



## **Section 5.16**

### **Parks and Recreation Facilities**

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## SECTION 5.16

# PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES

This section identifies existing parks and recreational facilities within the City of Buena Park and provides an analysis of potential impacts to parks and recreation facilities that could result from the implementation of the proposed General Plan Update. Mitigation measures to reduce the significance of impacts are recommended, as necessary.

### 5.16.1 EXISTING SETTING

The City of Buena Park Recreation, Parks and Community Services Department offers a wide variety of recreation, sports and cultural activities, senior programs, services, and events for all age groups. The Department is responsible for maintaining the parks and recreation facilities within Buena Park.

#### EXISTING PARKS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

The City currently has approximately 96.1 acres of parkland. The Department operates 11 parks, one Community Recreation Center and Senior Center, one Community Gymnasium, and a community garden; refer [Table 5.16-1, \*Parks and Recreation Facilities\*](#), and refer to [Exhibit 5.16-1, \*Parks and Recreation Facilities\*](#), for information on each facility. Facilities at these parks and recreation facilities include children's play areas, tennis courts, volleyball courts, basketball courts, swimming pools, handball courts, shuffleboard, skate park, dog park, and other amenities. The public parks range from 0.50 acres to 22.5 acres in size and are generally located within residential neighborhoods distributed throughout the City. Ralph B. Clark Regional Park, located at 8800 Rosecrans Avenue, offers 105 acres of additional parkland including baseball fields, bike and hiking trails, playground, tennis courts, and volleyball courts.

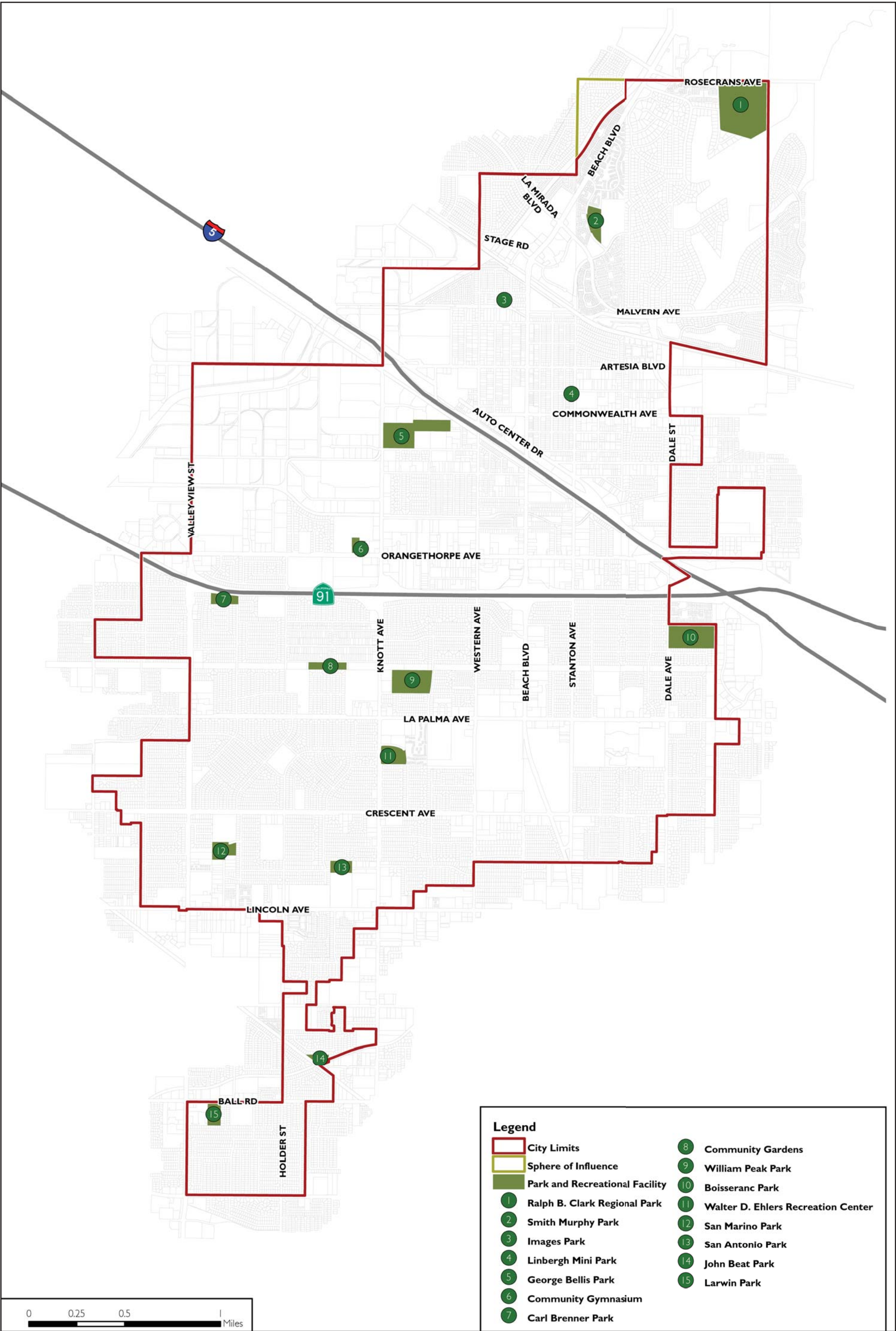
In addition to the Ralph B. Clark Regional Park, regional recreational facilities in the surrounding area include La Mirada Regional Park, Craig Regional Park, and Cerritos Regional County Park. Cypress College, a community college west of Buena Park, also provides additional open space and recreational facilities to City residents. Within the City, elementary schools, junior high school, high schools, and other small campuses provide supplemental recreational opportunities through playgrounds and playfield areas. One notable site is the joint-use Buena Park Junior High School gymnasium where the City is currently offering various recreational activities and programs, including adult sports leagues, drop-in sports, gym classes for kids, and a summer sports camp.

