
3.13 RECREATION

3.13.1 Introduction

This section describes recreational facilities and opportunities within the City. In addition, this section analyzes the potential impacts on recreational uses within the Project Area and in surrounding areas of the City of Lake Forest that could occur as a result of the Proposed Project. Potential effects include those associated with increased demand for recreational facilities, physical deterioration of recreational facilities, or the creation or expansion of recreational facilities, the construction of which could have a physical adverse effect on the environment.

Data used to prepare this section were taken from various sources, including the City of Lake Forest General Plan, Lake Forest Municipal Code, City of Lake Forest Opportunities Study, and previous environmental documentation prepared for the City of Lake Forest. Full bibliographic entries for all reference materials are provided in Section 3.13.9 (References) of this section.

The NOP for this EIR was issued on July 7, 2004. No comments regarding recreation were received in response to the NOP.

3.13.2 Environmental Setting

■ Regional Characteristics

Orange County

Recreation facilities in Orange County include a range of coastal facilities, historic parks, regional parks, and wilderness parks. The County of Orange Resources and Development Management Department (Harbors, Beaches and Parks Division) operates these regional recreational facilities and manages the historical and natural resources in the County. The 37,000 acres of parkland and open space managed by the Harbors, Beaches and Parks Division include harbors and beaches, historic sites, regional and wilderness parks, as well as nature preserves and recreational trails. Overall, the recreation facilities operated and managed by the Harbors, Beaches, and Parks Division include:

- Nine coastal facilities (i.e., harbors and beaches)
- Six historical parks
- Fifteen regional parks
- Six wilderness parks

The recreational facilities within the County that are nearest to Lake Forest include three of the wilderness parks: Laguna Coast Wilderness Park, Thomas F. Riley Wilderness Park, and Whiting Ranch Wilderness Park. In addition, one historical park (Heritage Hill) and two regional parks are also located nearby, including: Arroyo Trabuco and O'Neill Regional Parks.

Laguna Coast Wilderness Park

Laguna Coast Wilderness Park lies within some of the last remaining coastal canyons in Southern California. The park ecosystem is primarily Coastal Sage Scrub with the only natural lakes in Orange County. The park is also enrolled in the Natural Community Conservation Planning program designed to protect various endangered species by preserving large tracts of the rapidly diminishing coastal sage ecosystem. The canyons and high ridges offer views of the Pacific Ocean and create a spectacular environment for hiking, mountain biking, and horseback riding. Designed to preserve the delicate balance of the natural habitat, a major portion of the park's 6,500 acres is open for use on a limited basis.

Thomas F. Riley Wilderness Park

The Thomas F. Riley Wilderness Park, located in the rural community of Coto De Caza approximately 6 miles southeast of Lake Forest, is a wildlife sanctuary that is home to an abundant number of native plants and animal life. Old groves of Western Sycamores and Coast Live Oaks border the park's two seasonally flowing creeks. The remaining land features rolling hills and canyons of Coastal Sage Scrub and grasslands.

Whiting Ranch Wilderness Park

Whiting Ranch Wilderness Park is located in the community of Trabuco Canyon, partially within the City of Lake Forest; the park is located between the communities of Foothill Ranch and Portola Hills. Approximately 4,000 acres of deeply forested canyons, scenic rock formations (including the beautiful Red Rock Canyon), and grassy rolling hills are enriched by three intermittent streams (Borrego, Serrano, and Aliso Creek) and trails to create an ideal open-air opportunity for hikers, mountain bikers, and equestrians. The park's interpretive center features a trail rest stop, cultural and natural history exhibits, and park information.

Heritage Hill Historical Park

This 4.1-acre County facility is located within the City of Lake Forest boundaries and includes open space, historic buildings, educational programs, picnic tables, restrooms, and a maintenance structure. This facility preserves some of the rich cultural heritage of Orange County through its village of four historical buildings, which represent distinct eras in the early development of the Saddleback Valley and El Toro areas. Guided tours through the buildings are provided for the public Wednesday through Sunday. The tours offer an interpretation of Saddleback area history through the artifacts, events, and people associated with each building. Landscaping of the park is in keeping with the historic nature of the buildings. Park staff and associated community interest groups offer special events each year, the most popular of which is the annual Victorian Christmas held on the first Saturday of December.

