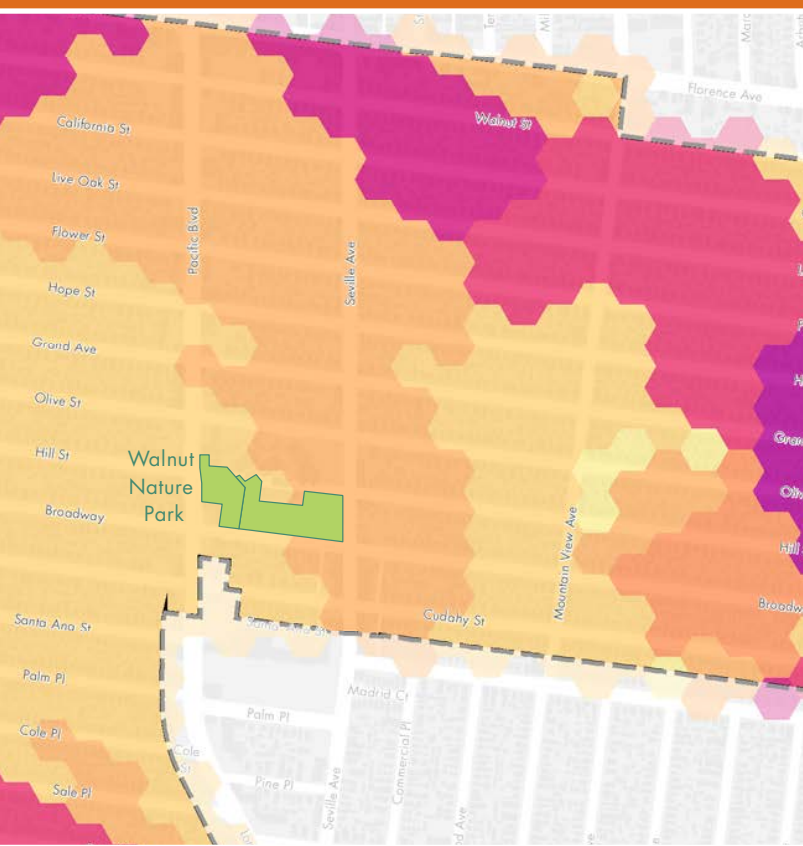


FEBRUARY 2016

WALNUT PARK COMMUNITY PARKS AND RECREATION PLAN

LOS ANGELES COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION



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Funding for the Walnut Park Community Parks and Recreation Plan was provided by the Strategic Growth Council through the Sustainable Communities Planning Grant program, funded by Proposition 84, the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2006.

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Special thanks to the residents of Walnut Park who took time to participate in outreach events and provide feedback about the future of parks and recreation in their community. This plan is dedicated to their vision.

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WALNUT PARK

Community Parks & Recreation Plan

GREEN IN!

Opening and Expanding the Green Space Network in Walnut Park

PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

The purpose of the Plan is to provide a vision and roadmap for a greener Walnut Park, including a more extensive network of publicly-accessible green spaces and recreational facilities, as well as environmental enhancement projects. More importantly, the Plan provides specific implementation actions to be taken by the County. These will require establishing and strengthening partnerships in order to help reach the vision of a greener, safer and healthier community. The Plan builds on previous planning efforts and is a response to community needs and calls for more greening in Walnut Park.

PARKS AND GREENING PROFILE

Walnut Park has a severe deficit of parkland. The community only has one joint-use park, approximately 4.5 acres in size, serving a population of nearly 16,000 residents. Additionally, the park is located on the school grounds of a local elementary school and has limited hours for community use. The Los Angeles County General Plan sets a standard of 4 acres of local parks per 1,000 residents. Based on current population levels, Walnut Park only has approximately **0.3 acres of local parks per 1,000 residents**, a figure significantly below the General Plan standard.

Due to the limited access of the joint-use park, many residents feel they do not have a park in their community and travel to parks outside of Walnut Park or simply do not visit parks at all. **Nearly one third of Walnut Park residents are not within walking distance (1/2 mile) of a park**, suggesting that their likelihood of using park spaces is significantly lower than residents within walking distance of parks. Other local **environmental issues** create a **high community need** for increased parks and green spaces. These issues include high levels of emissions and noise from nearby industrial uses, low urban tree canopy coverage, and a challenging pedestrian and bicycle environment.

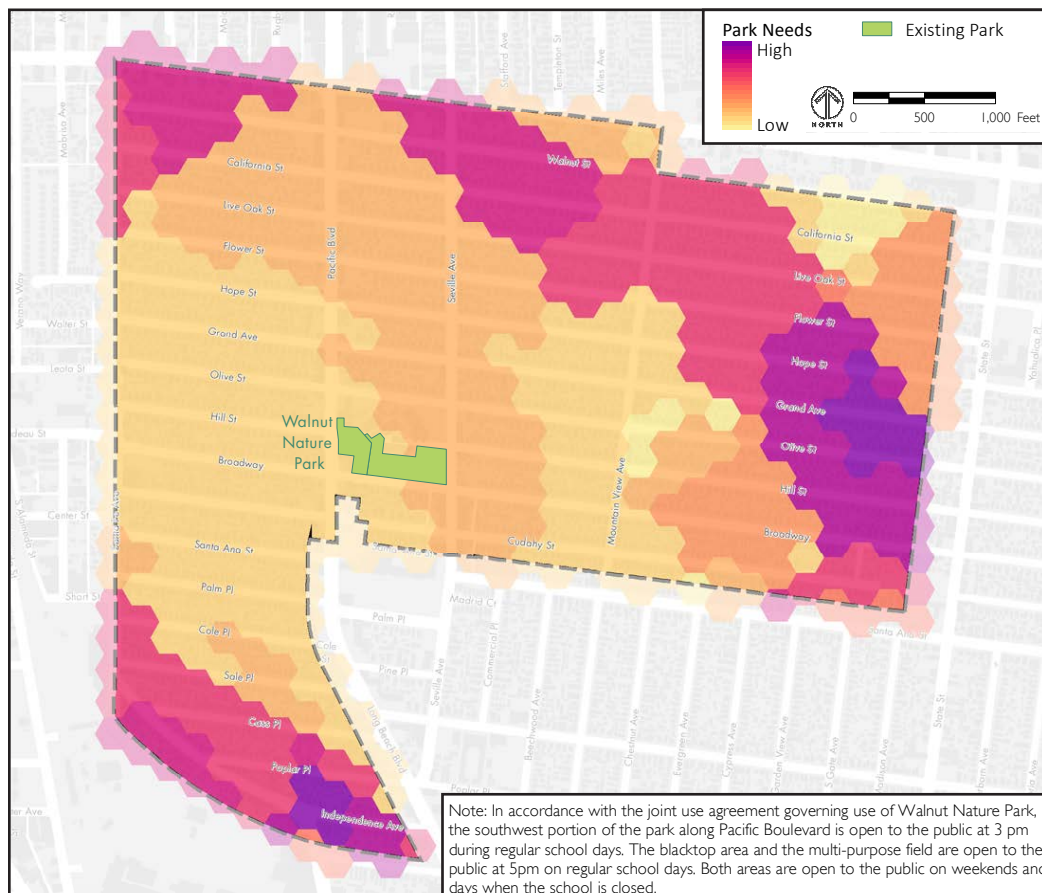
ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS OF EXISTING PARK

120,000 gallons of stormwater intercepted annually

160 pounds of reduced air pollutants annually

15,000 tons of CO₂ sequestered annually

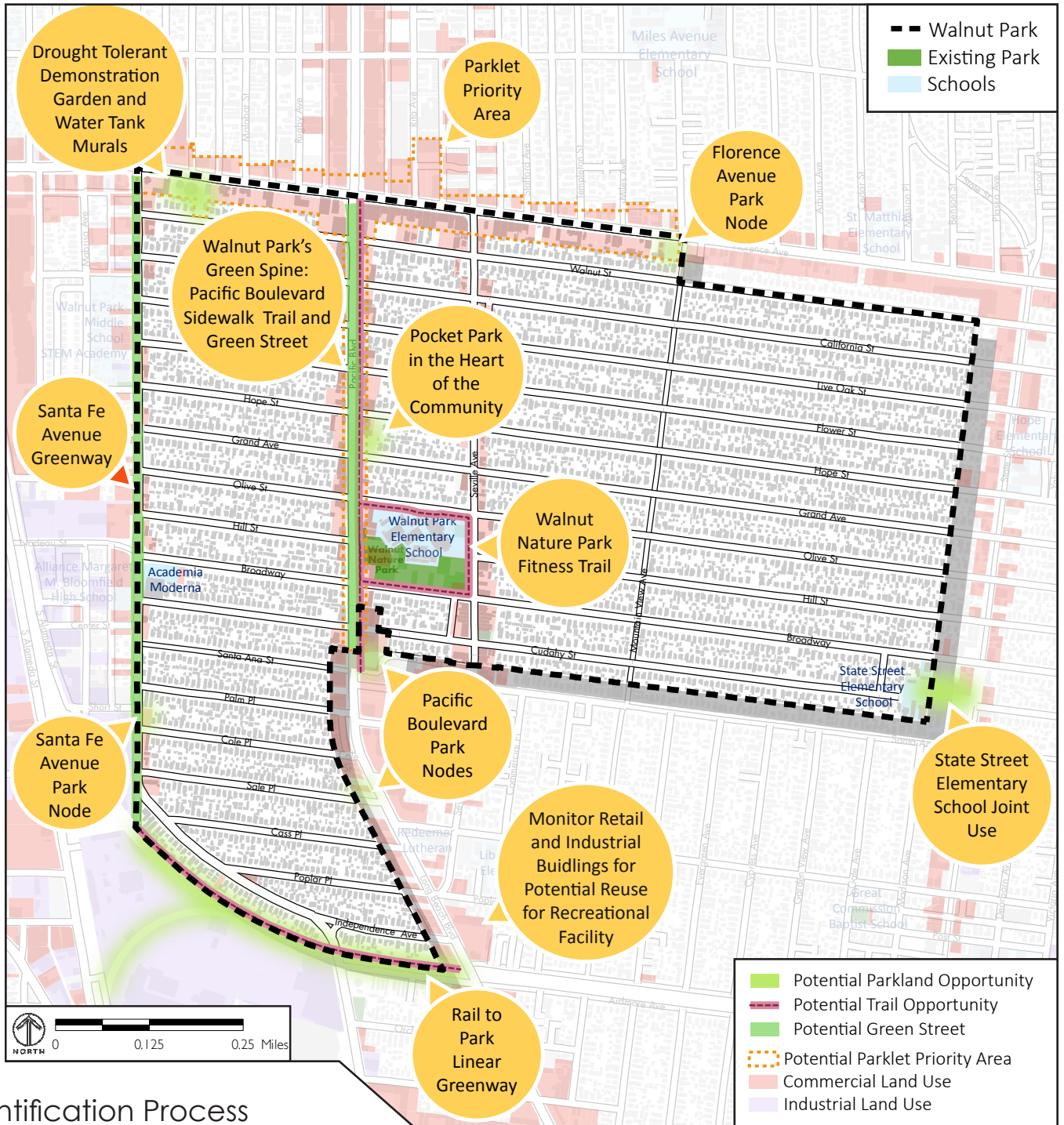
Where are parks most needed in Walnut Park?



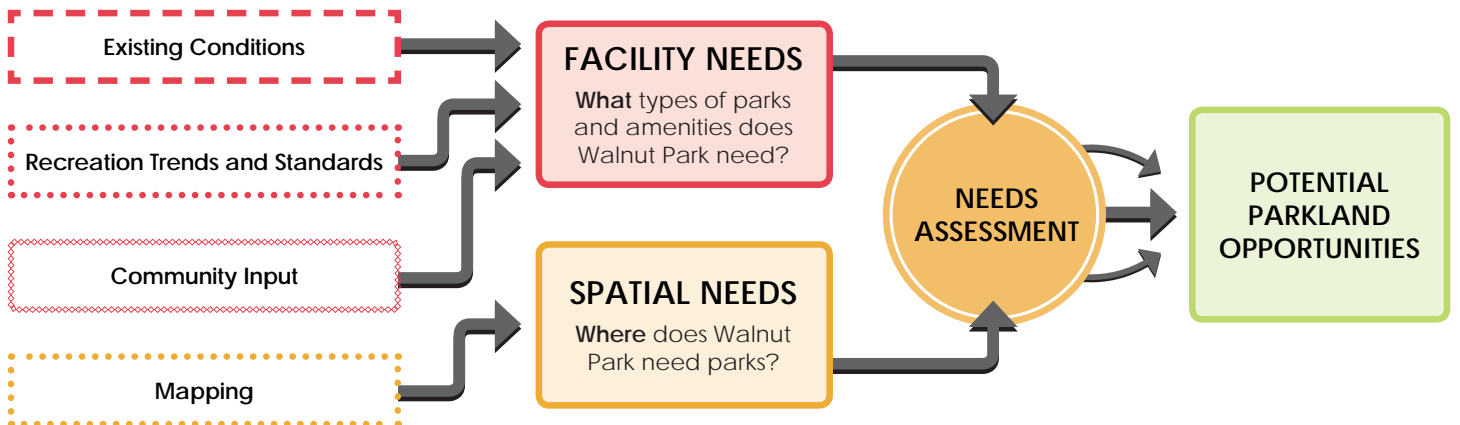
Community Workshop November 2013.

WALNUT PARK GREEN VISION MAP

This map identifies potential park, trail, and greening projects that may be implemented in the short, medium, and/or long term to meet the needs of Walnut Park.



Site Identification Process



GOALS FOR WALNUT PARK

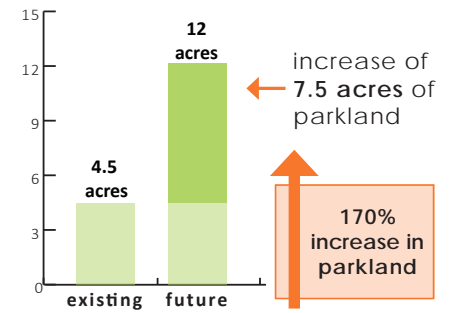
1. Increase overall green space and develop new recreational facilities.
2. Ensure that facilities and programs meet community needs and that the community is included in decision-making processes.
3. Provide new places for exercise and safe places to walk.
4. Create public spaces that support community interaction and cultural identity through public art, community events, and commercial enterprise.
5. Improve access to parks, green space, and community amenities while creating safe corridors for pedestrians and cyclists.
6. Maintain and enhance Walnut Park's urban forest.
7. Focus on multi-benefit urban greening projects that optimize environmental services.

CONCEPTUAL POCKET PARK

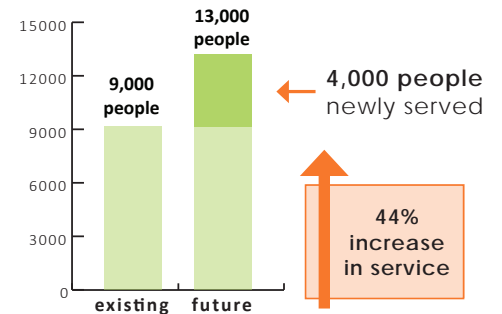


Service improvements (with the addition of potential new parks)

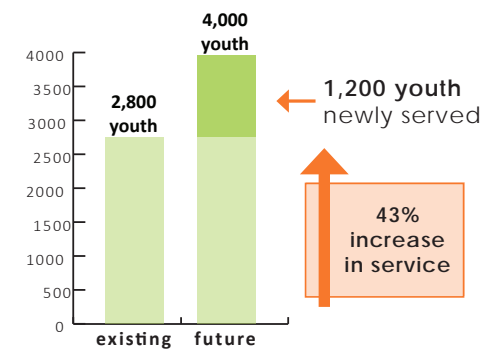
Parkland Acres



Total Population Served



Youth Population (Under 18) Served



Graphs show improvements based on the addition of high priority park projects.



CONCEPTUAL LINEAR PARK



For more information, contact:
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1 - INTRODUCTION



There are large areas of the County that are underserved by parks and recreational facilities. Nearly two out of three children in the County do not live within walking distance (one quarter mile) of a park, playground, or open space.

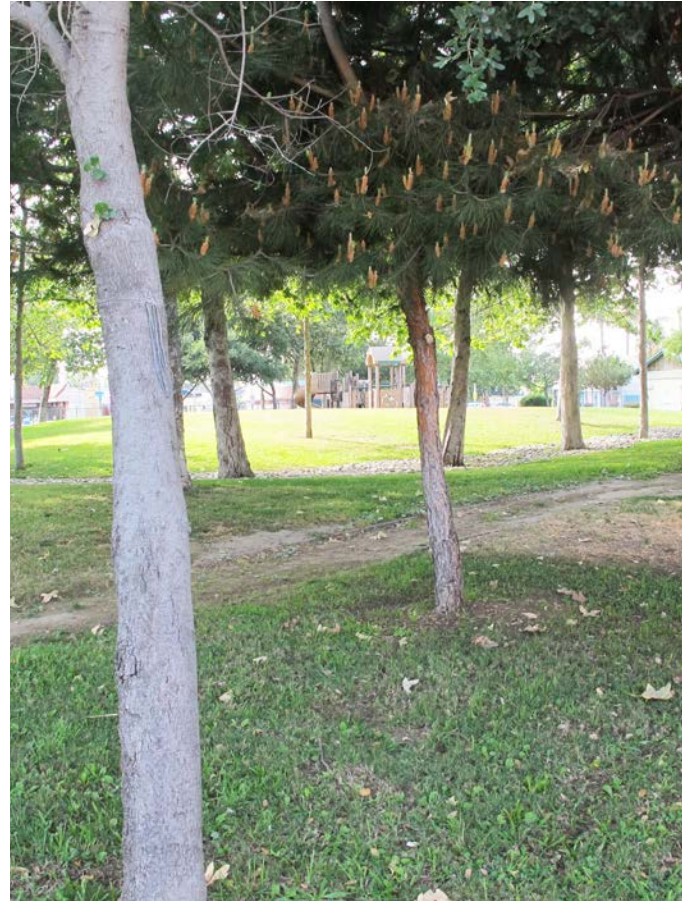
- Los Angeles County General Plan, Parks and Recreation Element

WHAT IS A COMMUNITY PARKS AND RECREATION PLAN?

A Community Parks and Recreation Plan is a guiding document for the improvement of existing parks and recreation resources and the development of new parks or programs within a community based on public input and need. The plan evaluates existing facilities and programs, as well as service areas for existing parks and recreation centers, recreational needs of current residents, trends in recreational activities, and projected future changes in the area. Through community outreach, spatial analysis, and site studies, the plan identifies areas within the community with the highest need for new parks and potential opportunity sites. The plan offers recommendations for the provision of new parks and recreation resources, and strategies to implement them in the community.

WHY WALNUT PARK?

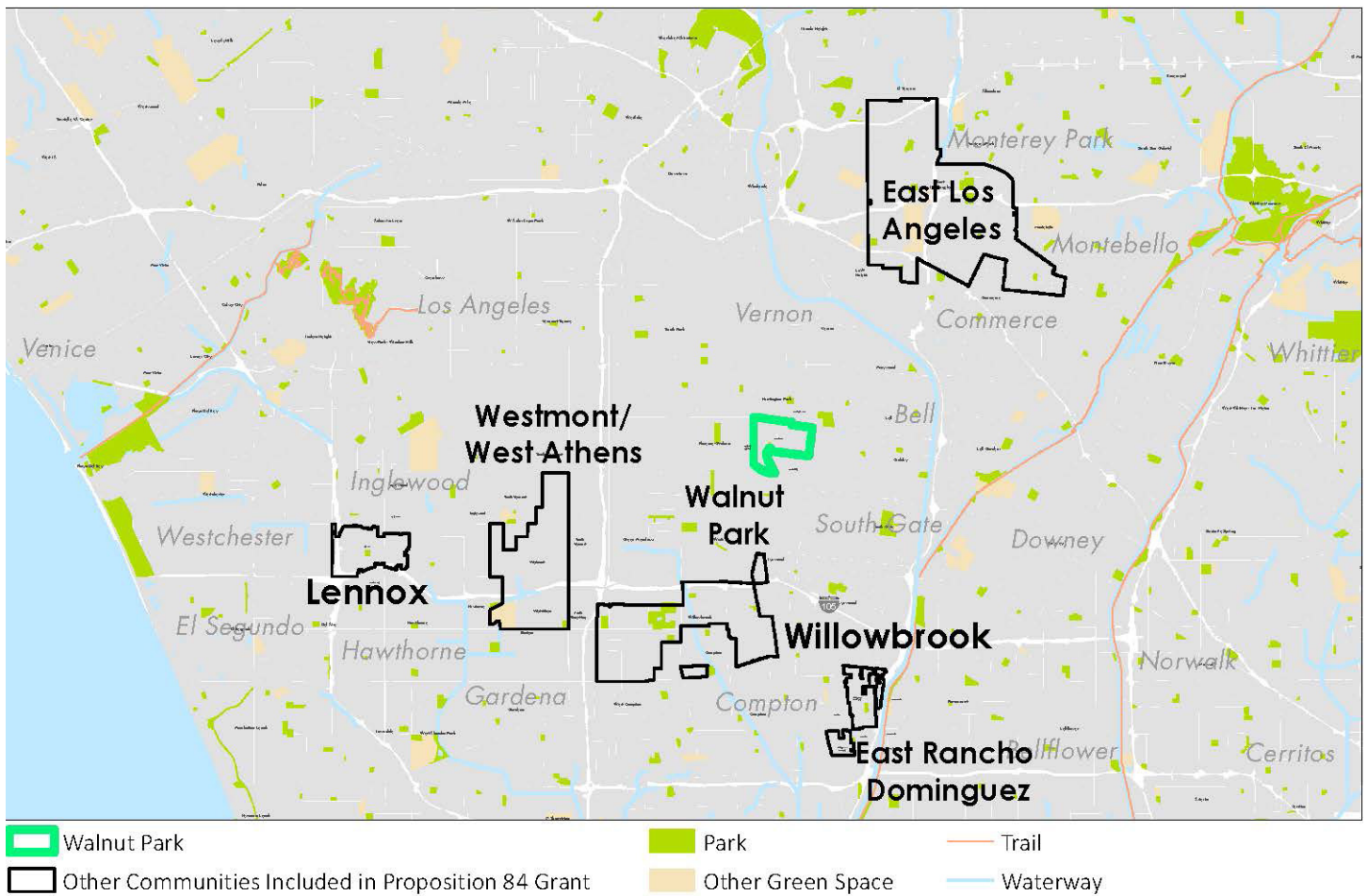
Walnut Park has one joint-use park serving a population of nearly 16,000 residents. The park is located on the school grounds of a local elementary school and has limited hours for community use. It is operated through a cooperative agreement with the Los Angeles Unified School District and the Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation, and is only available to the public during non-school hours. The agreement includes Walnut Nature Park, a densely wooded green space with an amphitheater, playground, and picnic area, and the blacktop and multipurpose field adjacent to the school. In total, the area equals 4.5 acres of parkland. The Los Angeles County General Plan establishes a goal of 4 acres of local parks parkland per 1,000 residents. With a population of nearly 16,000 residents, Walnut Park only has 0.3 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents. To meet the General Plan goal, Walnut Park would need to have 64 acres of parkland within their community. This suggests that Walnut Park is lacking nearly 60 acres of parkland. Furthermore, many residents have a difficult time understanding the hours of the joint-use facility and feel like the park is not meeting their green space needs. Most residents choose to visit parks and recreation facilities outside of Walnut Park or simply do not visit parks at all. Even considering the joint-use park, nearly one third of Walnut Park residents are not within walking distance of a park, suggesting that their likelihood of using park spaces is significantly lower than residents within walking distance of parks.



Walnut Nature Park



FIGURE 1.1 LOCATION OF WALNUT PARK IN REGION



Walnut Park residents consider the development of a new park space to be important for community unity. They believe that a new green space will provide them with space for events and places where they can gather as a group. The community considers the limited hours of the joint-use site to be detrimental to community gatherings and want to see new parks developed that are more in line with how they want to use public space. Residents are excited about creating a unique and special green space in their community and the Community Parks and Recreation Plan is a tool to initiate this process and document their vision for green space.

Walnut Park is a small community and lacks available land for new park creation. Walnut Park is predominately a low-density residential community. However, it is relatively “built-out,” meaning nearly all the land in the community is occupied by some type of development. Under these conditions, finding new spaces for parks is extremely difficult, and creative strategies for partnership and reuse are necessary to explore.

In addition to a lack of park space, Walnut Park has a number of other environmental issues. The community has a low urban tree canopy (16 percent community-wide as compared to a recommended standard of 25 percent) and dangerous roadways, which residents characterize as being dominated by fast-driving cars and illicit activities.

The area of southwest Walnut Park and the adjacent land to the west are predominately industrial, with numerous automotive shops, industrial storage facilities, and metal processing centers. The community considers these uses to be hazardous to their health and would like to see green infrastructure used to improve air and water quality.

Currently, the community is well-aware of the issues in Walnut Park and enthusiastic about parks as a catalyst for change. This plan intends to formalize their vision for green space and recreation in the community, document parks and recreation needs, explore existing opportunities in the community, and provide strategies for increasing green space in Walnut Park.

HOW DID THE WALNUT PARK PARKS AND RECREATION PLAN HAPPEN?

The Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) received a Sustainable Communities Planning Grant from California Strategic Growth Council (SGC) for the “Master Plan for Sustainable Parks and Recreation: Phase I,” which consists of the development of community parks and recreation plans for six communities within Los Angeles County that currently have significant parks and recreation deficits.

In addition to Walnut Park, community parks and recreation plans were developed for East Los Angeles, East Rancho Dominguez, Lennox, West Athens-Westmont, and Willowbrook, outlined in black in Figure 1.1.

Funding for the grant was provided by Proposition 84, the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River, and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2006, with the purpose of funding projects that significantly reduce energy consumption, conserve water, improve air and water quality, and provide other community benefits. Due to the multi-beneficial qualities that parks and open space provide in terms of energy conservation, stormwater retention, air quality enhancement, and public health improvement, plans to increase or improve existing green space are a valuable piece of meeting the goals of the program.

The grant provided funding for technical analysis, as well as an in-depth community outreach process to gather a comprehensive understanding of existing conditions, including parks and recreation needs, and potential opportunities and strategies to address identified needs. From Lot to Spot and the Los Angeles Neighborhood Land Trust (LANLT), local community-based green space advocacy groups, led the outreach program for the Walnut Park Community Parks and Recreation Plan. The team utilized a variety of strategies, from stakeholder interviews and community workshops to interactive surveys, a youth visioning activity for green space, and a community bus tour to green space in the greater Los Angeles area. The goal of the outreach was not only to gain information about existing usage of parks and preferred facilities or amenities, but to also facilitate a dialogue with community members about parks and recreation in Walnut Park. This feedback helped shape the vision for the Community Parks and Recreation Plan.

Community feedback was supported by spatial analysis and a review of existing conditions to create a robust picture of existing parks and recreation needs. Opportunity sites within the community were identified and reviewed for potential parkland development. Strategies to address the identification needs were developed, along with illustration of potential parkland ideas, to move the vision forward to an implementable plan.

WHY PARKS AND URBAN GREENING MATTER?

Parks make significant impacts on the everyday lives of urban residents. They provide valuable places for recreation and social engagement, as well as important ecological services. Together with community-wide urban greening, this plan proposes a vision with wide-reaching impacts, including:

SOCIAL

- **Improved Public Health.** Parks provide locations for outdoor recreation and exercise. Trees and landscape features help clean the urban air and water. Additionally, public trails and tree lined streets encourage walking and physical activity.

- **Stress Reduction and Academic Performance.** Parks in urban areas convey serenity by providing a sensory experience of being surrounded by nature, which helps to reduce stress. Additionally, parks and trees near school grounds facilitate environmental education opportunities and create a healthy setting for learning. Access to green space and opportunities to exercise can help students concentrate and focus in school.
- **Community Safety.** Violence and crime rates are lower in areas with nearby trees and landscaping than areas without trees. Furthermore, research has indicated that neighbors have better relationships with each other and that communities are stronger and more cohesive where there is green space, perhaps because people like where they live and feel safer.
- **Community Building.** The presence of a healthy park network and community-wide efforts to improve park spaces can empower communities to work together to protect and/or expand the network, and to build community identity.
- **Walkable Streets.** Shaded paths and trees offer pedestrians a buffer from nearby vehicles, respite from the hot sun, and colorful scenery to enjoy. In addition, trees can provide dramatic view corridors and, when properly planned, facilitate way-finding within an urban area.

ENVIRONMENTAL

- **Wildlife Habitat.** Parks and green infrastructure provide shelter and food for birds and small animals. The root network of trees and plants are home to a wide array of organisms that provide beneficial soil improvements. A varied plant population supports a wide diversity of habitat, which in addition to being beneficial regionally and globally, creates a dynamic, educational, and enjoyable environment for humans.
- **Stormwater Management.** Trees and stormwater treatment facilities within parks improve the quality of stormwater by intercepting and filtering stormwater before it reaches the underground water system, thus reducing the total amount of runoff lost to storm drains or contributing to flood events.
- **Improved Air Quality.** Trees and plants in urban parks can play several roles in improving air quality. The most direct way that trees help to improve air quality is by absorbing and filtering air pollutants, such as ozone and nitrogen dioxide, through their leaves or needles. In addition, parks reduce air pollution by creating cool microclimates since increased temperatures can accelerate the production of some air pollutants, such as ozone smog. Increased shading can also reduce the demand for air conditioning in buildings, impacting energy need and emissions from energy production at a larger scale.

FIGURE 1.2 WALNUT PARK



Sources: Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation, 2013; Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Agency, 2012; PlaceWorks, 2015.

- Park
- School
- The Link Shuttle: Florence-Firestone/Walnut Park

- **Heat Island Mitigation and Temperature Stabilization.** Urban areas can become “urban heat islands” due to the abundance of dark surfaces like asphalt and buildings that absorb the sun’s heat and re-radiate the heat resulting in higher air temperatures. Parks and green space can reduce this heat island effect by shading parking lots and other surfaces, effectively intercepting the sun’s heat and reducing temperatures through evapotranspiration.

ECONOMIC

- **Energy Conservation and Green Infrastructure.** Energy upgrades and energy conservation measures at parks can result in significant savings. Additionally, trees can help reduce the need for cooling and heating buildings, thereby reducing the cost of operating these systems. In addition, trees are an important component of many green infrastructure projects that reduce costs of stormwater management.
- **Increased Property Value.** Numerous studies have shown a general increase in property value for residential properties near parks and areas with street trees.
- **Increased Activity in Retail Areas.** Small park plazas and street trees can raise the aesthetic appeal of a shopping street, and thus attract more shoppers to a retail block.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE PLAN?

This planning document brings together community input, spatial analysis, and design to present a community-wide plan for parks and recreation. To accomplish this, the plan:

- Provides a guide toward developing new green spaces and enhancing existing recreational amenities in Walnut Park.
- Documents community input on parks and recreation planning issues in the community.
- Formalizes a vision for parks and recreation in Walnut Park based on community input and identified needs.
- Recommends potential sites and site types for acquisition and development of new projects.
- Develops conceptual plans for potential future park sites.
- Proposes meaningful strategies that can be realized by the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) in collaboration with its partners.

WHAT DOES THE PLAN INCLUDE?

Chapter 1. Introduction provides a summary of the plan, background of the planning process, and intended purpose.

Chapter 2. Existing Conditions identifies key conditions related to parks and recreation amenities within Walnut Park, including a demographic profile of the community, an inventory of existing parks and recreation programs, a summary of the existing urban forest, and spatial analysis of the community.

Chapter 3. Community Outreach summarizes the community outreach completed as part of this plan, including key input from the community regarding their perception of park needs and ideas for new parks.

Chapter 4. Needs Assessment describes the current state of park and recreation need within Walnut Park, based on findings from existing conditions, community outreach, and spatial analysis.

Chapter 5 Vision Plan describes the goals and vision of parks and urban greening in Walnut Park, including opportunities for new park development, enhancement of existing facilities, and installation of green infrastructure, including improvements to the urban forest in Walnut Park.

Chapter 6. Design Concepts provides conceptual site designs for sample sites selected during the planning process.

Chapter 7. Implementation recommends potential actions and funding sources for carrying out the vision presented in the plan.

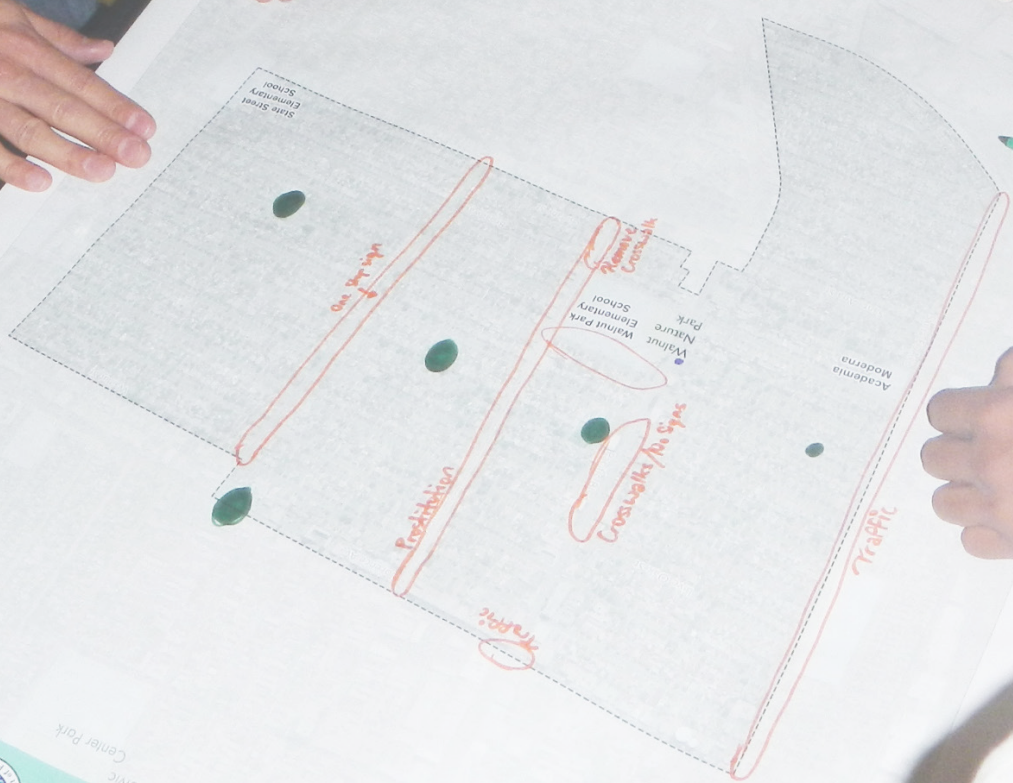


SACHET



SHOW US YOUR WALNUT PARK

SHARE YOUR INPUT: DO YOU USE? Draw a PURPLE circle on GREEN SPACES OR GREEN SPACES Draw a GREEN circle on WALNUT PARK TO WALK? Draw an ORANGE circle around the area where you would like to see GREEN SPACES? Draw a GREEN circle on where you would like to see GREEN SPACES? Draw a GREEN circle on where you would like to see GREEN SPACES?



Nature for Neighborhoods
Come help create a GREENER vision
LAKE BASIN



The background of the page is a faded, grayscale photograph of a park. In the foreground, several tree trunks are visible, some in sharp focus and others blurred. The ground is covered in grass and fallen leaves. In the middle ground, a playground structure with slides and climbing equipment is visible, surrounded by more trees. The overall scene is a typical suburban park setting.

2 - EXISTING CONDITIONS

Walnut Park is a 0.75-square mile, unincorporated community in Los Angeles County. It is bordered by the City of Huntington Park to the north and east, the unincorporated community of Florence-Firestone to the west, and the City of South Gate to the south. It is accessible from three major corridors, including an east-west connection via Florence Avenue and two north-south connections via Pacific Boulevard and Long Beach Boulevard. This chapter includes an overview of the policy context for developing new parks in Walnut Park, presents a community profile of the existing population, and provides a snapshot view of the status of parks and recreation in the community.

POLICY CONTEXT

There are various existing policies in place relevant to the development, financing, and maintenance of new parks in unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County, including the following policy documents:

- **PARKS AND RECREATION ELEMENT OF THE COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES GENERAL PLAN 2035 (ADOPTED OCTOBER 2015).** The Parks and Recreation Element of the County of Los Angeles General Plan plans for and guides the development and maintenance of parkland and recreation space and facilities to meet the needs of existing and future residents. The General Plan will guide future development throughout the unincorporated areas of the County to the year 2035.
- **LOS ANGELES COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION STRATEGIC ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR 2020 (SAMP).** In 2004, the Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation prepared a Strategic Asset Management Plan (SAMP) for Horizon Year 2020. The SAMP provides guidance for park development serving future population growth within the County in accordance with the General Plan’s parks and open space guidelines. The SAMP includes an assessment of existing parks and recreation resources and sets five-, ten-, and twenty-year priorities for identified needs in each Supervisorial District within the County.
- **FLORENCE-FIRESTONE COMMUNITY PARKS AND RECREATION PLAN (DRAFT OCTOBER 2010).** The Florence-Firestone Community Parks and Recreation Plan plans for services that meet the parks and recreation needs of residents in the unincorporated Florence-Firestone area. While this plan applies exclusively to Florence-Firestone, it contains examples of best practices policies reflective of a community process that could be replicated for establishing new parks in Walnut Park and other unincorporated communities.
- **LOS ANGELES COUNTY CODE, TITLE 17 - PARKS, BEACHES AND OTHER PUBLIC AREAS.** In the Los Angeles County Code, Title 17 – Parks, Beaches and Other Public Areas, there are several ordinances pertaining to parks and recreation. In general, the Code implements planning policies and establishes enforceable regulations. The ordinances in Title 17 regulate parks and recreation areas,

arboreta and botanical gardens, beaches, Pyramid Lake, and particular recreational activities (i.e. skateboarding and roller skating).

- **THE QUIMBY ACT.** The California Quimby Act, which is part of the Subdivision Map Act, applies to residential subdivisions and permits cities and counties in California to adopt ordinances which require the dedication of land and/or payment of in-lieu fees for park and recreational facilities. The Quimby Act is made effective through the Los Angeles County Quimby Code in Title 21 (Subdivision Code), which outlines how it is applied throughout the unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County.

A summary of these policy documents and their relevance to the Walnut Park Community Parks and Recreation Plan can be found in Appendix A.

EXISTING JOINT-USE AGREEMENTS

There is currently one joint-use agreement in effect in Walnut Park. The agreement established Walnut Nature Park, the only green space in the community. The school grounds occupy 7 acres; however, the park is only approximately 4.5 acres of this space.

- **WALNUT PARK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL COMMUNITY RECREATION AND COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT (LAUSD) AND COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION (DPR) AND THE SANTA MONICA MOUNTAINS CONSERVANCY (1997).** This community recreational agreement established a twenty-year agreement between the County of Los Angeles, the LAUSD, and the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (the “Conservancy”) for an approximate 196,020 square-foot (4.5 acre) portion of undeveloped land located adjacent to Walnut Park Elementary School, owned by the LAUSD for use as a publicly-accessible park, a multi-purpose field and a blacktop play area. The park area is called Walnut Nature Park and is located along Pacific Boulevard, separated from the school with a fence, and can be accessed without entering the school grounds for Walnut Park Elementary School, while the multi-purpose field and black top area

are located directly adjacent to the school. In exchange for use of the land, DPR and the Conservancy agreed to improve, operate and maintain Walnut Nature Park and the adjacent facilities.

Construction: The Conservancy served as Project Manager during the development of Walnut Nature Park, improvements in 1998 and DPR served as lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and prepared a Negative Declaration for the project.

Operations: The LAUSD reserved the exclusive rights to use the park during “regular school days” (in accordance with LAUSD’s calendar) until 5:00 p.m. The County obtained the rights to use the park after 5:00 p.m. on “regular school days” and on weekends, holidays, and school vacation periods. The agreement was modified in 2014 to permit increased public use of Walnut Nature Park, the area along Pacific Boulevard. This area is intended to open to the public at 3:00 p.m. on “regular school days,” as well as all other hours identified in the original agreement. The multi-purpose field and blacktop area continue to be closed to the public until 5:00 p.m.

DPR obtained the rights to impose charges on members of the public using the park facilities outside of these permitted hours.

Maintenance: The LAUSD agreed to maintain all hardscape, conduct a recycling program, and provide and pay for all utilities. DPR agreed to maintain all planted materials on a weekly basis remove graffiti and to maintain and repair the play area, restroom facilities and the irrigation system. DPR was also deemed responsible for securing the site each evening.

This agreement expires on December 23, 2017, but may be extended by one term of five years. At the end of the additional five years, the agreement may be extended for a mutually agreed upon length of time.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Walnut Park is a census designated place (CDP), which is a geographic area identified by the U.S. Census Bureau for statistical purposes. CDPs are populated areas that lack separate municipal government. CDPs are delineated solely to provide data for settled concentrations of population that are identifiable by name but are not legally incorporated under the laws of the State in which they are located.

POPULATION

Population is an important indicator for assessing parks and recreational needs. Traditionally, parks and recreation goals have been based on the ratio of parkland provided to population (i.e. X acres per 1,000 people). The Los Angeles County General Plan establishes a goal of 4 acres of local parkland per 1,000 people. Walnut Park was home to nearly

16,000 residents in 2010 and has 4.5 acres of local parkland. This acreage represent the area of the Walnut Park Elementary School property that was set aside for public use in the Community Recreation and Cooperative Agreement described earlier. This amounts to just 0.3 acres of local parkland per 1,000 residents. This represents a significant deficiency of local parks in the community. Furthermore, Walnut Nature Park and the adjacent facilities are not open to the public during school hours.

This area experienced significant population growth of 10 percent from 1990 to 2000, followed by a minimal decline in growth from 2000 to 2010. By comparison, Los Angeles County as a whole experienced growth over the past two decades: 7 percent between 1990 and 2000, and 3 percent between 2000 and 2010. A stabilizing population in Walnut Park suggests that when any new parks or recreational facilities are developed in the community, the ratio of parkland to population will improve in the future.

RACE AND ETHNICITY¹

The racial and cultural profile of a community often influences recreational preferences and is important to consider along with other demographic trends. Numerous studies have shown that parks and recreation needs, preferences, and perceptions vary by race/ethnicity, place of origin, and length of residence in the U.S. The vast majority of the population in Walnut Park is Latino (97 percent). Given the Latino majority in this community, it is important to consider their preferences and needs in the planning of new parks and provision of recreational programming.

AGE

Identifying a population’s age profile is important for parks and trails because different age groups have different recreational needs. For example, young children require more play equipment and cushioned surfaces for safety, while seniors utilize more passive recreational amenities such as walking paths and gardens. Understanding how the population shifts over time, with respect to age, is also an important consideration in planning future parks and recreational facilities.

Walnut Park’s median age increased from 27 years in 2000 to 30 years in 2010, but is still noticeably younger when compared to the County’s median age of 35. It is important to note that older age groups (45 and over) have increased in their share of the population, with the 45 to 64 year-old group experiencing the largest increase from 16 percent in 2000 to 21 percent in 2010, while all other groups have slightly declined in their share of the population. As baby boomers approach retirement, an increase in seniors over the next decade is likely to occur as more residents age in place. Therefore, it will be important to include more passive recreational amenities when planning new parks and recreational facilities.

¹ The race and ethnicity categories used in this document (i.e. African American, Asian, Latino, White, and Other) are derived from the 2010 U.S. Census.

FIGURE 2.1 DEMOGRAPHICS SUMMARY

POPULATION CHANGE

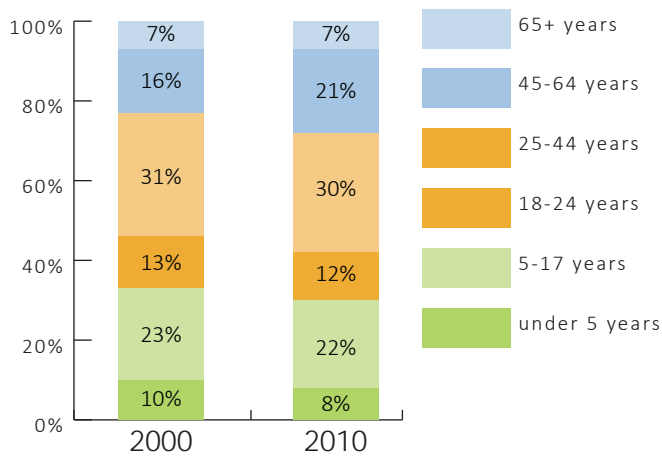
	1990	2000	2010
WALNUT PARK	14,722	16,180	15,966
LOS ANGELES COUNTY	8,863,164	9,519,338	9,834,410
	Percent Change 1990-2000	Percent Change 2000-2010	
WALNUT PARK	+10%	-1%	
LOS ANGELES COUNTY	+7%	+3%	

RACE AND ETHNICITY

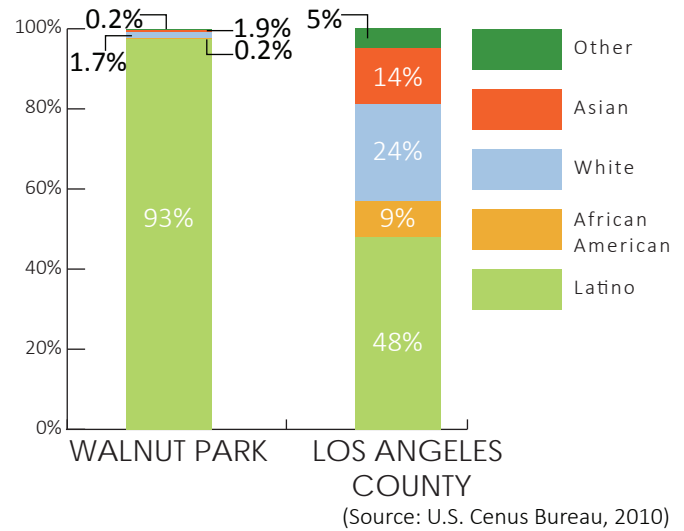
	Percent of 2000 Pop.	Percent of 2010 Pop.	Percent Change 2000-2010
LATINO	96%	97%	+1%
AFRICAN AMERICAN	<1%	<1%	NO CHANGE
WHITE	3%	2%	-1%
ASIAN	<1%	<1%	NO CHANGE
OTHER	<1%	<1%	NO CHANGE
TOTAL	100%	100%	--

EXISTING CONDITIONS

POPULATION BY AGE

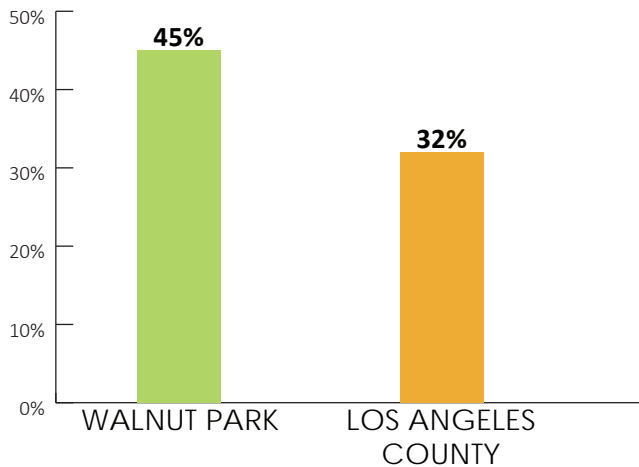


(Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010)



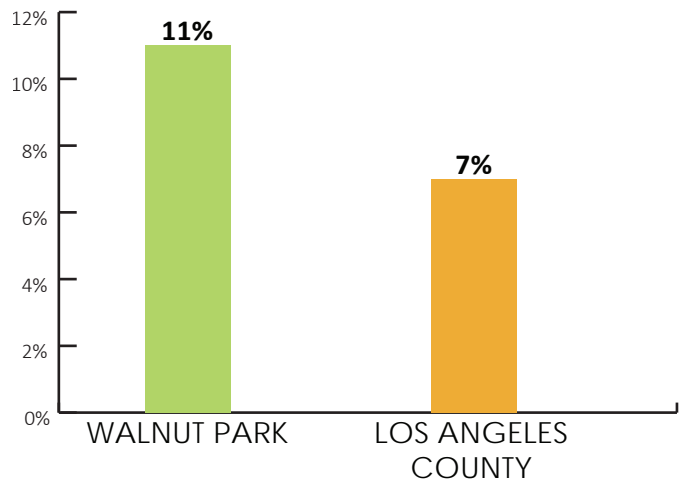
(Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010)

HOUSEHOLDS WITH CHILDREN



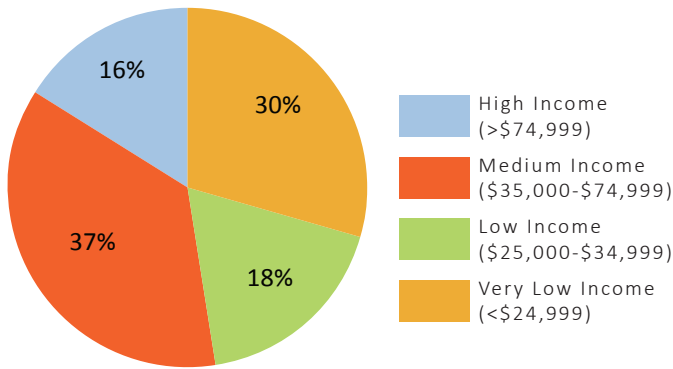
(Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010)

POPULATION THAT COMMUTES WITH PUBLIC TRANSIT



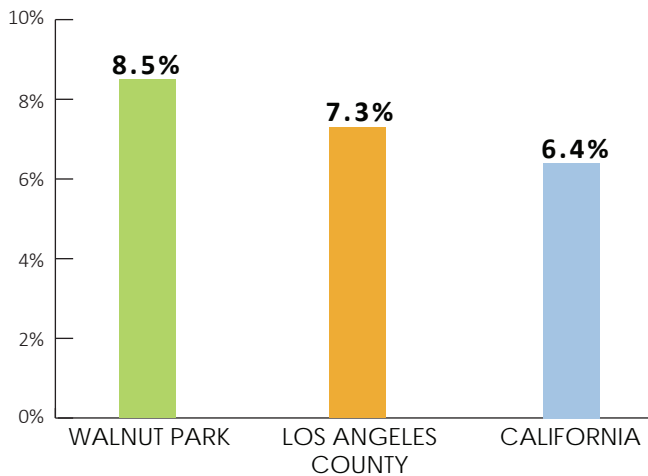
(Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2007-2011 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates)

INCOME GROUPS



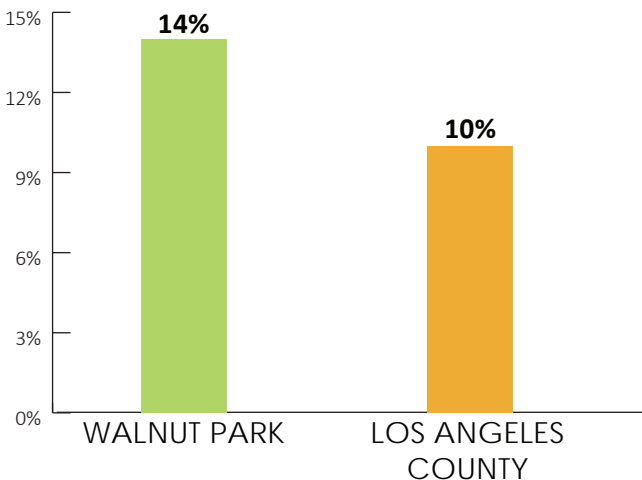
(Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010)

UNEMPLOYMENT ESTIMATES (2013)



(Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Fact Finder 2013)

POPULATION WITHOUT ACCESS TO VEHICLES GROUPS



(Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2007-2011 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates)

Although the population in Walnut Park is aging, the age group making up the largest percentage of the population is the 25 to 44 year-olds (30 percent), followed by the 5 to 17 year-olds (22 percent). These groups represent households with children and suggest a need to plan for park amenities that support activities for the entire family, in addition to seniors.