#### RECREATIONAL PROGRAMS

A number of private youth sports programs are offered in Buena Park including the Buena Park National Little League, Buena Park American Little League, Buena Park Youth Football, Buena Park Girls Softball, and AYSO soccer. Buena Park is also home to a number of clubs and service organizations. In addition, the City of Buena Park Cultural/Fine Arts Division oversees the Civic Theater, Youth Theater, student programs, concerts in the park, community chorus, and other arts and cultural events.

**Table 5.16-1  
Parks and Recreation Facilities**

Facility Name/ Location	Acres	Ball Fields	Basketball Courts	Play Area	Community Center	Handball Racquetball	Horseshoes	Picnic Areas	Restrooms	Senior Center/ Shuffleboard	Swim pool	Tennis Courts	Volleyball	Skate Park	Dog Park
Smith-Murphy Park 5290 Cameron Drive	6.9			X		X		X	X						
George Bellis Park 7171 8 <sup>th</sup> Street	22.5	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X			X
Carl Brenner Park 7373 San Rafael	4.5	X	X	X	X			X	X		X				
William Peak Park 7225 El Dorado Drive	15.8	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		X			X	
Boisseranc Park 7520 Dale Street	20.0	X	X	X	X	X		X	X		X	X			
San Marino Park 6200 San Rolando Circle	6.0		X	X				X	X						
Larwin Park 6150 Ball Road	5.9		X	X	X				X						
John Beat Park 6600 Mt. Shasta Circle	2.0		X	X				X	X						
San Antonio Park 8810 San Francisco Drive	4.5	X		X				X	X						
Ehlers Community Recreation Center 8150 Knott Avenue	6.0				X				X	X					
Lindbergh Mini Park 4 <sup>th</sup> Street & Stanton Avenue	1.0			X											
Images Park Pacific & Rostrata Avenue	0.5			X											
Community Gymnasium 6931 Orangethorpe Avenue	1.0		X						X				X		
Source: City of Buena Park Website, accessed February 10, 2009.															



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The Buena Park Senior “Activity” Center, located at the Walter D. Ehlers Community Center, has established a mission to “provide the mature adult population in the community with a diverse offering of recreational, educational, social, and human service programs in environments which promote a spirit of dignity and limitless potential for later life enrichment.” In addition to other services, the Senior Center offers a variety of classes including dance, exercise, arts and crafts, quilting, bingo, and basic computer.

## **OPEN SPACE**

Aside from the City’s public parks, there is limited open space in Buena Park. Existing open space consists of a linear easement owned by Southern California Edison (SCE) that is located north of La Palma Avenue. The 200-foot wide easement is currently retained as active and passive open space and supports some garden and nursery operations.

Flood control channels also serve as a form of open space for residents. Flood control channels within the City include the Brea Creek Channel, the Fullerton Channel, and the Coyote Creek Channel. The banks of these channels may provide potential use as hiking and biking trails.