Arroyo Trabuco Regional Park

The Arroyo Trabuco addition to O'Neill Regional Park is 935 acres of relatively pristine land. This park is presently maintained as a wilderness preserve. Planned recreational use will be passive, including hiking, nature photography, and picnicking. In future years, hiking trails will link the Arroyo Trabuco with upper

Trabuco Canyon and the nearby Cleveland National Forest in an effort to save much of the twenty mile Trabuco Corridor for public enjoyment.

O'Neill Regional Park

O'Neill Regional Park is situated in Trabuco and Live Oak Canyons. The expansive park is heavily wooded and offers a unique spot for both day use and camping. Trabuco and Hicky Creeks meander through the park, flowing in winter and early spring, dry in summer and fall.

City of Lake Forest

The Lake Forest Parks and Recreation Division is located at City Hall, 25550 Commercentre Drive. The Lake Forest Parks and Recreation Division is committed to providing residents of all ages positive experiences through a variety of high-quality programs, activities, and services under the direction of professional and dedicated staff who are responsive to the changing needs of the community.

The City of Lake Forest has many public parks, lakes, and urban forests. Thus, Lake Forest residents enjoy a variety of parks and trails with different amenities. Approximately 161 acres of public City parkland and recreational facilities have been developed within the City of Lake Forest. These 161 acres of parkland consist of a total of twenty-four City parks and recreational facilities. Private parks are also distributed throughout the City in various planned community developments.

Existing City Parks and Recreational Facilities

Borrego Wash

Borrego Wash is located at the City's western boundary. This 14.3-acre wash includes a Class-I Bikeway, respite areas, and passive open space.

Cavanaugh Mini Park

Cavanaugh Mini Park is located at 23782 Cavanaugh Road. This 0.2-acre park includes one basketball half court, one children's playground, and one picnic table.

Cherry Park

Cherry Park is located at 22651 Cherry Avenue. This 4.5-acre park includes four barbeques, one basketball half court, one playground, and twelve picnic tables.

Concourse Park

Concourse Park is located at 18931 Saddleback Ranch Road. This 7-acre park in Trabuco Canyon includes one basketball half-court, two playgrounds, a walking trail, and two picnic tables.

Darrin Park

Darrin Park is located at 22461 Cherry Avenue. This 3.1-acre park includes four barbeques, one basketball half-court, one playground, and eight picnic tables.

El Toro Park

El Toro Park is located at 23701 Los Alisos Boulevard. This 10-acre park includes restrooms, four barbeques, one playground, six picnic tables (one of which has a shelter), and two lighted tennis courts.

Heroes Park (formerly El Toro Park II)

El Toro Park II is located at 25420 Jeronimo Road. This 12.4-acre park includes a walking trail, two picnic tables, restrooms, two lighted soccer fields, and four lighted baseball fields.

Etnies Skatepark of Lake Forest

Etnies Skatepark is located at 20028 Lake Forest Drive. This 3-acre skatepark is located across from the Home Depot Center in Lake Forest and includes restrooms, approximately 38,000 square feet of skating area, and a parking lot.

Lake Forest Nature Park

Lake Forest Nature Park is located at 26215 Dimension Drive on the eastside of Dimension Drive and adjacent to Serrano Creek. This 4.5-acre park includes a walking trail, four picnic tables, and one gazebo picnic area.

Lake Forest Park

Lake Forest Park is located at 24000 Serrano Road. This 2.3-acre park includes one playground and four picnic tables.

Montbury Park

Montbury Park is located at 21962 Montbury Drive. This 3.5-acre park includes one barbeque, a walking trail, and two picnic tables.

Mountain View Park

Mountain View Park is located at 4061 Dylan Street. This 5.3-acre park includes two barbeques, one basketball court, one playground, one basketball court, six picnic tables (one of which has a shelter), and two lighted tennis courts.