HOUSEHOLDS WITH CHILDREN

Between 2000 and 2010, the percentage of households with children under age 18 in Walnut Park decreased from 48 percent to 45 percent. Yet the community has significantly more households with young children compared with the County (32 percent). This is consistent with the age profile described earlier and suggests a continual need to plan for park amenities that support families with children.

INCOME

The median income of Walnut Park is \$36,500, significantly lower than the County's median income of \$56,200. In general, lower income populations have fewer opportunities to engage in physical activity and have poorer health outcomes than the average population.² This is due in part to the fact that low-income groups often face social and environmental barriers to physical activity and may have fewer means by which to overcome these obstacles than other income levels. For example, lower income residents are much more likely to rely on public parks for recreation; many lower income families have little or no money to spend on recreational facilities and programs offered by alternative providers such as private gyms and the YWCA.

About 48 percent of the population in Walnut Park is very low or low income, meaning their income is less than \$35,000 annually. This is a significant percentage of the population and emphasizes the need to focus on the needs of lower income residents in the planning of new parks, trails, and open space, in order to improve their access and opportunities for physical activity.

EMPLOYMENT

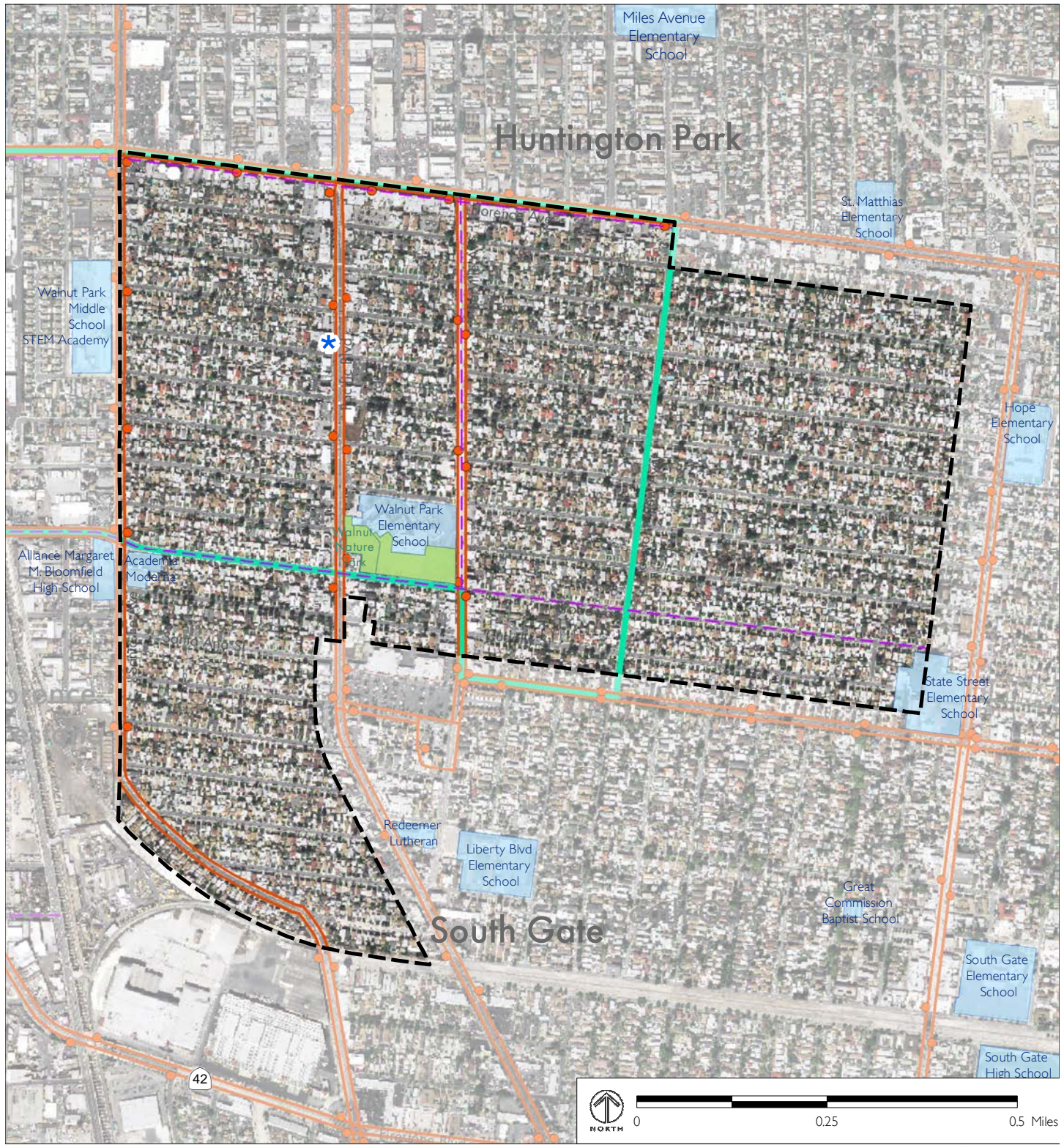
According to the 2007-2011 American Community Survey from the U.S. Census, most of the employed Walnut Park workforce are in the manufacturing industry (20.4%). A slightly smaller percentage of the workforce are in the retail trade (13.9%) or educational services, health care, and social assistance fields (13.9%).

The State of California Employment Development Department estimates from May 2015 indicate that the unemployment rate in Walnut Park (8.5 percent) is higher than the County (7.3 percent) and State (6.4 percent) averages.

² Active Living by Design, 2012, "Low Income Populations and Physical Activity."

FIGURE 2.2 WALNUT PARK COMMUNITY MAP

EXISTING CONDITIONS



Sources: Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation, 2013; Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Agency, 2012; PlaceWorks, 2015.

- | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
| County Park | Bike Network | Public Transit Network | ✱ YWCA Gloria Molina Community Empowerment Center |
| School | — Existing Bikeways | ● Bus Stops | |
| | — Proposed Bikeways | — Bus Routes | |
| | | — The Link Shuttle: Florence-Firestone/Walnut Park | |

VEHICLE ACCESS

Understanding transportation needs is important when considering access to parks and trails. Approximately 14% of households in Walnut Park have no vehicle access compared with 10% for County households. Lack of vehicle access suggests a need for increased transit, pedestrian and bicycle connectivity for local parks. The relationship between automobile ownership and access to parks is not often discussed, but cars clearly make a big difference because they give people mobility and options. With cars or some other form of transportation, residents can travel to recreational facilities outside of their immediate neighborhood, including beaches, arts and cultural facilities, regional parks, State parks, and national parks.

Walnut Park residents are also considerably more dependent on public transportation than other residents in the County. Over 11% of Walnut Park working residents commute to work via transit compared with 7% of workers countywide. This underscores the need to plan new parks and recreational facilities within walking or biking distance to residents and/or in close proximity to public transportation lines wherever possible.

COMMUNITY LAYOUT AND TRANSIT

Walnut Park is located in southern Los Angeles County, approximately 5 miles south of Downtown Los Angeles. Although located within Supervisorial District One, Walnut Park sits at the border between Supervisorial Districts One and Two. The community boundary has changed in recent years between the two jurisdictions, particularly along its western border; Santa Fe Avenue, which is the border between the two districts. The unincorporated community of Florence-Firestone neighbors Walnut Park to the west and is entirely located within Supervisorial District Two. The area west of Santa Fe Avenue is characterized by industrial land uses, which many Walnut Park residents consider to be detrimental to their public health. Additionally, two schools serving Walnut Park youth, Walnut Park Middle School and Alliance Margaret M. Bloomfield High School are located in this area west of Santa Fe Avenue.

Walnut Park is bordered to the north and east by the City of Huntington Park and to the south by the City of South Gate. There are only two schools located entirely within Walnut Park; Walnut Park Elementary School and Academia Moderna Elementary School. Students from Walnut Park attend schools outside of their community boundary.

Pacific Boulevard and Florence Avenue are the major commercial corridors through the community, with numerous retail businesses, office spaces, and restaurants located along these streets. Pacific Boulevard runs from north to south through Walnut Park and serves as the community “main street,” with many local businesses and community amenities

situated along this section of the corridor. South of Walnut Park, Pacific Boulevard becomes Long Beach Boulevard and continues south to Long Beach. Florence Avenue runs east to west and acts as the northern border to Walnut Park and is a major commercial corridor for adjacent communities, including Florence-Firestone, Huntington Park, and Bell. Florence Avenue continues west to Inglewood and the Pacific Ocean and east to the Los Angeles River and the Cities of Bell, Downey, and La Mirada. The 2012 Los Angeles County Bicycle Master Plan proposed bike lanes along Florence Avenue to connect communities along this important route. The Bicycle Master Plan also proposed bike lanes along Broadway, which passes three schools in Walnut Park and the joint-use park.

The community is served by Metro buses, which run along Santa Fe Avenue, Pacific Boulevard, Seville Avenue, and Florence Avenue. Los Angeles County Department of Public Works (DPW) additionally manages a public shuttle called “The Link.” The shuttle offers residents reduced fares (25¢ for the general public and free for seniors, persons with disabilities, children under 5 and Metro Pass Holders) to local destinations within Walnut Park and the unincorporated community of Florence-Firestone, including the Metro Blue Line stations on Florence Avenue and Firestone Boulevard. The Link shuttle runs from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday to Friday and 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Saturdays. Figure 2.2 displays The Link’s routes in Walnut Park.

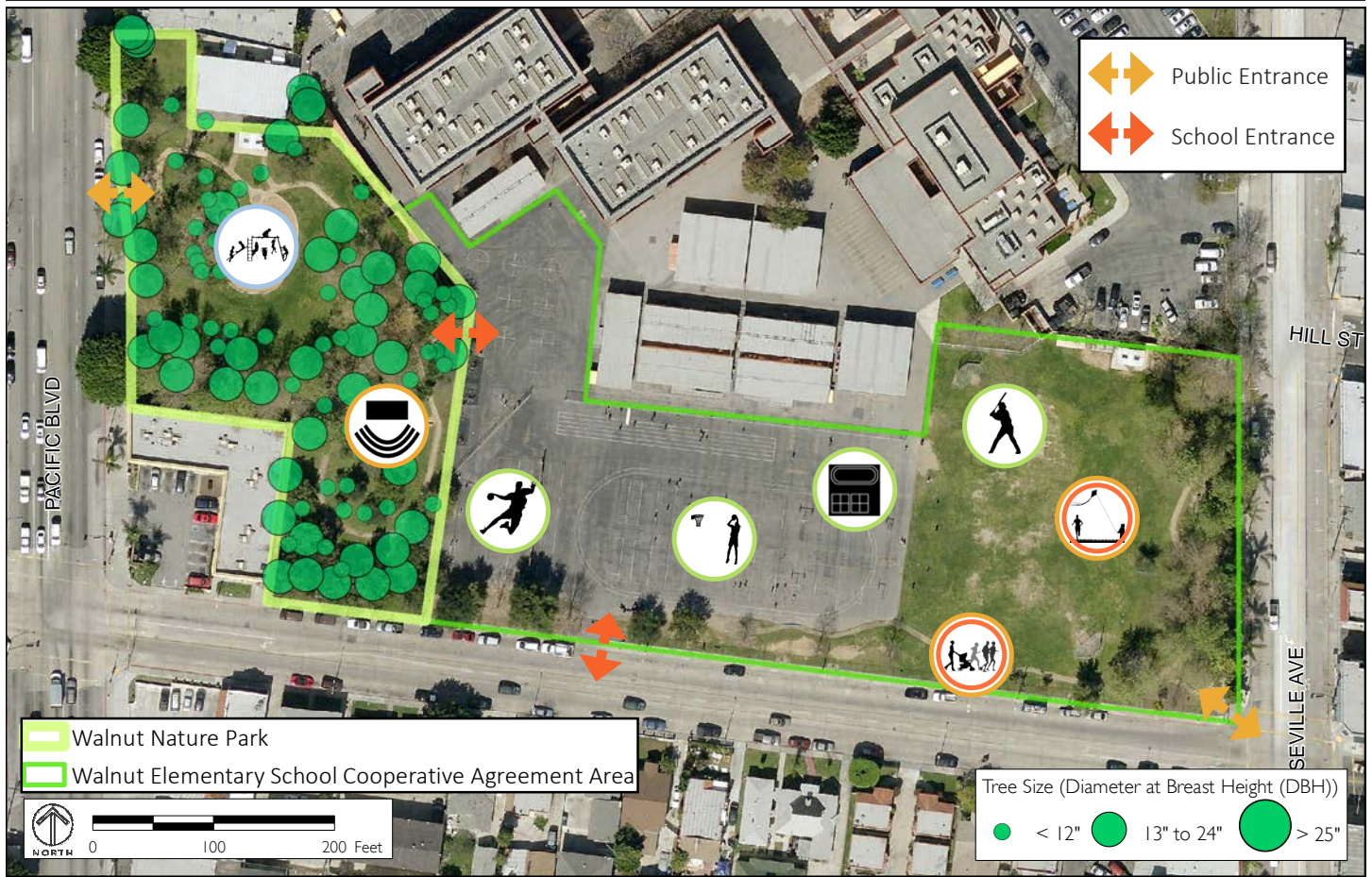
PARKS INVENTORY

The joint-use area at Walnut Park Elementary School is the only park space in Walnut Park. The joint-use area includes Walnut Nature Park along Pacific Boulevard and the multi-purpose field and blacktop area along Broadway.

The 2004 SAMP suggests that by 2020, the Recreation Planning Area in which Walnut Park is located (Planning Area 3 of Supervisorial District 1) will be deficient in providing space for walking, swimming, bicycle riding, fishing, hiking, roller skating, running, and skate boarding, as well as places to play basketball, softball or baseball, volleyball, soccer, football, tennis, and racquetball or handball.

These estimates are based on the national statistics for participation in different types of recreation, and although they show a general projected deficiency in recreational amenities, it will be important to incorporate the community preferences presented in the community outreach component of this plan in making future decisions about how to distribute recreational spaces.

FIGURE 2.3 JOINT-USE FACILITIES AT WALNUT PARK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



EXISTING CONDITIONS

FACILITIES

- sports
- play
- social outdoor
- indoor rec
- 1 softball/baseball field
- 4 basketball courts
- 4 handball courts
- blacktop games
- 1 playground (2-12 yr olds)
- multi-purpose field
- walking path
- amphitheater
- picnic tables

ACCESS

SECURITY LIGHTING

- street lights around park

TRANSPORTATION

- 0 bike racks
- 0 car parking spaces

JOINT-USE FACILITIES AT WALNUT PARK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PARK USE

Figure 2.4 provides an overview of the facilities and amenities at Walnut Nature Park and the adjacent area within the cooperative agreement with Walnut Park Elementary School (“Joint-use Facilities”). As noted, the facility is operated through a cooperative agreement between DPR and LAUSD and was constructed in partnership with the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy. The park is closed to the public during “regular school hours,” but can be used during nights, weekends, and school breaks and holidays. During community outreach events, described in more detail in Chapter Three, many residents expressed frustration with the limited hours and explained that although the park is intended to be open during the public hours, it is commonly left closed and locked, leaving them unclear on the hours of operation.

The joint-use facilities include two main areas; Walnut Nature Park along Pacific Boulevard (approximately 1.5 acres) and the multi-purpose field and blacktop area along Broadway (approximately 3 acres). These spaces are somewhat distinctive in their style and intended use.

Walnut Nature Park is densely wooded and was designed as a quiet retreat for environmental education and gathering. The park includes a playground and an amphitheater. It also has a small walking path circuit . There are picnic tables, benches, and two restrooms to accommodate small gatherings, but it has no barbecues or amenities for outdoor cooking.

The blacktop and multi-purpose field are more directly integrated with the school and serve as a site for active recreation during the school day and after. The space is divided between a multipurpose field with two baseball or softball backstops (although they share an outfield and the



EXISTING CONDITIONS

FIGURE 2.4 MATRIX OF PARK ELEMENTS AT WALNUT PARK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Size (acres)	Park Amenities					Play			Recreation Amenities					Buildings/Structures																	
	Restrooms	Group Picnic Shelters	Picnic Tables	Barbecues	Splash Pad	Fitness Zone	Outdoor Stage	Vending Machine	Drinking Fountain	Art / Monuments	2-5 years	5-12 years	2-12 years	Softball Field	Multipurpose Field	Soccer Field	Football Field	Basketball Court	Tennis Court	Volleyball Court	Skate Park	Walking Paths or Trails	Swimming Pool	Community Building	Senior Center	Offices	Gymnasium	Multi-purpose Room	Computer Lab	Security Lighting	Parking
4.50																															

space is only large enough for one game to occur at a time) and a blacktop area with surface games, including basketball, handball, four square, a circular track, and a straight track. The public entrance to the space at Broadway and Seville Avenue is designed to mimic the natural style of Walnut Nature Park and serves as a good gateway into the facility. There is a walking path along the eastern and southern edges that connect visitors between the multi-purpose field, the blacktop area, and Walnut Nature Park. The walking path is located on the interior of the fence area and is only accessible when the park is open.

PARK CONDITION

The joint-use facilities at Walnut Park Elementary School provide important park amenities for Walnut Park residents but are rarely used other than a facility for students at the school. The park forest, or trees at the park discussed more in-depth below, are healthy, and this area is one of the more dense areas of urban forest in the community. The joint-use facilities are completely enclosed by a chain-link fence, which is somewhat degraded in areas, as well as generally uninviting. The multi-purpose field shows significant signs of wear. The path along the multi-purpose field and blacktop areas is also significantly degraded.

DPR maintains a list of maintenance issues, necessary upgrades, and refurbishments for its existing parks. Identified renovations of the joint-use facilities at Walnut Park Elementary School include:

- Enhance Walnut Nature Park with the following amenities:
 - *West entrance improvement with floral garden and native plants*
 - *Picnic area with trellis*
 - *Picnic tables*
 - *Braisers*
 - *Decorative fencing*
 - *Benches*
 - *Kiosk*
 - *Amphitheater canopy*
- Install tubular steel fencing around park perimeter
- Construct new walkway path with colored concrete between field and west side

RECREATIONAL PROGRAMS

Recreational programming enriches a community by providing access to new forms of physical activity and social engagement. The Parks and Recreation Element of the 2035 Los Angeles General Plan states that parks and recreation programs specifically benefit the greater community by:

- Offering opportunities to play, grow, and learn.*
- Providing a sense of place and belonging.*
- Promoting health and wellness.*
- Improving neighborhood and community connections, and problem-solving.*
- Enhancing community cohesiveness while honoring diversity.*
- Helping protect natural environments.*

TABLE 2.1 SUMMARY OF PROGRAMS AT JOINT-USE FACILITIES AT WALNUT PARK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

PROGRAM	MONTH	DAY	TIME	AGE
Sports/Wellness				
Baseball Clinic	Summer	Varies	5:30 p.m. - 6:45 p.m.	6-12 years
Flag Football Clinic	August	Varies	5:30 p.m. - 6:45 p.m.	6-12 years
Soccer Club	September	Varies	5:30 p.m. - 6:45 p.m.	6-12 years
Capers Program	March to June	Saturday	12:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.	7-17 years
Cheerleading	September to January	Saturday	10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.	7-15 years
Social				
Fun club	Year round	Saturday	1:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.	7-12 years
Teen club	Summer	Friday	5:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.	12-17 years

Although many programs target health and fitness, recreational programming can also offer educational opportunities, job and life skills, or arts and social activities. The types of activities offered vary based on community interest and involvement.

PROGRAMS AT JOINT-USE FACILITIES AT WALNUT PARK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Table 2.1 lists the current programs offered at the joint-use facilities at Walnut Park Elementary School. Due to the location of the facilities on the school grounds, all of the programs are focused on youth, while other parks throughout the County have programs for people of all ages. The various park programs are offered at different times throughout the year. Table 2.1 also includes a summary of the month, day and time of each program.

OTHER RECREATIONAL PROGRAMS

SCHOOLS

Other schools in Walnut Park also offer afterschool programs. State Street Elementary School participates in the Los Angeles School District's Beyond the Bell afterschool program and Academia Moderna Charter School offers their own modified program with staff onsite. Both programs run afterschool until 6:00 p.m. and focus on academic enrichment and offer arts and fitness activities.

YWCA SUPERVISOR GLORIA MOLINA COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT CENTER

In 2014, YWCA opened an empowerment center on the southwest corner of Pacific Boulevard and Flower Street. The center focuses predominately on child development and care for toddlers and preschoolers. The facility also offers employment programs for adults and afterschool enrichment for older youth.

The facility includes a small playground for young children enrolled in programs at the center and a community gathering room for public events. There are plans for the YWCA to provide senior services and classes on healthy lifestyles and behaviors.

OTHER GREEN SPACES

COMMUNITY GARDENS

In addition to the joint-use facilities at Walnut Park Elementary School, there is a garden space located on the north side of the campus. The garden includes eleven raised planter boxes for growing vegetables and a school mural. Walnut Park Elementary School does not currently utilize the garden for school curriculum nor is it open to the public for use.



YWCA Supervisor Gloria Molina Community Empowerment Center
source: YWCA Greater Los Angeles



Garden at Walnut Park Elementary School

URBAN FOREST INVENTORY

Trees are intricately connected to the quality of life in an urban landscape and are key components of most greening strategies. The benefits afforded by trees, when grouped together as a healthy urban forest, are extensive. Benefits can include improved public health, walkable streets and increased pedestrian activity, community safety, improved air quality, reduced temperatures in urban heat islands, stormwater management, reduced building heating and cooling costs, and an enhanced sense of community, serenity, and beautification.³⁴ As such, understanding the extent, condition, benefits and costs of the urban forest is essential to identifying greening opportunities and making good management decisions regarding tree planting, maintenance, removal, and replacement.

EXISTING URBAN FOREST

The existing urban forest in Walnut Park was examined based on tree canopy coverage data for the neighborhood as a whole, as well as an inventory of trees at Walnut Nature Park.⁵ The neighborhood-wide canopy analysis provides a big picture understanding of the overall urban forest in Walnut Park and sets a benchmark for increasing overall coverage. The inventory of the trees within Walnut Nature Park provides an understanding of forest structure and forest benefits. In addition to presenting this analysis, this document provides summary of community input regarding Walnut Park's urban forest in order to establish a more complete picture of the assets, limitations, and needs of the community urban forest.

CANOPY COVERAGE AT THE COMMUNITY SCALE

EXISTING COVERAGE

Utilizing LIDAR⁶ images provided by the County of Los Angeles, it was possible to determine overall tree canopy coverage in Walnut Park, including both publicly and privately maintained trees. Although this method does not allow for the assessment of each individual tree, it provides a clear picture of the total coverage and reveals the areas that are well-planted or areas to focus new plantings. Figure 2.5 shows the density of tree canopy coverage in Walnut Park.

3 Southern Center for Forest Benefits and Benefits of Urban Trees, USDA Tree Benefits brochure, <http://www.urbanforestrysouth.org/resources/library/benefits-of-urban-treesbooklet>, accessed March 23, 2010.

4 Alliance for Community Trees, Benefits of Trees and urban Forests (Resource List), http://www.actrees.org/files/Research/benefits_of_trees.pdf, accessed February 25, 2014.

5 The other trees on the school grounds of Walnut Elementary School were not included in the inventory.

6 LIDAR, which stands for "Light Detection and Ranging", is a remote sensing technology that is use to examine the Earth's surface by using light beams from airborne lasers to measure distance, which provides a detailed group of elevation data points that can be used for mapping topography.

As Figure 2.5 demonstrates, the tree canopy coverage in Walnut Park is relatively uniform, with an obvious decrease in coverage along Santa Fe Avenue and Pacific Boulevard. The areas outside of Walnut Park to the west of Sante Fe Avenue are predominately industrial, a land use that traditionally has low tree canopy coverage. Likewise, Pacific Boulevard is predominately commercial, which also traditionally has low tree canopy coverage. However, Pacific Boulevard is also highly used by pedestrians and serves as a connection to Walnut Nature Park and would benefit from increased tree plantings.

Walnut Park has a total tree canopy coverage of 16 percent. It is expected that the urban forest would differ based on land use. Table 2.2 provides a breakdown of the existing coverage in Walnut Park based on land use. For simplification, similar land uses were combined for this analysis. The table also includes the list of land uses in each group.

In addition to parks, streets and sidewalks serve as a primary location for urban forest trees. Street plantings can mitigate the impacts of stormwater running off roadways, absorb vehicle emissions, and improve the pedestrian environment. Currently, 8 percent of Walnut Park's roadways contains tree canopies, suggesting that there is opportunity to increase street planting. These plantings would be most beneficial on roadways that form connections to Walnut Nature Park, schools, and other future green space in the community; effectively creating a green network within the community.

RELATIVE CANOPY COVERAGE

Research conducted by American Forests⁷ recommends an overall average canopy coverage of 25 percent as appropriate for urban areas in temperate and arid climates, such as Walnut Park, based on recommended coverage for specific land uses of 35 percent for suburban residential, 18 percent for urban residential zones, and 9 percent for central business districts. Furthermore, the City of Los Angeles 1-Million Tree Canopy Cover Assessment found an average canopy coverage of 21 percent within the City and set a target coverage of 27.5 percent as an average for all land use types.⁸ The study additionally found an existing coverage of 30.5 percent for low-density residential, 14.5 percent for medium/high-density residential, 3.5 percent for industrial, 5.6 percent for commercial, 18.3 percent for institutional, and 9.4 percent for unknown uses.

Walnut Park is currently lower than both the American Forest standard and the existing target coverage for the City of Los Angeles. Table 2.3 demonstrates these differences.

7 American Forests is a nonprofit conservation organization that is a recognized for their pioneering work in the science and practice of urban forestry.

8 McPherson, E. Gregory, James R. Simpson, Quingu Xiao, and Chuxia Wu. Los Angeles 1-Million Tree Canopy Cover Assessment. USDA. January 2008. http://www.fs.fed.us/psw/publications/documents/psw_gtr207/psw_gtr207.pdf.

FIGURE 2.5 EXISTING CANOPY COVERAGE



Source: Los Angeles County Parks and Recreation, 2013, PlaceWorks, 2015.

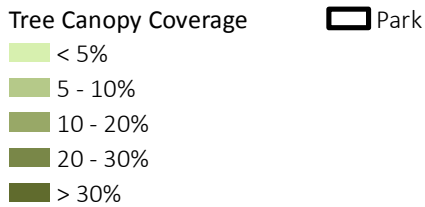


TABLE 2.2 TREE CANOPY COVERAGE IN WALNUT PARK BASED ON LAND USE

Land Use	Combined Land Use Groups	Total Area (Acres)	Total Canopy Area (Acres)	Tree Canopy Coverage
Low-density Residential	Single-family residence	385	67	17%
High-density Residential	Unlimited residence Limited multiple residence Two-family residence	37	5	14%
Commercial/ Institutional	Unlimited commercial Commercial manufacturing Commercial planned development Commercial recreation Institutional Neighborhood business Parking restricted Restricted business	52	4	8%
Industrial	Heavy manufacturing Light manufacturing Restricted heavy manufacturing	1	0.02	2%
Open Space*	Open space	2	0.7	35%
TOTAL		477	77	Average: 16%

*Open Space includes Walnut Nature Park and the adjacent streets.

TABLE 2.3 WALNUT PARK TREE CANOPY COVERAGE COMPARISONS

Land Use	Walnut Park Existing Tree Canopy Coverage	American Forest Recommended Tree Canopy Coverage	City of Los Angeles Existing Tree Canopy Coverage	City of Los Angeles Target Tree Canopy Coverage
Low-density Residential	17%	35%	31%	n/a
High-density Residential	14%	18%	15%	n/a
Commercial/Institutional	8%	9%	6% / 18%	n/a
Industrial	2%	n/a	4%	n/a
Open Space*	35%	n/a	n/a	n/a
Average	16%	25%	21%	27.5%

*Open Space includes Walnut Nature Park and the adjacent streets.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

TREE INVENTORY WITHIN WALNUT NATURE PARK

Trees within Walnut Nature Park were inventoried and assessed in 2013 with funding provided by a grant from the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE).⁹ This section provides an overview of the forest structure and benefits provided by the forest contained within Walnut Nature Park. The inventory was utilized to create a database within an analysis tool called iTrees Streets. This free tool was developed by a team of researchers with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Service, Davey Tree Service, and the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA), which allows cities to analyze the benefit of their forest. iTrees Streets is a street tree management and analysis tool that uses tree inventory data to assign dollar values to energy savings, carbon dioxide reduction, air quality, stormwater control, and property value increase.

The 2013 inventory identified 95 trees in Walnut Nature Park. Walnut Nature Park’s trees are together referred to as the “Park Forest” in this section. This report summarizes the species composition, age composition, and estimated benefits provided by the forest in dollar value, as well as an overview of the general condition, necessary maintenance, and potential conflicts with existing infrastructure. The complete data set resulting from iTrees Streets’ analysis is provided in Appendix B. The number of trees at Walnut Nature Park and the related canopy coverage is provided in Table 2.4. Canopy coverage in Walnut Nature Park was calculated using iTrees streets rather than LiDAR data.

FOREST STRUCTURE

Studies of urban forests suggest that a strong urban forest resource “possess a mix of species, sizes, and ages.”¹⁰ This diversity ensures the longevity and resilience of the forest over time. Increasing tree species diversity reduces the risk that a single blight, disease, or pest can destroy an entire forest population, as many of these issues are species-specific and spread more easily to related populations. Researchers additionally recommend utilizing native trees wherever possible, as they are well-suited for the environment and have developed resilience to local pests, and provide suitable habitat for native wildlife. Diversity in age and size ensures the long-term stability of an urban forest. As trees die and are replaced, there needs to be younger trees to offset the removal. Very

9 A grant from the Statewide Prop 84 CAL FIRE Inventory Program was awarded to the Los Angeles County Parks and Recreation Department in 2013 for the creation of a tree inventory, as well as an analysis of the trees’ health, maintenance, and spatial needs, for the underserved areas within the community.

10 Clark, James R., Nelda P. Matheny, Genni Cross, and Victoria Wake. “A Model of Urban Forest Sustainability.” *Journal of Arboriculture* 23(1): January 1997.

young trees do not provide the same benefits as established trees, so simply replacing the tree will not achieve the same immediate effect. The Park Forest in Walnut Nature Park is described below with consideration to structural diversity.

SPECIES COMPOSITION

The species composition of a forest affects the aesthetic character of a park and/or forest, as well as the benefits that it provides. For instance, palms and conifers are generally tall and narrow trees and provide minimal shade. Broadleaf trees, like oaks and sycamores, provide greater canopy coverage and shade and therefore have greater measurable benefits.

Walnut Park’s Park Forest is composed of 87 percent broadleaf species, 8 percent conifers, and 4 percent palm trees. Of the broadleaf species, 47 percent are deciduous and 53 percent are evergreen. Most of the forest (86 percent) is comprised of large stature trees. Small stature trees account for the remaining 14 percent of the Park Forest.

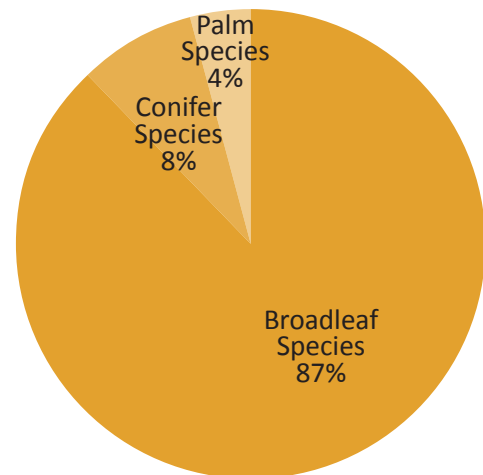
Species diversity is also an important consideration to forest health, as diversity can buffer the impacts of pests and weather conditions on the forest. For this reason, it is widely recommended that no more than 10 percent of the forest be comprised of any one species.¹¹

11 Clark, et al. 1997.

TABLE 2.4 OVERVIEW OF TREES AT WALNUT NATURE PARK

Total Trees	Tree Canopy Coverage (%)
95	35%

FIGURE 2.6 SPECIES COMPOSITION



Walnut Nature Park's Park Forest includes 12 unique species. The species of the Park Forest include California coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*) (27.4 percent), California sycamore (*Platanus racemosa*) (22.1-percent), London planetree (*Platanus x acerfolia*) (13.7 percent), southern live oak (*Quercus virginiana*) (12.6 percent), Italian stone pine (*Pinus pinea*) (8.4 percent), Mexican fan palm (*Washingtonia robusta*) (4.2 percent), Fraser photinia (*Photinia x fraseri*) (3.2 percent), common crapemyrtle (*Lagerstroemia indica*) (2.1 percent), Brisbane box (*Tristanopsis conferta*) (2.1 percent), Neomexican blue elderberry (*Sambucus caerulea* 'Neomexicana') (2.1 percent), canyon live oak (*Quercus chrysolepsis*) (1.1 percent), and white mulberry (*Morus alba*) (1.1 percent). While it is notable that California coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*) comprises a significant portion of the Park Forest, it is possible that if trees outside of this park were to be inventoried the species diversity may be more balanced.



Inclusion of native species in the urban forest can be beneficial as native species are well-suited to the local climate and provide valuable habitat. While native species are not always well suited to the constraints of urban environments, such as small tree wells and clearance requirements along roadways, many species are highly suitable to park environments. It is notable that there are 48 California native species within Walnut Park's Park Forest, or 50 percent of the forest. These trees include 21 California sycamore trees (*Platanus racemosa*), 26 coast live oak trees (*Quercus agrifolia*), and a single canyon live oak (*Quercus chrysolepsis*) tree. The concentration of native trees suggests that native plants are a defining characteristic of Walnut Park's Park Forest, and that efforts to increase diversity could focus on broadening the native plant palette.

RELATIVE AGE DISTRIBUTION

Age distribution is an important consideration when assessing an urban forest since every tree has a limited life span and different considerations are necessary depending on the age of a tree. For instance, urban trees are often planted at the same time (such as during the construction of a new park or street) and thus will reach the end of their life span at the same time. This makes it challenging to preserve an area's character, while addressing safety issues and removing trees. It is beneficial to a forest's health to have an uneven age distribution.¹² Studies suggest that the bulk of the tree population (approximately 40 percent) be composed of young trees in order to offset the loss of older and diseased trees.¹³

¹² Clark, et al. 1997.

¹³ Richards NA. 1982/83. "Diversity and stability in a street tree population." *Urban Ecology*. 7:159–171.



Given the difficulty of determining the age of each tree, diameter-at-breast-height (DBH), or 4.5 feet above ground level, is often used as an indicator of age distribution. Walnut Park’s Park Forest is equally distributed between young trees and established trees. Approximately 47 percent of trees are relatively young with DBH less than 12”; 53 percent are established trees with DBH of 12-24”. There are no trees with DBH of over 24”. These findings suggest that the trees within the Park Forest should strive for many more years and replacement may not be necessary in the short term.

CONDITION

Tree health also determines when it needs to be replaced as diseased trees can die prematurely. In this analysis, each tree was evaluated as being dead, critical, poor, fair, or good with consideration to the structural condition (the woody components) and the functional condition (the foliage).

The Park Forest in Walnut Nature Park is relatively well managed, with the all of the trees (100-percent) receiving a fair rating.

MAINTENANCE NEED

As part of the tree inventory, maintenance needs were categorized for each tree based on CAL FIRE grant guidelines. Maintenance needs identified for Walnut Nature Park’s Park Forest are described in Table 2.5.

The identified maintenance needs indicate that over 10 percent of the Park Forest’s trees should be removed. In addition, 54 percent of the trees are identified as requiring Priority 1 pruning, which indicates that a high level of potential hazards need to be addressed and may indicate maintenance has been deferred. Additional tree plantings will be an important consideration when addressing maintenance needs.

CONFLICTS WITH EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE AND UTILITIES

Urban trees exist in close proximity to other features of the urban environment and can interfere with infrastructure. Common issues include sidewalk damage from tree roots and tree canopy interference with overhead utility lines.

None of the trees in Walnut Nature Park’s Park Forest cause any sidewalk damage. This is primarily because many of the trees are planted on the interior of the park space and provide ample space for root growth.

Similarly, none of the trees in Walnut Park’s Park Forest conflict with overhead utility lines because there are no utility lines crossing Walnut Nature Park.

TABLE 2.5 MAINTENANCE NEEDS

Maintenance Need	Description (Based on CAL FIRE Grant Guidelines)	Number of Trees
Priority 1 Removal	Trees that have defects that cannot be cost-effectively or practically treated, and pose hazards to people or property. These trees are the first to be removed.	3
Priority 2 Removal	Trees that should be removed but do not pose a liability as great as the first priority.	7
Priority 1 Pruning	Trees that require priority 1 trimming to remove hazardous deadwood, hangers, or broken branches. Hazardous limbs or leaders are greater than four inches in diameter.	52
Priority 2 Pruning	Trees that have dead, dying, diseased, or weakened branches between two and four inches in diameter and are potential safety hazards.	24
Training Pruning	Young, large growing trees that require pruning to minimize future maintenance requirements.	9



FOREST BENEFITS

The benefits of an urban forest to a population can be measured both in environmental impacts and economic value. These benefits can be estimated and quantified based on tree size, type, and condition to provide a value for the urban forest. Following is a summary of both the environmental and economic benefits of Walnut Nature Park’s Park Forest, based on iTrees Streets’ analysis. As iTrees Streets was designed for the analysis of street trees rather than park trees, the analysis assumes that trees are set along roadways, and therefore the estimated benefits are likely on the high side for park trees. A full summary of the impacts of the individual tree species in Walnut Nature Park’s Park Forest can be found in Appendix B.

ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

Environmental benefits include the interception of stormwater runoff, improvement of air quality, and reduction of atmospheric carbon dioxide. Larger trees with more established canopies and roots tend to have greater impacts. It is important to maintain a young population, as well as to replace dying or removed trees, thereby maintaining continuous urban forest benefits. These benefits are summarized in Table 2.6.

TABLE 2.6 SUMMARY OF ANNUAL NET ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS AT WALNUT NATURE PARK

Stormwater (Gallons of Stormwater Intercepted)	Air Quality (Pounds of Reduced Air Pollutants)*	Carbon Dioxide (Tons of CO2 Sequestered per Year)
118,040	162	15,149

* Air Quality pounds includes deposition of Ozone (O3), Nitrogen Dioxide (NO2), Particulate Matter (PM10) and Sulfur Dioxide (SO2) and avoidance of NO2, PM-10, Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs), and SO2, but does not take into account potential Biogenic Volatile Organic Compounds (BVOCs) emissions.

ECONOMIC BENEFITS

Many of these environmental benefits also have economic value, although this value is difficult to quantify since the services that trees provide are generally considered free. However, iTrees Streets can be used to quantify the economic value trees provide. Based on the analysis using this program, Walnut Nature Park’s Park Forest currently has an estimated gross value of \$11,566, in the combined benefits related to energy savings, carbon dioxide sequestration, air quality, stormwater management, aesthetic and other benefits.

- **Energy Savings.** Trees save energy by reducing the need to heat and cool buildings. The value of energy savings is calculated by iTrees Streets based on assumptions for tree species regarding shading, canopy coverage, species size, and assumptions relating to regional climate and wind patterns.
- **Carbon Dioxide Reduction.** The value of reductions in carbon dioxide are calculated by iTrees Streets based upon costs associated with global warming. The amount of carbon dioxide sequestered depends upon tree size and species. Carbon dioxide released and generated by tree maintenance (use of chain saws, etc.) and by decomposition of trees are also considered by iTrees Streets.
- **Stormwater Runoff Reduction.** The implied value of stormwater reduction considers the amount of stormwater captured and the general cost of urban stormwater management.
- **Aesthetic and Other Benefits.** The fiscal value of beautification, shade, habitat, privacy, comfort, and great urban spaces is difficult to quantify. iTrees Streets estimates the fiscal value of these benefits based upon estimated property values. Research shows that buyers are willing to pay more for houses and properties with trees, and therefore trees increase property value.

These benefits are summarized Table 2.7. Considering these benefits as a whole, the average annual economic benefit of a tree within Walnut Nature Park’s Park Forest is \$209. As previously stated, estimates are based on benefits provided by street trees and therefore may be high for park trees.

TABLE 2.7 SUMMARY OF ANNUAL NET ECONOMIC BENEFITS

Energy	Stormwater	Air Quality*	Carbon Dioxide	Aesthetics	Total
\$2,175	\$649	\$103	\$72	\$16,875	\$55,866

* Air quality includes deposition of ozone (O3), nitrogen dioxide (NO2), particulate matter (PM-10) and avoidance of NO2, PM10, volatile organic compounds (VOCs), and sulfur dioxide (SO2), as well as Biogenic Volatile Organic Compounds (BVOCs) emissions.

SPATIAL ANALYSIS

Existing community facilities and infrastructure, as well as community indicators, were mapped and evaluated in order to gain a better understanding of Walnut Park’s physical environment and examine social factors such as a crime, safety, and public health. This analysis provides insight on the issues and conditions relative to the existing park. In addition, it informs the site evaluation and eventual selection for potential new parks and recreational projects.

This analysis includes six components:

- Park Access
- Population Density
- Vacant Lands
- Transit and Transportation
- Crime
- Health

PARK ACCESS

Traditionally, DPR considers a local park to be accessible to residents within a half-mile of the park. Half of a mile is considered a distance residents can typically walk to within ten minutes. Larger regional parks generally draw from a larger area, up to 25 miles away; however, park users may drive or use public transit to visit these facilities. These access boundaries for parks in and around Walnut Park are shown in Figure 2.9.

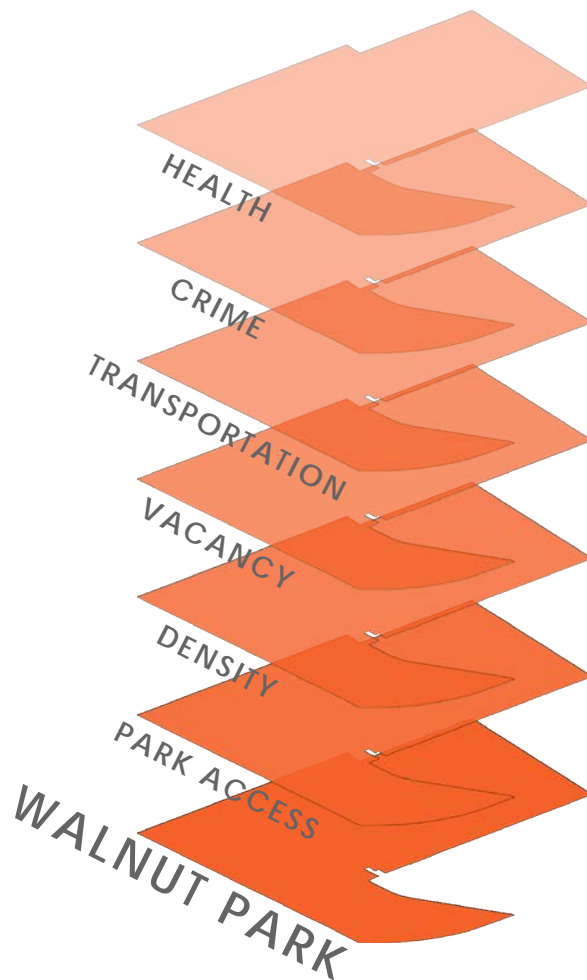
Additional analysis suggests that park usage might be limited by the existing street network and pedestrian access conditions. For this study area, the half-mile distance threshold was combined with street data and common pedestrian routes to determine if residents have walkable access to Walnut Nature Park.

PARKLAND GAP AND WALKABILITY

The parkland gap/walkability analysis was completed using the Network Analyst tool in ArcGIS, as well as field visits, to identify areas with and without walkable access to parks. All parks within the community boundary were used in the analysis along with parks up to a half-mile outside the community boundary. Fieldwork was used to identify pedestrian access points to the park, barriers, and connections affecting walkability. Residential and non-residential areas were differentiated using the Los Angeles County Assessor’s parcel information.

