



Parks and Recreation (PR)



Skate park at Roosevelt Park.
Courtesy, Los Angeles County Department of
Parks and Recreation

Vision

Increase the amount and quality of public spaces, ensure that every resident is within easy access of a park space, enhance neighborhood connectivity to parks, and provide greenery throughout the community.

Background

Florence-Firestone has five parks, totaling 70 acres of designated park space. The parks provide a range of active and passive recreation facilities from athletic fields to playgrounds and picnic areas. Parks and recreation facilities offer a variety of sports, special-interest activities, and classes for all age groups. The parks are a highly used local resource providing needed recreational space. The County Department of Parks and Recreation prepared the “Florence-Firestone Community Parks and Recreation Plan” in 2010 as well as a Countywide Parks Needs Assessment in 2016. Much of the information included in this section draws from the findings and recommendations from these efforts.

Despite its existing parks, the community remains underserved by local and regional parks and open space. Florence-Firestone has an average of 1.2 acres of local parkland per 1,000 residents. This amount is far below the County standard, established by the General Plan, of four acres of local parkland per 1,000 residents, and below the current countywide average of 3.3 acres of existing local parkland provided per 1,000 residents. The provision of large regional parks within 20 miles of community is also below the County standard of six acres of regional parkland per 1,000 residents.

Florence-Firestone is underserved by open space and recreational facilities compared with countywide averages. The Parks Needs Assessment concluded that 52% of community residents are in very high need of park space, 46% are in high need, and just 3% are in moderate need of park space compared to 32%, 20% and 25% countywide respectively. While 59% of the local population lives within a half-mile of a park, physical and social barriers limit access to parks communitywide.

Opportunities and Challenges

Enhance and Increase Recreational Opportunities

Vacant properties totaling more than 20 acres in area are scattered throughout the community. However, more than half the properties are less than one-quarter

(1/4) acre in size. Smaller lots can provide an opportunity for conversion to pocket parks, community gathering areas, and community gardens and orchards. According to the Parks Needs Assessment, the areas of greatest geographic need for recreational space communitywide are in the central-west, central-east, and southeast residential neighborhoods. Transforming vacant and underutilized property near the County Services Building on Nadeau Street and Compton Avenue could offer a centralized public space adjacent to public resources.

Alternative strategies to increase recreational space in a dense and largely built-out community include incorporating recreational and gathering spaces into private development in commercial areas, converting utility and transportation rights-of-way to park space, and co-locating open space areas and public service buildings. Additionally, integrating arts and culture facilities, such as an amphitheater or arts/performance space, into parks can further diversify the types of spaces and programming available to the community and address an expressed desire.



An opportunity exists to transform the utility corridor into a linear park connecting to the recently converted park in South Gate.



Park in South Gate converted from a utility corridor into public park space.



The only pedestrian bridge crossing over the Blue Line and railroad tracks at Roosevelt Park is used for fitness training and could be renovated to be a positive visual landmark in the community.



The Blue Line and railroad tracks create a barrier to mobility and access to parks and resources in the community.



Example utility corridor conversion to parks space in South Gate.

Greenway Networks and Urban Trails

Many residents are located within one-half mile of a park, but access to parks is limited by physical barriers and perceived safety concerns. Railroad rights-of-way and lack of pedestrian infrastructure around the Metro Blue Line, Alameda Corridor, and major corridors such as Florence Avenue, Firestone Boulevard, Compton Avenue, and Central Avenue make it difficult for residents to access existing parks. For example, only one pedestrian crossing bridge over the Metro Blue Line provides access to Roosevelt Park.

Perceived safety concerns also act as barriers to park access. Concerns about levels of crime, and gang activity and boundaries limit access to public parks. There is a need to improve connections between walkways, bikeways, and public spaces by creating greenway networks and urban trails throughout the community. Alternative uses of existing alleyways could also contribute to an urban trail and greenway network with public space and greening.

Partnerships in Open Space

The development of open space at a variety of scales throughout the community can provide equal access to meet the needs of a dense and largely built-out community. Collaborations and joint-use agreements with other County departments, public agencies, adjacent cities, non-profits, local religious institutions, schools, and private organizations can help to address the recreational space deficiency in the community.

Goals and Policies

ENHANCE AND INCREASE RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

GOAL PR-1

Community residents live within a half-mile of an easily accessible recreational space.

Policy PR-1.1

New Park Locations. Develop new parks throughout the community in strategic locations, such as near high pedestrian traffic areas, areas of high visibility, transit nodes, or collocated with public facilities.

Policy PR-1.2

Convert Rights-of-Way to Parks. Pursue opportunities for conversion of utility, transportation, and flood control rights-of-way to public open spaces providing urban trails, play areas, and/or passive and active recreation.

Policy PR-1.3

Range of Park Scales. Provide a range of easily accessible park types and scales, including community parks, neighborhood parks, pocket parks, and park nodes dispersed throughout the community.

Policy PR-1.4

Convert Underutilized Buildings. Encourage the reuse of existing underutilized buildings in the community, such as warehouses, for conversion to indoor sports facilities and recreational spaces in coordination with non-profit organizations or when the structure is purchased by the County.

Policy PR-1.5

Development of Public Spaces. Foster partnerships with schools, libraries, non-profits, other public agencies, and private entities for the development of new parks, public spaces, and recreational amenities.