Pebble Creek Park

Pebble Creek Park is located at 26441 Pebble Creek Road. This 1.9-acre park includes two barbeques, one playground, and two picnic tables.

Pittsford Park

Pittsford Park is located at 21701 Pittsford Drive. This 10-acre park includes restrooms, two barbeques, a walking trail, four picnic tables, and two tennis courts.

Rancho Serrano Park

Rancho Serrano Park is located at 20842 Paseo Sombra. This 5.1-acre park includes four barbeques and six picnic tables.

Ranchwood Park

Ranchwood Park is located at 22500 Killy Street. This 1.9-acre park includes one basketball half-court and one playground.

Regency Park

Regency Park is located at 21478 Regency Lane at the intersection of Osterman Road. This 8.5-acre park includes a soccer field.

Rimgate Park

Rimgate Park is located at 29772 Rimgate. This 5-acre park includes one basketball full court, two playgrounds, six picnic tables (one of which has a shelter), and one tennis court.

Serrano Creek Park

Serrano Creek Park is located at 25101 Serrano Road. This 44-acre park includes restrooms, one playground, a walking trail, and three picnic tables (one of which has a shelter).

Sundowner Park

Sundowner Park is located at 22041 Sundowner Lane. This 0.8-acre park includes one barbeque, one playground, and one picnic table.

Village Pond Park

Village Pond Park is located at 23102 Ridge Route Drive. This 4.7-acre park includes two barbeques, five picnic tables, and a pond.

Vintage Park

Vintage Park is located at 21000 Vintage Street. This 4.8-acre park includes two barbeques, three basketball half-courts, one playground, and eight picnic tables.

Whispering Hills

Whispering Hills is an undeveloped park site located within the City of Lake Forest and encompasses 6.4 acres of land.

Private Parkland Available to the City

Alton Park

Alton Park is located along Alton Parkway between Bonita Vista and Mallorca. This 2-acre park includes a small tot lot play area and one basketball half-court.

Borrego Park

This 11-acre park is located along Bake Parkway near Burbank, and includes a baseball field, basketball court, and play area with restrooms.

Foothill Ranch Community Park

This 15-acre park is located along Pauling near Lake Forest Drive, and offers restrooms, tennis courts, volleyball court, and a baseball field.

Overlook Park

Overlook Park is located along Viaggio Lane near Tessera Avenue. This 1.2-acre park contains a tot play area, picnic area, and gazebo.

Peachwood Park

Peachwood Park is located along Peachwood near Palmwood. This 2.7-acre park contains open space, a tot lot, and picnic area.

Serrano Park

Serrano Park is located at the intersection of Tamarisk and Peachwood. This 11.2-acre park includes ball fields for soccer and open play along with a basketball court and picnic tables.

■ Project Area Characteristics

The Project Area entails 838 acres of land formerly constrained by airflight patterns associated with the former MCAS El Toro. The Project Area, which is part of the larger Lake Forest Opportunity Project Area, includes seven different sites. These properties range in size from 13 to 387 acres and are primarily vacant. Therefore, no recreational facilities exist within the current Project Area.

Chapter 7.38 of the Lake Forest Municipal Code requires dedication of land for park facilities at a rate of 5 acres per 1,000 estimated population. The Code allows population to be estimated based on the average number of persons per dwelling unit from the latest census. The Opportunities Study Program

has broken the required parkland dedication into two components and required 3 acres per 1,000 estimated population for neighborhood parks and 2 acres per 1,000 estimated population for the community park (the public facilities/sports park package). Each of the proposed sites would provide parkland or pay in-lieu fees to satisfy the neighborhood park requirement. In addition, in-lieu fees for community parks from all project sites will be used for development of the 45-acre sports park and Community/Civic Center. Should any of the landowners decide not to proceed with the General Plan Amendment, Zone Change, and Development Agreements, the size of the public facilities would be recalculated on a proportional basis according to the number of housing units being eliminated from the Project Area.

3.13.3 Planning and Regulatory Framework

The management of recreation, including public facilities and services, is subject to laws and regulations at local levels of government. Summaries of local laws and regulations, including County and City, related to recreation management are presented below.