Walnut Nature Park and the other joint-use facilities at Walnut Park Elementary School are located approximately in the center of the community. The centralized location of this park allows it to serve almost 60 percent of Walnut Park’s residents. Another 7 percent of residents can access Salt Lake Park, located in the City of Huntington Park, by foot within 10 minutes. Walnut Nature Park also serves some neighboring communities, including Florence-Firestone and South Gate. Although there are multiple parks located outside of Walnut Park, most are not close enough to serve the remaining 33 percent of residents in need.

FIGURE 2.7 WHAT IS SPATIAL ANALYSIS?



Spatial analysis includes a series of maps that provide a geographic assessment at the community scale. Together, they help to provide a comprehensive picture of community conditions, including opportunities and constraints, as well as need for new parkland development.

FIGURE 2.8 POPULATION NEAR A PARK

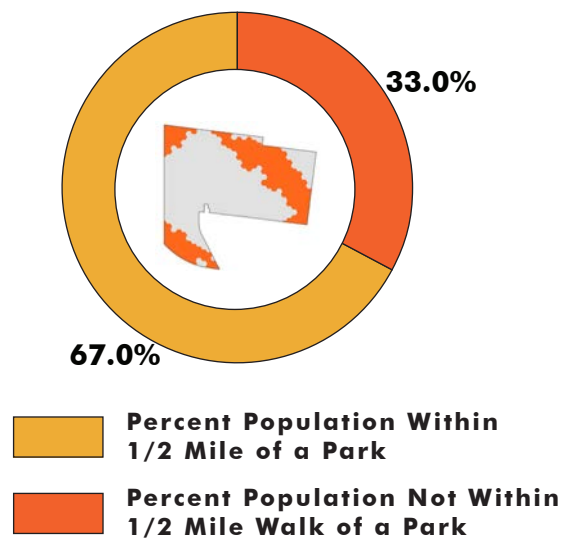
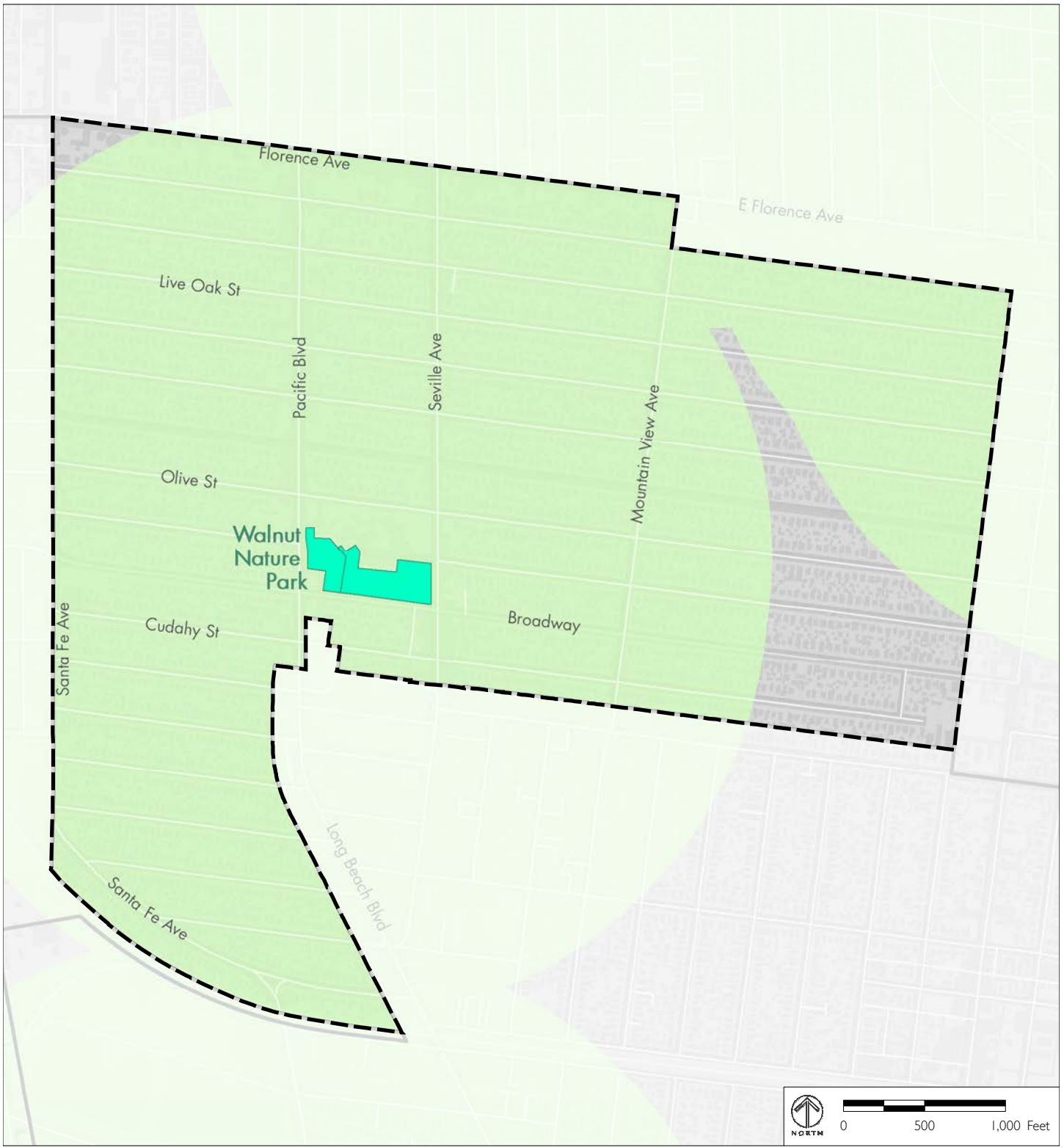


FIGURE 2.9 SERVICE AREAS - LOCAL AND REGIONAL PARKS

EXISTING CONDITIONS



Source: Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation, 2013, PlaceWorks, 2015.

Park Access

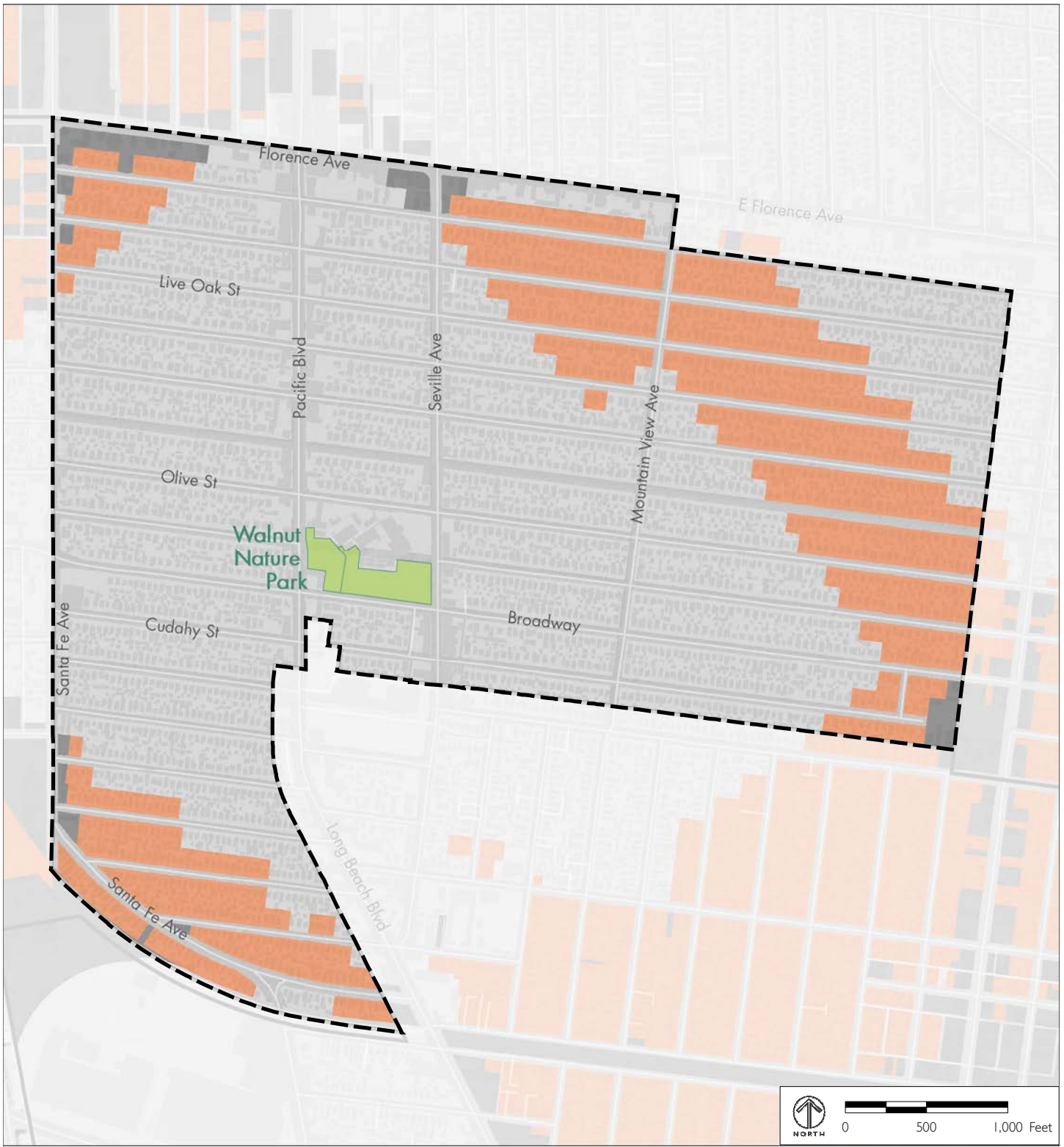
Area Not Within 1/2 Mile of a Local Park

1/2 Mile Service Radius from Local Parks

Green Space

Park Included in Analysis (includes parks within 1/2 mile of community boundary)

FIGURE 2.10 PARKLAND GAPS/WALKABILITY



Source: Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation, 2013, PlaceWorks, 2015.

Park Access

- Area Within 1/2 Mile (10 minute walk) of a Park
- Non-Residential Area Not Within 1/2 Mile (10 minute walk) of a Park
- Residential Area Not Within 1/2 Mile (10 minute walk) of a Park

Green Space

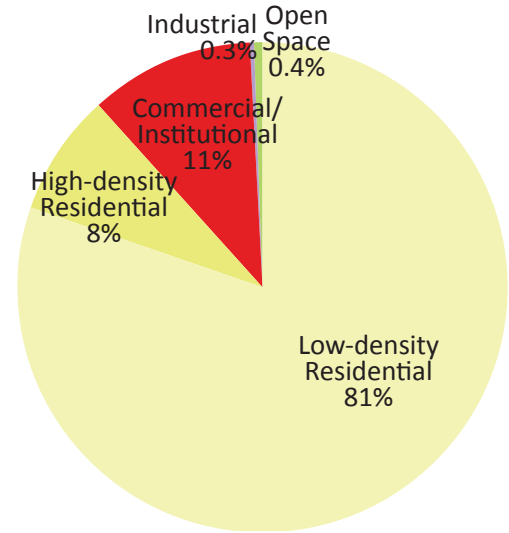
- Park Included in Analysis

LAND USE

As shown in Figures 2.11 and 2.12, Walnut Park is predominately a residential neighborhood. Nearly all of the the community (81 percent) is low-density residential and 8 percent is high-density housing. The majority of “high-density” residential properties are typically small in number with five to ten units rather than large structures common to dense downtown areas. Generally, housing units are located on small lots, which produce a low but dense pattern of development across the community.

Commercial uses are concentrated on Pacific Boulevard, Florence Avenue, Seville Avenue, and some sections of Santa Fe Avenue. Businesses along these corridors are typically low density and cater more directly to vehicular traffic. There are some small chain and “mom and pop-”style restaurants, as well as small retail centers and service facilities, like hair salons, bakeries, law offices, and medical centers. There is a large retail hub with a large grocery store located just south of Walnut Park along Pacific Boulevard in the City of South Gate. Businesses along Santa Fe Avenue are typically more industrial and there a number of vehicles sales, repair, or salvage businesses along this corridor.

FIGURE 2.11 LAND USE TYPES



Businesses along Santa Fe Avenue
source: Google, DigitalGlobe, 2015

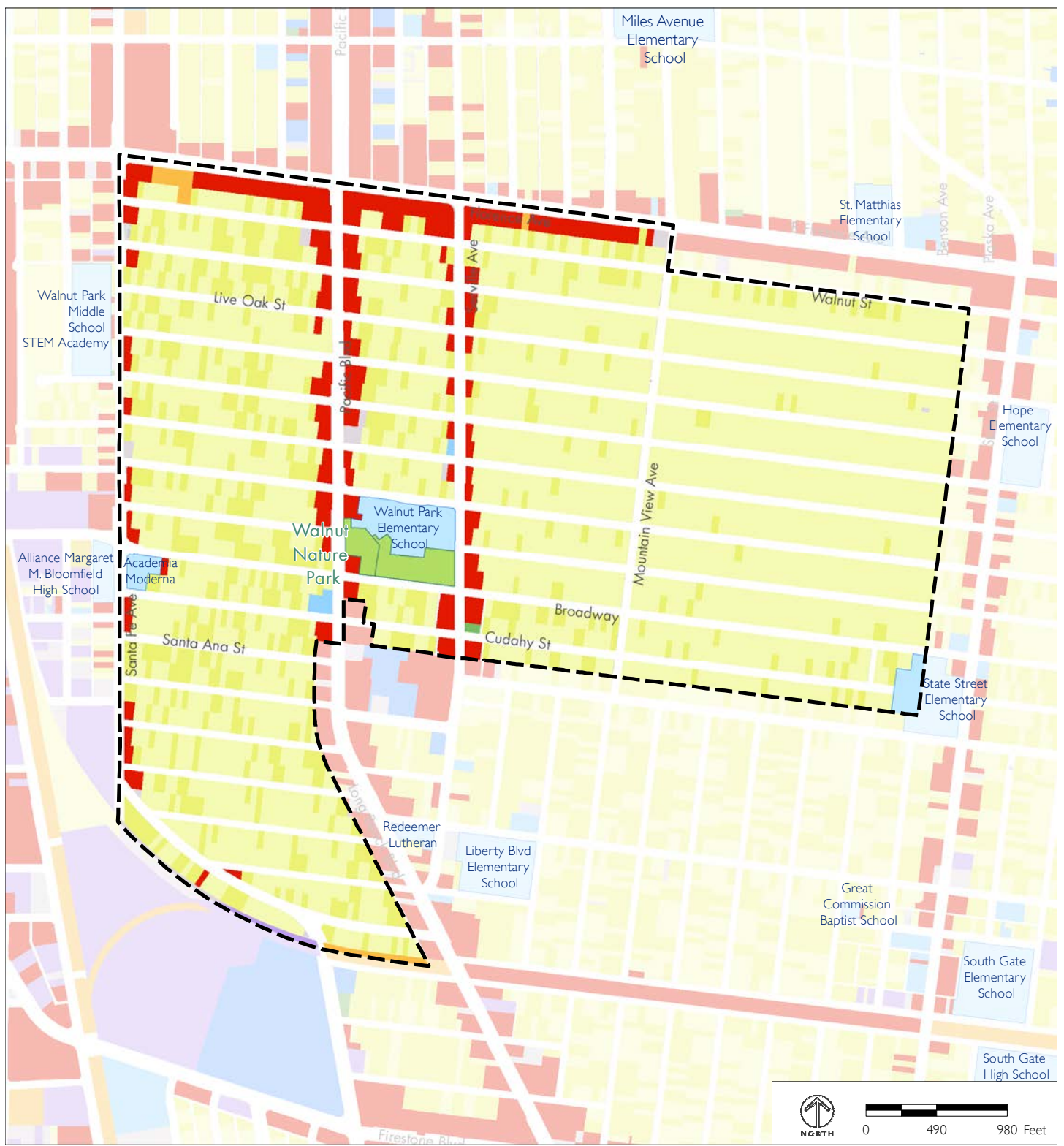


Businesses along Florence Avenue
source: Google, DigitalGlobe, 2015



Commercial business along Pacific Boulevard

FIGURE 2.12 LAND USE



Sources: Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation, 2013; Los Angeles County Assessor 2012; PlaceWorks, 2015.

Walnut Park

Park
 School

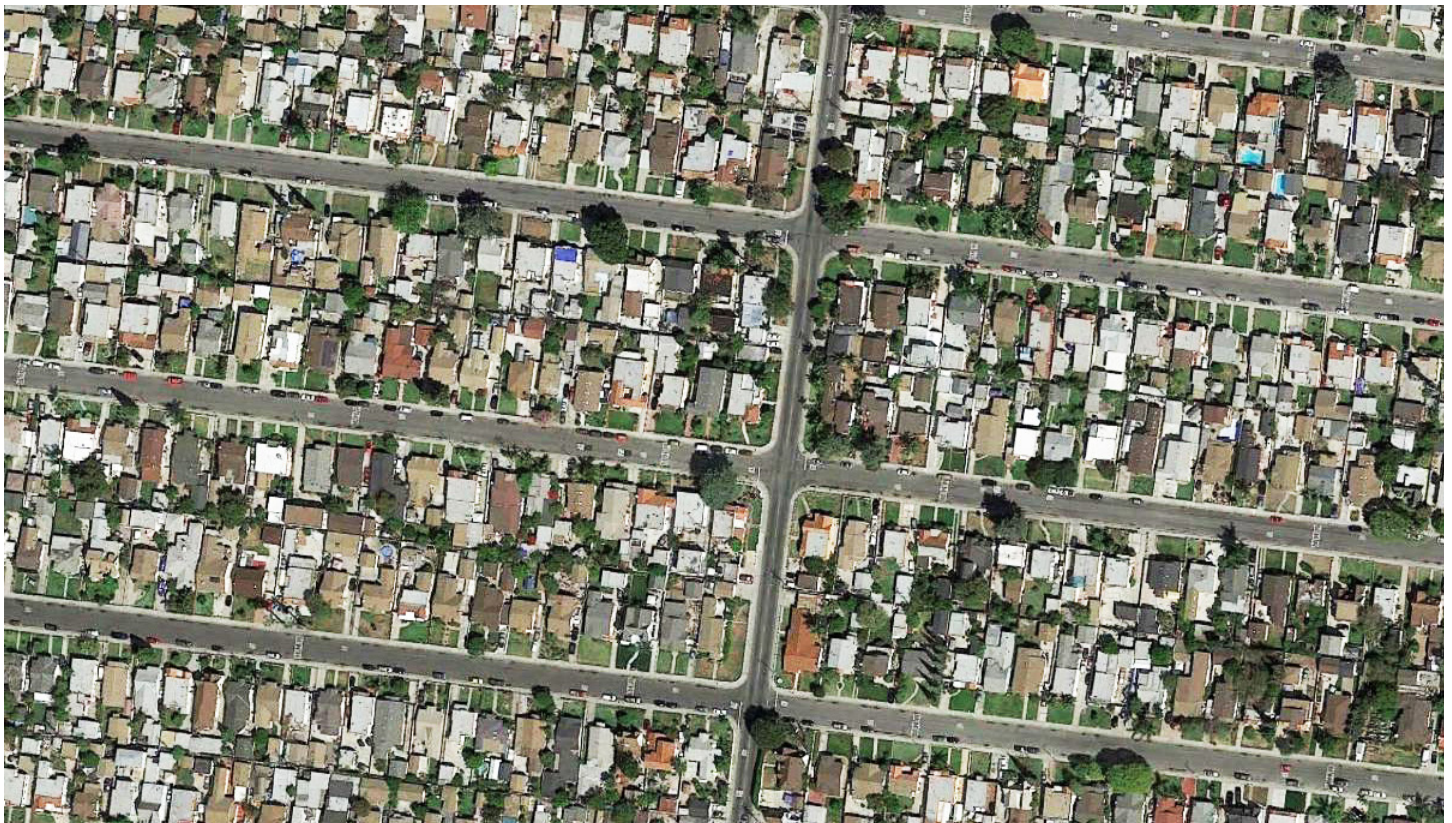
Land Use

Residential Single Family	Commercial	Miscellaneous
Residential Multi Family	Industrial	Recreational
Residential Manufactured Homes	Institutional	Agriculture
Residential Rooming/Boarding House	Government Owned	Vacant Land

POPULATION DENSITY

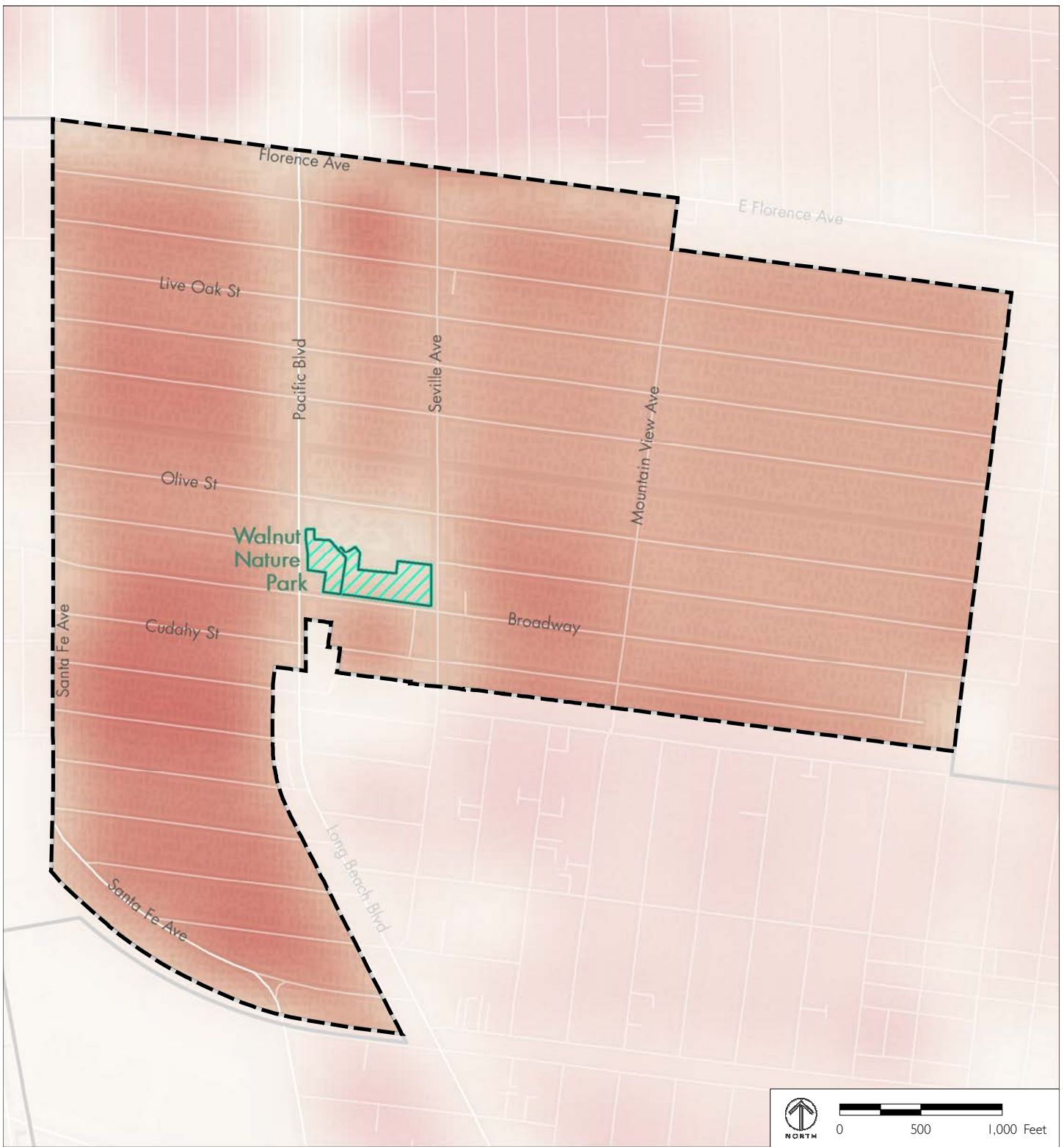
Walnut Park's population density patterns directly correspond with land uses within the community. Since the community is predominately low-density residential, population is generally evenly distributed throughout the community, with less population density along the commercial corridors of Pacific Boulevard, Florence Avenue, Seville Avenue, and Santa Fe Avenue. The residential blocks in Walnut Park are long in the east-west direction as compared to other communities in Los Angeles County. This creates long stretches of dense residential housing, as shown in the aerial image below.

Figure 2.13 shows the population density patterns within Walnut Park. The area in the southwest has slightly greater population density than the rest of the community. Parks and recreation facilities and public amenities are intended to be used by residents, so facilities within close proximity to dense residential areas can provide service to large numbers of residents. However, park development within these areas is especially challenging due to limited land availability and close proximity to neighboring properties.

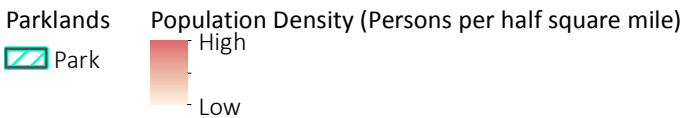


Typical Density Pattern in Walnut Park
source: Google, DigitalGlobe, 2015

FIGURE 2.13 POPULATION DENSITY



Source: Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation, 2013; United States Census Bureau, 2010; Los Angeles County Assessor, 2013; PlaceWorks, 2015.



TRANSIT AND TRANSPORTATION

Figure 2.15 shows the existing transportation network and the concentration of pedestrian and bicycle collisions in Walnut Park between 2002 and 2010. Pedestrian and bicycle collisions represent any collisions involving either pedestrians or bicyclists. The figure uses a gradient overlay to show areas with a high concentration of collisions using a distance of 500 feet as the threshold for combining collisions into clusters. This summary provides a description of the most problematic areas and considers these areas as they relate to Walnut Nature Park, the other joint-use facilities at Walnut Park Elementary School, and other community spaces in Walnut Park.

OVERVIEW

Walnut Park is a small community, slightly wider than 1.5 miles in width in both directions, which suggests that community mobility would be easy as most people would not travel far within their community boundary. However, limited services, such as the lack of parklands, require that many Walnut Park residents go outside their community regularly. Additionally, traffic conditions and the lack of pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure within Walnut Park pose a challenge to alternative modes of transportation within the community.

Currently, Walnut Park has no bikeways. However, the community is served by seven different Metro bus lines including three local and shuttle services and one rapid service. However, the Metro bus lines do not extend beyond Seville Avenue and the eastern half of Walnut Park is lacking in service.

The 2012 County of Los Angeles Bicycle Master Plan proposes three bikeways in the community, which would create the east-west connection that is lacking in Walnut Park.

The data on concentration of pedestrian and bicycle collisions, between 2002 and 2010 illustrates that the community has a high number of accidents relative to its size. The most problematic areas are listed in Table 2.8.

PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLIST SAFETY

Nearly all of the areas with a high concentration of collisions are located in northwest Walnut Park. The areas with the highest concentration of collisions are along Florence Avenue between Pacific Boulevard and Seville Avenue. Six of the seven Metro bus lines serving Walnut Park run along Pacific Boulevard and Seville Avenue.

Walnut Nature Park and the joint-use park facilities at Walnut Park Elementary School, are also located between Pacific Boulevard and Seville Avenue, along Broadway. The park facilities are located more in the southern portion of the community, where the number of collisions decreases substantially compared to other areas of the community.

Although the areas with high concentrations of collisions show 50 collisions over the 2002-2010 time period, when compared to Los Angeles County’s pedestrian and bike collision rates, Walnut Park has surprisingly lower rates for both pedestrian and bike collisions than the County as a whole. Walnut Park has 3.44 for pedestrian collisions and 1.19 for bike collisions per 1,000 residents, compared to 4.73 pedestrian collisions and 3.04 bike collisions for Los Angeles County. Nevertheless, planning for parks and green space in Walnut Park should include careful consideration of ways to maintain and improve pedestrian and bicycle safety.

TABLE 2.8 PROBLEMATIC AREAS FOR PEDESTRIANS

Location ^A	Number of Collisions ^B
Florence Avenue between Santa Fe Avenue and Pacific Boulevard	17
Pacific Boulevard and Live Oak Street	15
Pacific Boulevard, Between Cudahy Street and Santa Ana Street	12
Florence Avenue and Walnut Street	11
Florence Avenue and Santa Fe Avenue	11

^AThe Location column describes the closest intersection near problematic areas

^BThe Number column indicates concentration collision locations within 500 feet from one another

FIGURE 2.14 PEDESTRIAN, BICYCLE COLLISIONS PER 1,000 RESIDENTS

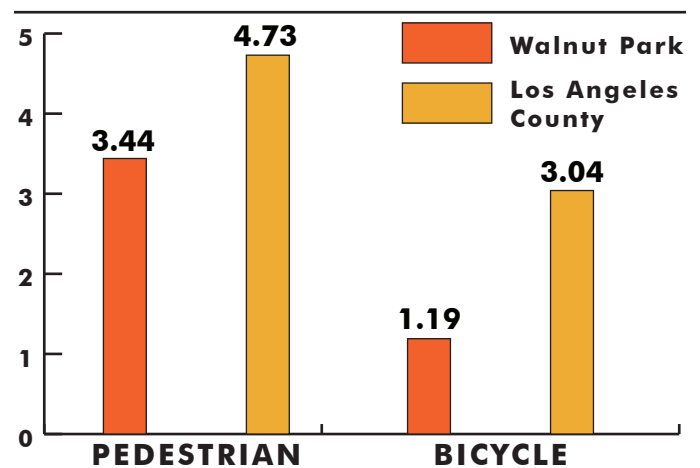
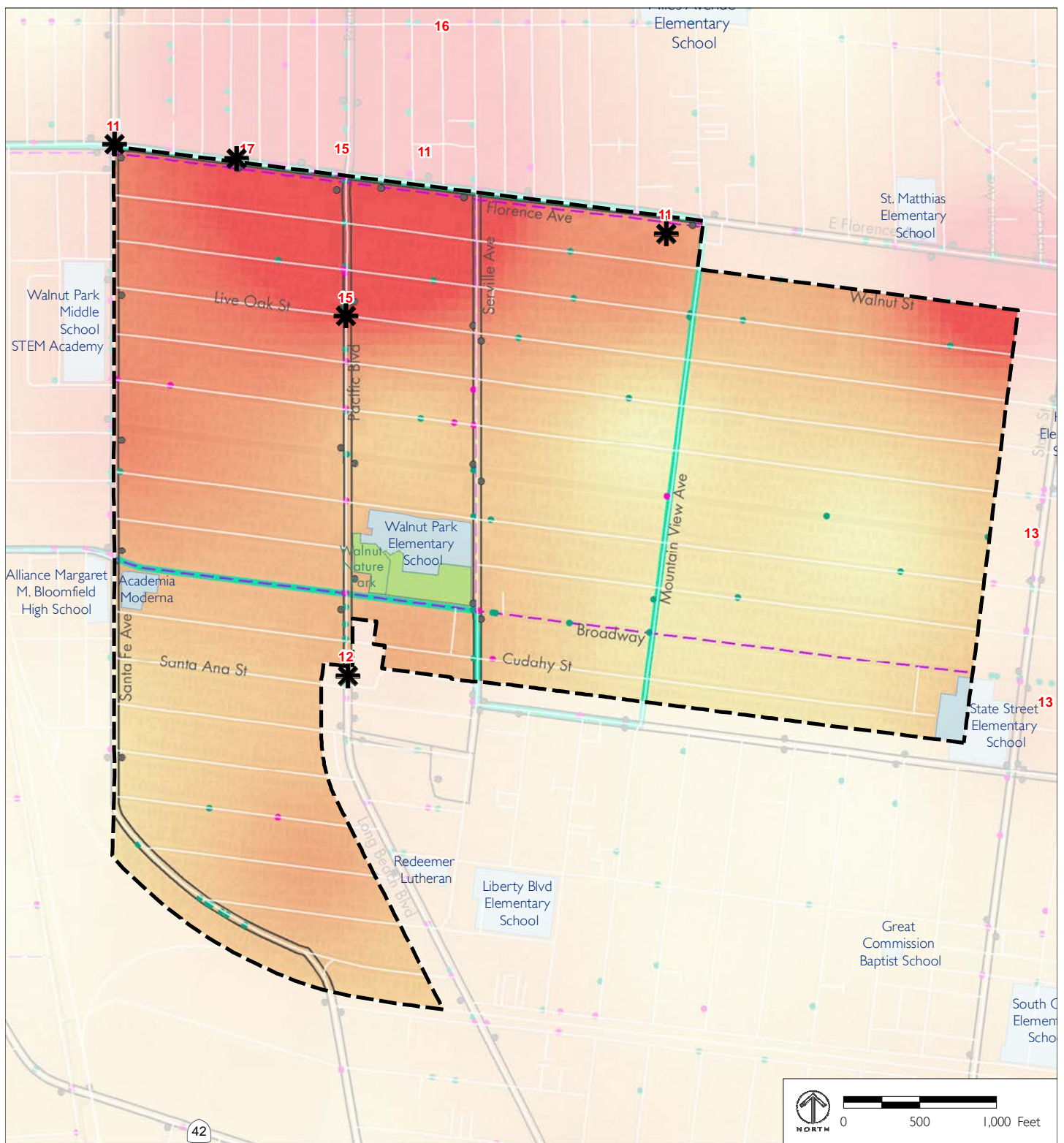


FIGURE 2.15 TRANSPORTATION, SAFETY, AND CONNECTIVITY



Sources: Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation, 2013; Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Agency, 2012; PlaceWorks, 2013.

Green Space and Schools

- County Parks
- Schools

Public Transit Network

- Public Transit Network
- Bus Routes

Bike Network

- Existing Bikeways
- Proposed Bikeways

The Link Shuttle: Florence-Firestone/Walnut Park

Problematic Area

- Collisions involving Pedestrians
- Collisions involving Bikes
- Concentration of Collisions within 250 feet

CRIME AND SAFETY

For this study, crime data analyzed spans from January 1, 2012 to December 31, 2012. The crime analysis used Esri's Hot Spot Analysis Tool in ArcGIS to identify areas of crime concentration. This tool analyzed both the spatial clustering and intensity of each crime location. Each crime category was weighted differently in order to give greater importance to more violent crimes. Any crime that was viewed as being a major concern to public safety received a higher intensity ranking, from 300 to 600. Non-violent offenses were ranked from 0 to 200. Table 2.9 lists crime intensity ranking categories.

As shown in the Figure 2.16, crime hot spots are concentrated along Pacific Boulevard with some areas along the southern and northern ends of Seville Avenue and along Santa Fe Avenue. The areas surrounding the joint-use park facilities on both Pacific Boulevard and Seville Boulevard stand out as hot spots for crime.

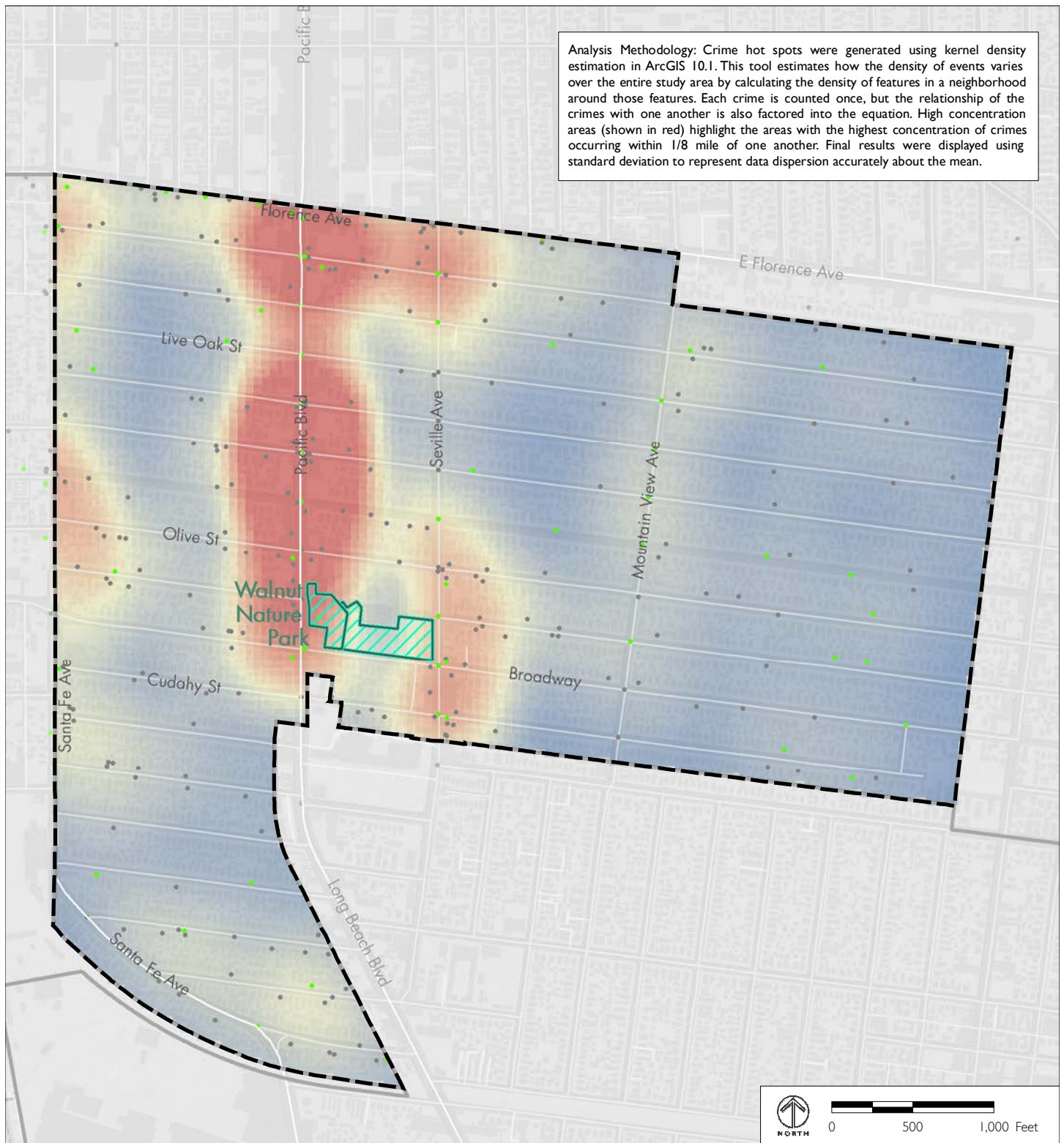
There are notable levels of gang-related crimes in the area surrounding the park, but most are concentrated in the northern section of the community along Pacific Boulevard.

TABLE 2.9 CRIME CATEGORY INTENSITY RATIO*

Intensity	Crime Categories
0	Accidents miscellaneous, accidents traffic/vehicle/boat, commitments, miscellaneous non-criminal, persons dead, suicide and attempt
100	Disorderly conduct, federal offenses without money, federal offenses with money, forgery, fraud and nsf checks, fraud and nsf checks, gambling, juvenile non-criminal, liquor laws, mentally ill, misdemeanors miscellaneous, offenses against family, persons missing, receiving stolen property, vagrancy, vandalism, vehicle / boating laws, warrants
200	Drunk / alcohol / drugs, narcotics, weapon laws
300	Burglary, drunk driving vehicle / boat, felonies miscellaneous, larceny theft, non-aggravated assaults, sex offenses misdemeanors
400	Grand theft auto, robbery
500	Arson, aggravated assault, forcible rape, sex offenses felonies,
600	Criminal homicide

*Source: Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, 2012. Crimes were categorized and given an intensity ranking in order to give more weight to violent offenses.

FIGURE 2.16 CRIMES AGAINST PERSONS



Source: Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation, 2013; Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, 2010, 2011, 2012; PlaceWorks, 2015.

- | | | |
|------------------|--------------------------------|--|
| Parklands | Crimes Against Persons* | Concentration of Crimes Against Persons |
| Park | Gang-related | High |
| | Not Gang-related | Low |

Note: Los Angeles County crime data included in this analysis covers a 3 year time period from January 1, 2010 through December 31, 2012. Over this time period there were a total of 1,890 reported crimes against persons within the community. *Crimes Against Persons includes the following crime categories: criminal homicides, forcible rape, both aggravated and non-aggravated assaults, sex offenses, and robberies.

VACANT LAND

A vacant land analysis was used to preliminarily identify opportunity sites for new parks in Walnut Park. Vacant land was identified using three different sources: Los Angeles County Assessor's vacant land data according to its use code; property lots with no improvement value; and input from community members, when provided. Once identified as vacant, the parcels were verified using aerial images to ensure that they were indeed vacant. Parcels were then categorized into vacant lands owned by Los Angeles County and by other public agencies. Additionally, tax-default properties were included in the analysis as they may serve as additional opportunities for parkland development. Figure 2.17 shows the location of vacant land in Walnut Park.

In addition to having very few vacant parcels, not all vacant land in Walnut Park is equally valuable for use as parks. Many vacant parcels or buildings or tax default properties are located in unsuitable areas, such as mid-block locations or areas with site restrictions.



Examples of Vacant Land in Walnut Park

FIGURE 2.17 VACANT LAND



Source: Los Angeles County Parks and Recreation, 2013; Los Angeles County Assessor's Office, 2013; Neighborhood Land Trust, 2013; PlaceWorks, 2015.

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| Green Space | Vacant Land | Other Potential Vacant Lands |
| ■ Park | ■ Assessor's Data | ■ Tax Defaulted Properties |
| | ■ County-Owned | |

FOOD ACCESS

For this study area, a distance threshold of a walkable half-mile (10-minute walk using the existing street network) was used to determine whether residents have walkable access to a food outlet selling fresh fruits, meats, and vegetables.

The healthy food access analysis was completed using Esri's Network Analyst tool in ArcGIS to identify areas with and without walkable access to healthy food. Any food outlet selling fresh fruits, meats, and/or vegetables was categorized as healthy. This analysis only includes neighborhood markets, full-service grocery stores, and specialty/farmers markets inside the community and within one-half mile of its boundary. No restaurants were included in this analysis.

Figure 2.18 identifies walkable and non-walkable areas within a half mile to/from the analyzed food outlets. Residential and non-residential areas were differentiated using Los Angeles County Assessor parcels' existing land use information.

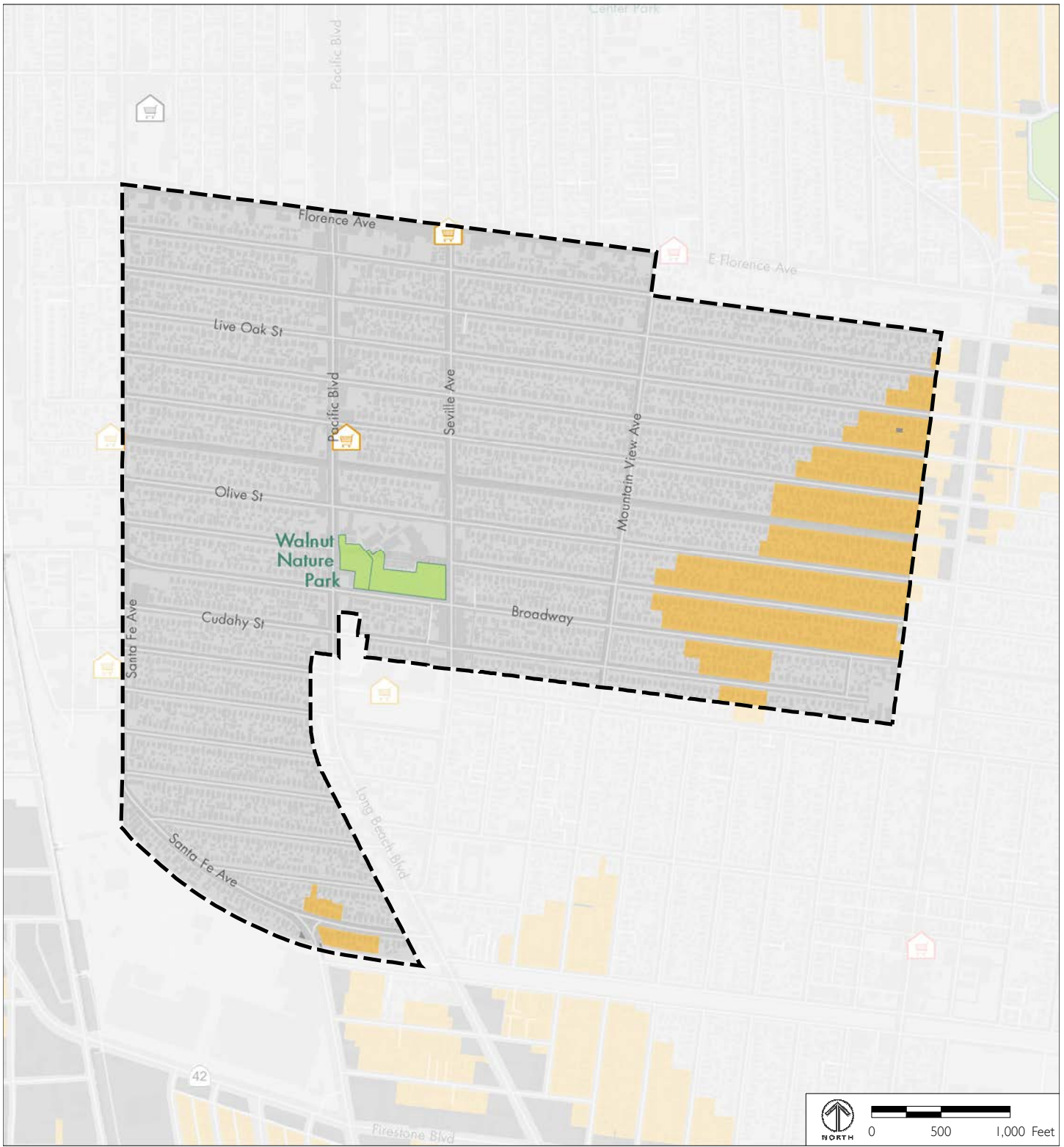


Pacific Market and Pacific Boulevard
source: Google, DigitalGlobe, 2015






Northgate Market and CVS on Pacific Boulevard
source: Google, DigitalGlobe, 2015

FIGURE 2.18 FOOD ACCESS






Source: Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation, 2013; Esri, 2013; PlaceWorks, 2015.

Supermarkets

-  Full Service Grocery Store
-  Neighborhood Market
-  Specialty Market

Healthy Food Access

-  Non-Residential Areas Not Within 1/2 Mile of a Grocery Store/Produce Market
-  Residential Areas Not Within 1/2 Mile of a Grocery Store/Produce Market
- Green Space**
-  Park

3 - COMMUNITY OUTREACH



Community outreach is at the heart of this planning process. The community outreach strategy was developed based on the project goals, as well as an understanding of the issues in the community. The Los Angeles Neighborhood Land Trust facilitated the outreach process in Walnut Park. These efforts took place between **May and August 2013**, and included surveys, focus groups, stakeholder interviews, a community workshop, a community visioning and design workshop, a youth activity, and a community tour.