## **PRIVATE RECREATIONAL FACILITIES**

The City also provides other recreational entertainment uses along its entertainment corridor, which is centered on Knott’s Berry Farm. Knott’s Berry Farm is a themed amusement park, located along Beach Boulevard. The amusement park offers rides, shows, and architectural styles reminiscent of the Old West. It began as a roadside berry stand in the 1920s and has become one of the largest amusement parks in the United States. Other private entertainment facilities include Soak City, Pirate’s Dinner Adventure, and Medieval Times Dinner and Tournament.

Additionally, the City is served by the Los Coyotes Country Club. This private facility provides three nine-hole courses and associated amenities.

## **PARK AND OPEN SPACE STANDARDS**

The City’s standard for parkland is of 3.0 acres per 1,000 persons. Based on the January 2009 population of 83,385, the City is deficient by approximately 154 acres of parkland.<sup>1</sup> Due to the shortage of vacant land and the cost to purchase land, opportunities to expand existing parks and/or develop new parks within the City are limited.

One joint use agreement exists for the use of the Buena Park Junior High School gymnasium and a number of the schools allow youth leagues to utilize their fields. The City also operates a community garden located on Thelma Avenue just west of Knott Avenue.

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<sup>1</sup> Based on a 2009 population of 83,385 persons and a parkland standard of 3.0 acres per 1,000 persons, the City would need 250 acres of parkland. The City currently has 96.1 acres of parkland, resulting in a deficiency of approximately 154 acres.



## 5.16.2 REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

### QUIMBY ACT

Originally passed in 1975, the Quimby Act (California Government Code §66477) allows cities and counties to pass ordinances requiring that developers set aside land, donate conservation easements, or pay fees for park improvements. This act allows local agencies to establish ordinances requiring developers of residential subdivisions to provide impact fees for land and/or recreational facilities. Revenues generated through the Quimby Act cannot be used for the operation and maintenance of park facilities. In 1982, the act was substantially amended, further defining acceptable uses of or restrictions on Quimby funds, provided acreage/population standards and formulas for determining the exaction, and indicated that the exactions must be closely tied to a project's impacts. Local ordinances must now include definite standards for determining the proportion of the subdivision to be dedicated and the amount of the fee to be paid.

### CITY OF BUENA PARK MUNICIPAL CODE

Section 18.64.070, Park and Recreation Facilities Dedications – Required When, of the City's Municipal Code, addresses parks and recreation facilities dedications for residential development. Specifically, Section 18.64.070 states that as a condition of approval of a subdivision map for new residential development, parkland shall be dedicated or fees shall be paid in lieu thereof, or a combination of both, for neighborhood and community park and recreation purposes. As a condition of approval of a building permit for new residential development not within a new subdivision, fees in lieu of parkland dedication shall be paid for neighborhood and community park and recreation purposes.

## 5.16.3 SIGNIFICANCE THRESHOLD CRITERIA

Appendix G of the *CEQA Guidelines* contains the Initial Study Environmental Checklist, which was included with the Notice of Preparation to show the areas being analyzed within the EIR; refer to [Appendix A](#) of this EIR. The Initial Study includes questions relating to parks and recreation. The issues presented in the Initial Study Checklist have been utilized as thresholds of significance in this Section. Accordingly, park and recreational facility impacts resulting from the implementation of the proposed General Plan Update may be considered significant if they would result in the following:

- Substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, or result in the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which may cause significant environmental impacts in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for parks;

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

## 5.16.4 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

### PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES

#### ■ IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN UPDATE COULD RESULT IN SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS TO THE AVAILABILITY OF ADEQUATE PARKLAND AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES WITHIN BUENA PARK.

**Impact Analysis:** Buena Park is primarily built out with limited vacant land available for parkland dedication and conversion. The City currently has approximately 96.1 acres of parkland. The City's standard for parkland is of 3.0 acres per 1,000 persons. Based on the January 2009 population of 83,385, the City would need 250 acres of parkland. Thus, the City is deficient by approximately 154 acres of parkland. The City has identified a need for additional parkland in the northern portion of the City, specifically north of the I-5 Freeway and south of Artesia. However, due to limited vacant land, no additional parkland is currently planned.<sup>2</sup>

Buildout of the proposed General Plan Update would introduce approximately 1,517 new dwelling units to the City, resulting in a population increase of approximately 5,231 persons. This increase in population would create new demand on existing parks and recreational facilities and programs. The potential population increase of 5,231 persons would require 15.7 additional acres of parkland based on the City's standard of 3.0 acres per 1,000 persons, further contributing to the existing parkland deficiency.

