

## 4.14 PARKS AND RECREATION

### Existing Conditions

A variety of public and private recreational opportunities are available to the residents of Lemon Grove including parks, school playgrounds, community facilities and recreational programs. Information in this section was obtained from interviews with the staff from the City Parks and Recreation Department and Community Development Department.

#### A. Existing Parks and Recreation Facilities

##### City Parks and Recreation Centers

The City of Lemon Grove Parks and Recreation Department presently operates four parks which encompass approximately 20 acres. In addition, the Parks and Recreation Department manages three recreation facilities. Figure 4.14-1 shows the locations of City parks, and Table 4.14-1 summarizes the park locations, acreages and facilities.

Three parks within the City offer recreation opportunities that serve a community-wide area: Lemon Grove Park, Berry Street Park and Monterey Heights Park. Lemon Grove Park encompasses approximately six acres of land, of which four acres are dedicated to open park land. Lemon Grove Park also contains the Lemon Grove Senior Center. Berry Street Park is comprised of six acres of open space. Monterey Heights Park, which is dedicated to organized field sports, is six acres in size and is shared with the Lemon Grove Little League. Major portions of this park lack turf, and new fill has recently been deposited onsite. The other municipal park in Lemon Grove is Firefighters' Park, a smaller park providing informal recreation opportunities. The City plans to develop Kunkel Park on Lemon Grove Way, which will provide one acre of parkland in a multiple-family residential neighborhood. Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds are being used to fund this new park.

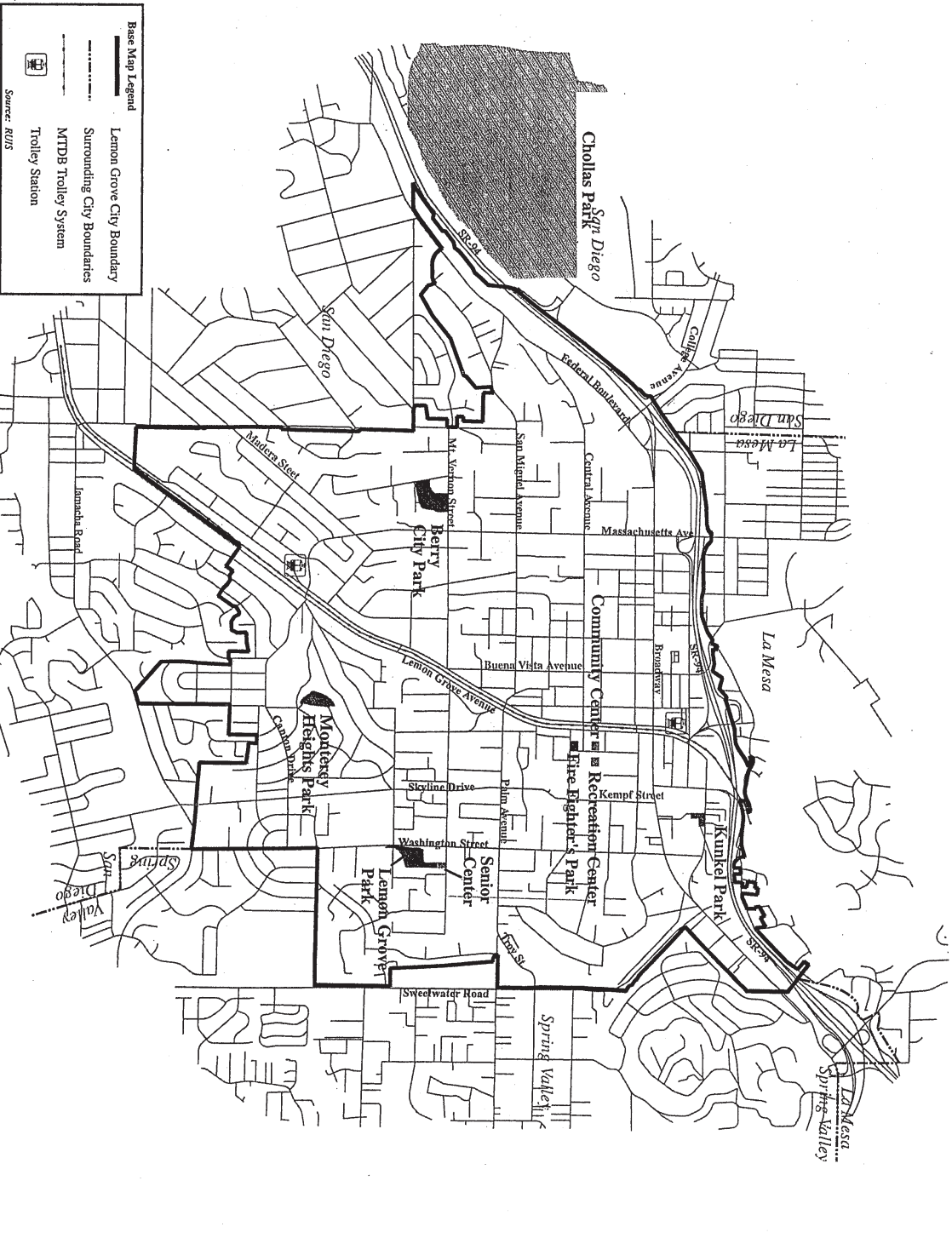
The Parks and Recreation Department also manages three recreation facilities that offer recreational opportunities: the Community Center, the Recreation Center and the Senior Center. All three facilities are equipped to provide services for meetings and special events. The Recreation Center also provides facilities for sporting activities. Many of the City's civic organizations schedule their meetings, luncheons and special events at all three facilities.