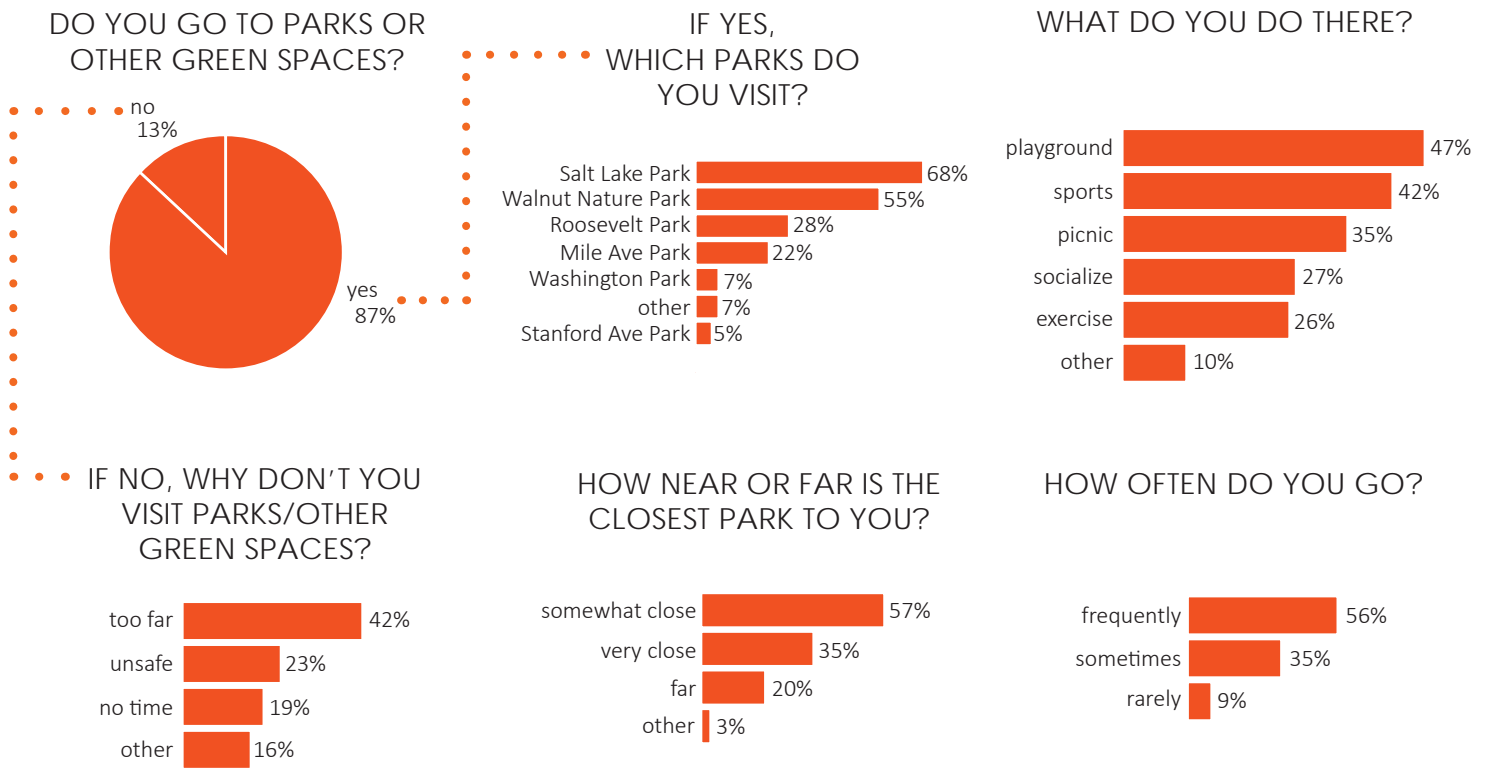
Key findings on desired park facilities, amenities, and programs are described below. Descriptions of the events and results are described more in depth in the outreach summaries in Appendix C. Due to the variety of outreach events, responses varied from recommendations for specific projects to more general requests for increased green space.

SURVEYS (MAY-OCTOBER 2013)

Two hundred (200) questionnaires were distributed while tabling at Walnut Park during key community events. Results show that more people visit Salt Lake Park, which is located outside the Walnut Park community, than Walnut Nature Park or any other parks located within the community. Other popular parks in nearby communities include Roosevelt Park and Mile Avenue Park. Survey responses suggest that people visit parks for the playgrounds more than any other amenity

or activity. Other activities, listed in order of popularity, include sports, picnicking, socializing, and exercise. As far as recreational facilities, community gardens are used more than walking and bicycle paths. Most people walk or drive to get to their local park, while fewer people bike or take transit. In addition, the parks are visited in the evening more frequently than in the afternoon and morning, and most people feel safe while traveling to and spending time inside their local parks.

FIGURE 3.1 SURVEY RESULTS

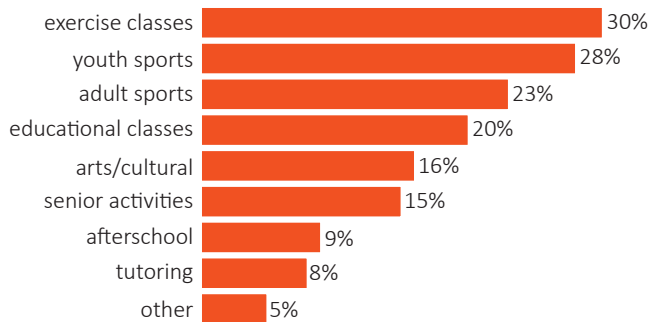


respondents could select more than one answer

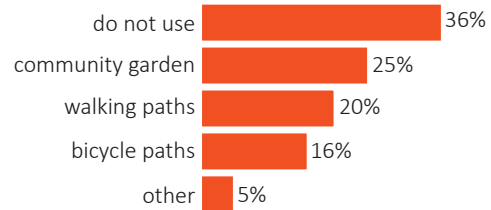
TABLE 3.1 SUMMARY OF NEEDS IDENTIFIED FROM SURVEY RESULTS

WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE MORE OF IN YOUR COMMUNITY?			
Programs		Facilities	
Exercise Classes	30%	Exercise Facilities	58%
Youth Sports	28%	Community Gardens	47%
Adult Sports	23%	Bicycle Paths	39%
Educational Classes	20%	Walking Paths	18%
Arts/Cultural Activities	16%	Other	6%
Senior Activities	15%		
Afterschool Daycare	9%		
Tutoring/Homework Assistance	8%		
Other	5%		

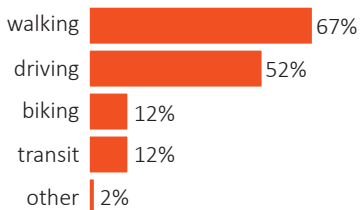
WHAT TYPES OF PROGRAMS DO YOU PARTICIPATE IN?



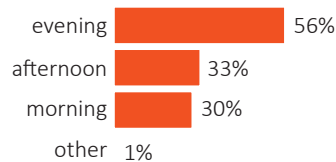
DO YOU USE RECREATIONAL SPACES, OTHER THAN PARKS? IF SO, WHAT KIND?



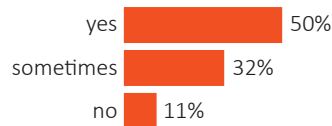
HOW DO YOU GET THERE?



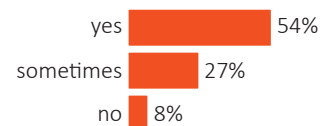
WHAT TIME OF DAY DO YOU USUALLY VISIT?



DO YOU FEEL SAFE IN PARKS?



DO YOU FEEL SAFE GOING TO PARKS?



respondents could select more than one answer

FOCUS GROUPS

In Walnut Park, three (3) focus groups were held with key representatives from community-based organizations, educators, and community leaders to provide insight on concerns and priorities for key parks and recreation users. Participating organizations included residents, parents, and community-based organizations (CBOs).

Focus group participants identified three key issues and potential solutions:

- Make Walnut Nature Park more accessible to community residents.
- Implement strategies to create more programming, while improving public information about it.
- Work to develop a new park solely dedicated to the needs of the community.

The community’s primary recreational asset, Walnut Nature Park, was heavily discussed during the focus groups. The park is operated as a joint-use facility with the Walnut Park Elementary School, which presents obstacles for public access. A key issue identified was the limited hours, in addition to design limitations and size. Participants also emphasized the lack of programming, highlighting the need for more accessible recreational space and programming that caters to youth, seniors, and families.

Parents and residents hold diverse views on the safety of Walnut Nature Park. While many would like to see cleaner bathrooms, more supervision, and more level grounds, others describe it as a very safe place, although they acknowledge that this is because there are rarely people in the park.

CBO Focus Group Representatives:

- Walnut Park Residents Association
- Walnut Park Chamber of Commerce
- First5 / Best Start
- Communities for a Better Environment (CBE)
- Organización de Líderes en Acción de Walnut Park (OLAWP)

The dire need for new green space within Walnut Park was strongly expressed, but many saw the lack of sufficient vacant land as a major obstacle. Sites that can both house programming and be open longer hours than Walnut Nature Park are needed.

Participants noted that there are various public health and safety issues that impact their community. Pacific Boulevard has been a hotspot for prostitution activity for the past 30 years and the community considers this to be a major reason why people do not walk or bicycle along this street. Additionally, the Central Metal recycling facility on Santa Ana produces a metallic taste and metal dust in the air, deteriorating the quality of life for local residents.

Participants also expressed the desire for a Walnut Park Steering Committee comprised of residents, business owners, and local stakeholders who could navigate and direct decision-making in the community.

TABLE 3.2 SUMMARY OF NEEDS IDENTIFIED FROM FOCUS GROUPS

Facilities	Programming
Community Garden	Farmer’s Market
Community Center	Summer Film Screenings
Outdoor Exercise Equipment	Concerts
Walking Paths	Reading Club
Bike Paths	Senior Activities
Amenities/Elements	
Grills, Tables, Benches	
Maintain Clean Restrooms	
Comprehensive Security Lighting	

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

Eight (8) stakeholder interviews were held with leaders from local organizations:

1. Walnut Park Florence Firestone Chamber of Commerce
2. Walnut Park Residents' Association
3. School Principal
4. LA County Board of Supervisors
5. Walnut Park Mutual Water Company
6. LA County Department of Parks & Recreation
7. Local Historian
8. Non-profit Education

Stakeholders suggested numerous strategies for providing additional recreational opportunities in the community, from increasing the number of available green spaces to reforming the design and management of existing spaces.

With their local knowledge, the stakeholders identified the three primary concerns for Walnut Park as:

- **Public Health:** Walnut Park is perceived as having one of the highest obesity rates in the County.¹
- **Economic Development:** Walnut Park has a high unemployment rate of 27.2%, according to one business-related stakeholder.
- **Government Investment:** The slow responses and the ever-changing Walnut Park boundary have created an overall lack of public confidence in local government.

Stakeholders identified the most pressing problem as the lack of access to recreational space in Walnut Park, which compels residents to travel to parks in the Florence-Firestone and Huntington Park neighborhoods.

¹ According to data on 5th grader obesity from Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, Walnut Park is among one of the most problematic areas for high levels of obesity in the County.

Key Issues and Concerns:

- The overall lack of green space in Walnut Park.
- Walnut Nature Park does not cater to community needs and interests with its limited hours, insufficient programming, flawed design, and missing infrastructure.
- High crime rates in the community have frustrated the community's faith in local government.

Stakeholders additionally identified the limited hours of the park facilities at Walnut Elementary School to be a major inhibitor to using their only green space. Although the park is scheduled to be open after school during the school year, stakeholders indicated that between October and March, it is not open during the week at all.

Stakeholders also noted the numerous missed programming opportunities due to space constraints, infrastructure limitations, and insufficient management of existing facilities. In one example, a private organization wanted to organize a soccer league at Walnut Nature Park, but ultimately went elsewhere due to the lack of goal posts and nighttime lighting. Additionally, there is a school garden at the Walnut Park Elementary School, but its success depends on the commitment of school staff at a given time.

The two main safety issues identified during the stakeholder interviews were prostitution and speeding along major corridors, such as Pacific Boulevard. Stakeholders suggested improving major streets with landscaped medians to add green space and calm traffic and to increase policing along streets.

Overall, Walnut Park stakeholders envision green spaces within the community as places for families to recreate and for a sense of community to grow. They indicated that they would like to be informed about park and recreation improvements in the community and recommended developing an advisory board of local stakeholders to work with local government and oversee the recreational space in the community.

TABLE 3.3 NEEDS IDENTIFIED FROM STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

Facilities	Amenities/Elements
Community Center	Picnicking/BBQ spaces
Walking path and exercise equipment around the school	Exercise equipment
Structure for indoor recreational facilities	Increased lighting

COMMUNITY WORKSHOP (NOVEMBER 9, 2013)

Approximately 70 community members attended a workshop held at Walnut Park Elementary School’s auditorium and provided input on the current and future green space opportunities in their community. The workshop began with a presentation from Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation, PlaceWorks, and the Los Angeles Neighborhood Land Trust, followed by a brief question and answer period during which residents noted these key issues:

- It is difficult to organize events at Walnut Nature Park.
- The community is frustrated with their inability to affect or change the state of Central Metal, a local recycling plant with a polluting history.
- Reckless driving, especially near local schools, poses safety risks for pedestrians.

After the question and answer period, participants engaged in collaborative planning activities that recorded their views on both current and future green space. In the first activity, **Activity Dots**, participants identified the types of activities they do at local parks, as well as what they would like to see. In the second activity, **Group Discussions**, residents described their vision for a greener Walnut Park. In the third activity, **Input Mapping**, stakeholders drew on a map of Walnut Park to show their current sources of green space, obstacles and accessibility issues, and locations where they would like to see future green space.



TABLE 3.4 SUMMARY OF NEEDS IDENTIFIED DURING GROUP DISCUSSIONS

Local Issues Identified	Park Management Needs (at Walnut Nature Park)
Prostitution	Dedicate Walnut Nature Park to the Community
Speeding Cars (along Pacific Boulevard)	Maintain Long, Regular Hours
Central Metal (a local recycling plant with a polluting history)	Introduce Greater Security Measures
Lack of Green Space	Enhance Programming
Changing Borders of Walnut Park Community	Improve Lighting
Limited Access to Healthy Food	Add Benches
	Redesign Existing Features
Park Features Desired	Specific Opportunity Sites Identified
Walking Paths	Grand Avenue & Pacific Boulevard
Bike Lanes	Florence Avenue & Mountain View Avenue
Swimming Pools	
Tennis Courts	
Pet Areas	
Community Gardens	

Activity Dots Exercise

Using images of typical parks and recreation facilities and programs, workshop participants voted on the types of activities they currently do in Walnut Park and the types of amenities that they would like to see more of in their local parks. Participants were given two stickers to vote with and were asked to choose their highest priorities.

Activities You Do:

- Exercise (19)
- Swim (15)
- Take kids to playground (13)
- Play organized sports (5)
- Socialize (4)
- Read (4)
- Picnic (4)
- Watch wildlife (4)

Things You Would Like To See:

- Lighting and security (25)
- Walking paths (14)
- Exercise facility (13)
- Bicycling (11)
- Play fields (11)
- Public art (8)
- Natural areas or features (7)

Residents wrote-in the following miscellaneous park needs and opportunities in the space provided on the boards:

- More programming
- Skateboard ramps and rails
- Tennis courts
- Gardens
- Gardening classes
- An area for pets
- No fences along Pacific Boulevard at Walnut Nature Park



Input Mapping Exercise

Using a map of Walnut Park, workshop participants identified places where they currently recreate, areas they felt were dangerous or difficult to travel, and spaces where they would like to see new open space or recreation amenities. Residents identified County Parks outside the community as major sources of green space, illicit activities and cars speeding along routes to parks as major obstacles to use, and vacant lots as important sites for future projects.

What parks or green spaces do you use?



The majority of participants pointed to Salt Lake Park and Roosevelt Park as their primary sources of green space. Both are located outside of Walnut Park. Some residents identified Walnut Nature Park as their preferred green space.

Where do you want new green space?

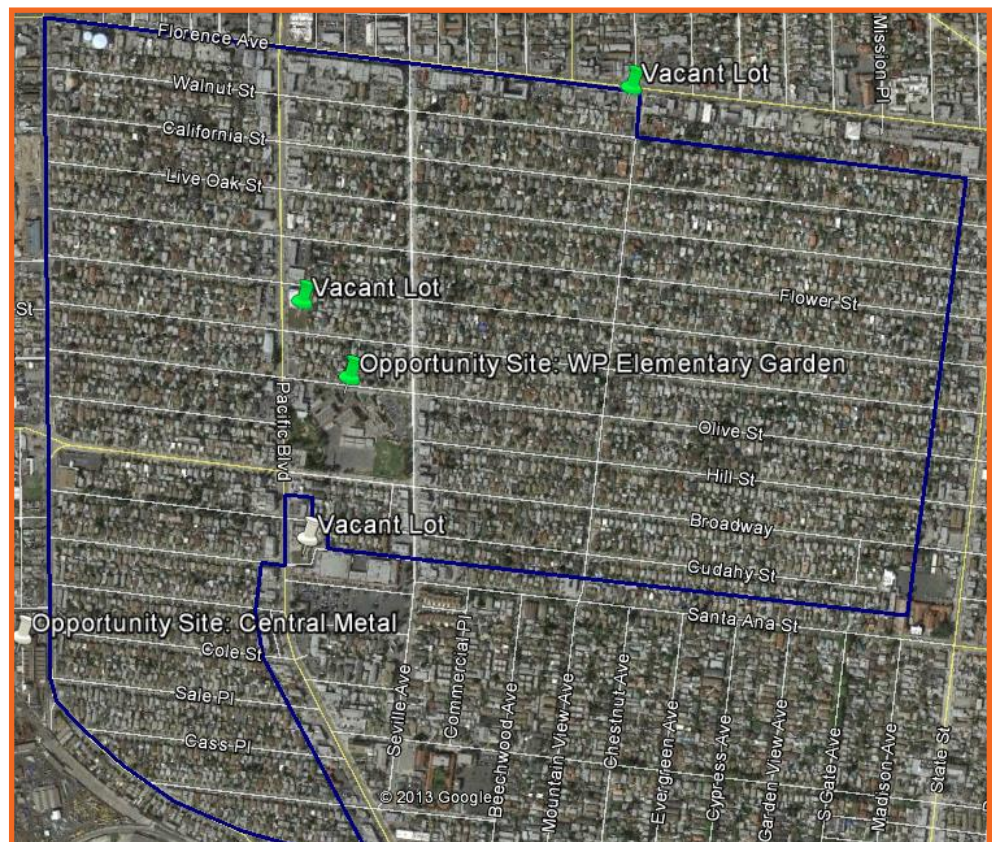


Walnut Park's vacant lots were popular choices for future green projects, including the lots at Grand Avenue and Pacific Boulevard and Florence Avenue and Mountain View Avenue. However, residents were strongly interested in general greening projects for their community, particularly along the blighted Santa Fe Avenue corridor. Community members also explored alternative forms of green space, from proposing "trails" along Pacific Boulevard and Mountain View Avenue to citing newly-built Walnut Park Middle School as a potential source of green space for the community.

Where is it hard to walk?



Most Walnut Park residents identified the primary thoroughfares of Santa Fe Avenue and Pacific Boulevard as the major impediment to pedestrian mobility in their community. These streets have a long history of prostitution and speeding. However, other north-south streets, such as Seville and Mountain View Avenues, see much of the same activity.



WHITE pins indicate the lots and/or opportunity sites identified by the group discussions. GREEN pins indicate other lots and/or opportunity sites identified from the mapping exercise.

COMMUNITY VISIONING AND DESIGN WORKSHOP (SEPTEMBER 25, 2014)

Approximately 40 community members participated in a design workshop to envision what new parkland space would look like and what they would include. Based on the first community workshop, other outreach events, and input from officials from Los Angeles County, three potential parkland sites were identified. In small groups, community participants completed a site design activity for each of the visioning projects:

- **PACIFIC BOULEVARD STREETScape.** Install a multi-use trail along Pacific Boulevard, connecting Walnut Nature Park and the YWCA.
- **CENTRAL POCKET PARK ALONG PACIFIC BOULEVARD.** Convert a small-sized vacant lot, located on the corner of a residential cross street and a commercial arterial, into a mini park.
- **LINEAR NEIGHBORHOOD PARK.** Transform a large, linear vacant lot into a community park.

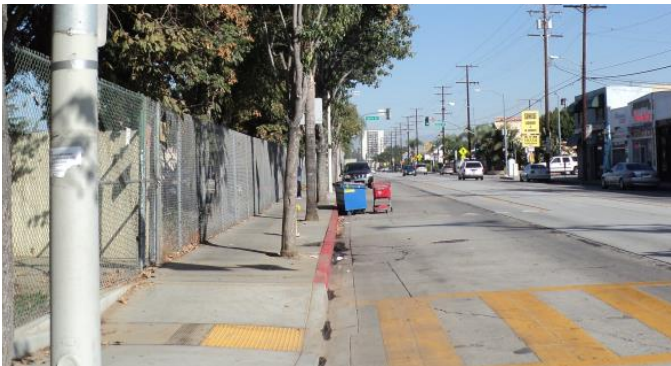
The community’s design of these sites formed the basis for the conceptual site designs presented in Chapter Six.

The groups began by brainstorming the vision for the site, as well as features that they wanted to include and the types of activities they wanted to see happen there. Following this discussion, the group began to draw on the site map, using a scale bar and scaled reference objects to ensure that the group had a realistic understanding of what could fit in the site.

Major site constraints were discussed and considered by the group, including the limited right-of-way and use conflicts along Pacific Boulevard, the size limitations of the conceptual pocket park, and the potential impacts of the neighboring residential properties and intersecting streets on the linear rail corridor. Facilitators worked with the group members to lay out general circulation and major park features, incorporate planting elements and discuss material recommendations.

Summaries of the community’s design concepts are described in detail in Chapter Six.





YOUTH ACTIVITY (MARCH 11, 2014)

Thirty-eight (38) students participated in a class-long activity with the goal of capturing the youth vision for the future of green space in Walnut Park.

The visioning activity was designed to canvas students' preferences on park amenities and programs, while also allowing the students to vote on which suggestions should receive a higher priority. After each student had the opportunity to suggest a new amenity/program, the students engaged in a conversation with each other on each proposal's relative merits. At the end of the discussion, each student had four (4) votes to cast.

Through the visioning exercise, the students expressed a strong preference for park amenities that cater to social, leisurely activities. The students prioritized green space that incorporated food stands, music, and free Wi-Fi. The results also showed a strong preference for alternative forms of exercise, such as a parkour court, a climbing wall, and a dog park.

Although it was not represented through the votes, students throughout the activity expressed a strong interest in parks as gathering places, with sufficient tables, shading, and chairs to accommodate groups of youth and local families.

TABLE 3.5 SUMMARY OF NEEDS

Amenities and Design Features	# of Votes
Free WiFi	28
Rock Climbing Wall	23
Food Stands	19
Performance Spaces	18
Water Park	18
Dog Park	15
Art Mural	13
Toddler-Friendly Play Equipment	11
Nature Play	11
Parkour Court	11
Cultural Events	9
Basketball Courts	7
Skate Park	6
Running Tracks	6
Merry-Go-Round	5
Swimming Pool	4
Playground	3
Walnut Trees	3

Programming

Music Lessons

Cooking Lessons

Photography Lessons

COMMUNITY TOUR (FEBRUARY 16, 2014)

Twenty-four (24) community leaders went on a site tour of three sites managed by the Los Angeles Neighborhood Land Trust. These included a community garden in South Los Angeles, a pocket park in South Central Los Angeles, and a joint-use facility in the West Adams community.

After guided tours of each site's unique design elements, participants and their families enjoyed the parks as their own, using the experience to vote on which features they felt would prove most appropriate for future green projects in Walnut Park.

Participants highlighted exercise equipment, security features, and picnic areas as high priorities for their community. Bathrooms, playgrounds, and scented plants, such as the rosemary present at the Fremont Wellness Center, were also popular amenities and design features.

After the tour, leaders who have helped the Walnut Park Community Parks and Recreation Plan by organizing events and conducting hours of outreach received Certificates of Recognition from the Los Angeles Neighborhood Land Trust.



SUMMARY OF COMMUNITY OUTREACH

KEY ISSUES

LACK OF GREEN SPACE. Walnut Nature Park is the only significant park space in the community and access is limited.

PROGRAMMING. Residents would like to see a more diverse array of park programs that respond to the community's needs.

LACK OF SPACES FOR YOUTH, SENIORS AND FAMILIES. There is a strong interest in creating spaces for all types of user groups, especially youth, seniors, and families.

SAFETY. Residents are interested in issues that address the safety of community, and specifically issues such as traffic speeds, prostitution, and air pollution.

RELATIONS BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AND COMMUNITY. Community-based organizations and key stakeholders are interested in working more closely with the local government to implement park and recreational improvements that respond to the community's needs.

COMMUNITY SUGGESTIONS

1. Increase green space in Walnut Park.
2. Develop recreational spaces that are more readily accessible to the public.
3. Add more outdoor exercise equipment and create new spaces for community fitness.
4. Install lighting to allow for night-time use of parkland.
5. Enhance streetscapes to improve the pedestrian experience by increasing green space and calming traffic.
6. Improve communication with the public for park and recreational events and programming.
7. Promote additional programming opportunities for youth, seniors, and families.
8. Build relationships between key community stakeholders and parks staff.
9. Improve the design of Walnut Nature Park with community-desired amenities.



4 - NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The Walnut Park community-based needs assessment brings together existing conditions, recreational trends, community input, and spatial analysis. This chapter builds on the results presented in Chapters Two and Three of this Plan and incorporates recreational trends and standards, as well as spatial analysis, to present an overall picture of parks and recreational needs in Walnut Park.

Community parks and recreation needs can be categorized as facility needs and spatial needs. Facility need refers to the types of facilities, amenities, and programs that Walnut Park residents want to have in their parks and recreational spaces, or what is missing in the community. Spatial need addresses the question of where are parks most needed in Walnut Park.

Facility need was identified through existing conditions analysis, review of existing trends and standards, and community outreach results, while spatial need was developed through a geographical analysis of existing open space and its service area considering the site size, adjacent population density, and walkability around these spaces.

The spatial needs analysis additionally identified potential parkland opportunity sites in Walnut Park. These sites have potential for new park development and serve as the basis for the green space vision presented in Chapter Five. These sites were further analyzed and ranked based on their park development potential and ability to meet identified need.

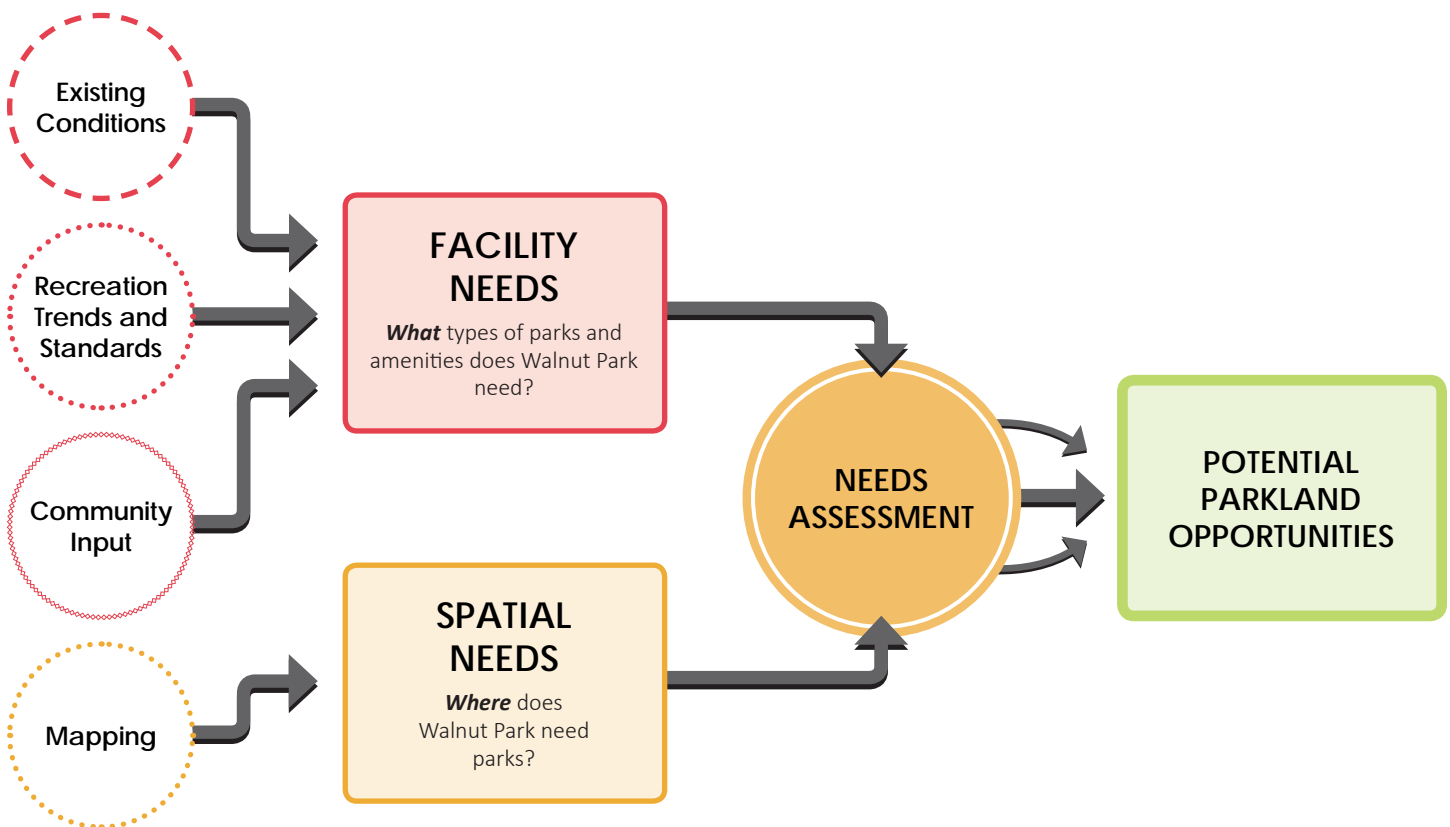
FACILITY NEEDS EXISTING CONDITIONS

As described in Chapter Two, Walnut Nature Park and the adjacent blacktop and multipurpose field at Walnut Park Elementary school are the only parklands in Walnut Park. Collectively, these spaces are approximately 4.5 acres in size. The population of Walnut Park is approximately 16,000 people. This translates to approximately 0.3 acres per 1,000 residents, which is significantly lower than the Los Angeles County General Plan goal of 4 acres of local parkland per 1,000 people. Moreover, these facilities are located on a school campus and are only open to the public during non-school hours.

PARK AMENITIES

In addition to having restricted hours, the Walnut Park Elementary School site is missing some key facilities that are common in parks throughout the County, such as **indoor recreation facilities or gyms, pools, splash pads, fitness zones, tot lots, picnic areas, soccer fields, tennis courts,**

FIGURE 4.1 WALNUT PARK NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND SITE IDENTIFICATION PROCESS



volleyball courts, skate and bike skills parks, and walking tracks. Spatially, the school campus can not accommodate these new uses, although park renovation, such as new fitness stations and a walking path along the perimeter or improved picnic facilities with barbecues, might allow for some expanded use. The multipurpose/softball field shows significant signs of wear. Field renovation, including the installation of new sports amenities, such as movable soccer goals, could increase recreational opportunities. New parklands and recreational facilities will likely be necessary to accommodate other uses and to provide a greater range of access throughout the day and week.

CONNECTIVITY

Walnut Nature Park is located along Pacific Boulevard, which is an important pedestrian corridor within Walnut Park, as it connects residents to the park, Walnut Elementary School, the YWCA Gloria Molina Community Empowerment Center, and commercial businesses along the route. Pacific Boulevard is a wide street with fast moving traffic and limited shade. Greening and infrastructure improvements, such as bicycle lanes, a sidewalk trail, benches, street trees, median plantings, and public art along this route might increase pedestrian activity while expanding overall tree and shrub planting in the community. Additionally, since Pacific Boulevard is a major thoroughfare, new parks along this route could be easy to access and there could be “eyes on the park,” or passersby to monitor behavior within the park. Creating parks along Pacific Boulevard could help create a greenway along the route, connect community amenities, and enhance retail businesses.

Proposed bicycle routes in Walnut Park will create an alternative transit network within the community. Parks along these routes will benefit from having safe bicycle access. Enhancing these bikeways with separated cycle tracks and pedestrian improvements could create a more dynamic and multi-beneficial green network through the community.

PARK NODES

Commercial streets in Walnut Park, including Pacific Boulevard, as well as Florence Avenue and sections of Santa Fe Avenue, have a distinctively more active urban feel than the rest of the community, which is predominately single-family residential homes. These areas include retail facilities, restaurants, and light-industrial facilities, such as car dealerships and mechanics.

Similar areas in Los Angeles County have initiated “parklet” partnership programs with local businesses. “Parklets” are small park nodes located in the street right-of-way in front of a business, providing outdoor seating and gathering space. These spaces help to create a more lively street environment and potentially slow traffic in these areas.

Informal vendors use some vacant lots along these commercial corridors to sell goods. Plaza space could formalize this use and provide a new mix of commercial and recreational space.



GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Parks and urban greening provide important ecological services, such as air quality improvements, stormwater runoff treatment, and wildlife habitat. In particular, as noted in Chapter Two, the urban forest, and specifically the park forest in Walnut Nature Park, provide significant environmental and public health benefits, including improved air quality and decreased urban heat island effect. Outside of the park, Walnut Park has relatively low urban tree canopy as compared to other areas in Los Angeles County. Additionally, the community is adjacent to industrial facilities located to the west and south across Santa Fe Avenue. Enhancing green infrastructure along this corridor could potentially mitigate environmental issues in the area.

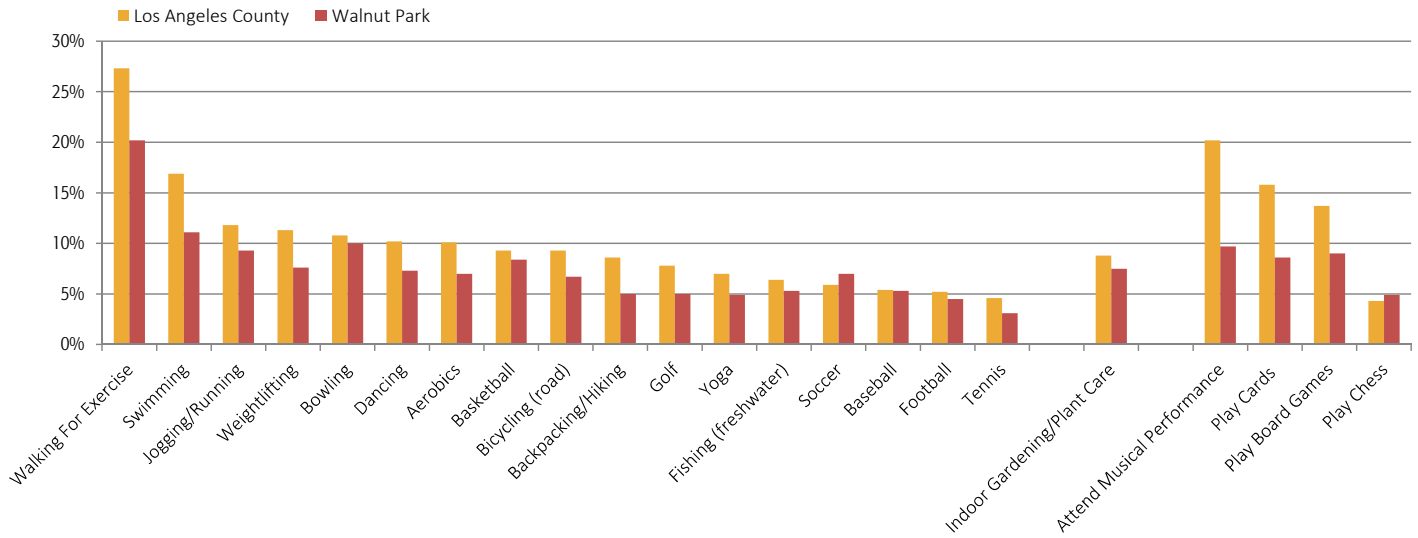
Additionally, the Walnut Park Elementary school site and new parklands could incorporate more green infrastructure features, including low-impact design strategies to treat more stormwater runoff, provide potential habitat space, and sequester greenhouse gases. Some parks in the County are utilizing green techniques, such as reduced irrigation strategies, energy production through solar panels, or water conservation facilities. Walnut Nature Park is not currently taking part in any of these initiatives.

PARK USER DEMOGRAPHICS

Several demographic factors have potential impacts on the types of facilities needed in Walnut Park. This community, according to US Census data, has a larger Latino population (97 percent) as compared to the rest of Los Angeles County (48 percent), as well as more households with children (45 percent) than the average for Los Angeles County (32 percent)¹. Additionally, Walnut Park is currently experiencing a growth in the number of adults approaching retirement.

1 The race and ethnicity categories used in this document are derived from the 2010 US Census.

FIGURE 4.2 SUMMARY OF PARTICIPATION RATES FROM ESRI BUSINESS ANALYST



Compared to the County as a whole, Walnut Park has a higher percentage of residents who commute by public transit (14 percent versus 10 percent), as well as a higher percentage of residents without access to a vehicle (11 percent versus 7 percent), making pedestrian or non-motorized access to parks particularly important.

RECREATIONAL TRENDS AND STANDARDS ESRI BUSINESS ANALYST

ESRI’s Business Analyst software provides a breakdown of market potential for sports and leisure activities. This report presents the percentage of the adult population of an area that currently participates in these types of activities. Figure 4.2 shows high ranking activities in Walnut Park and Los Angeles County that impact parks and recreation development.

Walking for exercise is the dominant form of physical activity for adults in Walnut Park and Los Angeles County. This is consistent with current trends in the State of California and was also evident in the results from the community outreach, discussed below. Swimming is the second most popular recreational activity in Walnut Park, although there are no public pools in the community. This further suggests a need for a pool, splash pads, or additional water-based activities in the Walnut Park. Soccer and playing chess are more popular in Walnut Park than the County as a whole. Bowling, jogging, and basketball are also popular activities in Walnut Park.

STATE AND NATIONAL TRENDS

Several State and national studies discuss the impact of population and demographic trends on outdoor recreation. An understanding of these trends and their most-likely implications is essential as the population increases and the rate of demographic change accelerates. Understanding the most likely direction of change may enable providers to position their services and respond more quickly to market changes.²

2 California State Parks, 2005, Parks and Recreation Trends in California.

Studies by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) and California State Parks report several trends and survey results which have implications for park and recreation planning in Walnut Park.

- Recreation patterns will be greatly influenced by California’s rapidly increasing Latino population. When surveyed, many Latino residents indicated a desire for parks that feel safe, a preference for features and amenities that support day-long outings with extended family, and the need for parks nearby and in urban areas.³
- Future park users will have a greater range of physical abilities, speak a wider array of languages, and represent more diversified age groups.
- Park proximity plays an important role in promoting higher levels of park use and physical activity, particularly for youth. Youth who reside close to parks and open space were found to be approximately two to three times more likely to take a walk within a two-day period than their counterparts that had no parks near their homes. Similarly, adults who reside within a half mile of a park were found to exercise five or more times a week more than those who reside further away from parks.
- Urban populations are typically associated with higher density, lower levels of vehicle ownership, and increased reliance on public transportation. As the urban population continues to increase over time, proximity to mass transportation should be considered when siting outdoor recreation areas.

3 California Department of Parks and Recreation, December 2003, Public Opinions and Attitudes on Outdoor Recreation in California – 2002: An Element of the California Outdoor Recreation Plan.

- There are specific types of facilities that promote higher levels of physical activity than others. For example, park users engage in higher levels of physical activity in parks that have playgrounds, sports facilities, and trails, compared to those without these facilities. Walking is expected to continue to be the most popular activity for Californians; to support this, an expanded network of pedestrian facilities is needed to connect parks and green space.

CALIFORNIA STATEWIDE COMPREHENSIVE OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN (SCORP)

California State Parks released a statewide assessment of recreation in September 2015. As part of this process, the state completed a Survey of Public Opinions and Attitude on Outdoor Recreation (SPOA) in California.⁴ Through phone interviews and mail or online questionnaires with adults and youth, California State Parks compiled information on how residents were using park facilities and what they would like to use them. Although many California State Parks are not located in urban environments and provide significantly different services than Los Angeles County parks, the results of this survey can be beneficial in determining public perception on park use.

Adult responses were categorized by region and 29 percent were from the Los Angeles region.⁵ Youth responses were for the state as a whole. In both the mail or online questionnaires and phone surveys, adults were asked what types of activities they participated in at parks. Figure 4.3 illustrates findings from the phone survey. Similar to other recreational trends in the state, walking or hiking is by far the most popular use of parks. Other highly common activities include eating/picnicking, playing, sedentary activities, jogging/running, sports, and dog walking.

In the phone survey for adults, respondents were asked to evaluate the importance of various recreation facilities at park spaces. Figure 4.4 presents some of these findings. The complete list includes: outdoor areas and facilities, field sports, court sports, multipurpose buildings, play areas for young children, day youth camps, facilities for overnight camping, dog parks, swimming pools, skateboard parks, picnic sites, single use trails, multi-use trails, paved trails, RV facilities and sites, rustic lodging facilities, commercial visitor services, areas for dirt bikes and ATVs, areas for driving, wilderness areas, developed fishing areas, public hunting areas, boating facilities, water-side recreation facilities, and community gardens.

FIGURE 4.3 ADULT RESPONSES TO USUAL ACTIVITIES ENGAGED AT PARKS

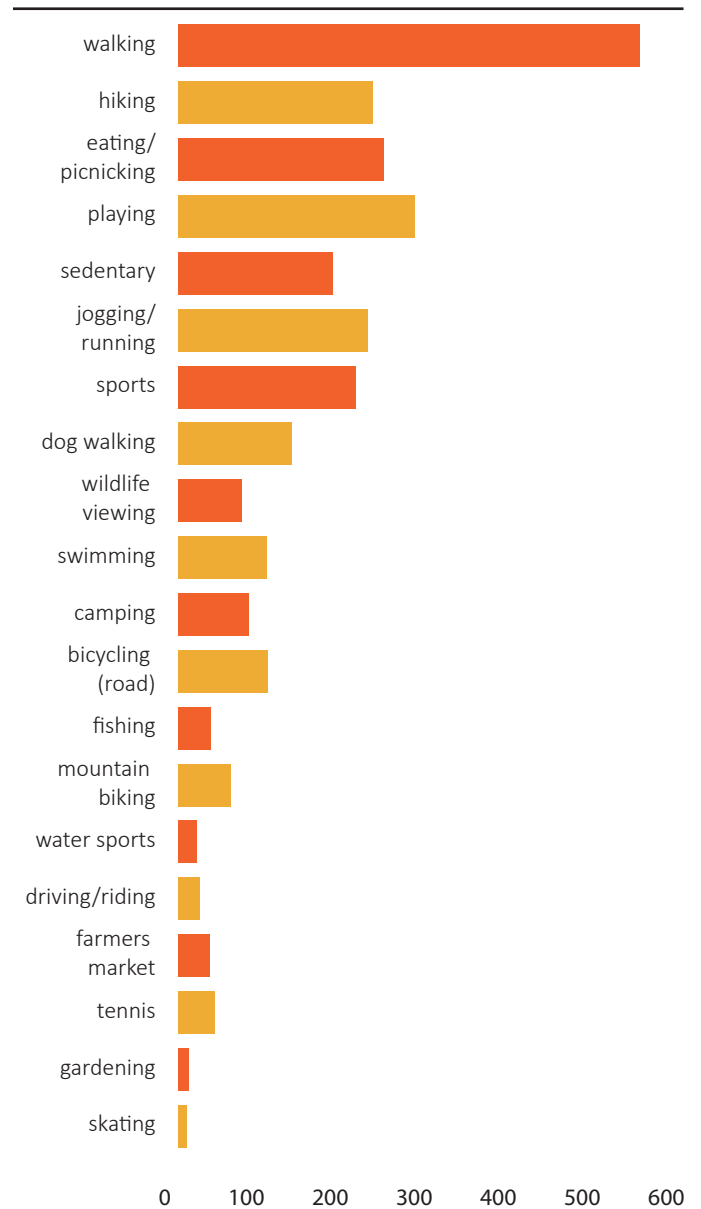
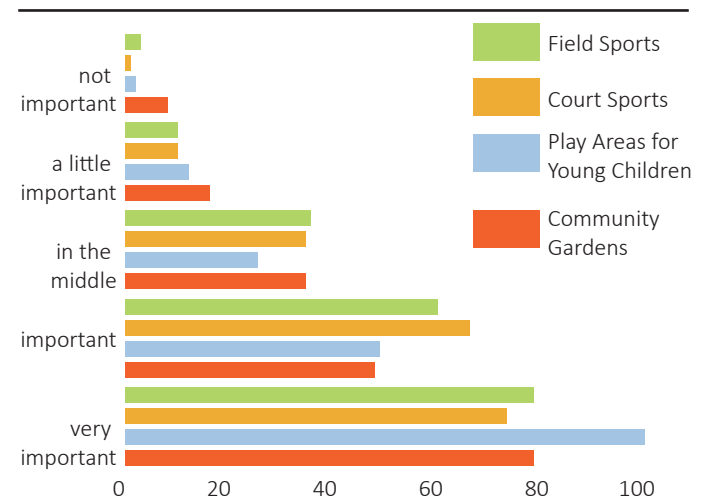


FIGURE 4.4 ADULT RESPONSES TO IMPORTANCE OF FACILITIES



4 State of California. California State Parks. Natural Resources Agency. Survey on Public Opinions and Attitudes on Outdoor Recreation in California 2012: Complete Findings. Sacramento, CA: California State Parks Office, 2014.

5 Responses are available at: <http://www.parks.ca.gov/SPOA>

FIGURE 4.5 AGE GROUPS OF YOUTH RESPONDENTS

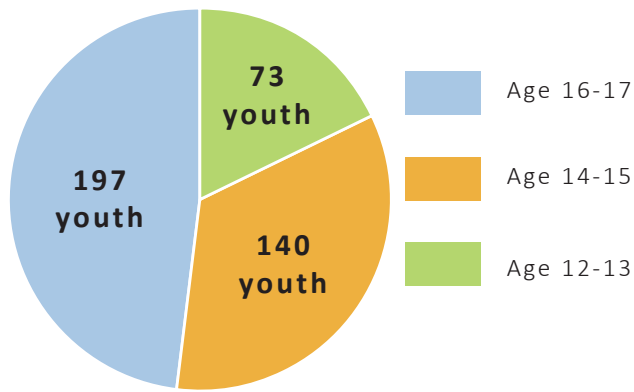
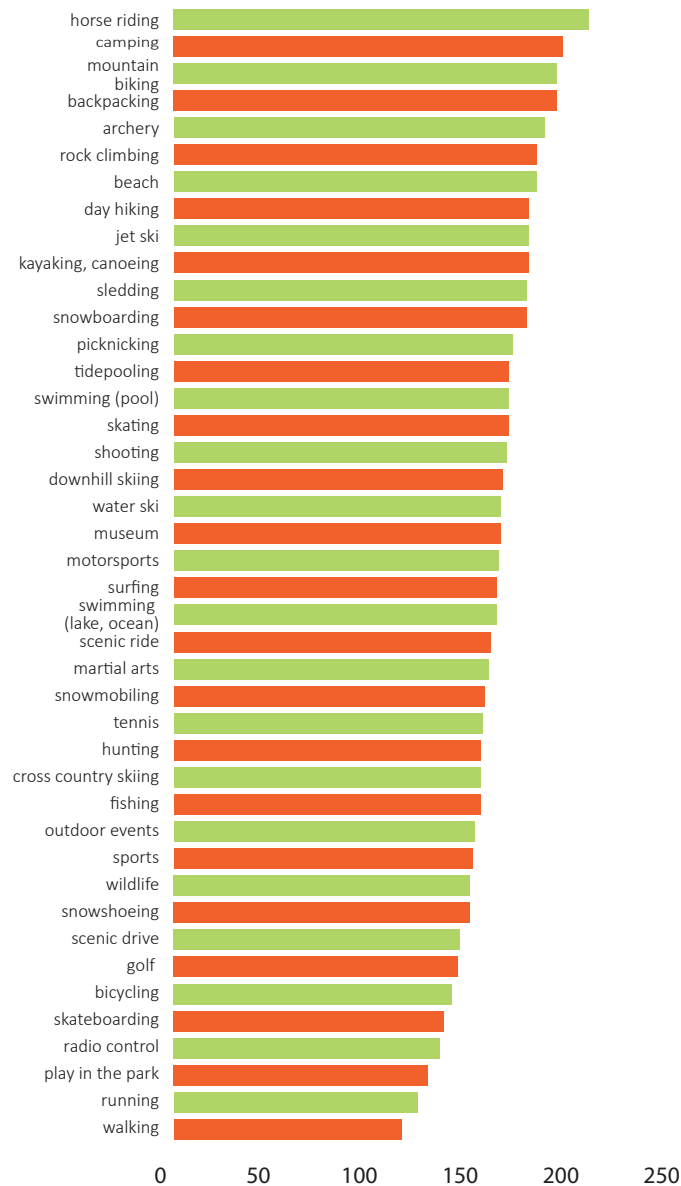


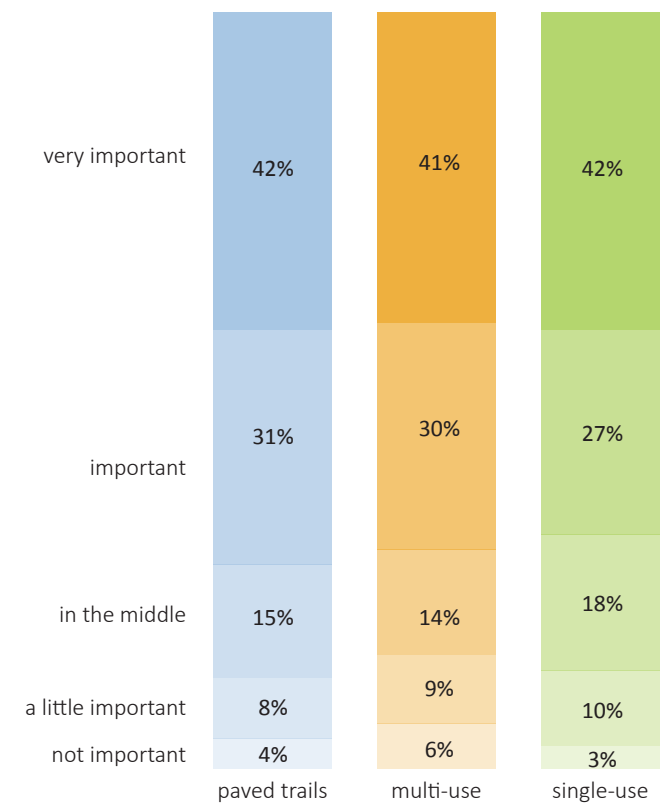
FIGURE 4.6 YOUTH RESPONSES TO WHAT THEY WOULD LIKE TO DO IN PARKS



The survey engaged youth participants through online engagement and a youth-focused survey. In total, 410 youth were questioned about their use patterns in parks and preferences for facilities. Figure 4.5 illustrates the age groups that participated in the survey. In addition to responding about what they would like to do in parks (Figure 4.6), youth were asked about how they access parks, their thoughts about the purpose of parks and open space, why they spend time outdoors, and attitudes that they have about parks and nature.