Due to the shortage of vacant land and the cost to purchase land, opportunities to expand existing parks and/or develop new parks within the City are limited. The City capitalizes on opportunities to provide alternative facilities and options for recreational opportunities within the City, including entering into joint-use agreements with school facilities and seeking open space opportunities for passive recreation amenities, such as green space. Other public and private recreational opportunities exist within the City, as well as regional facilities within adjacent jurisdictions.

Individual development projects would be reviewed to determine their potential impact on park and recreation facilities. Dedication of parkland and/or payment of fees in lieu for dedication of parkland based on 3.0 acres per 1,000 persons for new residential development would be required as a condition of approval.

The purpose of the dedication and/or fee is to provide parks and recreation facilities. Dedication and/or payment of the fee would help to reduce potential impacts of future residential development on parks and recreational facilities. Additionally, the City has proposed several policies and implementation measures in the General Plan Update to assist in providing parkland and recreational facilities for residents, including acquisition of land and preparation of a Parks and Recreation Master Plan to identify where additional parks and the types of facilities are needed. However, with the City's existing deficiency and the future growth associated with buildout of the proposed General Plan Update, and the limited land available to develop additional parks, impacts to parks and recreational facilities would be considered significant and unavoidable.

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<sup>2</sup> Telephone interview with Steve Hunt, Director, Recreation, Park & Community Services Department on March 4, 2009.



**Proposed General Plan Update Policies and Implementation Measures:**

Policies

- OSR-1.1: Preserve public and private open space lands for active and passive recreational opportunities.
- OSR-1.2: Encourage individual school sites to maintain open space areas.
- OSR-1.3: Expand the use of utility easements for linear trails and open space for active and passive recreation, where feasible.
- OSR-1.5: Evaluate and, where feasible, utilize the opportunities offered by abandoned road and railroad rights of way and similar environmentally impacted or unused linear open space to construct low maintenance greenbelts and multi use trails.
- OSR-1.6: Continue to ensure that adequate useable private open space is provided in residential developments, and that such areas are maintained as open space in perpetuity.
- OSR-1.8: Reinforce a sense of form and positive civic image by preserving older trees where possible, by requiring integrated landscaping plans within areas of newer development, and by providing bicycle and walking trails that link cultural, educational, civic, and recreational uses.
- OSR-1.9: Pursue innovative ways to provide parks and open space, including developing green roofs on buildings, reclaiming previously developed land, targeting vacant lots for use as passive parks or community gardens, or other strategies.
- OSR-2.1: Look for opportunities to acquire parkland through land donations and/or joint-use agreements.
- OSR-2.2: Continue to require new developments to provide park-in-lieu fees or land for recreational opportunities for residents in accordance with the City's park standard, 3 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents.
- OSR-2.3: Upgrade and maintain existing City parks and facilities to properly meet the needs of the community.
- OSR-2.4: Ensure that parks and recreation facilities are developed with facilities appropriate to all ages, including athletic fields, active play areas, passive open space, tot lots, and picnic areas.
- OSR-2.5: Design and redesign parks to reflect the latest recreational features that are responsive to population trends and community needs.
- OSR-2.6: Continue to provide disabled person accessibility to parks, recreational facilities, and open space.

- OSR-2.7: Wherever feasible, develop new park facilities in areas of the City currently underserved by parks, particularly in the northern portion of City.
- OSR-3.1: Provide a wide variety of recreational opportunities and facilities – both active and passive – to satisfy diverse needs of all ages and interest groups.
- OSR-3.2: Maximize the recreational opportunities offered by existing open space and recreation resources so that they serve the greatest portion of the community.
- OSR-3.3: Preserve existing recreational and park facilities and develop new park and recreational facilities and/or programs as necessary to maintain an adequate level of service and a wide variety of programs.
- OSR-3.4: Tailor recreation programs to serve the community and include specialized populations, such as pre-school and elementary school children, teens, senior citizens, families, young adults and those with special needs.
- OSR-3.5: Conduct ongoing needs assessments and evaluations of demands for recreational activities and public meeting facilities and modify programs where necessary to meet these demands, subject to availability of adequate funding.
- OSR-4.1: Encourage community groups, organizations, clubs, and the private sector to take a greater interest and financial responsibility in the improvement and operations of parkland and recreational facilities through such means as facility and program sponsorship and donation of goods, services, and financial support.
- OSR-4.2: Allow for the inclusion of revenue-generating activities at public parkland facilities and design future facilities to accommodate such events provided that they are consistent with and complement the primary recreational purpose of the park.
- OSR-4.3: Work closely with other public agencies, including other parks and recreation departments and school districts, in developing cooperative park and recreation programs and services.
- OSR-4.4: Work closely with private employers to develop and finance the costs of joint recreational programs and facilities for those working in Buena Park.
- OSR-4.5: Encourage the development of recreation programs aimed at serving the needs of businesses and employees within Buena Park.
- OSR-4.6: Explore and develop non-traditional approaches to provide supplementary services and programs where facility deficiencies exist (e.g., mobile programs, street events, entertainment, storefront operations).
- OSR-4.7: Allow for additional uses at the Los Coyotes County Club including hospitality hotel, spa, golf course-oriented residential dwelling units, and other golf-related amenities.

