.

Traffic Circulation. A new driveway could be constructed along the northern portion of the park boundary to provide access from Pasadena Avenue to the outdoor event area west of the new club house building.

Parking. A parking lot with 34 spaces could be constructed within the northeastern portion of the Collier Club House area.

Landscaping. Excluding turf areas, the Collier Club House area would be landscaped with native vegetation using low water demand techniques consistent with the City's Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (La Mesa Municipal Code Chapter 14.29). One turf area would be located in the western portion of the Collier Club House area, adjacent to Pasadena Avenue. Another turf area would be located immediately west of the plaza within the Collier Club House area.

Security Features. Park security would be enhanced by creating activity areas throughout the park, installing plantings that do not block views of the park from public rights-of-way, creating more access points to encourage pedestrian entry into the park, and installing additional lighting throughout the park.

4.5 SPRING HOUSE

The Spring House is situated adjacent to the Panhandle area of the park with its back in close proximity to Pasadena Avenue. Over the years the building has been structurally damaged and deteriorated from a series of events, including fires, being hit by cars, water damage, vandalism, and arson. It was determined to be uninhabitable and closed to the public in 1981. Resolution No. 15191, adopted by the City Council on October 22, 1985, designated Collier Park and the La Mesa Spring House as a local historical landmark. On February 27, 2007 the City Council requested the Spring House to be referred to the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC). The HPC discussed the potential options and concepts for recognizing the historic value of



the Spring House that could be incorporated into any future designs for improvements to Collier Park. The HPC acknowledged the serious physical deterioration of the structure and the economic feasibility of a complete restoration. It was the recommendation of the HPC, if funds were not available for complete restoration, that City Council direct that the stone walls around the base of the building, the cistern, and related accoutrements be maintained and preserved to serve as an interpretive center with a professionally designed display chronicling the significance of the springs in the early settlement and development of La Mesa.

It should be noted that the Draft EIR completed in January 2013 addressed a worst-case scenario alternative in order to evaluate the maximum adverse impact to existing conditions that could occur in a final design. The “Spring House Partial Deconstruction Alternative” was stricken from the recirculated Draft EIR in response to public concern. A number of scenarios are contemplated and discussed here. The following scenarios do not represent any decision or recommendation made or pending on the disposition of the Spring House at this time. In addition, the phasing of the proposed park development could allow the park to be upgraded around the Spring House until such time as funding and/or a determination on the Spring House can be made.

Alternative #1 – Spring House Restoration

The Spring House would be restored to accurately depict the form, features, and character of the structure as it appeared during the early 1900s, the period of time in which it was used as a bottling works (“restoration period”).

Alternative #2 – Spring House Rehabilitation

This alternative would rehabilitate the Spring House for use as an indoor (enclosed) interpretive center. Rehabilitation could involve repairs, alterations, and additions to the building to allow for an efficient contemporary use while preserving the structural features that represent its historical value to the site.

Alternative #3 – Reduced Development Alternative

Under this alternative the existing Spring House and Panhandle improvements would remain, but the proposed improvements to History Hill and Collier Club House areas would not be implemented.

The La Mesa General Plan (City of La Mesa 2012) defines adaptive reuse as follows: “The reuse of a building or structure, usually for a purpose different from the original. The term implies that certain structural or design changes have been made to the building in order for it to function in its new use.” Selection of this alternative would require adherence to the “Procedure for Permit to Demolish a Historic Landmark or Contributing Structure within a Historic District” described in

La Mesa Municipal Code Section 25.03.060. Prior to demolition, historical documentation of the Spring House would be completed.

At the time of drafting of this master plan, no funding for which this phase of the project might qualify has been identified. Should funding become available in the future, the City will draft specific plans for the Spring House. City staff will continue to explore various options with regard to the existing structure that may include restoration, rehabilitation, and adaptive reuse or a repurposing for alternative use as either an indoor facility or partial demolition and replacement with an outdoor interpretive facility.

4.6 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

The consulting services of Atkins were retained to draft an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the proposed improvements to Collier Park. Preparation of the EIR included community input as well as input from a variety of public agencies as required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

A draft EIR (SCH # 2011101051, City File # CR-09-04) was completed January 24, 2013 at which time City staff published a public Notice of Availability providing a 45-day public review and comment period for the document. Atkins also prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) required to evaluate potential impacts on the environment for improvements funded by the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The purpose of the EA is to facilitate interagency coordination and consultation, and to support a Finding of No Significant Impact for proposed improvements in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).





Chapter 5

IMPLEMENTATION

5.1 REVIEW AND APPROVAL PROCESS

A draft Collier Park Master Plan was presented to the City Council August 11, 2009 at which time City Council unanimously voted to direct staff to proceed with completion of the Master Plan and conduct the environmental review as required, review the plan through the City's Boards and Commissions, and bring it back to the City Council for final authorization. At the August 11, 2009 meeting, City Council also unanimously voted to approve hiring a consultant to investigate the financial viability of developing a portion of Collier Park to support upgrades and maintenance costs.