■ Federal, State, and Regional

There are no federal, state, or regional regulations pertaining to recreation applicable to the Proposed Project.

■ Local

City of Lake Forest General Plan

The City of Lake Forest General Plan contains goals, policies, and plans that are intended to guide land use and development decisions. The General Plan consists of a Land Use Policy Map and the following six elements, or chapters, which together fulfill the state requirements for a General Plan:

- Land Use Element
- Housing Element
- Circulation Element
- Recreation and Resources Element
- Safety and Noise Element
- Public Facilities/Growth Management Element

Policies that relate to recreation are listed below.

Recreational and Resources Element

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| Policy 1.1 | Promote the development and maintenance of a balanced system of public and private recreational lands, facilities, and programs to meet the needs of the Lake Forest population. |
| Policy 1.2 | Maximize the utilization of existing parks, recreational facilities, and open space within Lake Forest. |

- Policy 1.3** Operate and maintain public park and recreational facilities in a manner that ensures safe and convenient access for all members of the community.
- Policy 1.4** Require parkland improvements and facilities that are durable and economical to maintain.
- Policy 1.5** Promote a high level of public outreach regarding park and recreation opportunities in Lake Forest.
- Policy 1.6** Promote the future development of Community Centers as focal points for local activities.
- Policy 1.7** Develop a network of multi-purpose trails to provide convenient, safe access to recreational, residential, and commercial areas.
- Policy 1.8** Provide a positive environment to prevent anti-social forms of behavior (gangs, graffiti, and juvenile delinquency).
- Policy 1.9** Preserve all designated open space areas until sufficient parkland exists in the City to meet the established parkland standard to provide adequate recreational opportunities for the community except any land within the Regional Park/Open Space designation requiring reconfiguration to create a continuous open space link.

City of Lake Forest Municipal Code

Guidelines and provisions related to development of recreational facilities are addressed in Chapter 13 of the City Municipal Code.

3.13.4 Methodology

For purposes of this analysis, the deterioration of existing facilities or demand for new facilities would occur if an increase in population (resulting from implementation of the General Plan Amendment) resulted in a shortfall of the City's established park standard of 5 acres of parkland per 1,000 persons. Impacts to recreation have been determined by comparing the current ratio of parkland to population in the City of Lake Forest with and without the General Plan Amendment.

3.13.5 Thresholds of Significance

As the City's 2001 CEQA Significance Thresholds do not cover recreation issues, the following thresholds of significance are based on Appendix G of the 2005 CEQA Guidelines. For purposes of this EIR, the Proposed Project would result in significant impacts related to recreation services and facilities if they would:

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

3.13.6 Impacts

CEQA requires that the Proposed Project's potential environmental impacts be compared to on-the-ground conditions in the Project Area at the time the Notice of Preparation is issued or at the time the analysis of such impacts is commenced. Such on-the-ground conditions are considered, and often referred to as, the environmental or CEQA "baseline." Thus, the following section analyzes the Proposed Project's potential environmental impacts on baseline conditions. However, it should be noted that the land under consideration for the Proposed Project, while currently undeveloped, would not necessarily remain undeveloped. Most sites within the Project Area are subject to existing development agreements or entitlements and, in the absence of the Proposed Project, would in the future likely be developed with approximately 9.8 million square feet of industrial and commercial space under the existing General Plan. Given this, the analysis of alternatives to the Proposed Project in Chapter 4 of this EIR, under the "No Project/Reasonably Foreseeable Development" alternative, analyzes the potential environmental impacts associated with buildout of the existing General Plan. That analysis includes a comparison of the impacts of buildout of the existing General Plan with the potential environmental impacts of the Proposed Project.

Impact 3.13-1 The Proposed Project would increase the Project Area population but would not result in the increased use of parks and recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facilities would occur or be accelerated.