### Implementation Measures

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| OSR-1  | Prepare, adopt, and implement a Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan. Once adopted, update the Parks and Recreation Master Plan on a regular basis.  |
| OSR-2  | Identify opportunities to acquire vacant parcels within neighborhoods north of the Interstate 5 Freeway that are lacking open space.   |
| OSR-3  | Improve and enhance Buena Park flood control facilities through safety improvements and landscaping to provide open space and linkages between neighborhoods.  |
| OSR-4  | Establish/maintain joint-use agreements with schools to provide open space and recreational opportunities for residents.   |
| OSR-5  | Consider developing an open space plan to enhance public open space in the City.   |
| OSR-6  | Review and modify, as necessary, open space requirements for different types of development projects.  |
| OSR-7  | Pursue available resources to fund open space acquisition including Federal, State and local funding grants or donations.  |
| OSR-8  | Encourage public volunteer programs that contribute to the preservation and maintenance of open space areas.   |
| OSR-9  | Refine and utilize park performance standards that may include a classification system, park system guidelines, and design criteria to guide development and management of parks and open space.   |
| OSR-10 | Pursue and maintain joint-use agreements with school districts, neighboring cities, public agencies, private entities, and non-profit organizations that own and operate parks and recreational facilities in the area.  |
| OSR-11 | Develop an incentives program that encourages private development and public agencies to provide park and recreation facilities beyond the minimum requirements.   |
| OSR-12 | Create a program to renovate all park and recreational facilities that include guidelines and best practices for maintenance and upgrading.  |
| OSR-13 | Update the City's recreation program with input from the community to enhance existing programs or develop new programs to serve people of all incomes, cultural backgrounds, ages and levels of physical capability; and encourage more intensive use of facilities throughout the day. |
| OSR-14 | Continue to actively seek opportunities to purchase land within the northern portion of the City for development of a park.  |

OSR-15	Continue to develop partnerships with other agencies, community-based organizations, businesses, and foundations to maintain and upgrade parks and recreation facilities in the City.
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**Mitigation Measures:** No further mitigation is required beyond compliance with the General Plan Update Policies and Implementation Measures.

**Level of Significance:** Significant and Unavoidable Impact.

## 5.16.5 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

- DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATED WITH THE PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN UPDATE AND CUMULATIVE DEVELOPMENT COULD RESULT IN CUMULATIVELY CONSIDERABLE IMPACTS TO PARKS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES.

**Impact Analysis:** For this topic, cumulative impacts are analyzed in terms of impacts within the City of Buena Park.

Development associated with the proposed General Plan Update would create additional demand on existing parks and recreational facilities within the City. It is anticipated that Buena Park residents would continue to utilize parks and recreational facilities in adjacent cities, as well as local school facilities through joint-use agreements. Individual development projects would be reviewed to determine their potential impact on parks and recreational facilities. Dedication of parkland or payment of park-in-lieu fees would be required by residential development, which would reduce potential park impacts resulting from the population growth associated with the development.

Additionally, the proposed General Plan Update includes several policies and implementation measures to identify parks and recreational needs and to identify and take advantage of opportunities for land acquisition or alternative means of providing parks and recreational facilities and programs. However, with the City's existing parkland deficiency and future growth associated with the proposed General Plan Update and cumulative development, cumulative impacts would be considered significant and unavoidable in this regard.

**Proposed General Plan Update Policies and Implementation Measures:** Refer to the Policies and Implementation Measures identified above.

**Mitigation Measures:** No additional mitigation is required.

**Level of Significance:** Significant and Unavoidable Impact.

## 5.16.6 SIGNIFICANT UNAVOIDABLE IMPACTS

Due to the existing parkland deficiency within Buena Park, implementation of the proposed General Plan Update and cumulative development would result in significant and unavoidable impacts to parks and recreational facilities.

If the City approves the proposed General Plan Update, the City shall be required to adopt findings in accordance with Section 15091 of the *CEQA Guidelines* and prepare a Statement of Overriding Considerations in accordance with Section 15093 of the *CEQA Guidelines*.