The mail or online questionnaire for adults additionally asked respondents to evaluate the importance of various trail types, including paved trails, multi-use trails, and single-use trails. Most respondents indicated that all trail types were “important” to “very important.” Respondents could weigh the importance for all trail types, but were not asked to provide a preference, although single-use trails and paved trails received slightly higher “very important” scores than multi-use trails. The results suggest that the public both values trails and would like to see different types of trails.

FIGURE 4.7 ADULT RESPONSES TO IMPORTANCE OF TRAILS



COMMUNITY INPUT

Numerous facility needs were identified by community members. The major concern for most Walnut Park residents was that their community significantly lacks usable park space and green amenities. Walnut Nature Park is intended to be open to the public during non-school hours; however, most residents find it difficult to access the park and find it closed during times when it should be open. Additionally, residents believe that Walnut Nature Park is not providing the type of park that they would like to have in their community, such as places for exercise and space for community gathering, which are limited. Specifically, residents expressed a desire for a space that could be used as a community gathering place where residents could express cultural identity and spend time with their families and neighbors.

Residents strongly believe that parks and green space give the community a place to be proud of and embrace and stated that this severely missing in Walnut Park. Additionally, residents often pointed to the need for more fitness and exercise opportunities in the community, such as walking tracks and workout stations. Some youth in the community pointed out the need for more diverse exercise opportunities, such a rock climbing wall, skate park, or parkour court. Parkour is a recreational activity to uses obstacle such as walls, boulders, and fences to practice agility and fluid movement.

Prostitution, speeding, and “heavy cruising,” or drivers making repeated trips around an area, are issues along major corridors. Residents see these issues being related to people not taking pride in the area and public officials ignoring the problems. Due to safety concerns, intervention strategies such as security cameras and increased lighting in public spaces are very popular. Residents also consider nearby industrial uses as being a major safety concern in terms of public health. Utilizing urban greening to potentially mitigate some of these issues, such as poor air quality, is supported by the community.

For purposes of the needs assessment, outreach responses relating to activity spaces or facilities needed were accumulated and synthesized to provide a picture of the types of green space and public amenities that residents would like to see in their community; these are shown in Table 4.1. Community input focused on four topics:

- **COMMUNITY-WIDE GREENING** includes strategies to approach greening for the entire community or high priority areas.
- **PARK ELEMENTS** include features that residents would like to see in park spaces or other places in the community.
- **ACTIVITIES/EVENTS** include suggestions for specific activities or events.
- **WALNUT NATURE PARK** includes recommendations to improve Walnut Nature Park.

TABLE 4.1 COMMUNITY INPUT SUMMARY

Community-wide Parks and Urban Greening
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green spaces that people can be proud of • More green spaces within walking distance • Safer streets • Green corridor along Santa Fe Avenue • Walking paths and connections • Bike lanes
Park Elements
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indoor recreation facility or gym • Picnic areas with barbecues • Exercise and fitness space • Places to walk • Place for children to ride bicycles • Swimming pools • Playgrounds • Basketball courts • Tennis courts • Bathrooms • Free wi-fi • Rock climbing wall • Performance space • Dog park
Activities/Events
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community-oriented events • Farmers market • Summer film screenings • Concerts • Food trucks
Walnut Nature Park
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that park is open when it is supposed to be open • Increase lighting at night • Formalize school garden as a community garden that is open to the public • Increase number of benches, chairs, and tables • Add grills for outdoor cooking

PROGRAM FEEDBACK

Community residents indicated that there is a significant lack of programming in Walnut Park. Existing programming is provided by the schools and the YWCA, which exclusively offer programming for youth, or by facilities outside of the community, which typically charge higher fees to non-residents. There are no adult or senior programs, although there are some community and family events at Walnut Nature Park throughout the year. Many residents comment that “There’s nothing to do around here.” Youth in the community expressed interest for more arts programming, in particular music, cooking, and photography.

SUMMARY OF FACILITY NEEDS

Facilities help define a park or recreational space. Based on the research presented earlier, the following is a summary of the facilities that Walnut Park residents want to see in their parks and recreational spaces, as well as facilities that are currently missing or could add to the overall sustainability of Walnut Nature Park and potential future parks.

Generally, Walnut Park needs more parkland. Specific facilities needed are:

1. Indoor Recreation Facility/ Gymnasium

There are currently no public indoor recreation facilities in Walnut Park. To provide space for indoor programming and sports, the community needs an indoor facility.



2. New Field Space

The existing field at Walnut Park Elementary School is insufficient in size to provide space for sports programming as well as unorganized field recreation. To accommodate these uses, the community needs additional field space.



3. Picnic, Gathering, and Event Spaces

Community gathering and picnicking is a major priority for Walnut Park residents. New space for large-scale gathering, such as within a large park, as well as smaller nodes throughout the community are important. Places for community events, such as dance performances, movie screenings, and farmer's markets are also desired within the community. New spaces should be flexible to provide space for these types of events.



4. Exercise Facilities and Opportunities to Walk

Walnut Park residents would like to see more opportunities to exercise in their community. New facilities can be integrated into Walnut Nature Park as well as new facilities to provide opportunities to stay healthy. This could include new walking and running paths, exercise equipment or programs for adults and youth.



5. Safe Corridors for Pedestrians and Cyclists

Safe, green routes to parks and community spaces improve access and provide new opportunities for exercise. Walking and biking are popular in the community and an expanded trail network is a good method of linking together green space. Increasing amenities for pedestrian, bicycle, and other non-motorized modes of transportation helps decrease vehicle use and contribute to reductions in emissions.



6. Play Spaces, Tot Lots, and Spaces for Teens

About 8 percent of Walnut Park's population is under five years of age and approximately 30 percent is under eighteen. Safe places to play within close proximity to homes is a popular idea with community residents and an important attribute of a park system. In particular, Walnut Park does not have any "tot lots," or play facilities designated for youth under five. Nor does the community have any facilities dedicated to teens. This is particularly valuable, as these spaces are safe places for youth to spend time in a supervised environment.



7. Pool or Splash Pad

Swimming is a popular activity among Walnut Park residents but there are no public pools in the community. Additionally, there are no splash pads or water parks. These facilities provide relief from hot weather and can be an excellent form of exercise. Although more dedicated to play, splash pads can provide benefits in smaller space. However, they will need to be constructed with attention to water conservation practices.



8. Public Art

There are currently two murals at Walnut Elementary School around the garden and near the entrance of Walnut Nature Park, although these murals are mostly seen by students at the school. Public art can activate gathering spaces and help to define community identity, both important to the Walnut Park community.



9. Green Infrastructure

Trees and plantings can be used to provide vital ecological services throughout the community. These facilities are currently underutilized and could be significantly expanded.



10. Dog Park/Pet Area

Dogs are not allowed off-leash at Walnut Nature Park and residents would like a space in their community to exercise their pets.



11. Energy Conservation and Production

Walnut Nature Park does not produce any energy on-site through solar panels or other alternative means. New infrastructure could increase sustainability potential at parks and recreation spaces.



of all neighborhood parks is to bring people together to recreate and socialize close to home. Ease of access and walking distance uninterrupted by major roads and other physical barriers are important factors in locating neighborhood parks. Neighborhood parks should be well-connected to other public facilities, such as schools and libraries. Amenities for neighborhood parks can include informal open play areas, children’s play apparatus, picnic tables, picnic shelters, barbecues, practice sports fields, basketball, tennis and volleyball courts, public restrooms, information kiosks, recreation offices, and onsite parking.

- **POCKET PARKS** are less than three acres in size, and serve residential or business areas within a quarter mile radius or within walking distance. They are best used to meet limited or specialized recreational needs. Pocket parks can provide landscaped public use areas in industrial and commercial areas, scenic overlooks, linkage to a community pathway system, and urban infill sites in park poor communities. Pocket parks generally do not have onsite parking. Amenities for pocket parks can include both active and passive features, depending on the community’s setting and needs, such as children’s play apparatus, picnic areas, fountains, and seating areas. Due to the limited amenities included in pocket parks, they are typically not included in the service radius analysis.
- **PARK NODES** are small pieces of open space that serve as public destinations, connections, and community defining spaces. Nodes provide physical and visual breaks to the urban landscape and connect various spaces, such as waterways, streets, trails, and greenways. Park

CONNECTING FACILITY NEEDS TO PARK TYPES

The Parks and Recreation Element from the Los Angeles County General Plan defines the County’s classification for parks and recreation facilities, outlined in Table 4.2. Following are descriptions of the parkland facilities from the General Plan:

- **COMMUNITY PARKS** are typically 10 to 20 acres, and serve several neighborhoods within a 1 to 2 mile radius of the park. Community parks that are located in residential neighborhoods serve both the needs of the community park service radius and neighborhood park service radius. Community parks provide opportunities for a wide variety of active and passive recreation activities. The amenities programmed into a community park are focused on meeting the needs of several neighborhoods or large sections of the community. They allow for group activities and recreational opportunities that may not be feasible in neighborhood parks. Amenities for community parks can include informal open play areas, children’s play apparatus, group picnic areas with overhead shelters, barbecues, lighted sports fields, basketball and tennis courts, public restrooms, concession buildings, maintenance buildings, onsite parking and information kiosks.
- **NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS** are typically 3 to 10 acres, and serve residents living within a half mile radius of the park. Neighborhood parks provide space, programs, and recreation activities to create healthy social networks within residential communities. The common objective

TABLE 4.2 PARKLAND CLASSIFICATION

System	Facility	Suggested Size/Width
Local Park Types	Community Park	10-20 acres
	Neighborhood Park	3-10 acres
	Pocket Park	< 3 acres
	Park Node	¼ Acre or less
Regional Park Types	Community Regional Parks	20-100 acres
	Regional Park	>25 acres
	Special Use Facility	Varies
Trails	Type A Urban/Suburban	6'-10' wide
	Type B Rural	4'-8' wide
	Type C Primitive	2' or less
	Type D Shared Pathway/Service Road	10'-12'
Other	Multi-Benefit Parks	Varies
	School Sites	Varies
	City Parks and Facilities	Varies
	Private Recreational Facility	Varies
	Greenways	Varies












nodes are used as gathering and rest areas, and serve as opportunities for social and cultural exchange. Examples of park nodes include equestrian and hiking trail heads, bike rest stops and stations with lockers and repair areas, neighborhood focal points, and passive amenities, such as plazas, rest areas, playgrounds, landmarks, and public art installations.

- **COMMUNITY REGIONAL PARKS** are typically 20 to 100 acres, and have a service radius of 20 miles. Community regional parks protect and conserve natural resources, preserve open spaces, and provide recreational facilities that are not available in neighborhood or community parks. Amenities for community regional parks can include a jogging exercise course, informal open play areas, children’s play apparatus, group picnic areas with overhead shelters, barbecues, lighted sports fields, basketball courts and tennis courts, information kiosks, public restrooms, concession building, recreation offices, maintenance buildings, and onsite parking. Community regional parks may also have one or more of the following features: multiple sports facilities, aquatics center, fishing lake, community building and gymnasium, and scenic views and vistas.
- **REGIONAL PARKS** are typically greater than 100 acres in size, and have a service radius of 25 miles or more. They include unique areas such as lakes, wetlands, auditoriums, water bodies, and campgrounds, in addition to the active recreational facilities offered in community and community regional parks. Many of the recreation activities are associated with experiencing the natural environment. A regional park may also perform important ecological and environmental functions, including serving as wildlife habitats. The connection of these parks to natural areas is often vital to ensuring a healthy ecological system. Amenities for regional parks can include picnic areas, nature centers, trail systems, scenic drives, campgrounds, water areas for swimming, fishing and boating, and in some cases, sport fields.
- **SPECIAL USE FACILITIES** are generally single purpose facilities that serve greater regional recreational or cultural needs. One notable example is the Hollywood Bowl. Special use facilities require adequate public access and sufficient buffers to protect adjacent residential users and to insulate the park from commercial or industrial development. Special use facilities can meet both passive (e.g., historic and cultural facilities, natural areas, habitat preservation areas, arboreta and botanical gardens, and nature centers) and active (e.g., golf courses and driving ranges, equestrian centers, off-highway vehicle parks, water parks) needs within the region. There are no size criteria or service radius areas associated with special use facilities.

- **MULTI-BENEFIT PARKS** and open spaces are created through collaborative efforts among city, county, state, and federal agencies; private organizations; schools; private landowners; and industries. These parks are characterized as having more than one function and contributing to multiple program goals. There are a number of applications of multi-benefit parks including: utility corridors and flood protection basins that can serve as areas for active or passive recreation; school sites located adjacent to parks that can share facilities, such as parking and park amenities; watershed areas that can protect critical wildlife habitats, preserve open space, provide trails for recreation, and contribute to water conservation objectives; and water districts, where trails can be located adjacent to flood protection channels and trailhead parks.
- **SCHOOL SITES.** The County works with school districts to organize, promote, and conduct joint recreational and educational programs. These community recreation agreements are a form of joint use agreement, such as the one at Walnut Nature Park, where either a school or park facility may be put to some recreational use by the other party in exchange for some facility improvement and/or maintenance. A park does not have to be adjacent to a school (i.e., share a common boundary) for an agreement to be viable.
- **CITY PARKS AND FACILITIES** that are located close to the borders of the unincorporated areas are enjoyed by city and County residents alike. Similarly, local County parks that are located within or close to the borders of cities provide recreational amenities for both populations. This overlap in local park service radius is an important factor to consider in the placement of new local County parks.
- **PRIVATE RECREATIONAL FACILITIES** play an important role in meeting recreational needs. The network of private recreational facilities consists of churches, health and fitness clubs, and other organizations that offer a variety of programs and facilities. This plan does not include an inventory of private recreational facilities. Since the County does not control, maintain, or program private recreational facilities, these resources are not credited toward the County’s acreage goals for public parks.
- **GREENWAYS** provide a linear area along natural corridors, and often follow features such as rivers, man-made waterways, drainage channels, and utility easements. Greenways can accommodate various modes of uninterrupted pedestrian travel on pathways, including walking, jogging, and bicycling, and can include recreation areas and natural landscape features.

Considering the needs identified through this process, Table 4.3 demonstrates which types of parklands are needed in Walnut Park. In addition to the parkland classification types, the table also includes existing park improvements, as some needs can be met within existing facilities.

TABLE 4.3 TYPES OF PARKLAND TO MEET NEED

		Improvements to Walnut Elementary School Site	Community Parks	Neighborhood Parks	Pocket Parks	Park Nodes	Trails	Multi-Benefit Parks	School Sites	City Parks and Facilities	Private Facilities	Greenways
Indoor Recreation Facility/ Gymnasium			•	•					•		•	
New Field Space			•	•								
Picnic, Gathering, and Event Spaces		•	•	•	•	•			•			•
Exercise Facilities and Opportunities to Walk		•	•	•	•	•	•		•		•	•
Safe Corridors for Pedestrians and Cyclists							•					•
Play Spaces, Tot Lots, and Spaces for Teens			•	•	•	•			•			•
Pool or Splash Pad			•	•	•*	•*						
Public Art		•	•	•	•	•	•		•			•
Green Infrastructure			•	•								
Dog Park/Pet Area		•	•	•	•							
Energy Conservation and Production		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•

* Pocket parks and park nodes are likely too small to accommodate pools but could include splash pad or water play feature

SPATIAL ANALYSIS

The spatial need analysis takes into account all land within Walnut Park and identifies those areas with park development needs ranked from highest to lowest. These need areas were derived by calculating multiple factors within proximity of each land unit. A one-acre hexagon grid was used to capture all spatial relationships across the community. An example of this methodology for one grid cell can be found in Appendix D.

Population is the highest weighted factor for determining spatial park need in Walnut Park. Population was calculated in two ways in order to best capture the need of each area. First, total population in Walnut Park was summed for areas within one-half mile of each grid cell. Second, unserved population residing in the parkland gap areas in Walnut Park was calculated using the same methodology. Parkland gap areas are the areas of the community that are not within a 10-minute walk of a park. This methodology utilizes the existing street network to calculate walking distance and takes into account any barriers to reaching the park, such as impassable freeway crossings or dead end streets.

Ranking was determined using ArcGIS 10.3 to create five equally distributed ranking categories for both population measures. These categories were given rankings from 2 to 10, with 2 representing areas with the least population and 10 representing areas with the most population. This ranking was applied to each grid cell for both measures.

Healthy food access and urban forest cover were also factored into the park needs equation. Access to healthy food was similarly calculated but given less weight relative to other factors. If the grid cell has access to a full service grocery store or farmers market it received a ranking of 0, if it does not have access it received a ranking of 2.

For urban forest cover, the percent of tree canopy coverage was calculated within one-quarter mile of each grid cell. A ranking value of 1 to 4 was given to each cell based on the percent of canopy coverage, with 1 representing areas with the most tree cover and 4 representing areas with the least.

The final need value was calculated by summing Total Population Rank, Total Unserved Population Rank, Healthy Food Access Rank, and Urban Forest Cover Rank. Higher values indicate higher need. Figure 4.9 shows the map resulting when the methodology is applied to the entire study area. Park need is displayed as a gradient of orange with the areas of the highest need displaying the darkest color.

Spatial factors that determine areas of high parkland need?

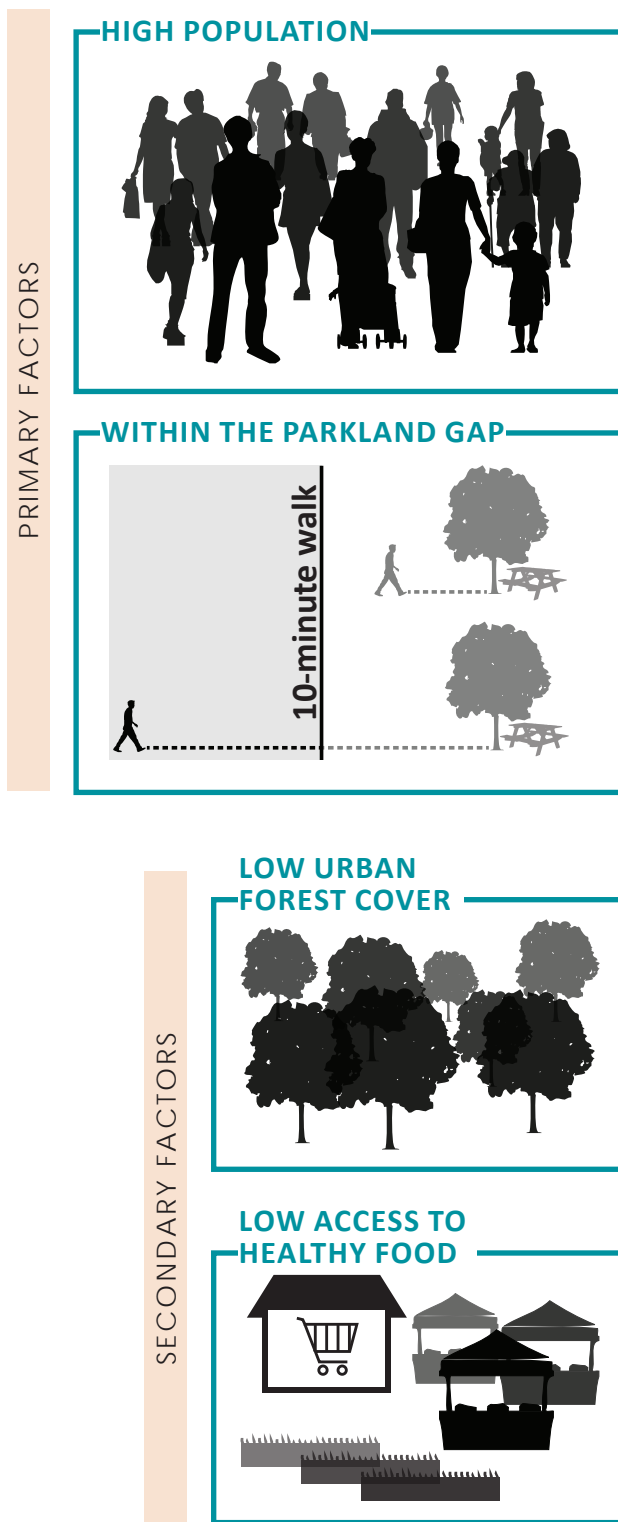
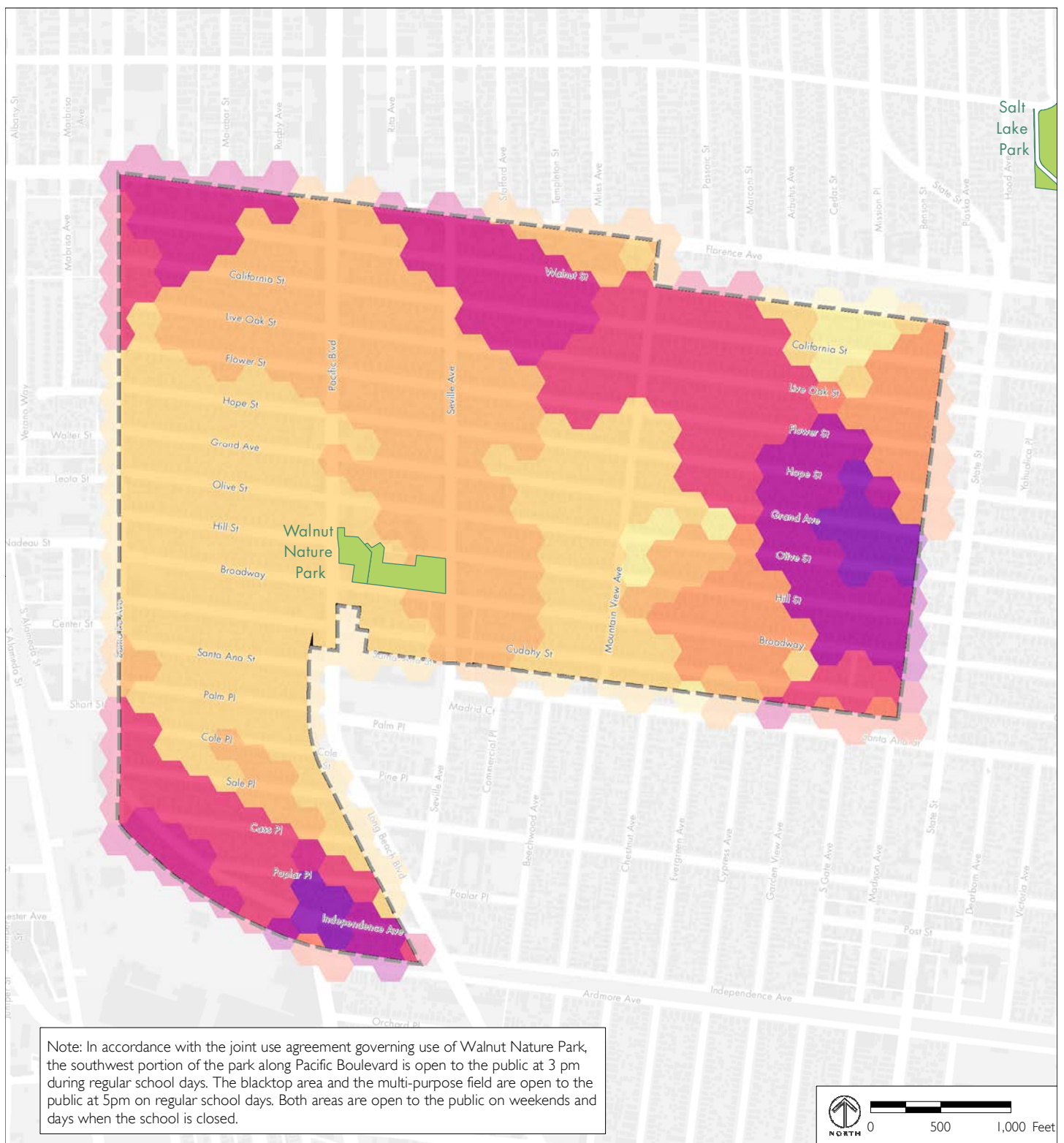
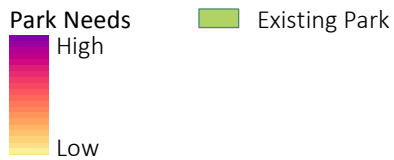


FIGURE 4.8 WALNUT PARK SPATIAL NEEDS MAP



Source: Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation, 2013, PlaceWorks, 2015.



PARKLAND OPPORTUNITIES

A major factor limiting new park development in urban areas is the ability to acquire new land. There are limited opportunities in Walnut Park available for new park development. Following is a summary of the opportunity types in Walnut Park or within close proximity to the community. Figure 4.10 illustrates these potential opportunity types.

VACANT LAND OR BUILDINGS

The Los Angeles County Assessors Office classifies vacant land on assessment roles. These sites, along with sites and buildings identified as vacant by the community are shown on Figure 4.10. There are very few sites with Walnut Park, and most these are very small parcels, each with an area less than 0.25 acres. There are also very few located on street corners, which are more desirable for park development than interior parcels, as corner lots are easier to access and patrol for law enforcement. Many of the parcels, particularly those along the west side of the community, are assessed as being vacant, but are used as parking lots, vehicle storage, car sales, or industrial work and storage yards. Although not truly “vacant,” an abundance of these types of lots in an area can create a sense of underutilization or inactivity and they could be considered an opportunity for conversion to green space.

RAIL CORRIDORS

Rail lines create linear corridors and create unique opportunities for creating community connections. Active rail corridors can be used for multi-use projects with adjacent trail features, while inactive rail lines could potentially be converted into pedestrian and cycling routes. There are two rail lines adjacent to Walnut Park that could potentially be an opportunity for trail development. The Alameda Corridor, which runs along Alameda Street to the west of Walnut Park, is a freight rail line connecting the ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles. In this area, the rail is below grade and covered by an overhead grate.

The second rail corridor opportunity is an abandoned rail line located along the southern edge of Walnut Park along Ardmore Avenue and Independence Avenue. The rail served industrial facilities in the area but no longer runs along this segment.

SCHOOL SITES

There are only two schools located entirely with Walnut Park, Walnut Park Elementary School, a public school, and Academia Moderna, a charter elementary school. There is additionally one middle school and one high school located at Walnut Park’s western border, and one elementary school located at the community’s southeastern border with the City of South Gate.

Walnut Park Elementary School currently has a cooperative use agreement (“joint use”) with Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) for use of their school grounds for park space, and the other schools have limited available space for joint use. State Street Elementary School has the most available open space within their campus, most of which is dedicated to blacktop for surface games and parking.

UTILITY PROPERTIES

Partnership with local utilities, such as power and water companies, can expand potential parkland opportunities, as typically these utility providers own properties dedicated to utility use that could be expanded to provide greening or recreational benefit. The Walnut Park Mutual Water Company operates an office and water tank storage site on Florence Avenue. Although most of the site is occupied by the building or the tanks, there could potentially be an opportunity for public art or demonstration gardens at the facility.

COMMERCIAL PROPERTIES

Commercial areas are good locations for urban plazas and park node development. Additionally, they could be good locations for “parklets,” small gathering spaces located within a parking space along a street, or “pop-up” parks, temporary events that bring park amenities into a space used for another purpose, like a parking lot. Restaurants, coffee shops, or medical facilities, might be good opportunities for parklets as these are places where people might want to congregate. Places with large parking lots, such as big-box or grocery stores, or community spaces, such as the YWCA Gloria Molina Community Empowerment Center, might be good locations for “pop-up” activities.

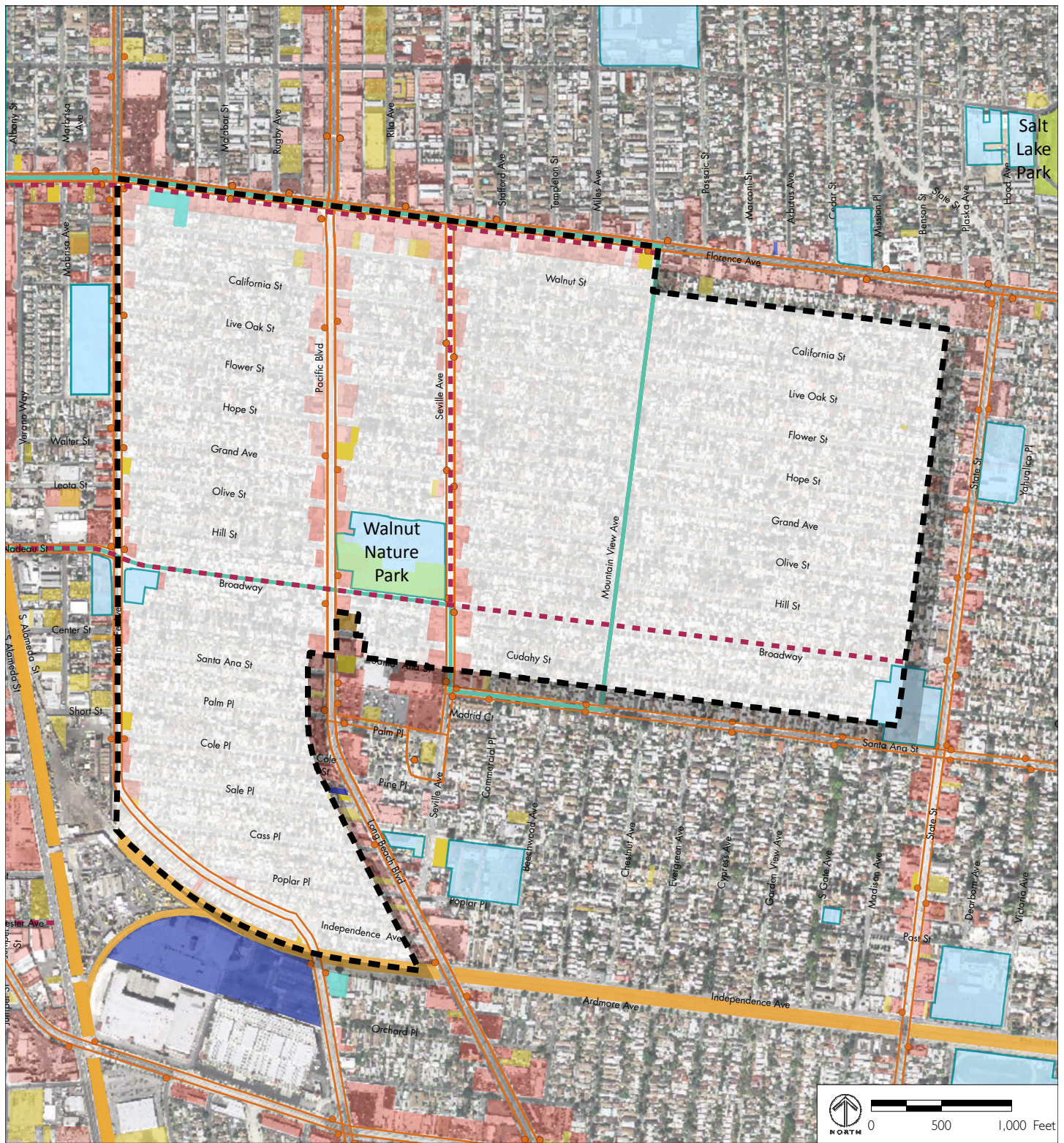
Unused commercial buildings can be a source of community blight and reuse of these structures for recreational uses could breathe new life into a retail area. Vacant or underutilized buildings could become new recreation centers, gymnasiums or pools in Walnut Park.

SIDEWALKS AND STREET RIGHT-OF-WAYS

Public streets offer important opportunities for green infrastructure, such as street trees and stormwater retention facilities. Additionally, safe and comfortable sidewalks can significantly increase a resident’s desire to walk in their community. Improvements could include wayfinding and sidewalk surface enhancement, as well as street furniture to promote community gathering, or exercise equipment to create fitness circuits within neighborhoods. Residents expressed interest in integrating public art into the community and street right-of-ways can also provide space for this use.

The Los Angeles County Bicycle Master Plan serves as a guide for improving bicycle connectivity. There are planned bikeways along Broadway and Seville Avenue. In addition to bicycle infrastructure, there could be enhancements to improve the overall functionality of the street network. Beyond the Bicycle Master Plan, existing commercial corridors, such as Pacific Boulevard and Florence Avenue are excellent opportunities for pedestrian improvements, as well as creative public space, like parklets.

FIGURE 4.9 POTENTIAL PARKLAND OPPORTUNITY TYPES



Source: Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation, 2013, PlaceWorks, 2015.

- Walnut Park
- Existing Park
- School
- Proposed Bike Route
- Metro Bus Line
- Vacant Land
- Vacant Land on Corners
- Utility Property
- Rail Corridor
- Vacant Building
- Commercial Land Use
- The Link Shuttle
- Metro Bus Stop

EVALUATION

To determine which sites could have the highest potential for parkland development, vacant and underutilized parcels were analyzed for their feasibility to become new green spaces. These spaces were scored based on their potential for meeting needs in terms of location and parkland type. Each site was evaluated based on nine criteria including:

PARKLAND GAP. Sites that are located within the high spatial need area were prioritized as opportunities to provide walkable parkland to residents who do not currently have green space near their residence.

POPULATION. Parts of Walnut Park are more populated than others. Sites in denser areas were prioritized over areas that were less dense, in order to serve a greater population.

SIZE. Larger sites were prioritized over smaller ones based on the anticipated uses for the sites.

OWNERSHIP. Sites owned by public agencies were generally considered more desirable than privately owned sites due to the increased ease of acquiring these sites for park use.

VACANCY. Sites that were identified as vacant or underutilized were prioritized over ones with non-vacant land uses.

TRANSIT. Sites located in areas of high public transit ridership were considered more desirable than ones where public transit ridership was low.

AIR QUALITY. Sites outside of the 500-foot buffer from freeways were more desirable than ones inside the buffer area, although sites within the buffer area were considered for urban forestry or air quality improvement projects.

PROXIMITY TO SCHOOLS. Sites in closer proximity to schools were prioritized over ones that were farther away from schools.

PARCEL AGGREGATION. Some sites were composed of a number of adjacent lots. Sites composed of fewer parcels were prioritized over ones that were composed of many parcels.

PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS

The sites with the highest potential and the sites selected by the community were visited and further analyzed through research on ownership and historic uses. The resulting Potential Parkland Opportunities Map, Figure 4.12, shows the recommended sites for park, trail, and green infrastructure development in Walnut Park in the future. The map is accompanied by Tables 4.5 and 4.6, which summarizes site conditions and identifies the type of parkland or trail that could be created. Potential infrastructure improvements include green street improvements, such as sidewalk trails, improved pedestrian facilities, new street

trees, and park node development. Green infrastructure improvements in Walnut Park will require partnership with Los Angeles County Department of Public Works (DPW). The commercial corridors of Pacific Boulevard and Florence Avenue are called out as potential parklet opportunity areas although specific sites are not identified. Creating parklets will additionally require partnership with DPW, as well as the participation of local businesses.

Sites were ranked using the same evaluation criteria above; however, additional preference was given to projects that could potentially be implemented in the short term, as well as those that could meet an identified facility need regardless of its location in the neighborhood. Sites were categorized as high, medium, or low priority. Potential uses at these sites are described more in depth in Chapter Five.

Major factors impacting final prioritization included:

- **NEED.** Sites located in areas with the highest park need were prioritized over sites near existing facilities, as well as sites that could provide the facility needs identified earlier in this chapter.
- **SIZE.** Larger sites are preferred due to their ability to provide more green space resources. Even though the majority of the opportunity sites in Walnut Park fit within the category of pocket parks, larger sites were still prioritized.
- **TIMING.** Sites that could be developed sooner were prioritized over sites that had impediments to development, such as site contamination, existing structures, or use restrictions.
- **OWNERSHIP.** Sites owned by a public agency or utility company were prioritized over privately owned sites. Sites owned by a Los Angeles County agency were prioritized above all other sites.

FIGURE 4.10 SITE SELECTION PRIORITIZATION CRITERIA

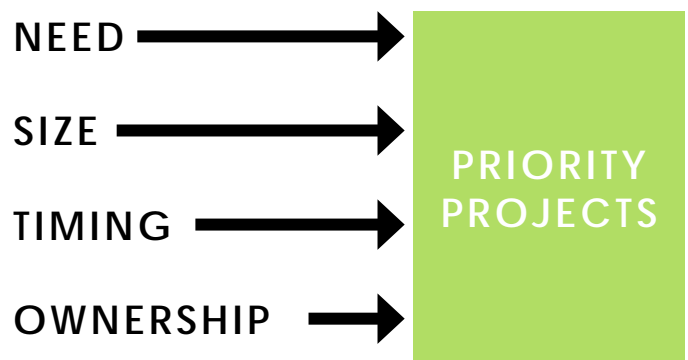


FIGURE 4.11 WALNUT PARK POTENTIAL PARKLAND OPPORTUNITIES MAP



- | | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|---------------|
| Park Needs

High

Low | Potential Parkland Opportunity | Existing Park |
| | Potential Walking Trail | School |
| | Potential Infrastructure Improvement | |
| | Potential Parklet Opportunity Area | |

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

TABLE 4.4 SUMMARY OF WALNUT PARK POTENTIAL PARKLAND OPPORTUNITIES

Priority Level	Site	Publicly Owned	Privately Owned	Size (acres)	Existing Parks Improvements	Community Parks	Neighborhood Parks	Pocket Parks	Park Nodes	Trails	Multi-Benefit Parks	School Sites	City Parks and Facilities	Private Facilities	Greenways
High	1		●	0.5				●							
	2 ¹		●	7		●				●					●
	3		●	0.2					●						
Medium	4		●	0.3				●							
	5 ¹		●	0.3				●							
	6 ¹	●		1.3								●			
	7	●		1 ²					●		●				
Low	8		●	0.2				●							

¹ Sites 2, 5, and 6 are located predominately outside of the Walnut Park community boundary.

² The area calculation for Site 7 includes water tanks, which would not be usable for park space.

TABLE 4.5 SUMMARY OF WALNUT PARK POTENTIAL TRAIL OPPORTUNITIES

Priority Level	Site	Publicly Owned	Privately Owned	Length (miles)	Type A Urban/ Suburban	Type B Rural	Type C Primitive	Type D Shared Pathway/ Service Road
High	A	●	●	0.5				●
	B	●		0.7	●			
	C		●	0.5	●			



5 - VISION PLAN

Based on the needs assessment and parkland development opportunities in Walnut Park, a community plan for new, near-term parkland development evolved. This chapter explores the vision and goals of the Walnut Park Community Parks and Recreation Plan, a strategy for community-wide urban forest enhancement, and potential long-term benefits of implementing the projects identified here.

GREEN IN!

Opening and Expanding the Green Space Network in Walnut Park

VISION AND GOALS

The green space vision and goals are driven by community needs and input. The theme of “Green In!” emphasizes the need for community green space within Walnut Park, rather than depending on green space amenities in surrounding areas. Residents feel that there is a severe lack of park space and green infrastructure; however, there are limited opportunities for new facilities. This plan integrates creative strategies for expanding the network and greening the community in a way that local residents can be proud of and excited to participate in building.

Parks and urban greening should be ubiquitous throughout Walnut Park. The intrinsic value of nature to human health cannot be underestimated. Research has shown the multiple benefits provided by close proximity to tree canopies and green open space, including reduced stress, improved attention span, decreased at-risk behavior among inner-city youth, and improved recovery from illness or injury. Therefore, increased green space for exercise and recreation, expanded walking trails, and the creation of a healthy urban forest, as described in this Plan, will improve the quality of life for Walnut Park residents in multiple ways.

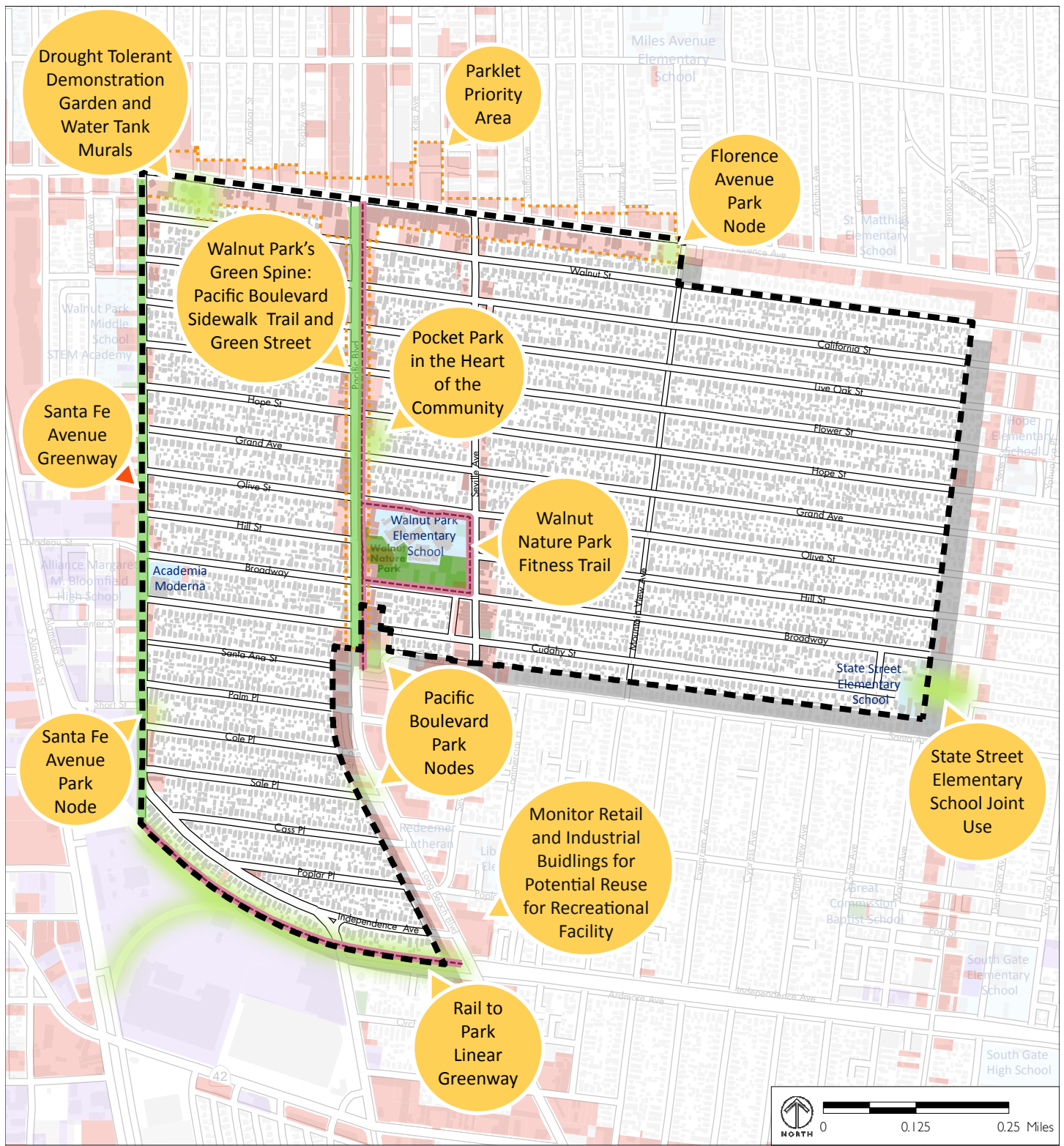
“This principle holds that a reconnection to the natural world is fundamental to human health, well-being, spirit, and survival.”

- Richard Louv,
The Nature Principle: Human Restoration and the End of Nature-Deficit Disorder

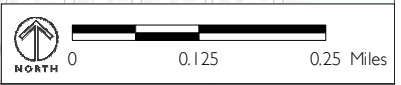
GOALS

1. Increase overall green space and develop new recreational facilities.
2. Ensure that facilities and programs meet community needs and that the community is included in decision-making processes.
3. Provide new places for exercise and safe places to walk.
4. Create public spaces that support community interaction and cultural identity through public art, community events, and commercial enterprise.
5. Improve access to parks, green space, and community amenities while creating safe corridors for pedestrians and cyclists.
6. Maintain and enhance Walnut Park’s urban forest.
7. Focus on multi-benefit urban greening projects that optimize environmental services.

FIGURE 5.1 WALNUT PARK GREEN VISION MAP



VISION PLAN



Source: Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation, 2013, PlaceWorks, 2013.

- Walnut Park
- Potential Parkland Opportunity
- Potential Parklet Priority Area
- Existing Park
- Potential Trail Opportunity
- Commercial Land Use
- Schools
- Potential Green Street
- Industrial Land Use



*Linear Park along Historic Rail
Bellflower Bike Trail
Bellflower, CA
source: TrailLink*



*Public Art Plaza
El Sereno Arroyo Park, El Sereno
source: City Parks Alliance*



*Artistic Play Equipment
Benito Juarez Park, Maywood, CA
source: Edison International on Trust for Public Land website*

The Green Vision Map in Figure 5.1 shows a mix of park types, community trails, and green infrastructure projects. This range of sites could help to meet the needs identified in Chapter Four. The plan accommodates the community's desire for new park spaces for gathering and exercise and calls for expanded greening along streets and corridors within the community.

PARKLANDS

The Green Vision Map shows a variety of potential parkland types including:

- **NEIGHBORHOOD PARK.** An underutilized rail corridor provides an opportunity for a linear neighborhood park along the southern edge of Walnut Park. The shape of the space suggests that it might be well suited for a central community walkway or trail with park amenities located along this route, such as playgrounds, multi-purpose fields, exercise stations, or dog parks. A conceptual site design for this project is presented in Chapter Six.
- **POCKET PARKS.** The Green Vision Map identifies a new potential pocket park in the “heart” of the community along Pacific Boulevard. Residents strongly believe that new green space could make the community stronger and that they need a space that defines Walnut Park and provides an opportunity for gathering and coming together. The pocket park could serve this purpose by providing new picnic areas; performance space; and areas for exercise, play, and public art. Pocket parks are small and space is limited so it will be important that all park amenities provide multiple benefits and be organized efficiently. Some examples include playgrounds that are also pieces of public art, fitness equipment integrated into walking paths, and flexible lawn space for picnics, play, or sports. In particular, residents want to have more public art in their community. Features within the park should be considered for potential art elements, allowing them to be both a recreational and an artistic benefit. A conceptual site design for this project is presented in Chapter Six.
- **PARK NODES/PLACITAS/PARKLETS.** The Green Vision Map identifies potential park nodes at various sites throughout Walnut Park. These small green spaces could help to distribute park resources throughout the community and provide spaces for community gathering, youth activities, and exercise. Typically these spaces have one central element, such as a playground, picnic area, or garden space. Although the program for these sites can be determined through a future design process, the Green Vision Map identifies some potential areas for pocket park creation.