Significance Level: Less than significant

The Proposed Project would substitute residential, recreational, commercial, and open space uses for existing vacant and underutilized lands located within the Project Area. Specific project development would entail approximately 5,415 residential units; 96 acres of parkland and community facilities, 648,720 square feet of commercial uses, and 154 acres of buffer/open space, as well as rezoning of areas currently zoned for industrial and office uses to a mix of residential, recreational, commercial, and open space uses. The Project Area currently contains no park or recreational facilities.

As part of the Proposed Project, each developer in the Project Area would be required to provide adequate parkland to meet the City's established park standard of 5 acres of parkland per 1,000 persons. As described above, each developer will meet the required parkland dedication requirements by providing 3 acres per thousand population in on-site neighborhood parks or in-lieu fees, and in-lieu fees at a rate of 2 acres per thousand population for community parks. The in-lieu fees for community parks will be used for the 45-acre community facilities.

As shown in Table 2-5 in Chapter 2 (Project Description) of this EIR, the project proposes 26 acres of neighborhood parkland on the Shea/Baker site, 10 acres on the Portola site, 11 acres on the IRWD site, and 4 acres on the Baker Ranch site. The Greystone and Pacific Heritage sites would not contain any parkland; however, in-lieu fees would be paid. In addition, trails would be provided that connect to existing trails, connecting the northern portions of the City with southern portions of the City as well as the City to the Great Park, Aliso Beach, and the Pacific Ocean. Further, a 39-acre sports park is proposed in association with the proposed 88,000 square feet of public uses (Civic Center and Community Center) on 6 acres for the northeastern portion of the Nakase site, as it has the ability to

host all three components. Thus, the Proposed Project would result in an additional 96 acres of parkland and community facilities within the City of Lake Forest.

As mentioned previously, the City of Lake Forest has an established park standard of 5 acres of parkland per 1,000 persons. Utilizing a factor of 2.91 persons per dwelling unit (stated in Section 3.11, Population and Housing), the Proposed Project's 5,415 residential units would result in a population increase of approximately 15,758 persons within the City of Lake Forest. Thus, in order to meet the City's parkland standard of 5 acres per 1,000 persons, the Proposed Project would need to develop a total of 78.79 acres of parkland in conjunction with its proposed 5,415 residential units. Since the Proposed Project would result in an addition of 96 acres of parkland within the Project Area, it would be adequate to meet the City's established parkland-to-persons ratio. Thus, sufficient available parkland would be provided such that the increase in population resulting from implementation of the Proposed Project would not result in the increased use of parks and recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facilities would occur or be accelerated. Therefore, this impact would be less than significant.

Impact 3.13-2 The Proposed Project would include recreational facilities, the construction of which would not have an adverse physical effect on the environment.

Significance Level: No impact

The construction impacts anticipated to result from implementation of the Proposed Project, including construction of the recreational facilities, have been comprehensively analyzed in Section 3.3 (Air Quality), Section 3.10 (Noise), and Section 3.14 (Transportation/Traffic) of this EIR. No additional significant impacts exist related specifically to the recreational component of the Proposed Project that have not already been analyzed. Therefore, there would be *no* impact. All relevant mitigation measures related to construction occurring with implementation of the Proposed Project shall be applied to reduce overall construction impacts to the maximum extent feasible.

3.13.7 Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required other than as identified for construction-related impacts in other technical sections of this EIR.

3.13.8 Summary of Impacts

Table 3.13-1 summarizes the potential long-term adverse impacts of the Proposed Project related to recreation in the Project Area, and identifies the significance of those impacts after any applicable mitigation measures.

Table 3.13-1 Summary of Impacts

<i>Impact</i>	<i>Threshold</i>	<i>Significance</i>
3.13-1	The Proposed Project would increase the Project Area population but would not result in the increased use of parks and recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facilities would occur or be accelerated.	Less than significant
3.13-2	The Proposed Project would include recreational facilities, the construction of which would not have an adverse physical effect on the environment.	No impact

3.13.9 References

EIP Associates. 2004. Project Area Site Photos, December.

Lake Forest, City of. 2001. *City of Lake Forest General Plan*, Revised July.

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Orange County Parks. 2005. Harbors, Beaches, and Parks. <http://www.ocparks.com/default.asp>, 8 March.