5.2 POTENTIAL REVENUE GENERATION

A report on potential revenue generating development was completed by Keyser Marston Associates (KMA) on April 8, 2011. KMA was tasked with: 1) exploring revenue-generating land uses that would be compatible with the park setting; and, 2) developing options for restoration, reconstruction, or replacement of the Spring House and creating design concepts for the undeveloped portions of the park, referred to as History Hill and Collier Club House in this Master Plan.

Potential revenue-generating uses identified and explored included: a day care facility, commercial recreation, a wellness center/spa facility, and meeting/event venues. Based on anticipated improvements in the park, the KMA study concluded that the most viable revenue-generating uses would be a multi-purpose club house structure that would be available for rent for meetings or special events, and outdoor recreational facilities such as picnic pavilions, barbecues, an open-air amphitheater, or other event space that could be reserved for a fee. Both options would require the addition of staffing for continuing facility management and assessment of revenue potential indicated some limited potential to cover operating costs but not sufficient to amortize development costs.



5.3 IMPLEMENTATION RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to compile a project containing sufficient detail to make proposed improvements eligible to apply for capital grant funding opportunities, this Master Plan reflects a recommended phased approach to improvements with the first phase of construction occurring in the Panhandle area, and future phases (History Hill, Collier Club House, and Spring House) presented in concept. Following are specific recommendations for initial implementation as plans are completed for the first phase of improvements.

5.3.1 Spring House

It is recommended that the Spring House be mothballed in the short term. Mothballing is the process of closing and protecting a building from weather and vandalism. This would stabilize and protect the building from further deterioration while, in the long-term, research on grants and other funding opportunities can be pursued for restoration or rehabilitation of the Spring House. Mothballing the Spring House would not result in any new environmental impacts not already addressed in the Draft EIR. Improvements to other portions of Collier Park could occur without a specific determination on the Spring House.

5.3.2 Site Water

Based on significant public comment regarding the desire to include use of the underground spring water present at the park site, as well as the increasing need for water conservation in our region, use of existing water on the site is recommended to be included in a project design feature. Further research may be needed to determine the amount of water available and a feature could include the proposed bioswales, a small fountain, or included in restoration of the Spring House cistern for irrigation of landscaping in the park. Any such use provides the opportunity to incorporate educational or interpretive information regarding water conservation and pollution.

5.4 FUTURE FUNDING

Implementation of this master plan requires identification of funding for improvements and increased maintenance. There is currently no City funding identified to cover either phased design beyond the first phase, capital construction costs, or the anticipated increase in operation and maintenance costs as a result of improvements. These factors dictate a need to develop creative ways to obtain funds to cover the cost of initial construction and ongoing revenue sources to cover continuing maintenance costs. Some potential funding opportunities are identified in Appendix B. Additional funding opportunities will be researched and evaluated as they become available.



Collier Park Master Plan

APPENDIX A

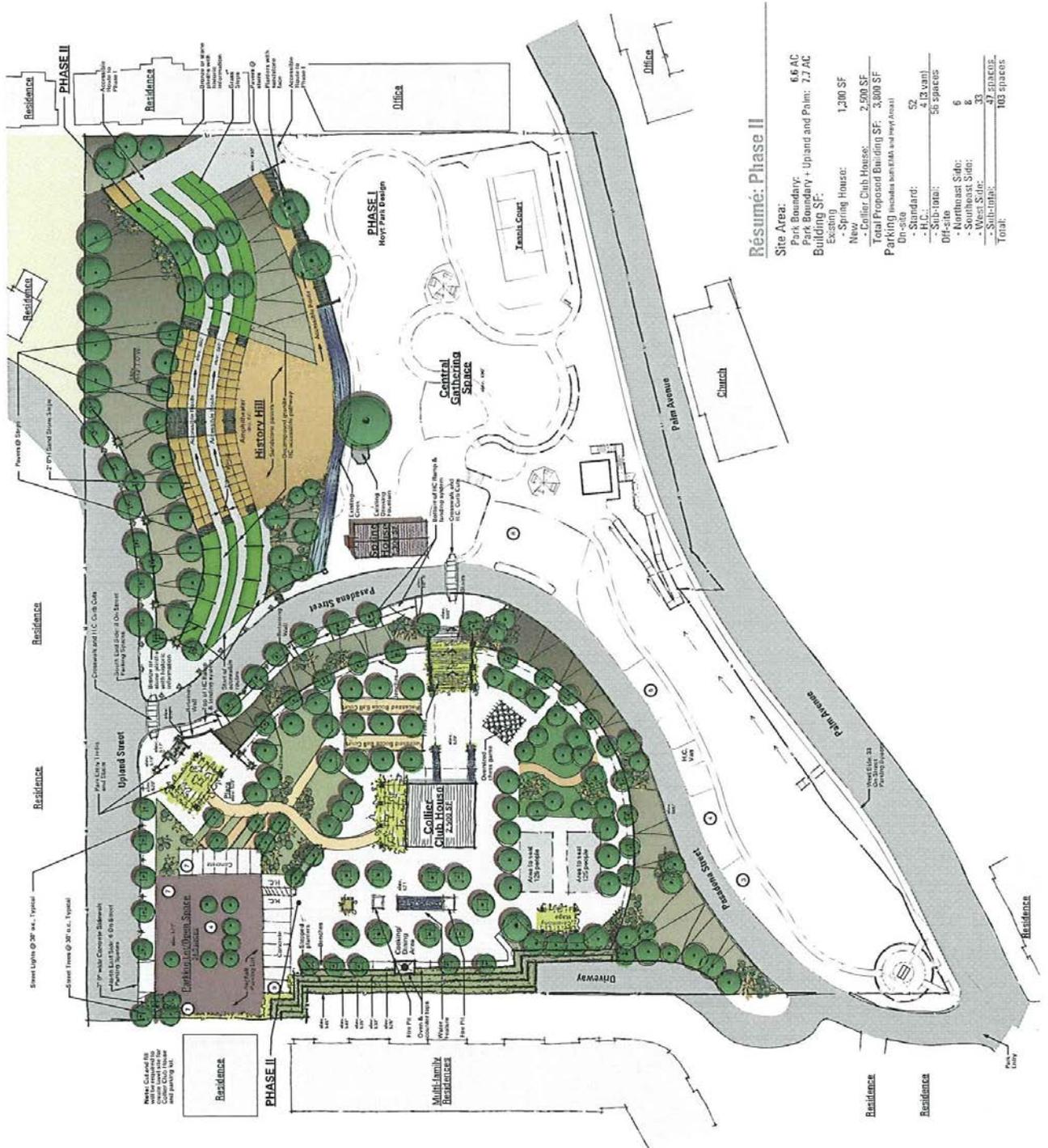
AERIAL VIEW OF COLLIER PARK AND SURROUNDING AREA