 - **Pacific Boulevard Park Nodes.** Pacific Boulevard is the central north-south corridor through Walnut Park and many of the existing community assets, such as the YWCA and Walnut Nature Park, are located along this route. New pocket parks on Pacific Boulevard could

benefit from being in a central location and could be important spaces for community gathering. Residents want to see more green space in their community where they can hold community events; park space along this corridor could be well suited for this purpose. These spaces should include amenities for larger community-wide events, such as movie nights or music events, as well as small group gatherings, such as picnics and barbecues. These spaces could include play equipment for younger children or “hanging out” space for teens. The community, and particularly teens, want to see more public art on display in their community and these pocket parks could be excellent opportunities for these types of community amenities.

- **Santa Fe Avenue Park Nodes.** Santa Fe Avenue has large sections of industrial land use but also contains three schools. Residents consider the corridor to be in significant need of urban greening to create a filter between the industrial uses and the community. Small park nodes could increase opportunities for greening along the corridor and significantly improve public perception of the corridor. Additionally, these spaces could provide students and parents with gathering and exercise space near their schools.
- **Plazas/*Placitas*¹.** Plazas can enhance a commercial area by improving the retail experience and increasing foot traffic. These spaces are typically integrated into commercial businesses and provide public amenities, such as places to sit and landscaping. Some plazas and *placitas* are further expanded as community spaces with places for children to play, areas for exercise, or space for outdoor vendors. Pacific Boulevard and Florence Avenue contain predominately commercial properties, many of which are focused on vehicular users and contain large parking lots. Partnerships with businesses and public agencies to reconsider commercial development parking requirements or reuse of areas within commercial developments could carve out space for plazas within these areas.
- **Parklets.** The commercial areas along Pacific Boulevard and Florence Avenue could also be used for the development of parklets. Parklets are small park-like spaces occupying a parking space along a street. These types of projects are common in other areas of Los Angeles County and are typically utilized to enhance the pedestrian environment and expand commercial space. Typically, parklets are placed near restaurants and coffee shops where patrons can utilize the parklet space for eating or near public resources centers like bike shops or grocery stores. The development of a parklet program requires partnership with local business owners and Los Angeles County Department of Public Works (DPW).



MLK Fitness Garden
Willowbrook , CA



Huntington Street Parklet
El Sereno
source: People Street; photo by LADOT/Jim Simmons



Parklet at El Machin on Whittier Boulevard
source: Pasadena Star News

1 *Placita* is the Spanish word for plaza and signifies a central gathering place.

- **JOINT USE AT LOCAL SCHOOLS.** There is an existing joint use agreement at Walnut Elementary School. Residents want to see improvements to this agreement, including a strategy for ensuring that the park is open during the hours it is intended for public use, the addition of new picnic amenities, and new lighting for use after dark. The Green Vision Map additionally calls for the development of a community trail around the school to provide new opportunities for exercise. DPR could also partner with the school to improve overall environmental efficiency at the site. Potential upgrades could include installation of solar panels or smart water meters, conversion to drought-tolerant plant species, or utilization of Low Impact Design (LID) stormwater management techniques.

The Green Vision Map also includes joint use at State Street Elementary School. The school has a large black-top area that could potentially be enhanced with new play facilities or sport courts and made available to residents outside of school hours. State Street Elementary School is located near the highest park need area in the community and could help shortfalls in this part of Walnut Park.

- **RECREATION FACILITY.** Walnut Park lacks an indoor recreation facility. Currently, there is limited space available to develop one; however, it continues to be a high priority in terms of community recreational need. One potential opportunity to create a recreation facility includes the conversion of an existing commercial space. DPR will continue to monitor commercial areas for vacancies that could potentially be converted into a recreational facility.

CONNECTIONS AND CORRIDORS

With limited available land for new park development, some of the environmental and recreational benefits of parks will need to be created outside of park boundaries. Key opportunities include the enhancement of city streets and the development of new trails. These linear spaces can expand greening potential throughout the community and create new recreational options for residents. These improvements will additionally improve access to parks and commercial centers. Figure 5.2 illustrates key connections and corridors in Walnut Park. These connections build off previous planning efforts and on-going infrastructure development projects.

- **GREEN STREETS.** Green Streets include increased plantings along a street through the addition of street trees and stormwater treatment basins, as well as traffic calming elements such as bulb outs, improved crosswalks, and lane width reductions.

Pacific Boulevard and Santa Fe Avenue are good opportunities for Green Street improvements as it could increase access to existing public amenities, such as Walnut Nature Park and the YWCA (Pacific Boulevard), and create a

potential green filter between the community's residential and industrial areas (Santa Fe Avenue). Additionally, if park nodes are developed along these corridors, Green Streets could improve access for pedestrians and cyclists. These types of improvements require partnership with DPW, but could significantly enhance the overall urban greening of Walnut Park.

- **COMMUNITY TRAILS.** Walnut Park residents want more places to walk safely in their community. The Green Vision Map includes a sidewalk trail along Pacific Boulevard, a trail around Walnut Elementary School, and a trail through the linear green space along the trail corridor.

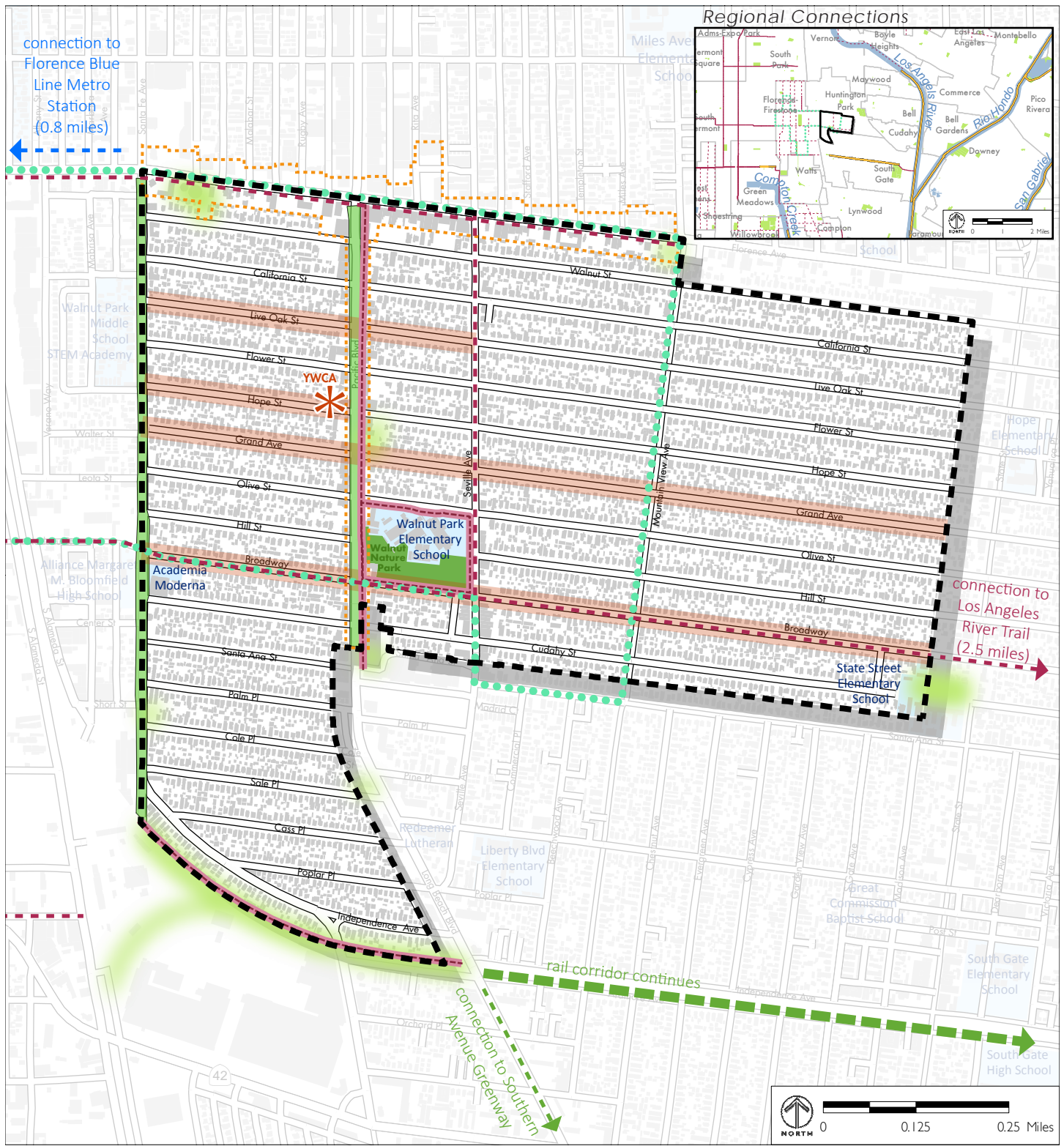
The trail along Pacific Boulevard could include widened sidewalks, where possible, or sidewalk markings, surface treatments, and directional signage. This trail could create a walking network between green spaces along this corridor, community amenities, and commercial spaces.

The trail around the school requires moving the existing fence to accommodate a trail between the sidewalk and the school. If the trail is placed outside the fence, it could be accessible to the public at all times. Additionally, if the trail includes fitness stations, it could become an important space for fitness and health and provide an opportunity for walking and biking.

- **SLOW STREETS.** Walnut Park residents consider many of their streets to be unsafe for pedestrians due to speeding cars and illicit activity. Residents recommended traffic calming along some streets that connect to major corridors. Street improvements require partnership with DPW, but could include speed bumps, lane width reductions, or pedestrian-controlled crosswalks. Safety improvements require partnership with the Los Angeles County Sheriff.



FIGURE 5.2 CURRENT AND POTENTIAL FUTURE CONNECTIONS



Source: Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation, 2013, PlaceWorks, 2013.

- Walnut Park
- Potential Parkland Opportunity
- Existing Park
- Schools
- Potential Trail Opportunity
- Potential Green Street
- Potential Parklet Priority Area
- Proposed Bike Lane
- The Link Shuttle: Florence-Firestone/Walnut Park
- Potential Slow Street

CREATIVE STRATEGIES TO INCREASE ACCESS TO RECREATION

Walnut Park’s park and recreational needs are significantly greater than the space available in the community. Although the green corridors could help to meet some of the recreational needs and green the community, there will likely continue to be a need for additional recreational resources. In addition to new park and trail developments in Walnut Park, DPR could expand their capacity in Walnut Park by developing new initiatives to bring temporary recreational activities into the community.

- **POP-UP PARKS.** A “pop-up” park is a temporary park space that occupies a site for a period of time. Commercial parking lots or public streets could provide space for this type of project. Through an agreement with property

owners or DPW, DPR could utilize these spaces for recreational activities, such as sports days, concerts, or farmer’s markets, for a temporary amount of time.

- **GREEN SPACE SHUTTLES.** Los Angeles County utilizes free and reduced-price shuttles to provide access to public spaces for residents without vehicles. In Walnut Park, the Link connects people through the community. In other communities, the County provides shuttles to destinations outside of the community, such as the Beach Bus that shuttles residents of Altadena, Castaic, Charter Oak, Duarte, East Los Angeles, La Cañada Flintridge, La Crescenta, Lancaster, Palmdale, and Topanga Canyon to the beach in Santa Monica. DPR could potentially partner with DPW to expand this route to include pickup locations in Walnut Park. Alternatively, routes to other recreational locations, such as the Santa Monica Mountains or the Hollywood Bowl could be considered.

FIGURE 5.3 PRECEDENT POP-UP FEATURES



Mobile Exercise Stations
source: David Garza, CyclingInspired™



Play Pieces
source: Stefano Giovanni, Brooklyn Paper Community News Group



Movable Street Furniture and Surface Paint
Bradley Avenue Plaza
source: Los Angeles Department of Transportation People Street



Movie Screenings
source: Elizabeth Bernstein, East Bay Express

URBAN GREENING

Parks and trails serve the public not only as recreational amenities, but also provide valuable ecological services through the landscape elements and infrastructure they contain. These “green” features can significantly benefit urban areas by improving air and water quality, providing habitat areas for wildlife, and improving comfort levels for local residents. For example, trees in parks absorb carbon dioxide, pollutant gases, and filter out particulates.

In addition to urban forestry, urban greening can include efficiency measures, such as energy and water use reductions, stormwater treatment, and transportation initiatives to increase walking and biking to reduce vehicular emissions and improve health.

It is important that parks serve as a model for urban greening in the community where they are located, utilizing efficient technologies, maximizing ecological potential, and advocating for sustainable actions community-wide. Walnut Nature Park has good tree coverage and a substantial amount of permeable surfaces. However, to maximize benefits, additional measures could be implemented at Walnut Nature Park, as well as in potential new parks and trails. Partnerships with other agencies, local non-profits, and residents could expand the greening potential for the community as a whole. Following are areas where change could be implemented to improve urban greening in Walnut Park:

WATER

Water in California is valuable and limited. As of 2015, the State is in the fourth year of an extreme drought, which is considered to be one of the most severe in the last 30 years. Actions are being taken across the State to conserve and protect water resources. Local actions include both water conservation to prevent overuse, as well as water treatment and management to protect water quality.

WATER CONSERVATION

In April 2015, California Governor Jerry Brown declared a statewide State of Emergency due to severe drought conditions and issued an Executive Order requiring a 25 percent reduction in water use from 2013 water use levels through February 2016. The State Water Resources Control Board placed water providers in different tiers of water reduction based on existing water conservation strategies. Walnut Park’s water is provided by the Walnut Park Mutual Water Company, which was placed in a tier that was mandated to reach a 25 percent reduction of 2013 levels. Since many residents are also shareholders in the water company, they will be impacted by any sanctions or regulation placed on the company.

WATER QUALITY

Limited water capacity, stormwater capture and aquifer recharge are important services. Furthermore, soil and plants filter pollutants out of stormwater, reducing the amount of

URBAN GREENING TARGETS

1. Provide at least **15 percent** canopy coverage within new parks.
2. Work with other jurisdictions, agencies, and property owners to increase tree plantings outside of parks, working towards a community-wide canopy coverage target of **31 percent**.
3. Reduce water usage at all existing parks by **25 percent** of 2013 use levels.
4. Capture **100 percent** of stormwater runoff onsite at existing and potential future parks.

polluted runoff into creeks and waterways. Such capture and treatment can be achieved through implementation of bioretention basins and swales.

AIR QUALITY

Greenhouse gas emissions in urban areas can have negative impacts on human health, including cancer and respiratory disease, and negative environmental impacts, such as increased heat island effect or plant growth stagnation. Walnut Park is located within the South Coast Air Basin, which has some of the most polluted air in the nation. Pollutants typically come from two sources: ozone and particulate matter (PM). Ozone (or smog) is created by chemical reactions and sunlight. Pollutants like nitrogen oxides (NOx) and volatile organic compounds (VOCs) are called “ozone precursors.” They combine in the presence of hot, stagnant, sunny weather to create ozone (or smog). Ozone precursors in Los Angeles County come from cars, trucks, ships, buses, petroleum production, and waste disposal. Additionally, southwestern Walnut Park has predominately industrial land uses, including scrap metal processing facilities.



Industrial uses in southwest Walnut Park pose an air quality concern for residents

Residents see this as a major contribution to poor air quality in their community and support urban greening efforts that mitigate potential impacts of these uses.

Parks and recreation facilities in Walnut Park can affect air quality by reducing the need for vehicular access to these spaces, increasing tree canopy within the community to filter air pollutants, and maintaining healthy soil ecosystems.

ENERGY

Although significant progress has been made to increase renewable sources of energy, the majority of electricity in California comes from fossil fuels, with natural gas making up 44 percent of the total power supply.² Energy needs at parks can be substantial, including lighting for sports fields, walkways, and indoor facilities; irrigation meters; heating and cooling systems; computer labs and technical equipment; as well as day-to-day use of electrical equipment by office and program staff.

² 2013 Total Electricity System Power. Energy Almanac. California Energy Commission. <http://energyalmanac.ca.gov/electricity/total_system_power.html>

In 2010, DPR initiated a pilot project to install solar panels at Obregon Park in East Los Angeles. The project reduced electricity consumption by 20 percent at the park and reduced carbon dioxide emissions by 40,000 pounds. Neither Walnut Nature Park nor Walnut Elementary School produces energy on site through solar panels or other alternative means.

WILDLIFE AND HABITAT

Parks, green space, and other green infrastructure serve as sanctuaries for birds, animals, reptiles, amphibians and insects living within an urban area. These species add life to a green space and give residents the opportunity to engage with creatures outside of the human race. Continuous green spaces serve best for a habitat as it allows species to move freely in a protected environment. This is particularly important in urban areas where there is limited green space and species can be trapped. For many species, these spaces do not need to be extremely large and small elements, such as street trees, and can provide valuable foraging and habitat resources.

Green connections within Walnut Park can serve as both corridors for humans as well as urban wildlife. Modifications to the streets in Walnut Park, including more native plants and more trees, can enhance habitat potential.

PUBLIC HEALTH

In addition to being beneficial for the environment, clean air and water benefit humans living nearby. Urban conditions, such as high levels of vehicle exhaust and low levels of trees and landscape, can be difficult on human respiratory and neurological systems and detrimental to psychological health. Parks and green infrastructure can help offset these negative physiological and psychological conditions.

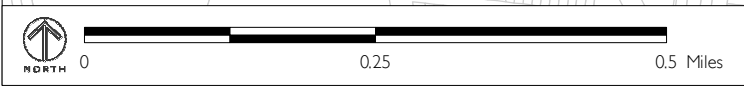
Furthermore, people are more likely to exercise when there are safe places to do so near their homes. Increased exercise can help reduce or prevent obesity and related diseases. Additionally, exercise is important for cardiovascular health and can help counteract the impacts of stress on the body.

URBAN FORESTRY

The urban forest represents a significant component of urban greening and its quality and diversity has a direct effect on how the public perceives the environment of their community. Specifically, residents of Walnut Park considered addressing the urban forest as an important phase in developing the Community Parks and Recreation Plan.

The vision for Walnut Park's urban forest is to increase existing canopy coverage throughout the community by creating greener streets that encourage people to walk and exercise, establishing green buffers from adjacent industrial uses, and focusing on other multi-benefit greening opportunities. Within existing parks, the vision is to increase the canopy coverage while maintaining visibility and existing park uses, and to transition the park forest into one which provides optimal benefits for the community.

FIGURE 5.4 POTENTIAL URBAN FORESTRY OPPORTUNITIES IN WALNUT PARK



Source: Los Angeles County Parks and Recreation, 2013, PlaceWorks, 2015.

- Walnut Park
- Existing Parks
- Schools
- Potential High Priority Street Opportunities (street corridors with low existing tree canopy)
- Pacific Boulevard Tree Planting
- Santa Fe Avenue Industrial Buffer
- Potential Future Parkland with Urban Forestry Opportunity

Realization of this vision will maximize environmental, social and economic benefits associated with the urban forest, thereby enhancing the quality of life and the public health enjoyed by the Walnut Park community. Potential benefits of the urban forest are identified below based on research by the United States Department of Agriculture and the Alliance for Community Trees.^{3,4}

CANOPY TARGETS

As discussed in Chapter Two, tree or shade coverage within Walnut Nature Park is approximately 35 percent; however, the community as a whole has an overall canopy coverage of 16 percent due to low coverage within street corridors, residential areas and other land uses. This is less than the 21 percent coverage maintained within the City of Los Angeles or the 25 percent recommended by American Forests as appropriate for urban areas in temperate and arid climates.

It is recommended that DPR maintain current canopy coverage at Walnut Nature Park, and work with other departments, organizations, and agencies towards a 31 percent community-wide canopy coverage target, with the understanding that increases will be incremental and the target represents a

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- 3 Southern Center for Forest Benefits and Benefits of Urban Trees, USDA Tree Benefits brochure. <<http://www.urbanforestrysouth.org/resources/library/benefits-of-urban-treesbooklet>> accessed March 23, 2010.
 - 4 Alliance for Community Trees, Benefits of Trees and Urban Forests (Resource List), http://www.actrees.org/files/Research/benefits_of_trees.pdf, accessed February 25, 2014.

long-term goal. This target is based on American Forests' recommendations and adjusted based on existing land uses within the community. Reaching this target requires nearly doubling the number of trees in the community. As it is not feasible or desirable for parkland to support all new plantings, community-wide efforts are needed to increase canopy in non-park areas, including residential areas and along streets.

KEY OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENHANCING THE URBAN FOREST *WITHIN* PARKS

Tree canopy coverage at Walnut Nature Park is high and there is limited opportunity to increase tree canopy. Existing trees should be monitored and maintained as a resource for the community and continue to act as a green filter along Pacific Boulevard.

The development of new parks provides great opportunity for new trees. The number of trees and their location depends on the programming and design of the site. Gathering places, plazas, playgrounds and pathways all benefit from shade provided by trees. For other types of programming, such as community gardens and sports fields, trees need to be located to complement these uses, such as not to cast shade on gardens or out of the field of play.

Within Walnut Nature Park and any new parks, the replacement of existing trees and planting of new trees are central to enhancing the trees within the "Park Forest." Trees that are either unhealthy or do little to contribute to the urban forest should be replaced with species that provide greater urban forestry benefits, such as trees with larger and fuller canopies. New trees should be located where they could have the most benefit in existing parks; for example, planting trees around



Pacific Boulevard is a major commercial corridor but has low tree canopy coverage.

gathering areas or in open areas where the tree canopy is lacking. Trees should be arranged so that they do not conflict with programming, such as sports fields.

KEY OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENHANCING THE URBAN FOREST BEYOND PARK BOUNDARIES

Due to the low canopy coverage throughout the neighborhood, expansion of the Park Forest would not be sufficient to improve the overall urban forest. Some opportunity sites to plant trees in non-park areas include along public street right-of-ways or sidewalks and in private residential yards. Although these areas are typically beyond the jurisdiction of County Parks, DPR can plant new trees in partnership with Los Angeles County Department of Public Works (DPW) and can encourage private property owners to plant trees on their respective properties.

Areas that were identified as having a high need for additional street tree plantings and specific opportunity sites, including potential future parks that could include new trees, are identified in Figure 5.4 and described below. The Preferred Tree List in Appendix E identifies species that are appropriate for each of the opportunity types identified.

- **STREET CORRIDORS.** Increasing canopy coverage on urban streets can significantly improve pedestrian conditions by creating a cooler and more aesthetically pleasing walking and cycling environment. In particular, increased street tree planting should occur along the streets with high priority of better urban canopy (identified in Figure 5.4) and along the corridors that connect parks and major community amenities, such as a schools, churches, and recreational facilities.



Existing trees planted throughout Walnut Park provide little shade to pedestrians.

The two corridors discussed previously as Green Street opportunities, Pacific Boulevard and Santa Fe Avenue, are identified in Figure 5.4. The character of the urban forest along these streets could provide unique benefits. Along Pacific Boulevard, the trees could help to create a sense of community. Currently, the street is planted predominately with palm species and residents like that it helps to distinguish the community boundary. However, palms provide limited shade. A resident advisory committee could potentially assist in selecting another community tree that defines the community but has greater urban benefits.

Santa Fe Avenue runs along the edge of an industrial area and the trees along this corridor could provide a valuable buffer for residents living nearby. Trees selected for this area should be similar to trees planted along freeways, as these trees are effective at mitigating air pollutants and noise. See trees designated as suitable for industrial buffers in the preferred tree list in Appendix E.

- **RESIDENTIAL YARDS AND PRIVATE PARKING LOTS.** Private individuals can have significant effects on the public urban forest. Educational resources and incentive programs can encourage residents or property owners to plant trees on their property or request planting from their landlord.

GREENSCORE

Achieving the vision and expanding Walnut Park's parks and recreation system will take time, long-term investment, and political will. There are a wide range of project types and site conditions with different levels of feasibility. As noted in Chapter Four, projects with the highest potential for park development that could meet the most need were prioritized for consideration and possible implementation in the short-term.

Parks with high priority were used in the Greenscore analysis to examine the potential effect of new parkland and trail development. The high-priority projects used in the analysis are shown in Figure 5.7. Green Street development along Pacific Boulevard is a high-priority project; however, it does not increase total acreage of parkland in the community.

Following are discussions and illustrations of how these new potential parks and trails could affect service areas, spatial need, and population served. Greening benefits of the development of new parks as well as meeting urban greening goals community-wide, such as meeting the target canopy coverage of 31 percent are additionally discussed.

IMPACT ON SERVICE AREAS

Figure 5.8 displays the service areas of existing parks and new parks identified as high priorities based on DPR's standard service area buffers. As seen in the figure, with the addition of new potential parks, almost all of the area within Walnut Park is within a half mile of a local park.

IMPACT ON PARKLAND GAP AND WALKABILITY

METHODOLOGY

Using Esri ArcGIS's network analyst, the service areas for potential park sites were calculated. The threshold used was an average 10-minute walking distance (quarter-mile radius). The existing street network and pedestrian conditions as well as potential trails proposed were used to calculate distance and create the service area to determine each potential future park site's walkable service areas. The US Census Bureau's American Community Survey's 2012 5-Year Estimate data was used for the community characteristics analysis. The community's characteristics data needed to be adjusted due to the irregular shape of the walkable service area, which did not correspond with the block group polygons. The ratio of the block group acreage and clipped block group acreage were calculated and applied to the demographics data to estimate the park served population.

PARKLAND GAP

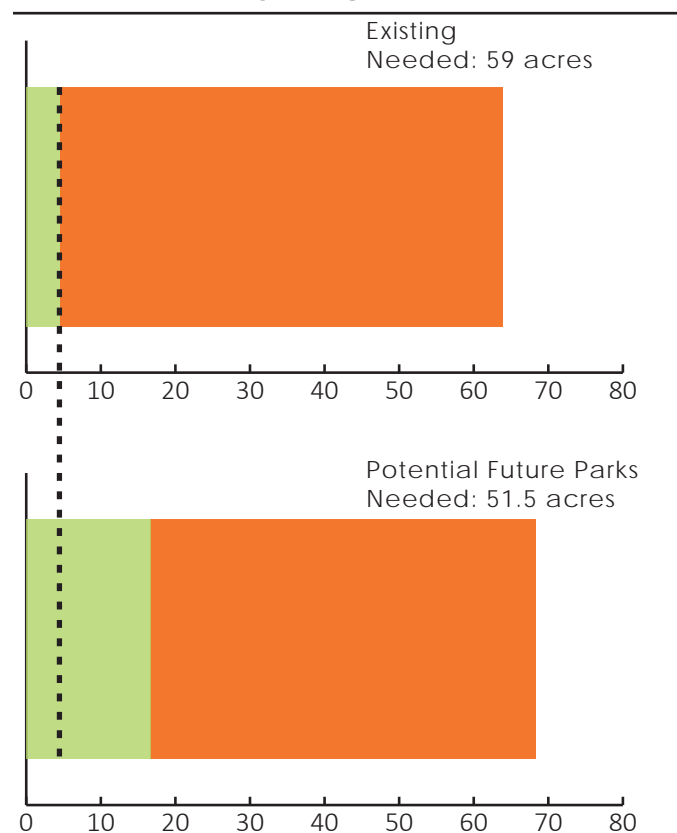
As shown in Figure 5.9, the parkland gap area could be reduced with the implementation of the high-priority park projects. Only a portion of eastern Walnut Park is not within a 10-minute walk to a park. Additionally, when potential trail opportunities are added to the street network, pedestrian access routes to existing and potential future parklands are increased.

IMPACT ON SPATIAL NEED

With the size of its current population, Walnut Park needs approximately 64 acres of local parkland to fulfill the General Plan standard of 4 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents; however, Walnut Nature Park and the adjacent green space at Walnut Elementary School, the only existing park in the community, is only 4.5 acres. The development of the identified high-priority sites adds approximately 7.5 acres of new parklands, which could reduce the parkland needs from 59 acres to 51.5 acres. This calculation of new acreages includes the linear rail corridor site, which is partially located with Walnut Park and partially located within the City of South Gate. The site only includes acreage for the existing rail corridor, although it could potentially be expanded to include renovation of underutilized structures located adjacent to the corridor in the City of South Gate.

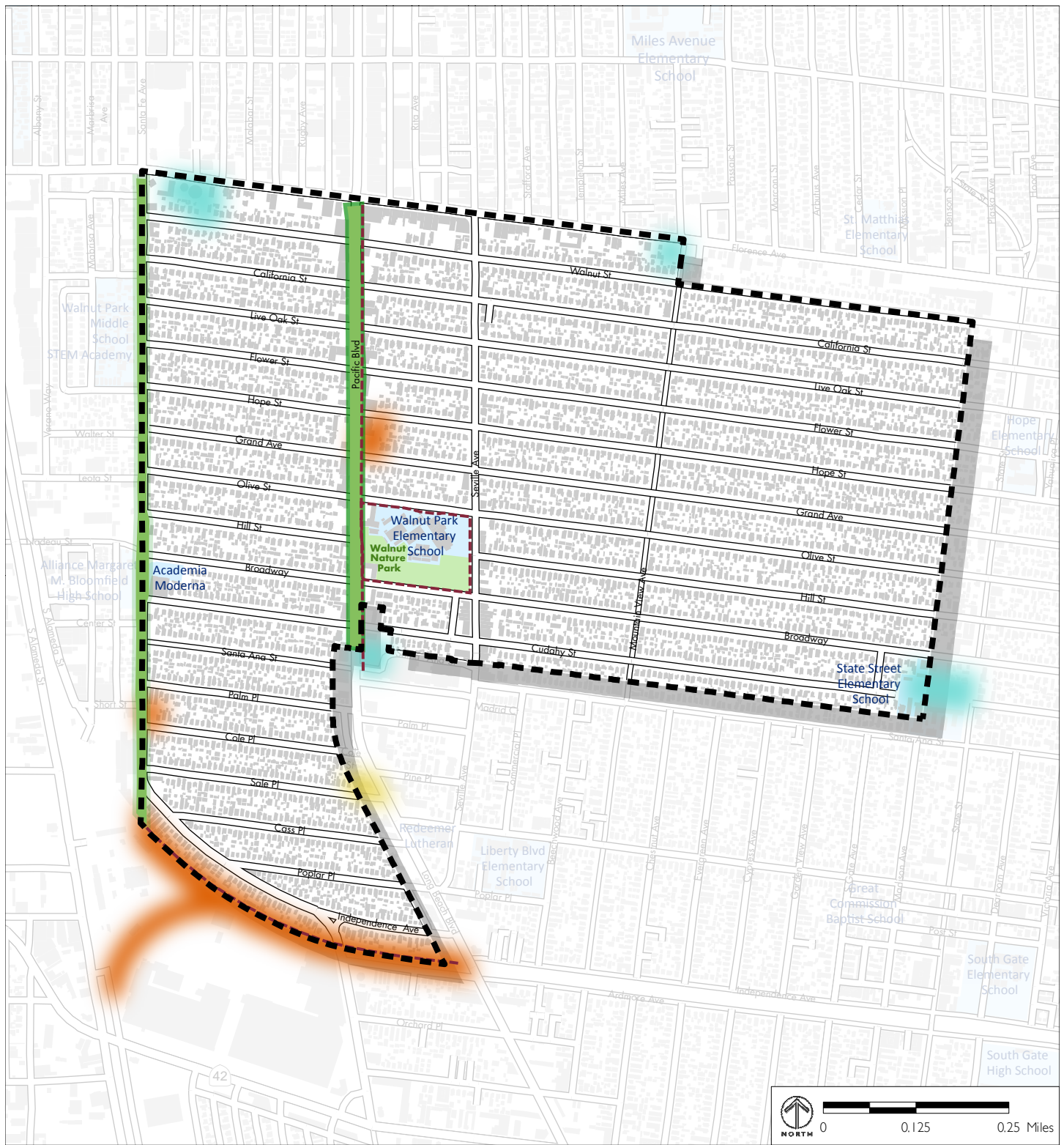
Although there is still need for new parks and recreation facilities, the overall community need could decrease with the addition of the recommended new parkland. Furthermore, with park resources spread out through the community, more Walnut Park residents could be within walking distance of a green space. As seen in Figure 5.10, spatial need throughout the community could be decreased, particularly in the southwest corner of the community.

FIGURE 5.5 **IMPACT ON PARK NEED ACREAGE**



Graphs show improvements based on the addition of high priority park projects only.

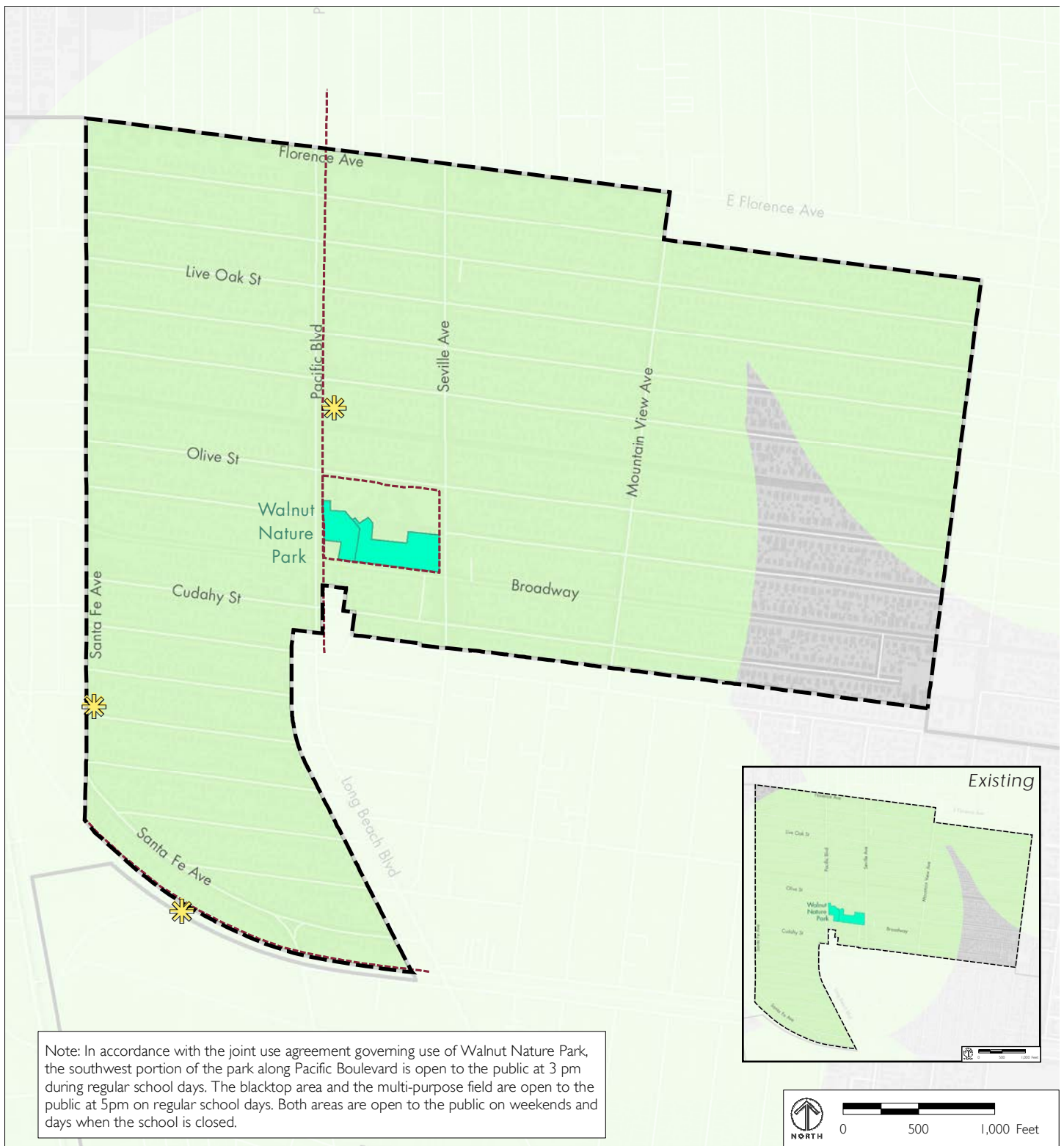
FIGURE 5.6 WALNUT PARK PRIORITY PARKLAND AND TRAIL OPPORTUNITIES



Source: Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation, 2013, PlaceWorks, 2013.

- Walnut Park
- High Priority Parkland Opportunity
- Medium Priority Parkland Opportunity
- Low Priority Parkland Opportunity
- High Priority Trail Opportunity
- High Priority Green Street
- Medium Priority Green Street

FIGURE 5.7 SERVICE AREAS - EXISTING AND POTENTIAL FUTURE PARKS

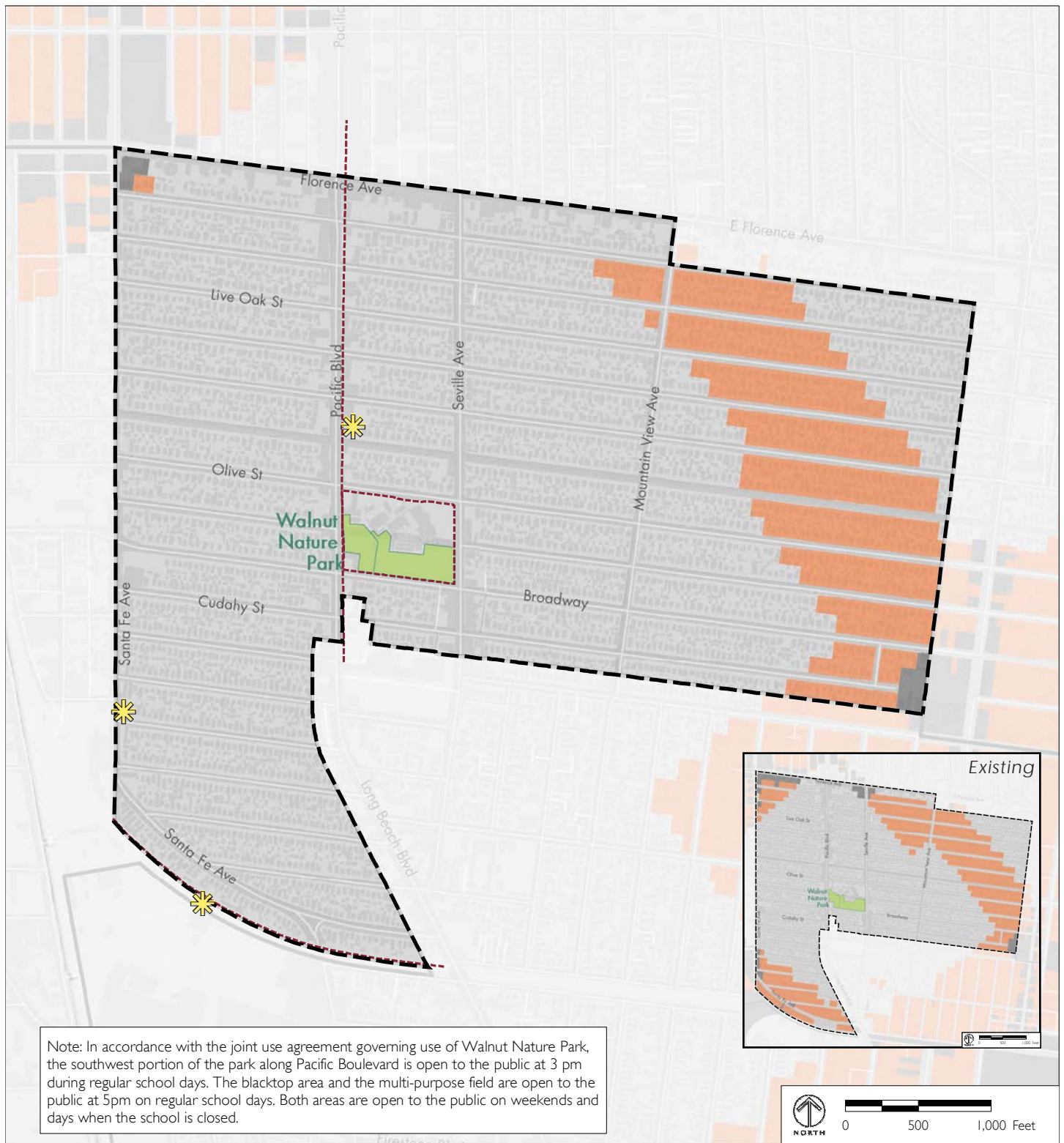


Source: Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation, 2013, PlaceWorks, 2015.

- Park Access**
 1/2 Mile Service Radius from Local Parks (Includes Existing and Potential Future Parks)
- Parklands**
 Existing Park Included in Analysis (Includes Parks Within 1/2 Mile of Community Boundary)
 Potential Future Park Included in Analysis

- Trails**
 Potential Trail

FIGURE 5.8 PARKLAND GAPS/WALKABILITY - EXISTING AND POTENTIAL FUTURE PARKS



Source: Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation, 2013, PlaceWorks, 2015.

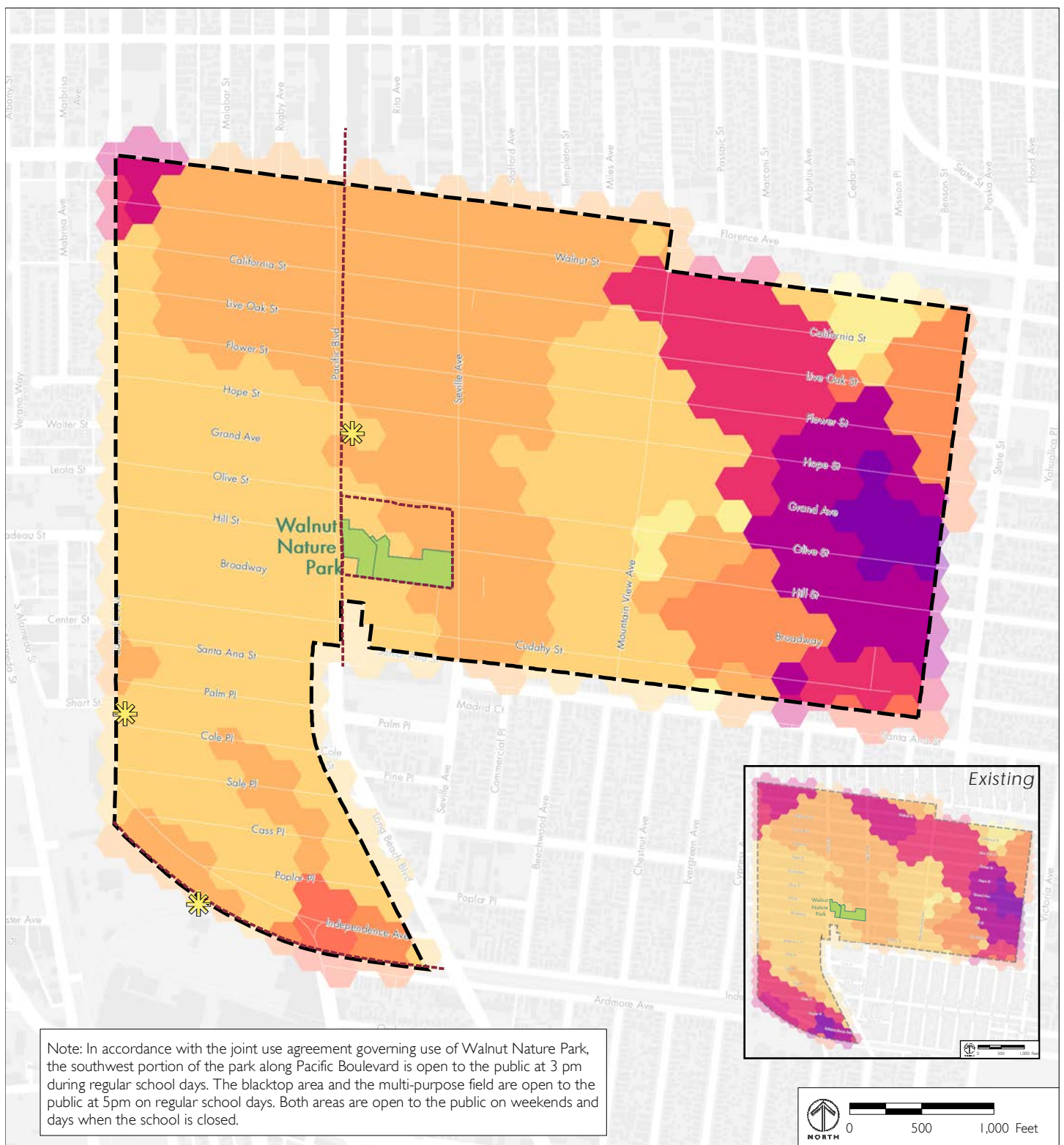
Park Access

- Area Within 1/2 Mile (10 minute walk) of a Park
- Non-Residential Area Not Within 1/2 Mile (10 minute walk) of a Park
- Residential Area Not Within 1/2 Mile (10 minute walk) of a Park

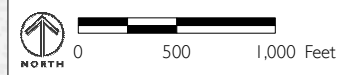
Parklands

- Existing Park Included in Analysis
- Potential Future Park Included in Analysis
- Trails
- Potential Trail

FIGURE 5.9 SPATIAL NEED - EXISTING AND POTENTIAL FUTURE PARKS



Note: In accordance with the joint use agreement governing use of Walnut Nature Park, the southwest portion of the park along Pacific Boulevard is open to the public at 3 pm during regular school days. The blacktop area and the multi-purpose field are open to the public at 5pm on regular school days. Both areas are open to the public on weekends and days when the school is closed.

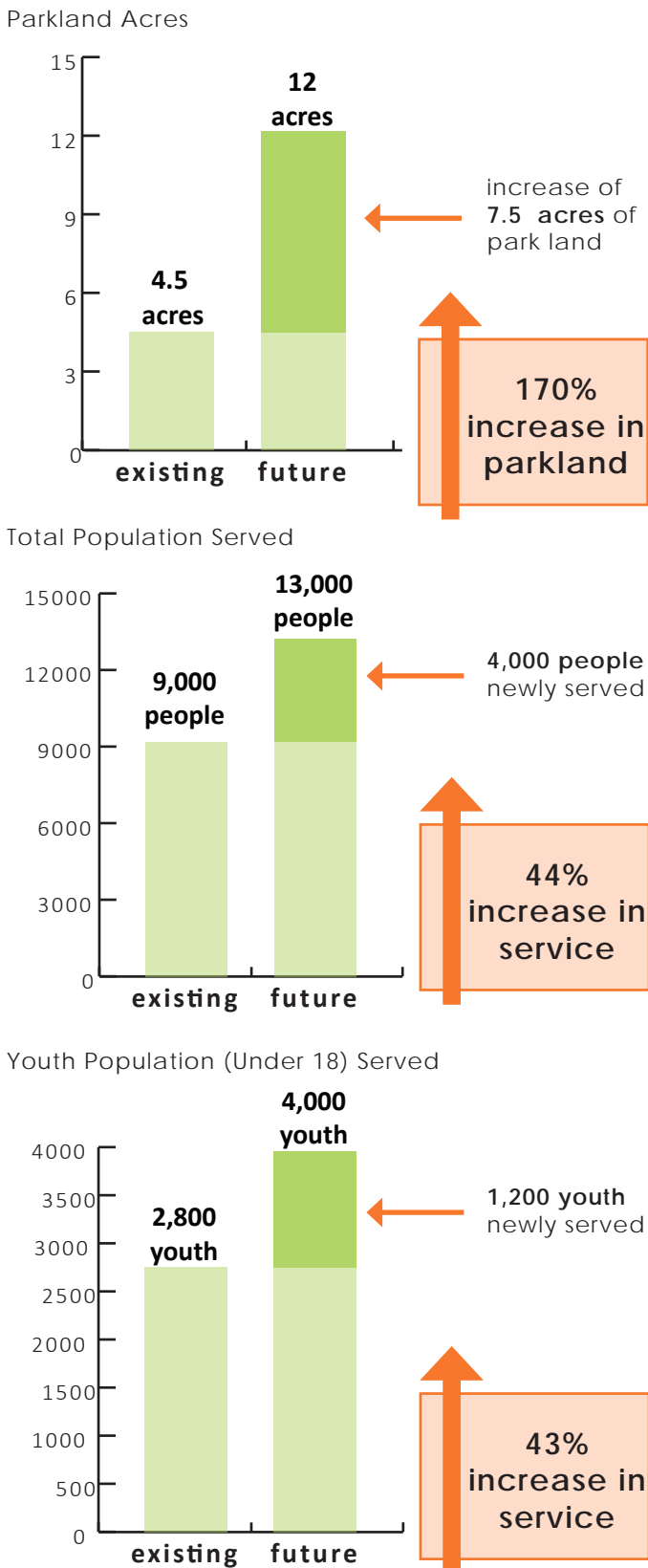


Source: Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation, 2013, PlaceWorks, 2015.