While no City-wide standard currently exists, the Parks and Recreation Department believes the amount of developed park acreage is insufficient to satisfactorily meet the needs of the community. The neighborhoods in the northern part of the City are believed to be particularly underserved, as shown in Figure 4.14-1. In addition, the existing parks are not being adequately maintained due to budget constraints and an insufficient number of City maintenance employees.

TABLE 4.14-1  
Existing Parks and Recreation Facilities

Name	Location	Acres	Facilities
<b><u>Parks</u></b>			
Lemon Grove Park	Washington at Alton Drive	6	Open space, play area with equipment, picnic areas with BBQs, covered shelter for picnics, parking lot, and restrooms
Berry Street Park	Mt. Vernon at Berry Street	6	Open space, parking lot, restrooms, play area with equipment, picnic areas with BBQs, and covered shelter for picnics
Monterey Heights Park	Canton Drive at Glencoe	6	Base ball diamond, 1/2 baseball diamond, parking lot, and restrooms
Firefighter's Park	School Lane at Central	0.25	Grass patch pocket park, 2 picnic benches, and 2 benches
Kunkel Park (planned)	8111 Lemon Grove Way	1	Open space and neighborhood facilities
<b><u>Recreation Facilities</u></b>			
Community Center	3146 School Lane	0.25	Kitchen, meeting room, and restrooms
Recreation Center	3131 School Lane	0.9	Basketball courts, volleyball court, game room, meeting room, office, restrooms, and parking
Senior Center	8235 Mt. Vernon Street	0.2	Meeting rooms
<b>Total Existing Acres</b>		<b>19.6</b>	

Source: City of Lemon Grove Parks and Recreation Department, 1995



**Base Map Legend**

- Lemon Grove City Boundary
- Surrounding City Boundaries
- MTDB Trolley System
- Trolley Station

Source: RUTS

**Legend**

- Park
- Community Center
- Regional Park

Source: City of Lemon Grove, 1995.

N  
 1 inch = 2,000 feet

**Figure 4.14-1**  
 Existing Parks and  
 Recreation Facilities

### School Facilities

Schools provide additional public recreation facilities. Two middle schools and six elementary schools provide playing fields and courts for softball, soccer, basketball, volleyball and other sports. The City has joint use agreements with the Lemon Grove School District (LGSD) to use school facilities for after school activities and other recreational programs.

### Nearby Parks and Facilities

Recreational opportunities are also provided by several regional facilities. Chollas Reservoir and Park is a 77-acre regional recreational facility in the City of San Diego. It is approximately one-quarter mile west of the Market Place at the Grove. Visitors to Chollas Lake and Park can canoe, hike, picnic and play horseshoes. Children under 15 can fish and participate in various camp activity programs such as crafts, nature walks and archery. Chollas Park is ten minutes away from Lemon Grove by car.

Mission Trails Regional Park is a 57,000-acre park with a state-of-the-art visitor center. The facility offers video displays and a library. Visitors to Mission Trails Park can mountain bike, hike, picnic and swim in the San Diego River. Mission Trails Park is thirty minutes away from Lemon Grove by car.

Balboa Park, which encompasses 1,158-acres, offers museums, playhouse theaters, two open amphitheaters, two golf-courses and a zoo. In addition to these numerous recreational facilities, visitors can also picnic, cycle and jog at Balboa Park. Balboa Park is thirty minutes away from Lemon Grove by car.