Collier Park Master Plan

APPENDIX B

PHASE II SITE PLAN



Résumé: Phase II

Site Area:	6.6 AC
Park Boundary - Upland and Palm:	7.7 AC
Building SF:	
Existing:	1,200 SF
New:	2,500 SF
Total Proposed Building SF:	3,700 SF
Parking (includes both PHASE I and PHASE II)	
On-site:	52
- Standard:	4 (3 van)
- H.C.:	56 spaces
Off-site:	
- Northeast Side:	6
- Southeast Side:	8
- West Side:	33
- Subtotal:	47 spaces
Total:	103 spaces

POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES

The following is a list of grants that may be available to support the capital campaign for the Collier Park Master Plan. A complete binder was provided to City staff with further suggestions. Note that some of this information is more than 6 months old:

1. Land and Water Conservation Fund Program – California Department of Parks and Recreation

Federal funding allocated to states provides matching grants for the acquisition or development of lands and facilities that provide or support public outdoor recreation. The next application deadline is February 2014. New grant program guidelines were under development at the time of this master plan and are expected to become available in October 2013.

2. Save America's Treasures – National Trust for Historic Preservation

Provides grants for preservation of the nation's most endangered cultural treasures. This legacy includes the built environment as well as documents, artifacts, and artistic work.

3. Cap and Trade Funding

Cap and Trade is a market based regulation designed to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and encourage investment in clean technologies by facilities subject to the cap. AB 32 has established goals to reduce GHG emissions in California to 1990 levels by 2020 with reduction to 80% of 1990 levels by 2050. Facilities subject to the GHG cap will be able to trade their allowances for GHG emissions and revenue received will be managed by the California Air Resources Board (ARB). The California ARB is currently developing methods for distribution of the revenues collected and there is potential for some of this revenue to be made available for enhancement of green spaces in urban environments.

4. Sustainable Communities and Resources Grants

A number of sustainable communities grant programs are available in California. Some may be applicable to elements of this project such as efficient use of the onsite spring water, or for energy efficient and green building proposals.

POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES - continued

5. Park In Lieu and Impact Fee Funds

Specified fees collected from developers are placed in the Park In Lieu and Impact Fee Funds for the purpose of parkland acquisition and improvements of park facilities. These impact fees are designated for single and multi-family residential developments to mitigate the impact of new development on existing facilities and infrastructure. 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. The use of the fees must be tied to new park amenities or acquisition and cannot be used for maintenance of parks. Funds that may be collected as a result of future development(s) in the City can be directed toward the park if appropriate findings are made by the City Council.

6. Private Funds and Potential Naming Rights through the La Mesa Park and Recreation Foundation

The La Mesa Park and Recreation Foundation supports the City of La Mesa through its mission to facilitate quality projects and programs that provide activities that strengthen community and family bonds as well as foster pride in La Mesa and in its parks. In support of this mission the Foundation leverages its ability as a non-profit to provide private funding to augment public funds used for park and recreational facility improvements.