- Park Needs**
- High (Purple)
- Low (Yellow)
- Green Space**
- Existing Park Included in Analysis (Green)
- Potential Future Park Included in Analysis (Starburst)
- Trails**
- Potential Trail (Dashed Red Line)

VISION PLAN

FIGURE 5.10 SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS WITH THE ADDITION OF POTENTIAL NEW PARKS



Graphs show improvements based on the addition of high priority park projects only.

POPULATION SERVED WITH NEW PARKLAND

Meeting the overall park need in Walnut Park is challenging due to the limited availability of vacant land and the high-level of need. The total area of Walnut Park is only 486 acres so in order to achieve this parkland acreage goal of 64 acres, nearly 13 percent of the community would need to be converted to parkland, which is unlikely given the development realities in the community.

However, the addition of 7.5 acres of parkland could have a noticeable effect on parks and recreation service to Walnut Park residents, as shown in Figure 5.11. With the addition of potential future park sites, the population within walking distance of any parks could increase by 44 percent from approximately 9,000 to 13,000 residents. Within that group, the population under 18 years old could increase from approximately 2,800 to 4,000, representing a 43 percent increase from the existing population served. This indicates that the addition of potential future park sites could increase the possibility of providing more access to the parks and green spaces to the overall population and especially for residents under 18 years old.

IMPACT ON STORMWATER INTERCEPTION

Utilizing Low Impact Development (LID) technologies, such as stormwater swales, bioretention basins, or green roofs to intercept water runoff within existing parks and in potential future parks, could provide significant benefits to water storage and improve water quality running into nearby waterways.

Increasing the community-wide tree canopy to 31 percent could store and treat significant quantities of stormwater outside of the parks' boundaries, reducing impacts to existing stormwater infrastructure.

Although current rain levels are below normal, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) estimates the average rainfall for downtown Los Angeles to be 14.93 inches per year. Utilizing this estimate for the 7.5 acres of additional parkland in Walnut Park, annual rainfall in these areas could equal more than 3 million gallons.

A significant amount of this volume could infiltrate into the parks' pervious surfaces; however, a presumed runoff of 10-20 percent is expected in the typical park or open space resulting in approximately **600,000 GALLONS** that could be intercepted and treated with LID.

IMPACT ON WATER CONSERVATION

Changes to maintenance and landscape installation within existing and potential future parks can provide dramatic water conservation. Key water saving strategies include:

- Utilizing **DRIP IRRIGATION** instead of spray heads (estimated 16% water savings)
- Planting **LOW WATER USE PLANTS** and replacing high water use ones (estimated 62% water savings)
- Applying **COMPOST** in planting areas and in turf areas (estimated 10-13% water savings)
- Utilizing **MULCH** regularly to retain soil moisture (estimated 20% water savings)

Figure 5.19 demonstrates how these savings could be applied to a 10,000 square foot sample park project in Walnut Park.

FIGURE 5.11 **SAMPLE PARK PROJECT WATER SAVING**

<i>project size</i>	<i>10,000-square feet</i>
<i>project description</i>	<i>conventional high water use lawn with spray</i>
<i>estimated water use (gallons per year)</i>	349,994

Action	Estimated water use (gallons per year)	Estimated Water Savings (gallons per year)
Switch spray heads to drip irrigation	292,348	57,646
Switch high water use plants to low water use plants	131,248	218,746
Add 3.5% or 5% organic matter content compost	307,995	41,999
Add 3 inches of mulch to planting areas	279,995	69,999

IMPACT ON GREENHOUSE GAS REDUCTION

Implementing the vision plan and urban greening goals in Walnut Park could include many actions that could reduce greenhouse gas emissions and increase carbon sequestration.

- Improving the pedestrian network that encourage more people to walk could **DECREASE VEHICLE MILES TRAVELED** and reduce emissions.
- Utilizing **ON-SITE ALTERNATIVE ENERGY PRODUCTION**, could limit dependence on fossil fuels for energy needs.
- Increasing **TREES** in the urban environment could improve capacity to “sequester” carbon by removing it from the atmosphere and storing it in their wood and in the soil.

It is also possible to quantify the benefits of new trees in Walnut Park. As described in Chapter Two, Walnut Nature Park’s Park Forest (existing trees with parks only) is estimated to sequester 15,149 pounds (6.87 metric tons) of carbon annually. There is limited opportunity to increase tree canopy and carbon storage at Walnut Nature Park. Adding more parks with healthy urban canopy coverage is one strategy to increase the overall carbon stored by the park forest. However, the complete benefits of the urban forest are best understood at the neighborhood scale rather than limited to trees within parks. As shown in Table 5.1, it is estimated that the current forest sequesters 371 metric tons of carbon dioxide per year and that approximately 708 metric tons could be sequestered by the target canopy.

It is important to consider that the planting of trees along streets, at parks, and throughout communities can contribute to greenhouse gas reduction in ways other than carbon sequestration, including but not limited to: providing shade for buildings, thus reducing air conditioning usage; reducing the urban heat island effect; and creating streets and paths that encourage people to walk or bike, thus reducing vehicle trips.

Maintaining canopy coverage at Walnut Nature Park at 35 percent and ensuring coverage of at least 15 percent for new parks could ensure sustained or increased carbon sequestration by the park forest. In addition, selecting trees that have high capacity for carbon sequestration, especially for sites near freeways and other sites that have high levels of air pollution, can improve the contribution of the urban forest to greenhouse gas reduction.

TABLE 5.1 WALNUT PARK CARBON SEQUESTRATION UNDER EXISTING AND TARGET CANOPY COVERAGE

Land Use ¹	CANOPY COVER		ANNUAL CARBON SEQUESTRATION (CO ₂ METRIC TONS) ²	
	Existing	Proposed	Existing	Proposed
Low Density Residential	67	135	321	641
High Density Residential	5	7	23	32
Commercial/Institutional	4	5	19	22
Industrial/Utilities/ Transportation	0.02	0.04	0.1	0.2
Open Space ¹	2	3	8	13
Total	78	150	371	708

1 Land use areas are based on land use of tax parcels and adjacent streets. Walnut Nature Park and the adjacent blacktop area and multipurpose area are operated through a joint use agreement with Walnut Park Elementary School. The area is designated as Institutional land use rather than Open Space. However for this analysis, 4.5 acres (the approximate area of the joint use agreement) were categorized as Open Space. The carbon sequestration data in the impact on greenhouse gas reduction summary is based on iTrees estimate of tree survey at Walnut Nature Park only, while the coverage displayed in Table 5.1 is based on LiDAR data for the entire area and is slightly higher than the iTrees estimate.

2 Increase in carbon storage resulting from increased canopy coverage was estimated using the following assumptions: (1) 150 pounds stored/tree/year, based on the average iTrees estimates for existing trees in East Los Angeles parks (East Los Angeles was selected as the sample measurement due to the diversity of the existing park forest in that community); (2) 70 trees per acreage of cover, assuming approximate spacing of 25 feet between trees. Based on these assumptions, it is estimated that 10,500 pounds of carbon could be sequestered for each additional acre of canopy coverage, regardless of land use.



6 - CONCEPTUAL SITE DESIGNS

New parks and recreation amenities in Walnut Park should consider the vision set forth in this plan and incorporate the feedback of community members who participated in the planning process. To begin to illustrate the vision, conceptual site designs and implementation strategies were created for three prototypical sites. These conceptual ideas are intended to help move the vision forward into realization and create a park system that is more responsive to the needs of Walnut Park residents.

CONCEPTUAL SITE DESIGNS

Three prototypical projects were selected to serve as conceptual projects for a community design activity with Walnut Park residents. The designs generated at this workshop are intended to guide new park and infrastructure development and the projects serve as samples for the types of projects that might be developed in Walnut Park. Although the specific project may not be implemented due to a variety of factors (land availability, political, e.g.), concepts and amenities from these designs may be incorporated into different projects at other locations, where applicable.

Conceptual site designs include the following site types:

- **CENTRAL POCKET PARK ALONG PACIFIC BOULEVARD.** A pocket park along Pacific Boulevard could be an important gathering place for Walnut Park residents. This concept was for a new green space along this corridor, likely located on a vacant lot.
- **LINEAR NEIGHBORHOOD PARK.** This concept is for a larger park within a linear corridor. The sample location was the underutilized rail corridor in southwest Walnut Park, although the concepts could apply to other larger park space.
- **PACIFIC BOULEVARD STREETScape.** Due to limited opportunities for green space, existing streets were considered important opportunities for urban greening and recreational amenities. Pacific Boulevard runs through the heart of Walnut Park and this concept envisioned a street that provides more amenities to pedestrians and cyclists and integrates community amenities that are missing in Walnut Park.

Figure 6.1 highlights locations where the three conceptual site designs could be implemented, although other available sites in Walnut Park could additionally build off the concepts developed in this process.

COMMUNITY DESIGN WORKSHOP

As described in Chapter Three, these sites were presented at a community design workshop at YWCA-Supervisor Gloria Molina Community Empowerment Center in September 2014. Workshop participants collaborated with DPR and the consultant team to develop a programmatic approach to each of the sites and design conceptual parks for the sites.

Following the workshop, these ideas were compiled into the designs shown and described in this chapter. Some elements were eliminated from the design based on infeasibility or other site constraints; however, where possible, the design reflects the community's vision for the site. To incorporate community voices that were not present at the design workshop, elements were added to the sites to accommodate other needs identified in the community, as well as to help meet DPR's own sustainability goals. The summary of each site design includes a list of the identified facilities needs that the project would help meet.

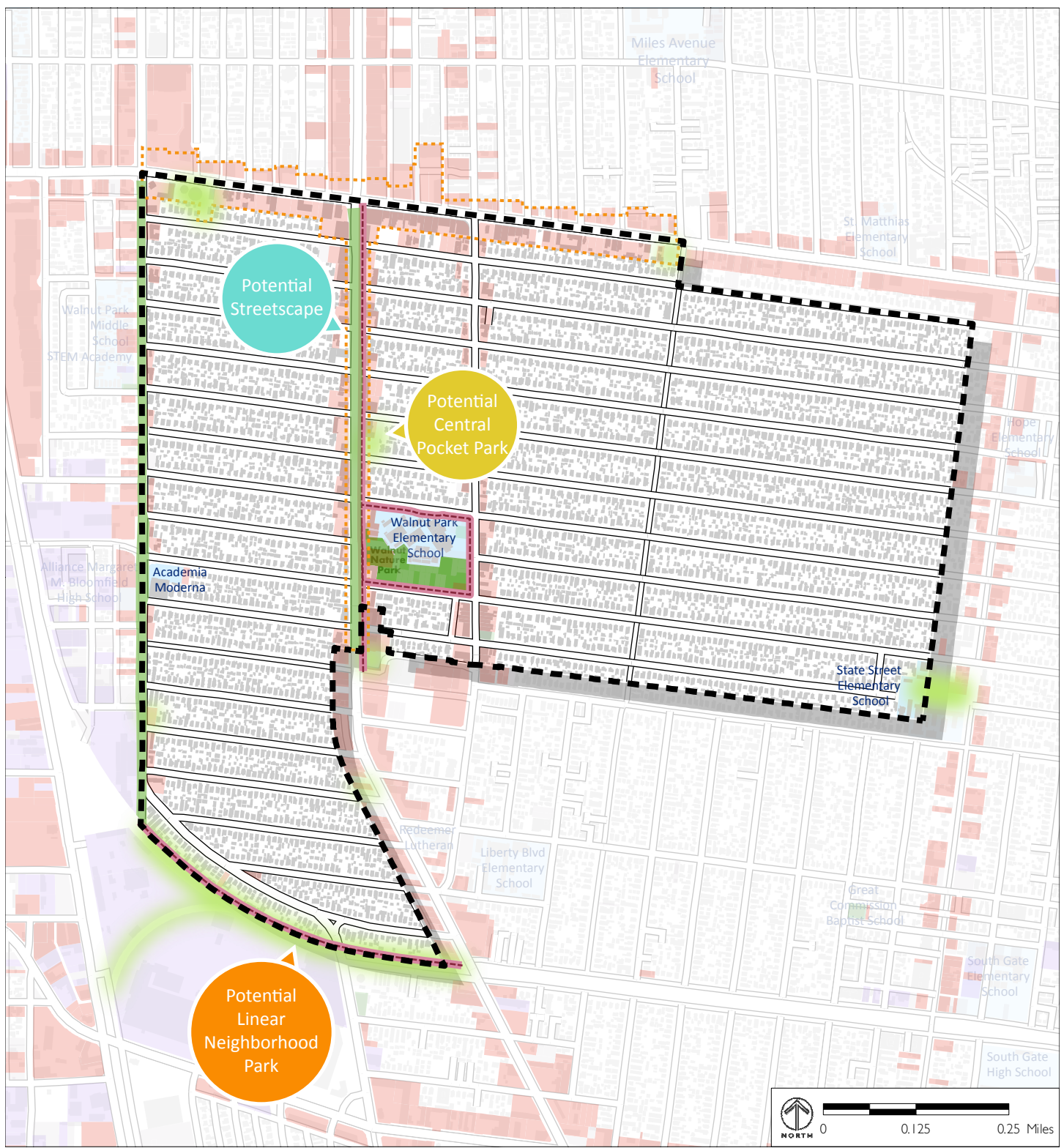
PURPOSE AND FUTURE USE OF SITE DESIGNS

Although conceptual, these site designs bring together key elements from the Vision Plan presented in Chapter Five and how it could be carried out at a site level. As park projects are built in Walnut Park, these plans should serve as a model for the design style and programming that is desired within the community as well as an illustration of how urban greening elements could be incorporated into future parks.



Walnut Park residents participating in community design activity

FIGURE 6.1 LOCATION OF CONCEPTUAL SITE DESIGN PROJECTS



Source: Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation, 2013, PlaceWorks, 2013.

- Walnut Park
- Potential Parkland Opportunity
- Potential Parklet Priority Area
- Potential Central Pocket Park
- Existing Park
- Potential Trail Opportunity
- Commercial Land Use
- Potential Linear Neighborhood Park
- Schools
- Potential Green Street
- Industrial Land Use
- Potential Streetscape

CENTRAL POCKET PARK

SITE SUMMARY

Walnut Park residents expressed a strong desire for a new green space that could bring the community together as a place to gather, exercise, and play. Residents do not consider Walnut Nature Park to be sufficient to provide this and want to see a new park serve as the central park in the “heart” of Walnut Park. During the community design workshop, participants envisioned this type of space.

COMMUNITY VISION

Workshop participants in this group created a list of amenities that they would like to have in the small park space:

- Place to play music and for musical performances
- Place to dance
- Stage
- Electricity
- Wi-Fi
- Space for gathering activities
- Lighting
- Exercise equipment
- Emergency call phone
- Water feature
- Snack bar
- Indoor gym facility and recreation center
- Space for seniors (indoor or outdoor)
- Clear lines of sight

Based on this list, the group decided to design a space for performance and gathering. The main feature is a small stage, such as a band shell or a trellis-covered platform, which the group thought could be used for dance performances, movie screenings, and musical shows. The group envisioned a seating area directly in front of the stage with a small slope and seat walls to create a small-scale amphitheater effect. Since it would be used for seating, the slope would be lawn, although the group indicated that a low-water use turf alternative should be used and lawn should be limited within the park.

The group included a walking trail around the park for exercise, with two nodes for exercise equipment. At the center of the path, there is a play space for children with a shade structure and barbecues and tables for picnicking. The group felt it was important for the site to include a restroom to accommodate people using the park all day.

The group designed the park to have two entrances. They preferred not to have a fence but to utilize a planted buffer along the boundary to create a natural barrier to the street. The group included a few large trees for shade.

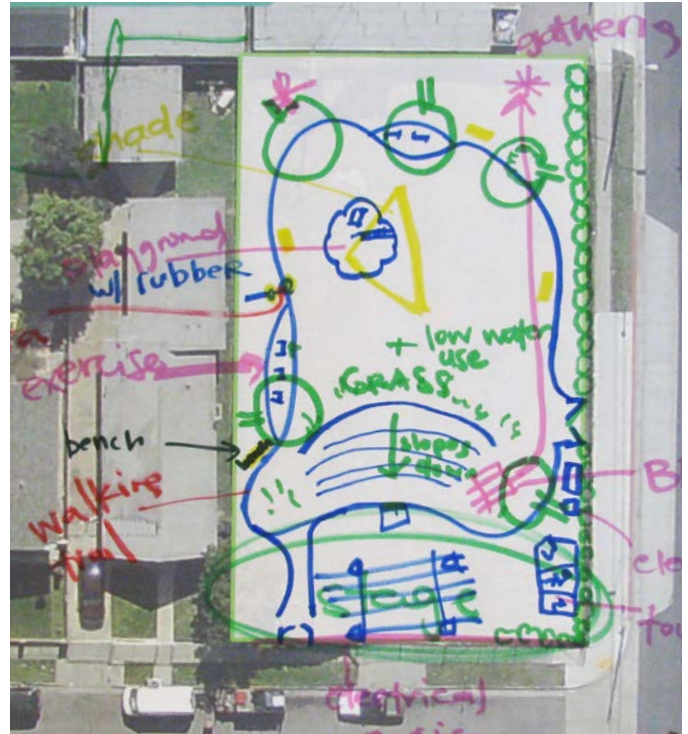
For safety, the group thought the site should have motion-sensor, solar powered lights. They did not want the park to be closed at night but would like to discourage unsafe uses after dark. The group thought that these lights would create the sense that the park is being watched. The group also wanted to

SUMMARY OF SITE CONDITIONS

size: 0.5 ACRES

ownership: PRIVATE OWNER

potential park type: POCKET PARK



Community Vision Drawing from Design Workshop

include a security camera and an emergency call phone. They also indicated that the entire site should be visible at all times to prevent people from hiding in the park.

SITE DESIGN

The site design reflects the community’s desire for a central gathering space with a stage. A large berm is located in the middle of the site and separates the performance space from a small play area. A fence was added to one side of the park to separate the performance area from the street. The park is surrounded by landscaping, and there is a walking path with benches and exercise equipment around the perimeter.

Public art is used to enliven the space. The play equipment and fence are opportunities for integration of art and utility, while the wall on the adjacent building could potentially be used for a mural. Youth outreach participants indicated that public art makes them more likely to utilize a public space. By partnering with youth groups to create artwork that is appealing to them, it is more likely that they will take ownership of the space and utilize it.

FIGURE 6.2 CONCEPTUAL CENTRAL POCKET PARK PLAN



FIGURE 6.3 CONCEPTUAL CENTRAL POCKET PARK VISUAL SIMULATION



LINEAR NEIGHBORHOOD PARK

SITE SUMMARY

An unused freight rail corridor runs through southwest Walnut Park along the border with the City of South Gate. This corridor could potentially be utilized as a linear park. The western section of the corridor runs behind residential properties parallel to Santa Fe Avenue as it turns to run in an east-west direction. The rail corridor crosses Santa Fe Avenue as the road turns back to a north-west direction and the rail corridor continues to Long Beach Boulevard and beyond into the City of South Gate. The section of the corridor east of Santa Fe Avenue runs parallel to Ardmore Avenue, which provides vehicular access to the potential park space.

Although conversion of the rail corridor may not be feasible due to site conditions, the recommendations for the park could be transferred to another neighborhood park-scale project. The linear character of the rail corridor lends itself to a central walking path with park elements along the path. This layout is potentially specific to this site but the community would like to see more walking opportunities even if it is not the central feature in new parks.



Existing Site Photos

SUMMARY OF SITE CONDITIONS

size: 7 ACRES

ownership: SOUTHERN PACIFIC RAILROAD

potential park type: NEIGHBORHOOD PARK AND TRAIL

COMMUNITY VISION

Workshop participants brainstormed on uses in the park, amenities that they would like to have there, and also potential issues that could occur in the site:

USES

- Safe for youth
 - *Afterschool place*
 - *Youth sports*
- Programming and classes
- Access for pets
- Dog friendly
- Operating hours so the park opens and closes
- Community gardens

AMENITIES

- Walking path/trails
- Exercise equipment
- Bathrooms
- Water features: splash pad
- Drought resistant plants
- Native plants
- Benches along trail
- Lighting
- Art
- Murals on warehouse walls
- Drinking fountain
- Protected children's area

ISSUES

- Close to homes (could be issue with burglary)
- Vagrants, squatters, prostitution
- Drug use
- Should not be used for parking – locate parking on cross street

In their design, the group envisioned a meandering “nature walkway” through the site with amenities and activity nodes along its route, including benches, fitness equipment, play areas and splash pads, water fountains, trash receptacles, and a community garden. The pathway is divided for pedestrians and cyclists with a dedicated bike lane away from the main path. The group included numerous lighting features spaced evenly along the entire length of the park. The group designated the western end of the park as a dog-friendly zone.

The group wanted the park to be visible to cars and pedestrians passing along Santa Fe Avenue and suggested visible signage at the intersection of the park and the street. The group also indicated that the existing warehouse walls facing the corridor could be used for murals and public art.

The group was provided a “visual inspiration toolkit” with images of park features. The group identified the following items as being in line with their vision for the linear neighborhood park:

- Fitness equipment including stationary bikes
- Separated bicycle and pedestrian pathway
- Crosswalks with flashing lights (at Long Beach Boulevard and Santa Fe Avenue)
- Interactive splash pad
- Performance stage
- Community garden
- Native plants and naturalistic planting patterns
- Murals
- Mosaic art and play features
- Decorative fencing
- Close lighting with high illumination
- County signage
- Movable metal seating
- Wooden benches

SITE DESIGN

The site design reflects the community’s desire for a central pedestrian trail and a separated bicycle route. Small park “rooms” are located along the path, including splash pads, playgrounds, fitness areas, community gardens, multi-purpose fields, and dog parks. The park includes plaza entrance spaces at all major intersections to direct people into the park.

A skate park and skate path were added to the park to provide space for older youth. The linear paved walkway for cyclists could provide skateboarders with recreational space and create access to the skate facility.

The linear neighborhood park is broken into three phases:

PHASE ONE: Long Beach Boulevard to Santa Fe Boulevard
 This section is most easily accessed in its current state and was selected as the first phase as a way of activating the area in preparation for expansion the park. In addition to the dual pathway, this section includes entry plazas on both ends, a playground and splash pad, a fitness station with exercise equipment, a multi-purpose field, and a dog park.

PHASE TWO: Santa Fe Boulevard East to Middle Access Point
 This section includes the area of the corridor behind residential properties. In order to be accessed from both ends, it includes an entry plaza that connects to Santa Fe Avenue to the north. This section also includes a large entry plaza at the eastern end that would serve as the gateway to the park and the central gathering space for the park. It could potentially incorporate a large mural on an adjacent building. Additionally, this section includes dual pathways, a skate park, an urban farm with fruit trees, and a multi-purpose field.

PHASE THREE: Middle Access Point to Western Access Point
 This section extends from the middle access point to Santa Fe Boulevard access point at the western end of the corridor. This section of the park is the most secluded and should be completed once there is a active park presence at the site to ensure that it is well used and well supervised. This section includes an entry plaza at the western end, dual pathways, multi-purpose fields, and natural planting areas.

FIGURE 6.4 LINEAR NEIGHBORHOOD PARK PHASING

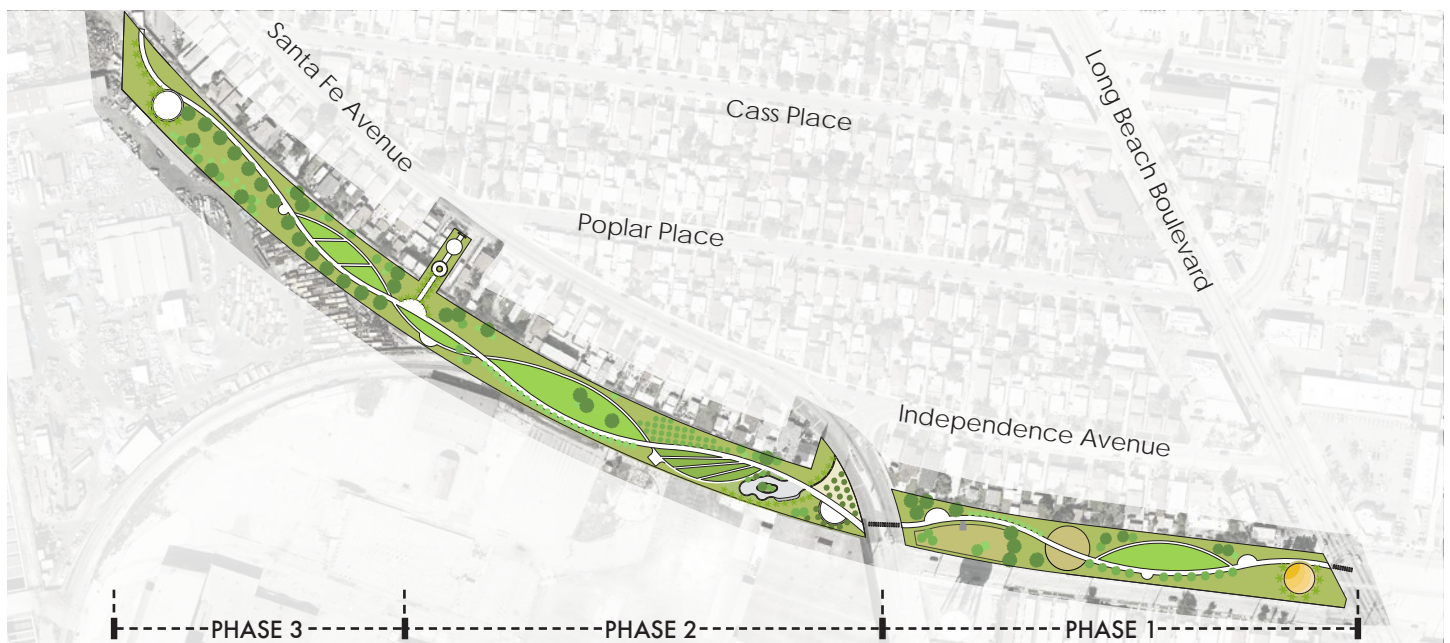


FIGURE 6.5 LINEAR NEIGHBORHOOD PARK CONCEPT PLAN



SITE DESIGNS

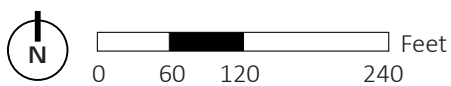
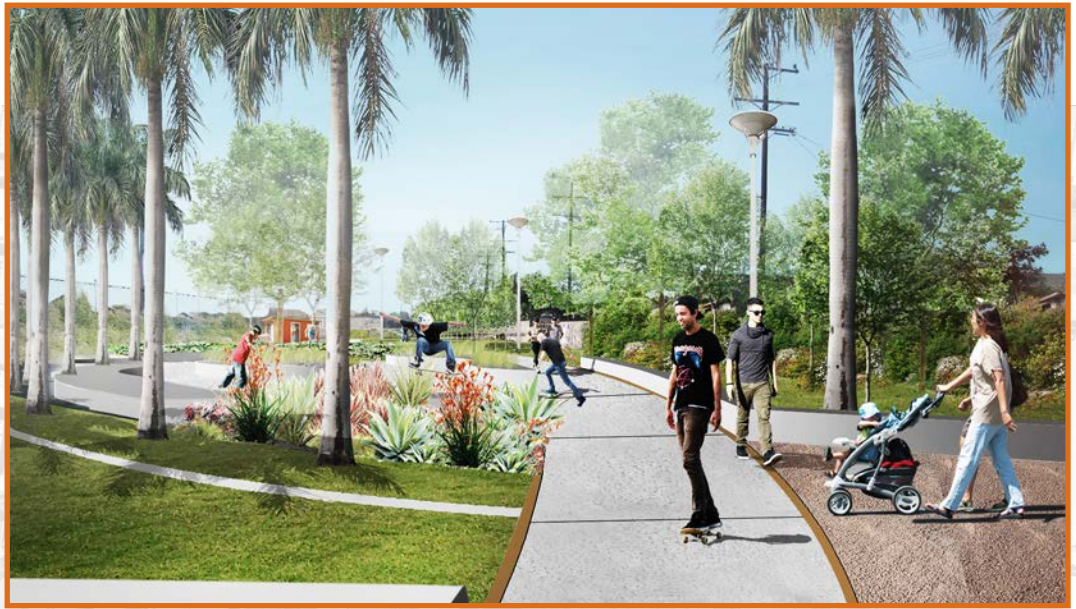


FIGURE 6.6 LINEAR NEIGHBORHOOD PARK VISUAL SIMULATION



PACIFIC BOULEVARD STREETScape

SITE SUMMARY

Due to limited space for new parks and the potential for streets to provide significant urban greening and recreational benefits, residents in the community design workshop also completed a potential design concept for Pacific Boulevard. Residents were asked to envision features that would make it more likely that they would walk along the corridor and features that would enhance the “green” quality of the street. Major site constraints, such as road and sidewalk width, were not considered for this visioning exercise. Residents were made aware of these potential issues and they were asked to provide more “big picture” thoughts on of the ideal street green space. Some business owners in the group brought up issues that they would potentially have with streetscape changes, such as the difficulty of turning into their businesses if there is a central median, and the need for clear access from the sidewalk.

COMMUNITY VISION

Participants in the workshop group used stickers with site features to create their vision for the Pacific Boulevard. The stickers included typical streetscape features, such as street trees, landscaped medians, benches, public art, wayfinding,

SUMMARY OF SITE CONDITIONS

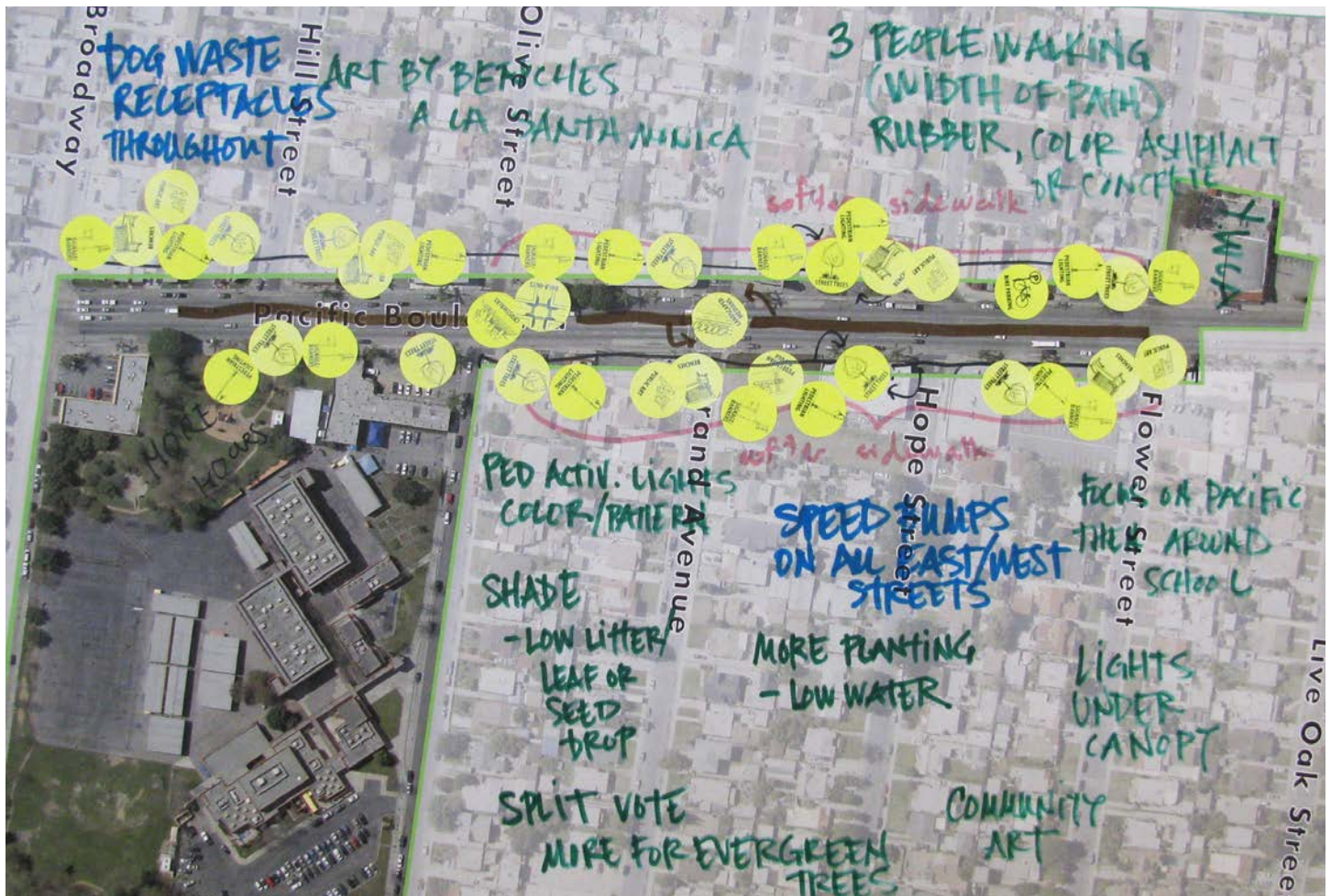
length: 0.5 MILES

jurisdiction: DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

potential project type: GREEN STREET AND TRAIL

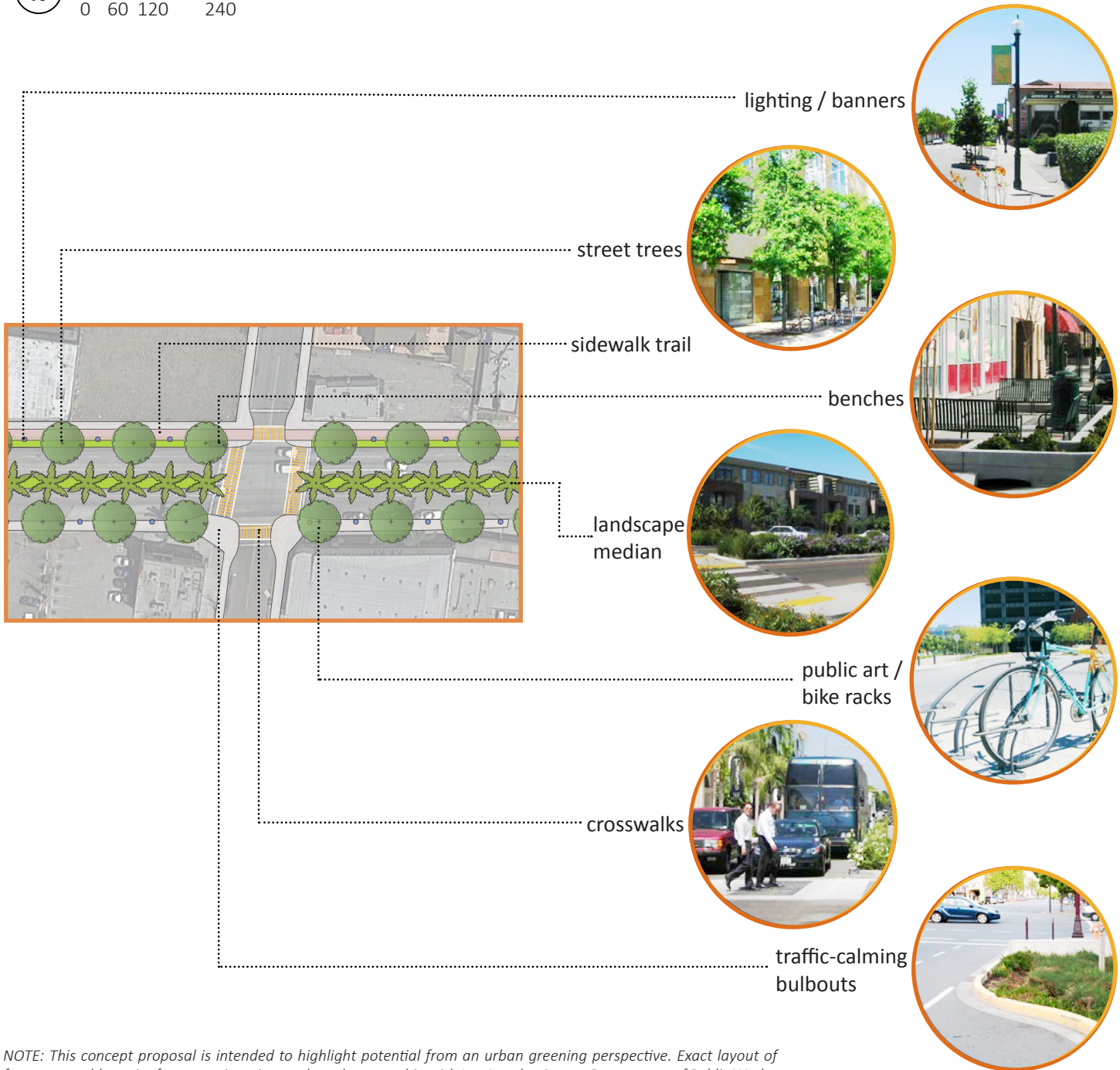
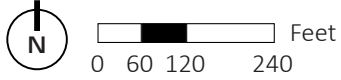
lighting, crosswalks, and landscaped bulbouts. Participants also drew other elements that were not included on the stickers on their plan.

The major element designed by the group was a sidewalk path delineated by a colored concrete, asphalt, or rubber surface material. The group thought the trail should be wide enough for three people to walk side-by-side. The group considered the “trail” area to be separate from other sidewalk uses, such as entering and exiting commercial businesses, sitting on benches, or gathering along the street. The group also envisioned the sidewalk area to be wide enough to accommodate trees, benches, lighting, and bike parking. There was also an interest in including community art near the benches.



Community Vision Drawing from Design Workshop

FIGURE 6.7 PACIFIC BOULEVARD STREETScape PROTOTYPICAL PLAN



NOTE: This concept proposal is intended to highlight potential from an urban greening perspective. Exact layout of features would require future engineering study and partnership with Los Angeles County Department of Public Works.

The group thought that the following improvements would increase pedestrian activity by making the street safer or more interesting to walk along:

- Water-efficient landscaping
- Improved pedestrian lighting (below canopy of trees) at frequent intervals
- Pedestrian-activated crossings at Olive Street and Grand Avenue
- Custom patterned and colored crosswalks
- Signage or banners
- Benches with community art nearby
- Dog waste receptacles along route
- Colored/patterned crosswalks and extended curbs
- Bike parking

The group proposed a landscaped center median and more plantings in the pedestrian realm, although the group was split about whether street trees should be deciduous with fall color or be evergreen for year-round shade and less leaf litter.

The group wanted to include speed bumps along the east-west residential streets crossing this section of Pacific Boulevard, bulbouts and enhanced crosswalks with pedestrian-activated

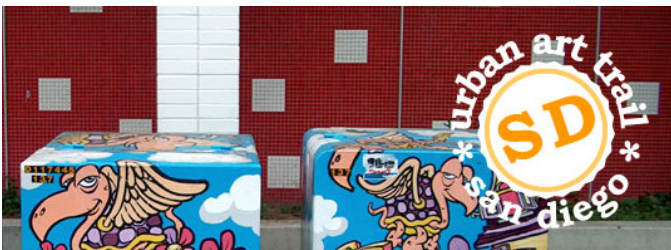
crossings at the Olive Street and Grand Avenue intersections, and a pedestrian refuge island as part of the Grand Avenue intersection.

SITE DESIGN

The site design includes conceptual prototypes for segments of Pacific Boulevard. The concept does not include a full redesign of the street but rather incorporates the elements from the workshop participants vision. The prototypes include a vibrant sidewalk trail that is separated from the sidewalk. The trail is marked with signage along streetlights, which are low and spaced at frequent intervals. The prototypes include a central landscaped median with drought tolerant plants, street trees, and a landscaped buffer along the sidewalk.

Public art is a major priority for the community and integration of art and utility projects, such as banners, benches, and bike racks, could be potential partnership opportunities for local groups and the Los Angeles County Arts Commission. Community outreach with residents will be important for selecting artwork along the corridor as it will help to define this section of Pacific Boulevard as distinctly Walnut Park.

FIGURE 6.8 STREETScape IMPROVEMENT PRECEDENTS



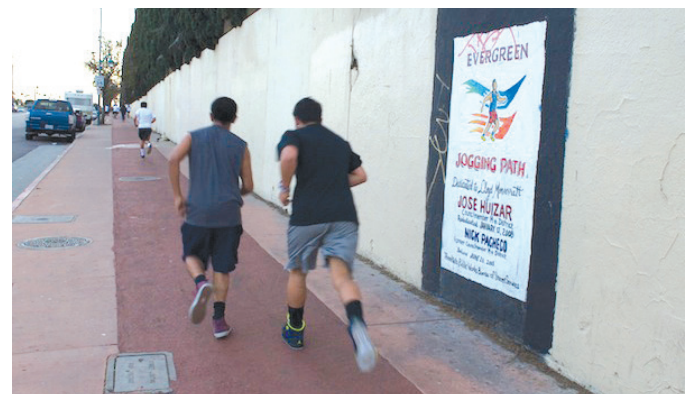
*Urban Art Walk
East Village, San Diego, CA
source: Art Project Foundation*



*Central Median Planting
Hawthorne Boulevard, Lennox, CA
source: Google, DigitalGlobe, 2015*



*Decorative Crosswalk
Edina, MN
source: Ennis-Flint*

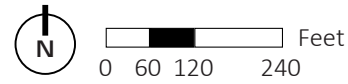


*Sidewalk Trail
Evergreen Cemetery, Boyle Heights, CA
source: Kris Fortin: StreetsblogLA*

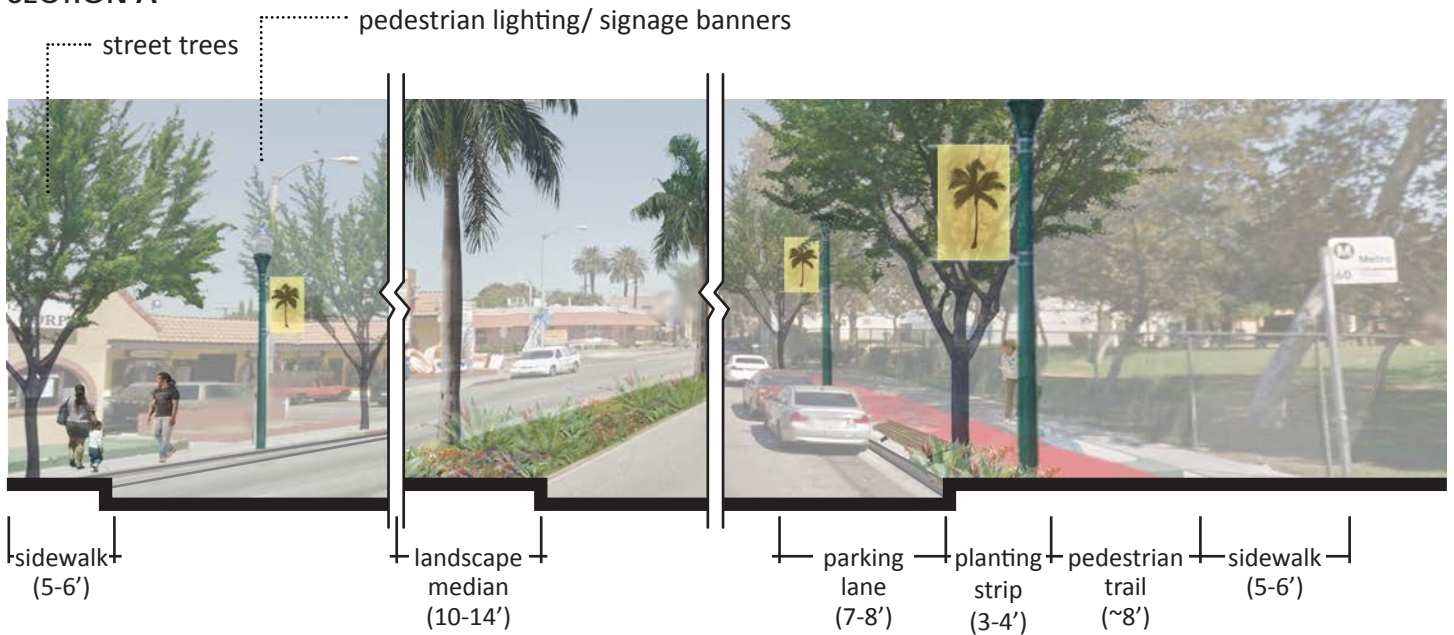


*Landscaped Bulbout
Portland, OR*

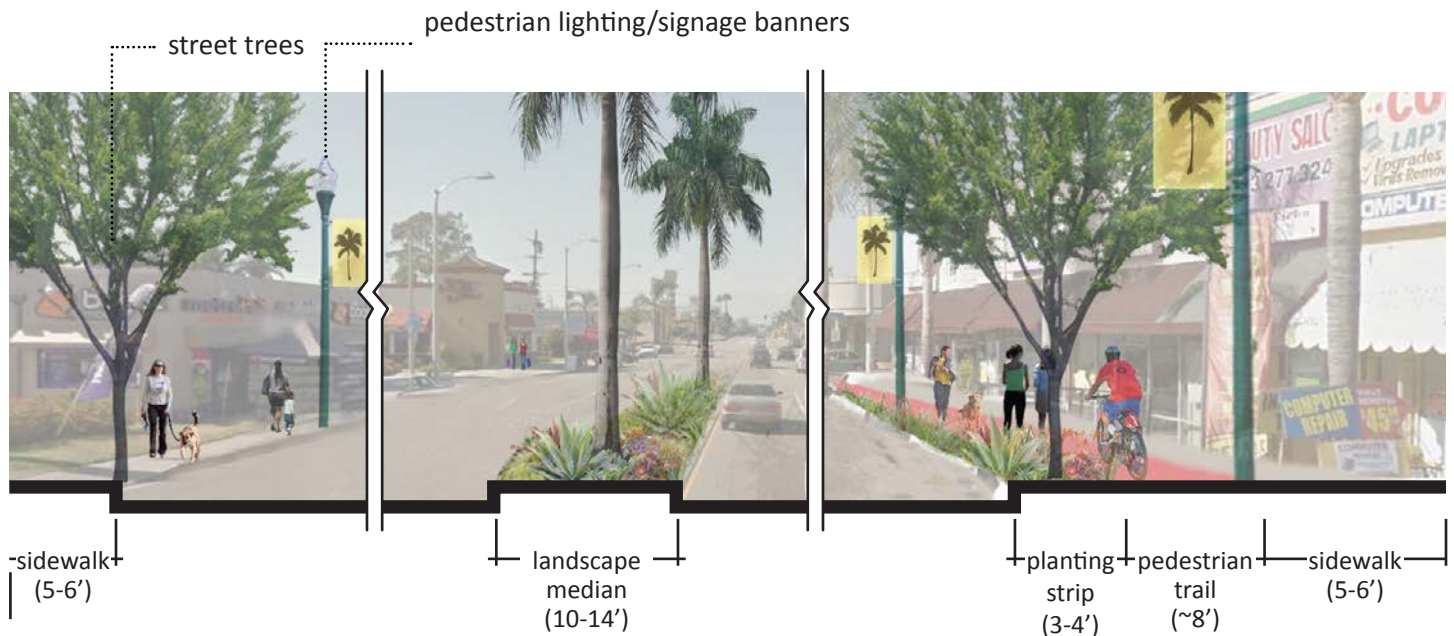
FIGURE 6.9 PACIFIC BOULEVARD STREETScape PROTOTYPICAL SECTIONS



SECTION A



SECTION B



NOTE: This concept proposal is intended to highlight potential from an urban greening perspective. Exact layout of features would require future engineering study and partnership with Los Angeles County Department of Public Works.

