

18. Recreation

18.1 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Recreation facilities include facilities and services related to providing recreation for the citizens of Ventura County. Recreation facilities managed by the Ventura County Parks Department of the General Services Agency include local parks/facilities, regional parks/facilities, and regional trails/corridors.

18.1.1 Local Parks/Facilities

A local park/facility serves the daily needs of a defined neighborhood or group of neighborhoods within an unincorporated urbanized area of the county. Local park/facility acreage should provide for three primary types of recreation: open areas for passive recreation and relaxation; active sports areas for sports fields and court games; and neighborhood or community centers that accommodate a wide variety of community serving activities catering to all age groups. Local parks/facilities are divided into the following three major classes:

Local Trails/Corridors

Paths that are designed to accommodate non-motorized recreational travel through areas removed from vehicular traffic. Local trails/corridors also serve as access to the regional trail network.

Community Park Facilities and Playfields

Community centers for social and cultural activities, crafts, meetings, special events and senior programs; passive areas for family and group picnics; children play facilities; indoor gyms; health and fitness centers; pools; and other similar recreation features. Playfields are normally part of the community recreation service and consist of specialized facilities that serve organized teams or specific sports enthusiasts including courts, ballfields, and other facilities as may be warranted.

Neighborhood Park Facilities

Open lawn, play apparatus, shade, activity building, and game courts. Joint use with school facilities is common and desirable, and facilities should be provided for the specific needs of the neighborhood within a service radius of one mile.

18.1.2 Regional Parks/Facilities

A regional park/facility is an area of land that by its unique natural character, or unusual or extensive development, offers recreation opportunities from beyond the local vicinity without regard to physical, political, or municipal boundaries. There is no defined service radius. Regional parks/facilities are divided into five major classes:

Regional Park

A regional park should include sufficient developable land to accommodate large, organized groups or family gatherings without sacrificing the basic qualities of the area or the specific attributes that

support specialized use. A regional park may contain a variety of specialized facilities or natural features that will support recreation experiences of county-wide significance.

Preserve

A preserve is an area of land preserved from development to protect unique scenic resources, sensitive or unusual native plants and animals, geologic phenomena, or historical sites or buildings. It may be part of a regional recreation area or a singular entity.

Regional Open Space

A regional open space is an area, the preservation of which in its natural condition would maintain or enhance the aesthetic quality of a regional recreation area, a major portion of the county, or contribute to the logical control of urban development.

Specialized Facility

A specialized facility is a singular area or facility that provides specialized recreation opportunities that are of regional or county-wide significance. It may be an individual element, or it may be a unit of a larger or more inclusive regional park. Specialized facilities may include but are not limited to amphitheaters (bowls), auditoriums, botanical gardens, day use beaches, equestrian centers, fairgrounds, golf courses, museums, nature centers, off-road vehicle areas, campgrounds, group picnic grounds, riding and hiking trails, vista points and zoos.

Recreation Park

A recreation park should provide facilities for a comprehensive recreation program to serve a population of approximately 200,000 by providing facilities such as sports fields, courts, courses, and gyms. It is designed to handle large-scale multiple participant sports programs and can accommodate tournament competition. It may also offer incidental passive recreation areas and local park facilities, such as small picnic areas and playgrounds. It is usually not less than 30 acres in size and may comprise the active recreation element of a regional park.

18.1.3 Regional Trails/Corridors

A regional trail/corridor includes areas and facilities that are intended to accommodate non-motorized recreational travel through areas removed from vehicular traffic. Regional trails/corridors should link major park and recreation facilities. They may be designated as single purpose and/or multi-purpose by design, and major access points should be served by a trailhead.

18.1.4 Other Park Districts and Agencies

The County has partnerships and agreements with the districts and agencies listed below to provide recreational resources. For additional supporting information, refer to Chapter 7 of the Ventura County General Plan Background Report and the Ventura County *Resource Management Agency Geographical Information System Viewer*.

Casitas Municipal Water District

The Casitas Municipal Water District is a local water supplier for western Ventura County, including Ojai, the upper Ojai, Rincon, and parts of Ventura. The district maintains the 300-acre Lake Casitas

Recreation Area and provides for boating, camping, fishing, and recreation services including a water park and disc golf course.

Conejo Open Space Conservation Agency

The Conejo Open Space Conservation Agency (COSCA) was created through a joint agreement between the City of Thousand Oaks and the Conejo Recreation and Park District. COSCA manages 19 open space properties and co-manages 7 open space properties with the Conejo Recreation and Park District, City of Thousand Oaks, County of Ventura, and the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority.

Conejo Recreation and Park District

The Conejo Recreation and Park District serves communities within the Conejo Valley both within Thousand Oaks as well as the unincorporated areas of Lynn Ranch, Rolling Hills, and Lake Sherwood. The district maintains 50 developed facilities, which include parks, playfields and special facilities and jointly owns and operates 40 open space areas and regional parks totaling more than 13,000 acres.

Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority

The Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) is a local partnership between the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, the Conejo Recreation and Park District, and the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District. MRCA manages about 4,800 acres of open space land in Ventura County.

Pleasant Valley Recreation and Park District

The Pleasant Valley Recreation and Park District includes substantial unincorporated areas south and east of the City of Camarillo. Additionally, some neighborhoods north of Camarillo but within the City's Sphere of Influence, are within the district's boundaries. The district has 27 parks on 300 acres, an aquatic center, a community center, and a skate park.

Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District

The Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District serves residents within Simi Valley but also unincorporated areas in close proximity including Oak Park. The district has 50 parks, over 5,600 acres of open space, two equestrian centers, two swimming pools, and two golf courses.

United Water Conservation District

The United Water Conservation District encompasses the Santa Clara River Valley and the Oxnard Coastal Plain and is a supplier of municipal and agricultural water. The district manages the Lake Piru Recreation Area. Along the western shore of the lake, the district provides boating access, camping, fishing, swimming, and picnicking.

Other Parks and Recreation Departments

The Cities of Santa Paula, Ojai, Oxnard, Moorpark, Ventura, Port Hueneme, and Fillmore each consist of their own Parks and Recreation Department that oversees park and recreation programs and facilities within their respective jurisdictions.

18.2 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

The determination of significance shall be made on a case-by-case basis and evaluated using the following threshold of significance as specified below.

REC-1 A project may have a significant impact if it would result in substantial physical deterioration due to increased use of existing recreation facilities, or otherwise remove, impede, or obstruct the use of existing recreation facilities or future development of recreation facilities.

18.3 IMPACT ANALYSIS

Guidance on addressing the questions from the Initial Study Checklist is provided below. In order to determine whether project impacts exceed or meet the criteria of the threshold of significance in Section 18.2, the level of impact shall be evaluated based on the appropriate assessment methodologies as outlined below.

(a) *Would the project result in substantial physical deterioration due to increased use of existing recreation facilities, or otherwise remove, impede, or obstruct the use of existing recreation facilities or future development of recreation facilities?*

Determine whether the center of the project site is within two miles of a local or regional park/facility and/or whether the project is *adjacent* to any lands containing regional trails/corridors. If applicable, identify the park and recreation district or agency responsible for maintaining such parks/facilities or trails/corridors. A project may be considered to have a significant impact on recreation facilities if it would result in substantial physical deterioration of existing recreation facilities, or otherwise remove, impede or obstruct access to, or use of, existing or future development of recreation facilities within the vicinity of the project. Future development of recreation facilities are those that have been planned or approved, such as facilities that are identified in an approved land use plan or similar planning document, or that have received a land use entitlement and/or secured public financing. The applicable park and recreation district or agency shall be given the opportunity to review the project and provide recommendations to reduce or mitigate project impacts on recreation facilities.

If the recreation facilities affected are within the jurisdiction of the County of Ventura, the Ventura County General Services Agency shall review the project and provide recommendations to reduce or mitigate project impacts on recreation facilities. Potentially significant impacts involving substantial loss, impediment to, or obstruction of the use of existing or future recreation facilities may require the replacement of that recreation facility in similar size, quality, and character as the affected facility. Replacement recreation facilities should serve the same population as the affected facility. The scope of replacement facilities shall be reviewed and approved by the *Lead Agency* in consultation with the General Services Agency.

For subdivisions subject to the Quimby Act, parkland dedication, the payment of a fee in-lieu thereof, or a combination of both, if applicable, may be imposed on the project pursuant to the Quimby Act to reduce impacts to a less than significant level. The amount of land to be dedicated and/or the fee to be paid shall be determined in accordance with the Quimby Act and applicable Quimby ordinance. Consult with the General Services Agency or the applicable park district to determine whether the project is subject to the Quimby Act and to calculate the appropriate fee, if applicable.

18.4 RESOURCES & REFERENCES

| Source | Managing Agency/Organization | Online Access |
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| Resources | | |
| Ventura County CEQA Implementation Manual | Ventura County Resource Management Agency (RMA) Planning Division | PDF Website |
| Ventura County Initial Study Assessment Guidelines, Introduction | Ventura County RMA Planning Division | PDF Website |
| Ventura County Initial Study Checklist Template | Ventura County RMA Planning Division | PDF Website |
| References | | |
| Casitas Municipal Water District | Casitas Municipal Water District | Website |
| City of Fillmore, Parks and Recreation Department | City of Fillmore, Parks and Recreation Department | Website |
| City of Moorpark, Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department | City of Moorpark, Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department | Website |
| City of Ojai Recreation Department | City of Ojai Recreation Department | Website |
| City of Oxnard, Parks Division | City of Oxnard, Parks Division | Website |
| City of Port Hueneme, Recreation and Community Services Department | City of Port Hueneme, Recreation and Community Services Department | Website |
| City of Santa Paula, Parks and Recreation Department | City of Santa Paula, Parks and Recreation Department | Website |
| City of Ventura, Parks Division | City of Ventura, Parks Division | Website |
| Conejo Open Space Conservation Agency | Conejo Open Space Conservation Agency | Website |
| Conejo Recreation and Park District | Conejo Recreation and Park District | Website |
| Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority | Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority | Website |
| Pleasant Valley Recreation and Park District | Pleasant Valley Recreation and Park District | Website |
| Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District | Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District | Website |
| United Water Conservation District | United Water Conservation District | Website |
| Ventura County General Plan Background Report, Chapter 7 | Ventura County RMA Planning Division | PDF Website |
| Ventura County RMA Geographic Information System Viewer | Ventura County Information Technology Services | Website |