Within San Diego County there are numerous golf courses. Several privately-owned golf courses east of Lemon Grove include Rancho San Diego, Steele Canyon and Singing Hills. In La Mesa, a city north of Lemon Grove, is Sun Valley, a nine-hole pitch and put golf course. Balboa Municipal Golf Course, which is located in the City of San Diego, has both an 18-hole and a nine-hole course. All of these courses are approximately 15 to 30 minutes away from Lemon Grove by car.

### County Parks

There are no county parks within the City's boundaries.

## **B. Recreation Programs**

The City and a number of other organizations offer recreation programs in Lemon Grove. The City Parks and Recreation Department administers various sport programs for all age groups, community information services and special events. The programs that are available include craft

classes, dance activities and organized sports. The Parks and Recreation Department also offers summer day camp and Red Cross classes. The organized youth sports that the Parks and Recreation Department offers include flag football, basketball and indoor soccer. The organized adult sports include basketball, volleyball and softball.

Youth sport leagues operating in the City include Atlas United Soccer, AYSO Soccer, Lemon Grove Little League, Lemon Grove and Spring Valley Bobby Sox, and Los Toros Pop Warner Football.

### **C. Long-Term Recreation Planning**

Many cities have Recreation Master Plans that contain an inventory of existing recreation facilities, identify existing and future needs for new and/or expanded facilities, and establish programs to develop needed facilities. Currently, the City of Lemon Grove has not adopted a Recreation Master Plan. There is, however, a strong interest from the community and City to develop and implement such a plan. Issues to address in the Recreation Master Plan include development, maintenance, and improvement of the parks and facilities within the City to meet the demands of the existing and future population.

The City of Lemon Grove does not have a park standard. Many jurisdictions have a park standard based on the park acreage needed to adequately serve residents. A park standard would be useful to determine existing park land deficiencies and to predict the future park demand due to population growth.

In order to generate funds to develop new parks for the City's growing population, the Community Development Department collects park land dedication fees for new development projects. These fees are determined by square footage per dwelling unit or square footage per lot, depending on whichever one is greater, for both residential and commercial development. The current park land fees that are collected range from \$115 up to \$200 depending on the zoning and square footage of the project. In past years, fees have been collected in lieu of the dedication of parkland. This decision was based on the insufficient resources to adequately maintain new parks.

#### **Threshold of Significance**

Based on the CEQA Guidelines, a project will normally have a significant impact on parks and recreation if it will:

- Substantially increase the demand for neighborhood or regional parks or other recreational facilities.



## Impacts

### **A. Plan-wide**

Implementation of the proposed General Plan will result in new residential development. Most new residential development will occur in the northern portion of the City. The additional population expected from buildout of the proposed General Plan will create additional demand for parks and recreational programs.

Using the per capita standard of 1.5 park acres per 1,000 residents proposed by the General Plan, buildout of Lemon Grove will generate demand for approximately 43 acres of parkland. This will exceed the 20 acres of parkland which currently exists in the City. Although school fields and nearby regional parks expand the recreational land available to the community, a shortfall currently exists. Thus, future development under the proposed General Plan will have a significant impact on parks and recreation facilities.

### **B. STAs and Other Development Areas**

#### Downtown Village (STA I)

Development of this STA will result in multi-family residential units as part of the mixed-use area. Additional residents will be located in this STA and will generate a proportionate share of the demand for public parks and recreational opportunities.

#### Massachusetts Station (STA II)

Development of this STA will result in multi-family residential units as part of the mixed-use designation. Additional residents will be located in this STA and will generate a proportionate share of the demand for public parks and recreational opportunities.

#### Regional Commercial (STA III)

This STA will develop with commercial uses, which do not create a demand on parks and recreational programs. The loss of some residential areas within this STA will reduce the population within this STA, thereby, proportionately reducing the demand on parks and recreational programs within this area.

#### West Central Residential (STA IV)

Development of this STA will result in additional single-family residential units. The additional residents will generate a proportionate share of the demand for public parks and recreational opportunities.

### Federal Boulevard Automobile Sales District (STA V)

This STA includes industrial uses, and no residential population would reside in this STA. No demand for parks and recreational opportunities will occur in this STA.

### Skyline Commercial Center (STA VI)

This STA will develop with commercial uses, which do not create a demand on parks and recreational programs.

### Troy Street/SR-125 Planning Area (STA VII)

The majority of this STA will be devoted to the right-of-way for SR-125. The remaining portion of this STA would remain single-family residential. No additional demand for parks and recreational programs will result in this STA from the proposed General Plan.