General Plan PolicyParkland Acquisition and Dedication

Policy PR 3.1: Acquire and develop local and regional parkland to meet the following County goals: 4 acres of local parkland per 1,000 residents in the unincorporated areas and 6 acres of regional parkland per 1,000 residents of the total population of Los Angeles County.

GOAL PR-2

Parks and open spaces are designed and maintained to meet the community's needs and support a positive role in the community.

Policy PR-2.1

Arts and Culture Venues. Incorporate arts, cultural, and performance venues, such as an outdoor pavilion, amphitheater, arts studios, exhibition spaces, and/or workshop spaces in parks and public facilities.

Policy PR-2.2

Park Lighting. Provide well-lighted entryways and enhanced visibility into and throughout parks.

Policy PR-2.3

Gathering Places. Provide comfortable outdoor gathering places with ample shade, drinking water, picnic areas, barbecue stations, and seating near children's play areas for adult caretakers.



Example of a public space incorporated into a public facility at Martin Luther King Jr. Community Hospital.

Courtesy, Daryl Koonce



Roosevelt Park.

Policy PR-2.4

Community Centers. Ensure that community centers are spatially and acoustically designed for use as meeting rooms and indoor gathering spaces for community members.

Policy PR-2.5

Passive and Recreational Activities. Ensure a balance of passive and recreational activities in the development of new park facilities.

Policy PR-2.6

Park Facilities. Ensure that County parks are clean, safe, inviting, usable, and accessible.

Policy PR-2.7

Existing Park Improvements. Improve existing parks with needed amenities and address deficiencies identified through the community input process.

Policy PR-2.8

Additional Playing Fields. Address the need for additional fields in the community.

General Plan Policies

Park Programming

Policy PR 1.1: Provide opportunities for public participation in designing and planning parks and recreation programs.

Park Management

Policy PR 1.7: Ensure adequate staffing, funding, and other resources to maintain satisfactory service levels at all County parks and recreational facilities.

Collaboration and Financing

Policy PR 2.7: Increase communication and partnerships with local law enforcement, neighborhood watch groups, and public agencies to improve safety in parks.

GOAL PR-3

Parks and open spaces provide varied recreational programming and learning environments for all age groups.

Policy PR-3.1

Environmental Education. Incorporate education on nature and environmental concerns in public schools, park programs, adult education centers, community workshops, and library programming.

Policy PR-3.2

Bilingual Education. Provide bilingual education programs to increase understanding and appreciation of the community, the natural surroundings, and natural systems.

Policy PR-3.3

Park Programming. Expand park programming, including indoor programming during the summer months, year-round youth programming at parks near schools, and popular recreational activities such as sports, senior's activities, and educational classes.

Policy PR-3.4

Active Recreation. Meet the recreational needs of various age groups through the provision and maintenance of athletic fields, basketball courts, skate parks, splash pads, walking paths, exercise equipment, urban trails, or other desired elements.

General Plan PolicyEducation and Programming

Policy PR 5.7: Integrate a range of cultural arts programs into existing activities, and partner with multicultural vendors and organizations.

GREENWAY NETWORKS AND URBAN TRAILS**GOAL PR-4**

Parks and open spaces are integrated into a community-wide greenway network.

Policy PR-4.1

Pathway Network. Develop a comprehensive community-wide network with urban trails, green pathways, and bike and pedestrian infrastructure, connecting neighborhoods to open space, transit, public facilities, and community destinations.

Policy PR-4.2

Park Connectivity. Provide safe and visible pedestrian connections within a half-mile of parks, including clear pathways to transit stations, landscaped curb extensions, lighted crosswalks, pedestrian access across landscaped medians, attractive bridge crossings over the Metro Blue Line and railroad rights-of-way, and other elements, where appropriate, to ensure safe park access.



Exercise equipment at Roosevelt Park.

Policy PR-4.3

Connecting to Regional Open Space. Develop safe connections to parks and open spaces in adjacent communities, linking to larger open space networks, such as the Los Angeles and Rio Hondo River trails.

Policy PR-4.4

Convert Alleyways. Convert alleyways to multi-use pathways and community green spaces, where feasible and appropriate.

PARTNERSHIPS IN OPEN SPACE

GOAL PR-5

Public agencies and private, non-profit, and community-based organizations partner to create a robust local network of parks and connect residents to regional open spaces.

Policy PR-5.1

Joint-Use Agreements. Incentivize joint-use agreements with schools and local organizations to expand access to recreational facilities and to organize joint recreational and educational programs.

Policy PR-5.2

Recreational Space Incentive. Incentivize the provision of public recreational spaces and amenities, such as plazas, walking/jogging paths, squares, and park spaces, within commercial or retail projects.

Policy PR-5.3

Partnerships for Parks Development. Pursue partnerships to acquire and develop public open space and recreational facilities with adjacent jurisdictions, public agencies, and non-profit, community-based, and private organizations. *(Refer to the Collaboration and Financing and Parkland Acquisition and Development policies in the Parks and Recreation Element of the General Plan for further information.)*

Policy PR-5.4

Access to Regional Open Space. Provide transportation to recreational and cultural facilities, such as beaches, regional, state, and national parks, located outside of the community.

Policy PR-5.5

Park Volunteer Program. Promote a park volunteer program, and actively recruit community groups, youth, and seniors to conduct recreational programs and services.