### Other Development/Land Use Changes

***Multiple-Family Residential Development.*** An estimated 8,488 residents will be attributed to buildout of the multi-family residential areas which represents an increase of 1,930 residents over current conditions. The majority of the demand on parks and recreational opportunities will be created by the multi-family residential development.

***Industrial and Commercial Areas.*** These areas of the City will not create additional demand on parks and recreational programs.

***Skyline Neighborhood Commercial Area.*** The conversion of the existing commercial area to single-family units will generate additional population and a proportionate share of the demand for parks and recreational programs.

***Civic Center Concept Area.*** A small park/open space area is planned in the Civic Center Concept Area. This park is envisioned for outdoor gatherings associated with civic uses. This park will be unsuitable for sports events, but will increase park and recreational opportunities in the City.

### Mitigation Measures

The following mitigation measures are required to reduce impacts to parks and recreation to less than significant. The mitigation measures correspond to applicable programs of the General Plan Implementation Manual, as noted.

**A. Plan-wide****Parks**

**Mitigation Measure 4.14-1:** The City shall develop and implement a Parks Master Plan addressing the following areas.

- Complete inventory of existing park and recreational facilities.
- Long-term maintenance of facilities and grounds.
- Landscape enhancements that contribute to improving the City's aesthetic character.
- Improvements and programs to prevent the occurrence of crime, vandalism, graffiti and public nuisances in parks.
- Accessibility per the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- Continued joint use of City and Lemon Grove School District facilities.
- Improvements to existing parks to better meet the needs of the community, with consideration of local cultural diversity.
- Equal geographic distribution of recreational facilities throughout Lemon Grove.
- Parks and recreational facilities needed to meet the existing and future needs of the community, based on a park availability standard of 1.5 acres per 1,000 population. While this standard is lower than typical city park standards, it reflects the builtout conditions in Lemon Grove and establishes a realistic goal.
- Funding strategies. (General Plan Implementation Manual, Conservation and Recreation Program #32).

**Mitigation Measure 4.14-2:** The City shall work to continue the joint use of City and Lemon Grove School District (LGSD) facilities and cooperatively address facility maintenance, vandalism and other concerns that arise. (General Plan Implementation Manual, Conservation and Recreation Program #33).

**Mitigation Measure 4.14-3:** The City shall provide areas in parks for active youth and adult recreational activities, such as basketball, baseball, roller skating and bicycling, in addition to passive recreational areas for picnicking and relaxing. When identifying sites for active recreational facilities, the City shall consider potential noise impacts to adjacent areas. (General Plan Implementation Manual, Conservation and Recreation Program #34).

**Mitigation Measure 4.14-4:** Since no regional park exists within the City limits, the City shall participate in the planning for nearby regional parks to promote facilities that meet the needs of Lemon Grove residents. (General Plan Implementation Manual, Conservation and Recreation Program #35).

**Mitigation Measure 4.14-5:** As provided by the Quimby Act, the City shall require new development to dedicate land and/or pay fees in lieu of dedication for the acquisition and



development of recreational facilities. The City shall consider increasing the in lieu fees to better reflect current land acquisition and park development costs. (General Plan Implementation Manual, Conservation and Recreation Program #36).

**Mitigation Measure 4.14-6:** The City shall continue to provide diverse recreational programs reflecting the interests of local children, teens, adults and seniors. Modify programming as needed to reflect the evolving ethnic composition and interests of the City. (General Plan Implementation Manual, Conservation and Recreation Program #37).

**Mitigation Measure 4.14-7:** The City shall develop a Recreation Strategy Plan to explore alternatives for expanding recreational options in the community. Strategies may include:

- Co-sponsoring recreational programs, activities and events with local civic and artistic organizations and public agencies.
- Using fund-raising techniques and volunteers to expand the scope of programs where appropriate and practical.
- Identifying opportunities for commercial recreational facilities and programs. (General Plan Implementation Manual, Conservation and Recreation Program #38).

#### **B. STAs and Other Development Areas**

Mitigation Measures 4.14-1 through 4.14-7 include all of the STAs and other development areas. These mitigation measures will reduce potential impacts to parks and recreation within the STAs and other development areas. Furthermore, Mitigation Measure 4.1-12 in Section 4.1, Land Use, requires that play areas for children be required as part of or within short walking distance of new multi-family developments. No other mitigation measures are required for these specific areas of the City.

#### **Level of Significance After Mitigation**

With implementation of the mitigation measures identified above, impacts related to parks and recreation will be reduced to below significance.