MEETING THE NEEDS

The site designs presented above reflect the design concepts developed in the community design workshop, as well as other needs identified in the outreach process. Table 6.1 illustrates which of the facility needs identified for Walnut Park in Chapter Four could be met by the design concepts presented here. As shown, the facilities help to create many of the needs identified by the community and are described in Chapter Four, with the exception of the indoor recreation facility.

The design concepts include new gathering places for small groups and larger events. They offer new opportunities for exercise and fitness through community walking and running paths and parks with exercise facilities. New play facilities for younger children, such as playgrounds and splash pads, and facilities for older youth, such as sport courts, “hangout” spaces, and skate parks, could be accommodated in these design concepts, and the concepts create space to achieve the community’s desire for new public art though installations and creative site amenities.



Enthusiastic Walnut Park resident presenting the group’s concept for Pacific Boulevard

TABLE 6.1 POTENTIAL NEEDS MET WITH CONCEPTUAL DESIGNS

		Central Pocket Park	Linear Neighborhood Park	Pacific boulevard streetscape
New Field Space			●	
Picnic, Gathering, and Event Spaces		●	●	
Exercise Facilities and Opportunities to Walk		●	●	●
Safe Corridors for Pedestrians and Cyclists			●	●
Play Spaces, Tot Lots, and Spaces for Teens		●	●	
Pool or Splash Pad		●	●	
Public Art		●	●	●
Green Infrastructure		●	●	●
Dog Park/Pet Area			●	
Energy Conservation and Production		●	●	



7 - IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation of the Walnut Park Community Parks and Recreation Plan will require long-term financing and strategic administrative policies for construction, acquisitions, and maintenance. This chapter includes recommendations of strategies, implementation actions, funding resources, and partnership agreements for achieving the “Green In” vision in Walnut Park.

SUMMARY OF GOALS

As presented in the Vision Plan in Chapter Five, goals for improving parks, recreation, and greening in Walnut Park include:

1. *Increase overall green space and develop new recreational facilities.*
2. *Ensure that facilities and programs meet community needs and that the community is included in decision-making processes.*
3. *Provide new places for exercise and safe places to walk.*
4. *Create public spaces that support community interaction and cultural identity through public art, community events, and commercial enterprise.*
5. *Improve access to parks, green space, and community amenities while creating safe corridors for pedestrians and cyclists.*
6. *Maintain and enhance Walnut Park’s urban forest.*
7. *Focus on multi-benefit urban greening projects that optimize environmental services.*

These goals are achievable through new park development, updates to Walnut Nature Park, and partnerships between Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) and other agencies and community groups.

STRATEGIES

Strategic policy and development actions at various places throughout Walnut Park would be necessary to achieve these goals and increase overall parkland in Walnut Park. The following is a summary of the key strategies to implement this project. Importantly, these strategies work together to achieve the vision of this plan and many of the strategies address multiple goals.

1. **UPGRADE AND IMPROVE WALNUT NATURE PARK AND FACILITIES AT WALNUT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TO MEET COMMUNITY NEEDS AND SUPPORT DPR’S SUSTAINABILITY GOALS.** Walnut Nature Park is the only green space in the community, but it has restricted hours of operation and lacks major amenities which community members would like in their public spaces. Direct

improvements to the park could ensure that the space operates more effectively and is more directly meeting community needs. Additional upgrades to the park’s facilities and operations could maximize environmental efficiency and aid in the overall sustainability of the Los Angeles County parks system.

2. **STRATEGICALLY ACQUIRE VACANT AND UNDERUTILIZED LOTS FOR PARKS AND GREENING THROUGHOUT THE COMMUNITY.** Vacant and underutilized parcels could be transformed into new green space for recreational and green infrastructure use. Transforming these spaces could increase overall green space and improve public perception of environmental health and recreation options in the community.
3. **DEVELOP POCKET PARKS, PARK NODES, AND WALKING PATHS TO SUPPORT THE COMMUNITY’S DESIRE FOR EXERCISE AND FITNESS.** New wellness opportunities need to be explored throughout Walnut Park. These interventions could include walking paths, exercise equipment, or spaces for fitness events. Placing wellness parks along community corridors, walking paths, or proposed bicycle routes in the Los Angeles County Bike Master Plan will increase the benefits of these facilities as they can work in tandem within a community wellness network.
4. **UTILIZE “POP-UP” INTERVENTIONS TO CREATE RECREATIONAL AND GATHERING OPPORTUNITIES IN THE SHORT TERM.** There is limited available space for new parkland development in Walnut Park. Partnering with local businesses, non-profits, and public agencies to temporarily utilize space could provide some relief to recreational needs in the short term. Potential locations include parking lots and public streets that could be closed for a limited time. Creative programs, such as mobile sports and exercise clinics, outdoor movie nights, and food truck events, among others, could help alleviate the community’s concern for lack of recreational options and events in the Walnut Park.
5. **USE PARK NODES, PLACITAS, AND PARKLETS TO ENHANCE CULTURAL IDENTITY, COMMUNITY ART, AND COMMERCIAL VITALITY.** Walnut Park residents want public sites and facilities that define their community and provide opportunities for community engagement. In particular, the community would like to see spaces where they could hold community events and public art that distinguishes Walnut Park from other communities.

6. **CREATE A GREEN CORRIDOR ALONG PACIFIC BOULEVARD.** Pacific Boulevard could be a major community asset as a pedestrian and bicycle thoroughfare with green spaces, community centers, and commercial businesses. Current conditions do not promote active street life nor encourage people to walk or bicycle. Green Streets improvements, such as increased street tree plantings, crosswalk improvements, and public art, as well as the development of park nodes, pocket parks, and parklets, could dramatically shape the landscape of Walnut Park and provide a green “spine” to the community.
7. **PROVIDE A GREEN BUFFER AT SANTA FE BOULEVARD.** Santa Fe Boulevard runs along the western edge of Walnut Park. Although three schools (Academia Moderna Elementary School, Walnut Park Middle School, and Alliance Margaret M. Bloomfield High School) are located along this street, it is generally considered to have a light industrial character and a major public health concern for the community. There are numerous auto repair, scrap metal, and industrial storage facilities along Santa Fe Avenue and directly to the west of Walnut Park. In particular, Central Metal, a large recycling facility, is located along this corridor. Providing green infrastructure, such as street trees and stormwater planters, will improve the aesthetics of the corridor, and potentially improve pedestrian access and environmental quality in this area.
8. **MONITOR COMMERCIAL CORE FOR POTENTIAL BIG BOX REUSE AS RECREATIONAL FACILITY.** Walnut Park does not have any public indoor recreation facilities and limited vacant land opportunities to develop a new one. There is a growing practice across the United States to repurpose aging retail buildings into recreational facilities. Much of the retail core of Walnut Park is composed of older buildings that is less desirable for business owners or currently vacant. As businesses move out of these structures, there is potential to reuse these structures for indoor recreation.
9. **CREATE NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHILDREN AND TEENS.** Healthy and safe recreation options for young people in Walnut Park is important, as it provides an alternative to more dangerous activities such as gang activity. Youth-focused programs and facilities ensure that young people have places within the community where they can recreate in a fun and safe way. In particular, Walnut Park has an active and engaged teen population who want greater recreational options for their demographic within their community.
10. **MAXIMIZE URBAN FORESTRY POTENTIAL AND UTILIZE GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE.** Green infrastructure, such as urban forests, stormwater swales, and pervious planting areas, can provide valuable ecological services and provide aesthetic benefits to a community. Throughout Walnut Park, there are opportunities to expand and enhance the existing urban tree canopy and implement

green infrastructure interventions. Within Walnut Nature Park and other potential future parks, DPR must ensure that the tree population is healthy and well-maintained and that water and soil systems are well managed. Other local agencies, community groups, and local residents can also work to improve the overall urban forest and expand ecological services in the community.

11. **PARTNER WITH LOS ANGELES COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS (DPW) AND LOS ANGELES COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT TO CREATE A SAFE STREETS AND SAFE PARKS STRATEGY FOR WALNUT PARK.** Walnut Park residents are extremely concerned about the safety of their streets and see this as a major impediment to park use. The community has a vision for improving safety by reducing traffic speed and restricting illicit activities along public corridors and in public spaces. Within parks, concerns for safety and well-being is also a potential impediment to using these spaces. A strong commitment to public safety would ensure that park facilities are enjoyable and accessible to all residents.
12. **CONTINUE DIALOGUE WITH COMMUNITY ABOUT PARK NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES TO BE INVOLVED IN PARK ADMINISTRATION.** The planning process for the Walnut Park Community Parks and Recreation Plan started an important relationship between DPR and local residents. Participants in outreach events expressed interest in continuing to work on parks and recreation issues in their community and should be considered valuable advocates for implementation of this plan.
13. **SUPPORT INITIATIVES THAT INCREASE ACCESS TO PARKS, RECREATIONAL FACILITIES, AND REGIONAL DESTINATIONS.** Access to recreational opportunities in Walnut Park can be enriched through improved pedestrian and bicycle amenities in the community and shuttle services to bring residents to green spaces and community centers. Programs to take residents to regional open space destinations throughout the County would further expand the reach of parks and recreation in the community.

IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

The following actions provide specific direction and are categorized as short, medium, or long-term. Short-term actions represent items that DPR and/or partner agencies could begin to explore in the next five years. Medium-term projects require more coordination and could be pursued within five to ten years. Long-term actions require extensive coordination, planning, and long-range strategies appropriate for ten to fifty years in the future. In addition, some actions are ongoing and require interim monitoring or progress.

These actions are detailed in the following tables.

STRATEGY 1: Upgrade and improve Walnut Nature Park and facilities at Walnut Elementary School to meet community needs and support DPR’s sustainability goals.

Implementation Actions		Phasing			
		Short	Medium	Long	Ongoing
RECREATION ACTIONS	<p>1.1 Complete planned improvements at Walnut Nature Park and adjacent facilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plant floral garden and native plants at western entrance on Pacific Boulevard. Create picnic area with trellis, picnic tables and barbecues. Install new benches. Install decorative fencing along Pacific Boulevard. Develop a community kiosk. Install canopy over amphitheater. Install tubular steel fence around park perimeter. Construct new walkway path with colored concrete between multipurpose field and west side near Pacific Boulevard. 	●	●		
	<p>1.2 Implement new operational protocols to ensure consistent operating hours at Walnut Nature Parks, potentially including the following strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Install remote locks on the gates at the park to ensure consistency with opening and closing of the park. Ensure that gates are only locked from the outside. Hire community member as part-time “gatekeeper” with responsibility of opening and closing park during designated hours. 	●			
	<p>1.3 Create fitness circuit along perimeter of park.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Move perimeter fence to accommodate walking track between sidewalk and fence. Install stations with fitness equipment at intervals along route. 		●		
SUSTAINABILITY ACTIONS	WATER CONSERVATION				
	<p>1.4 Ensure Walnut Nature Park meets requirements set forth in Executive Order B-29-15 to address State drought actions.</p>	●			
	<p>1.5 Perform a preliminary water audit of Walnut Nature Park and perform additional audits biannually at this park and any new parks.</p>	●			●
	<p>1.6 Install smart controllers at Walnut Nature Park and any new parks, or implement maintenance schedule to adjust irrigation frequency monthly to reflect evapotranspiration rate expected in the next month.</p>	●			●
	<p>1.7 Replace all high water use plumbing fixtures with low water use ones and use only low water use fixtures in new County parks and recreation facilities.</p>	●			
	<p>1.8 Monitor regularly for potential leaks in plumbing and replace quickly when leak is identified.</p>				●

Implementation Actions		Phasing			
		Short	Medium	Long	Ongoing
SUSTAINABILITY ACTIONS	1.9 Ensure that all planting areas are provided with a two-inch (2”) layer of organic mulch (free of weed seed), consistent with plant palette in DPR’s Park Design Guidelines and Standards. At minimum, replenish mulch once per year in November.	●			●
	1.10 Use California native and drought-tolerant plant species, consistent with plant palette in DPR’s Park Design Guidelines and Standards, in existing and new County parks.				●
	1.11 Explore opportunities for demonstration spaces that highlight water efficient planting and irrigation.		●		
	1.12 Introduce recycled water for irrigation at Walnut Nature Park and new parks. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with Los Angeles County Department of Public Works (DPW) and water purveyors in connecting County parks to recycled water lines where available. Participate in meetings and discussions on expansion of service areas for recycled water. • Systematically replace plants unsuitable for reused water irrigation with suitable species with higher salt tolerance, identified in the “Preferred Plan List- Recycled Water” from DPR’s Park Design Guidelines and Standards. • Research replacing active turf grass areas with drought tolerant, high salt tolerant turf grass, such as <i>Paspalum vaginatum</i> (seashore paspalum or platinum paspalum) and research replacing cool turf areas with drought and salt tolerant utility groundcovers, such as <i>Lippia nodiflora</i> (Kurapia). 		●		●
	WATER QUALITY				
	1.13 Increase stormwater management potential at Walnut Nature Park and ensure that new parks maximize stormwater retention on-site. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the design of new parks, use the standards of a “designated project” outlined in Chapter 12.84 of the Los Angeles County Code: Low Impact Development Standards, requiring either 100-percent stormwater retention on-site or low-impact design strategies to mitigate whatever is not retained on-site. • Research capacity to utilize park spaces as urban sponges for street runoff by integrating curb cuts along park edges and creating stormwater basins along parks. • Replace existing paving with permeable paving in parking lots and use pervious surfaces in new parks. 				● ● ●

Smart controllers were installed at seven Los Angeles County Parks, which resulted in a 219 million gallon water reduction over a 12 month monitoring period, signifying a 23% reduction of water usage.

Source: Los Angeles County DPR

The California State Water Resources Control Board proposed that Walnut Park Mutual Water Company, which provides water to Walnut Park, reduce usage by 25% to achieve mandatory statewide conservation goal of 25% reduction.

Source: State Water Resources Control Board

Implementation Actions		Phasing			
		Short	Medium	Long	Ongoing
SUSTAINABILITY ACTIONS	ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND GREEN BUILDINGS				
	1.14 Install solar panels in exposed parking lots or on roofs at Walnut Nature Park, Walnut Elementary School, and new parks.		●		
	1.15 Utilize paving materials with low albedo to reduce surface temperatures.				●
	1.16 Construct all new County park buildings and park building remodels to meet U.S. Green Building Council LEED Rated Silver, as directed in the Park Design Guidelines and Standards, and ensure that all new buildings on County parks properties conform with the County’s Green Building Ordinances.				●
	1.17 Pursue Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification (or other equivalent energy certified ratings) for all new buildings of 5,000 square feet or more on County Park properties.				●
	1.18 Select buildings in existing parks to pursue LEED EB (Existing Building) certification for existing buildings on park properties by addressing whole-building cleaning and maintenance issues (including chemical use), recycling programs, exterior maintenance program, and systems upgrades; and implement certification.	●			
	CARBON SEQUESTRATION				
	1.19 Maintain and enhance park forest following the recommendations set forth in the urban forestry implementation actions below.				●
	1.20 Utilize an organic approach to soils management to improve organic matter content, which will in turn increase carbon sequestration in the soil. See “Healthy Soil” below.				●
	HEALTHY SOIL				
	1.21 Perform soils analysis of existing multipurpose fields to assess drainage, compaction, and organic matter content. Test shall include recommendations to increase soil organic matter content to 5 percent using quality green-waste compost. If needed, implement recommendations to improve soil tilth, drainage, and carbon sequestering potential.		●		●
	1.22 Turf maintenance shall include grass recycling and topdressing turf with finely screened quality compost after aeration and/or 1-4 times per year to maintain a healthy, living soil profile.				●

DPR’s Energy and Water Efficiency Program seeks to further reduce energy and water consumption at County Parks by establishing specific reduction targets and a formal reporting system process to measure DPR’s progress towards these targets.

Implementation Actions		Phasing				
		Short	Medium	Long	Ongoing	
SUSTAINABILITY ACTIONS	<p>1.23 All landscaped areas shall receive a regular reapplication of organic mulch, preferably shredded tree/shrub trimmings, to a minimum depth of three inches (3”) for all exposed soil to minimize evapotranspiration, protect against compaction, and maintain overall soil health.</p>				●	
	<p>1.24 Plant and soil amendments for maintenance shall be specified as compost, compost tea, or other naturally occurring and non-synthetic fertilizers for all landscaped areas.</p>				●	
	ADMINISTRATIVE PROTOCOLS					
	<p>1.25 Establish and implement guidelines for operation, design, and development of existing and new park facilities that will meet the needs of the Walnut Park community while minimizing impact on the natural environment. The guidelines will address a variety of issues including, but not limited to, the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systems designs which promote efficient use of water and energy. • Landscape design which uses drought tolerant and native plants where appropriate. • Use of construction material with recycled content. • Reduce generation of water during construction and occupancy. • Use of construction material with reduced or no release of harmful gases. • Building design and operation which promotes indoor air quality and users’ comfort level and productivity. • Installation of efficient plumbing fixtures to reduce potable water use and lower production of waste water. • Purchase of sustainable cleaning materials and building maintenance products. 				●	
	EXISTING INITIATIVES					
	<p>1.26 Implement the County’s Energy and Environmental Policy at Walnut Nature Park, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy and Water Efficiency Program • Environmental Stewardship Program • Sustainable Design Program 				●	

The Environmental Stewardship Program aims to reduce DPR’s environmental footprint through a series of environmental impact actions.

The Sustainable Design Program provides integration of sustainable, green building technologies into the design of park improvement and refurbishment projects. The program seeks to extend the life cycle or useful life of buildings in County parks and maximize energy and water use efficiency.

STRATEGY 2: Strategically acquire vacant and underutilized lots for parks and greening throughout the community.

Implementation Actions	Phasing			
	Short	Medium	Long	Ongoing
2.1 Contact owners of currently vacant lots and abandoned rail corridor identified in this plan for potential acquisition.	●			
2.2 Conduct an annual review of vacancies along key corridors to identify potential new acquisitions, including vacant buildings and foreclosed properties. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prioritize search in high need areas of the community, including the eastern portion. 				●
2.3 When pursuing new acquisitions and potential projects on vacant lots, focus on opportunities for fitness, exercise, and places to gather and promote cultural identity.				●
2.4 Partner with Walnut Park Mutual Water Company to create a drought-tolerant demonstration garden and mural on existing water tanks at their storage facility on Florence Avenue.	●			



IMPLEMENTATION

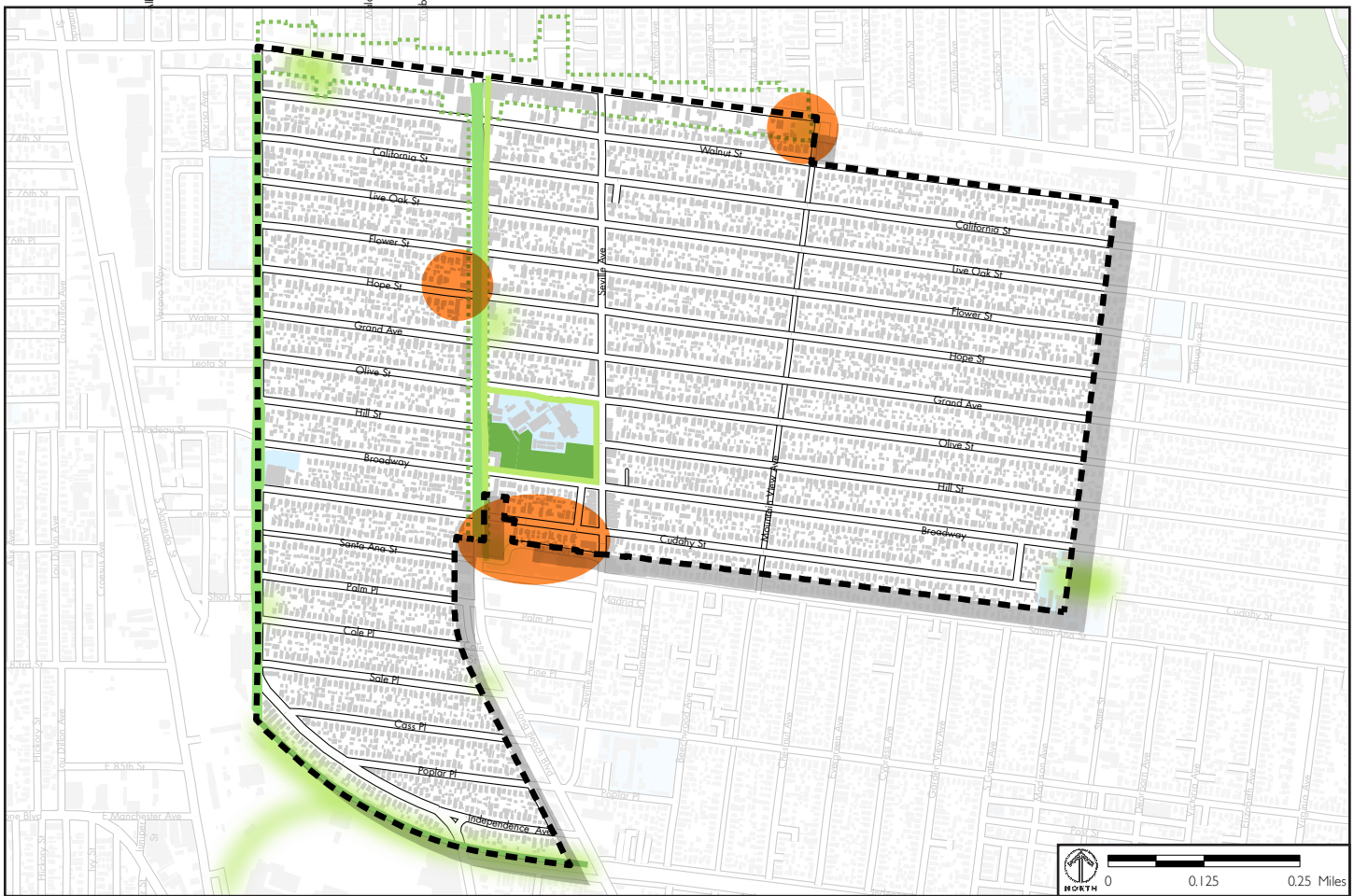
STRATEGY 3: Develop pocket parks, park nodes, and walking paths to support the community’s desire for exercise and fitness.

Implementation Actions	Phasing			
	Short	Medium	Long	Ongoing
3.1 Create new walking paths along existing streets and the abandoned rail corridor, as identified in this plan.		●		
3.2 Install park nodes with exercise equipment along walking paths, popular pedestrian routes, and near schools.		●		
3.3 Create mobile program unit to travel to provide programs, such as exercise classes, yoga, and dance, at small pocket parks and at “pop-up” events.		●		
3.4 Partner with Department of Public Works (DPW) to implement pedestrian improvements and street tree planting throughout the community to encourage walking along sidewalks.	●			●



STRATEGY 4: Utilize “pop-up” interventions to create recreational and gathering opportunities in the short term.

Implementation Actions	Phasing			
	Short	Medium	Long	Ongoing
4.1 Coordinate with DPW to temporarily close segments of streets for “pop-up” park events.	●			
4.2 Partner with YWCA to create a “pop-up” park events in the parking lot.	●			
4.3 Partner with local businesses with large parking lots for “pop-up” park events.		●		



IMPLEMENTATION

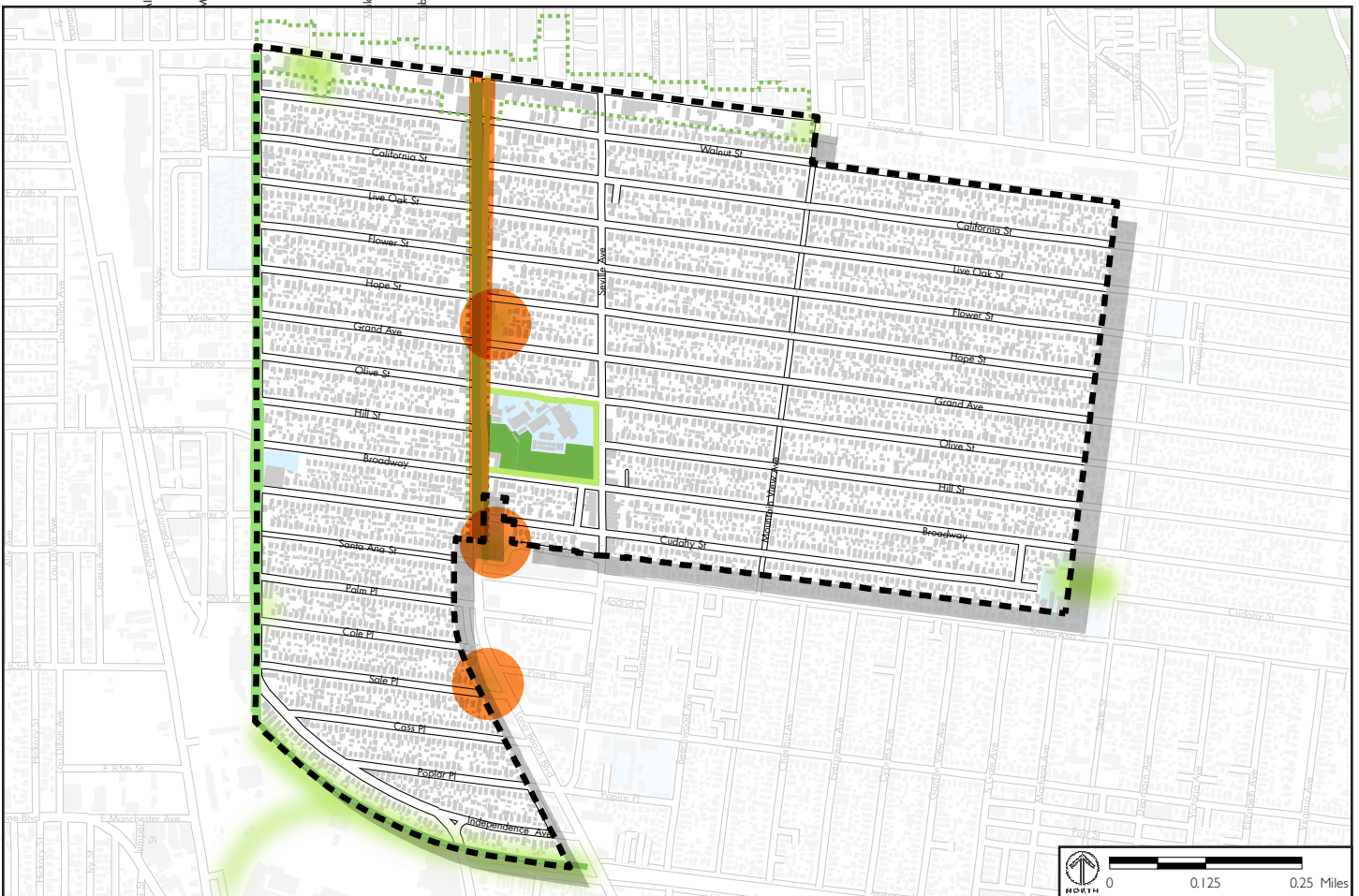
STRATEGY 5: Use park nodes, *placitas*, and parklets to enhance cultural identity, community art, and commercial vitality.

Implementation Actions	Phasing			
	Short	Medium	Long	Ongoing
5.1 Partner with the Los Angeles County Arts Commission to create public art for parks, plaza spaces, and streets that is representative of the cultural identity of the community and will encourage residents to gather in these spaces.				●
5.2 Partner with Department of Public Works (DPW), the Walnut Park Florence Firestone Chamber of Commerce, and private businesses, particularly restaurants, to create parklets along Florence Avenue and Pacific Boulevard.		●		
5.3 Create space within new parks that can accommodate commercial activities, such as farmer’s markets, food truck vendors, craft fairs, or merchandise sales.				●
5.4 Provide electrical connections and Wi-Fi in new parks to allow for state-of-the-art, modern events.				●



STRATEGY 6: Create a Green Corridor along Pacific Boulevard.

Implementation Actions	Phasing			
	Short	Medium	Long	Ongoing
<p>6.1 Partner with DPW to implement Green Street concepts along Pacific Boulevard, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Street tree plantings • Sidewalk trail • Stormwater treatment basins • Public art and community branding 	•	•	•	
<p>6.2 Create pocket parks, park nodes, parklets, and <i>placitas</i> along Pacific Boulevard to complement Green Street improvements.</p>	•			
<p>6.3 Improve entrance to Walnut Nature Park from Pacific Boulevard.</p>	•			



IMPLEMENTATION

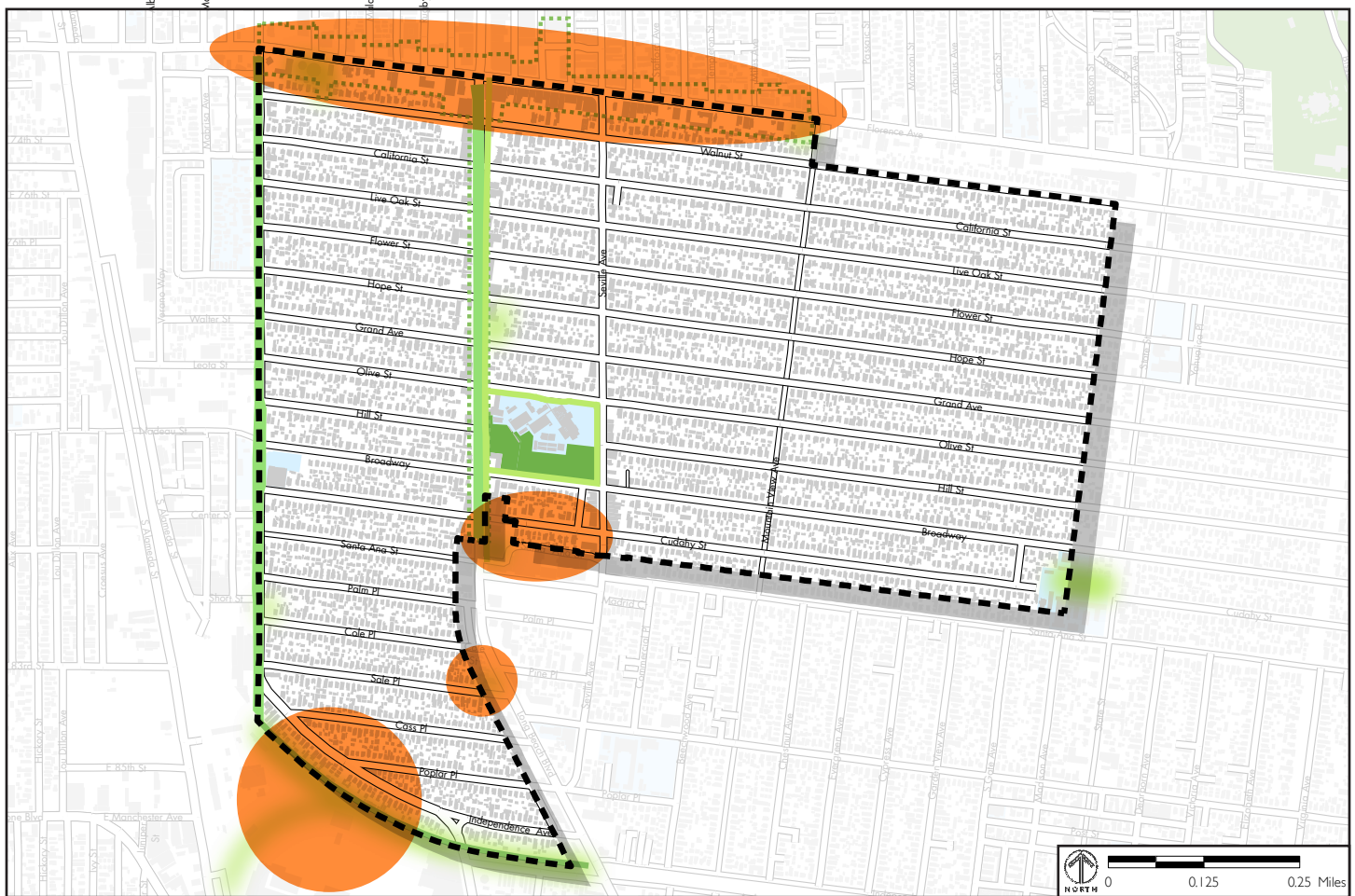
STRATEGY 7: Provide a green buffer at Santa Fe Boulevard.

Implementation Actions	Phasing			
	Short	Medium	Long	Ongoing
7.1 Partner with DPW to increase streets trees, stormwater treatments, and landscape planting along Santa Fe Boulevard.			●	
7.2 Partner with Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) to increase landscape areas and tree plantings in front of Academia Moderna and Alliance Margaret M. Bloomfield High School.		●		



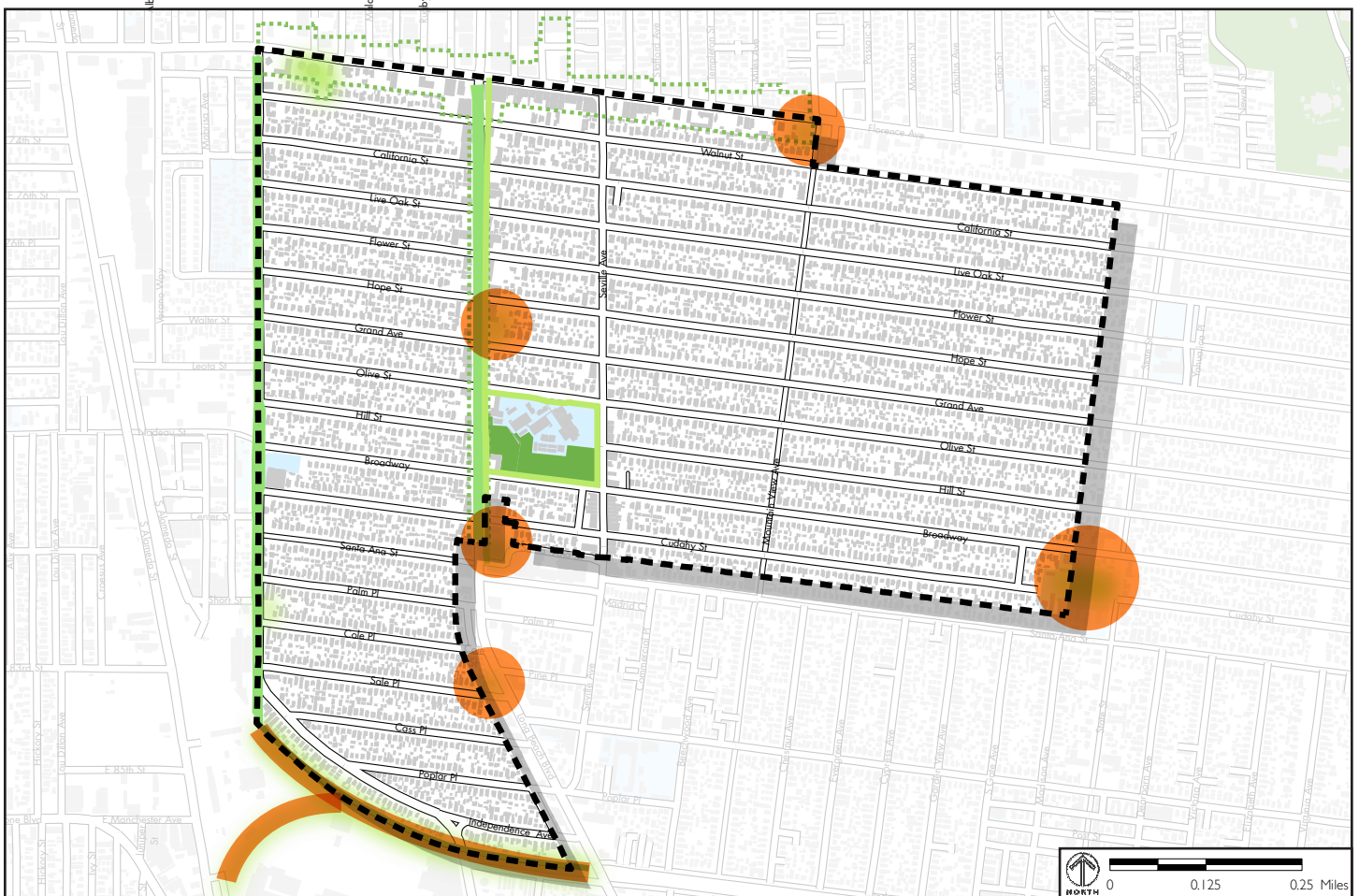
STRATEGY 8: Monitor commercial core for potential big box reuse for recreational facility.

Implementation Actions	Phasing			
	Short	Medium	Long	Ongoing
8.1 Evaluate existing vacant buildings for potential reuse.	●			
8.2 Conduct an annual review of vacant buildings and units.				●



STRATEGY 9: Create new opportunities for children and teens.

Implementation Actions	Phasing			
	Short	Medium	Long	Ongoing
9.1 Develop a joint-use agreement(s) with Los Angeles Unified School District to create a partnership green space at State Elementary School.	●			●
9.2 Coordinate with community garden organizations to facilitate new community gardens for youth and parents at existing schools in Walnut Park.				●
9.3 Create new tot lot, a play area for children under five, at a new pocket park.		●		
9.4 Install a splash pad at a new pocket park.		●		
9.5 Continue to investigate opportunities to build a pool complex.				●
9.6 Integrate amenities for teens into site designs for new parks. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a skate park in the linear park along the abandoned rail corridor. • Partner with local schools and Los Angeles Arts Commission to create public art projects. 	●		●	●

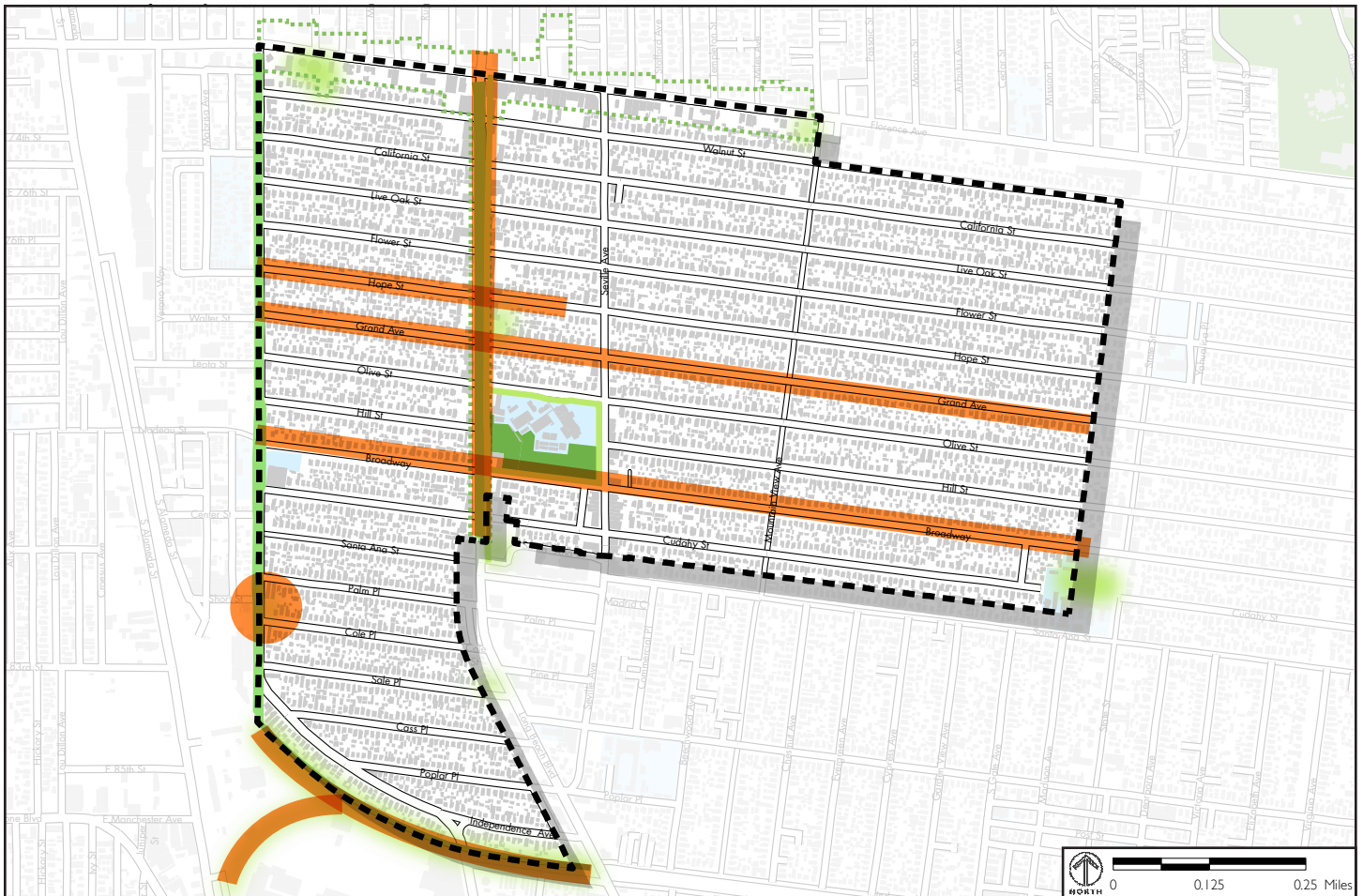


STRATEGY 10: Maximize urban forestry potential and utilize green infrastructure.

Implementation Actions		Phasing			
		Short	Medium	Long	Ongoing
EXISTING	10.1 Enhance and maintain canopy cover of 35 percent in Walnut Nature Park. Monitor and replace trees as needed.				●
	10.2 Ensure maximum of 15 percent urban forest cover at new County parks.				●
NEW	10.3 Partner with other agencies and groups to enhance urban forest throughout the community.				●
	Street Corridors Add street trees, particularly along the street corridors in high need areas (see Figure 5.6). Plant trees trail along Pacific Boulevard, connecting Walnut Nature Park to the YWCA Gloria Molina Community Empowerment Center. Explore opportunities to bury utility lines throughout community to increase planting opportunities. Consider replacing palms with another species that provides more shade but still provides a sense of community identity. Create a Community Forestry Group to advise on tree preferences along Pacific Boulevard to define the character of Walnut Park. Use street trees as buffers between residential areas and industrial areas. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase street trees along Santa Fe Avenue to filter particulates and noise, improve air quality, and beautify the area. • Select species with low Volatile Organic Compound (VOC) emissions to maximize impact of sequestration of air pollutants (see trees selected for Industrial Buffer in Preferred Tree List in Appendix E) 	●			●
		●			●
		●			●
		●			●
Southern Pacific Railroad	Rail Corridors			●	●
	Residential Yards Educate residents about benefits of tree planting and offer tools to encourage and inspire residential projects, including through community involvement in urban forest projects. Encourage development of programs for utility companies to provide shade trees to home owners to increase community forest canopy and reduce residential energy use (The American Clean Energy and Security Act of 2009 (HR2454) appropriated funds from the US Department of Energy to local utility companies for strategic tree planting). Encourage the use of Preferred Tree List in Appendix E.				●
●				●	
●				●	

STRATEGY 11: Partner with DPW and Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department to create a safe streets and safe parks strategy for Walnut Park

Implementation Actions		Phasing			
		Short	Medium	Long	Ongoing
STREETS	11.1 Compile community feedback regarding concerns about street activity, including speeding and lack of pedestrian amenities, for DPW.	●			
	11.2 Work with DPW to implement traffic calming throughout the community.		●		
PARKS	11.3 Expand Parks After Dark into Walnut Park by creating a program at Walnut Nature Park.		●		
	11.4 Contract with the Parks Bureau of the Sheriff’s Department to conduct regular walking patrols through new parks, particularly new parks located away from major activity centers.				●
	11.5 Install facilities that are attractive to large groups at new parks that are located outside high pedestrian traffic and high visibility areas to ensure frequent use.		●		

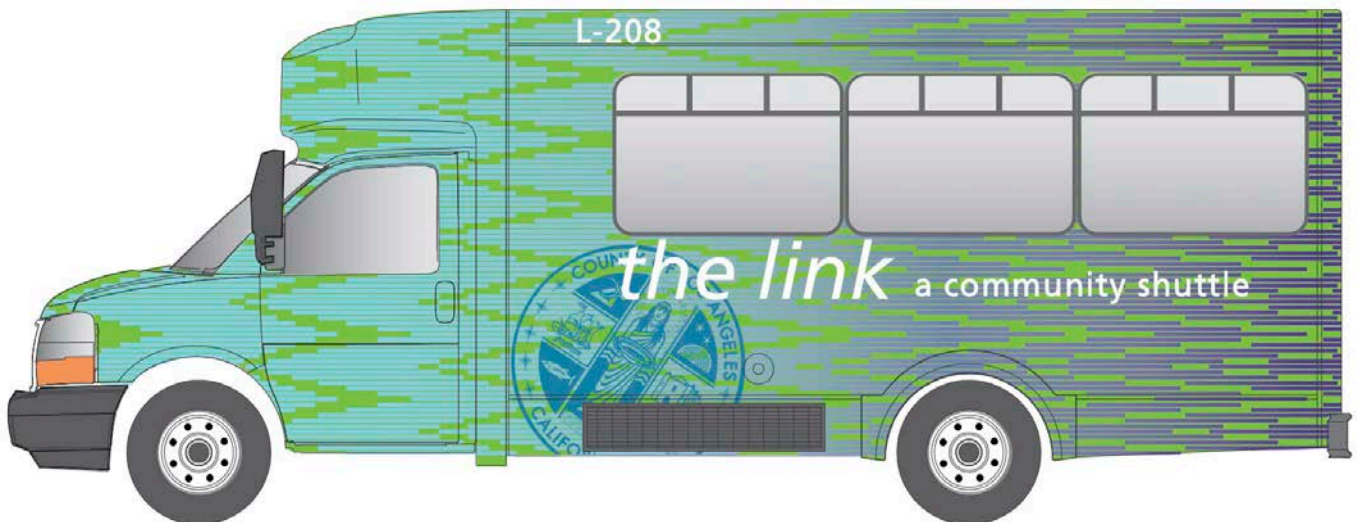


STRATEGY 12: Continue dialogue with community about park needs and opportunities to be involved in park administration.

Implementation Actions	Phasing			
	Short	Medium	Long	Ongoing
12.1 Develop a suggestion and/or complaint system at local parks, such as a drop-box for community feedback. Ensure that questions and concerns receive a follow-up call in a timely manner.	●			
12.2 Invest in additional “relationship building” training for park staff and Parks Bureau deputies.				●
12.3 Create ombudsperson for Walnut Park to serve as community liaison between DPR and community members who want to participate in park events and volunteer with DPR.	●			

STRATEGY 13: Support initiatives that increase access to parks, recreational facilities, and regional destinations.

Implementation Actions	Phasing			
	Short	Medium	Long	Ongoing
13.1 Partner with DPW to ensure that The Link shuttle provides service to new parks developed in Walnut Park.				●
13.2 Partner with DPW to create Beach Bus service within walking distance of Walnut Park during summer months.	●			
13.3 Create shuttle program to regional recreational open spaces, such as the Whittier Narrows Recreational Area and Mount Baldy at the Angeles National Forest.		●		



source: Los Angeles County District 2 Supervisor and DPW

PARTNERSHIP

Partnering with other agencies, local non-profit groups, and individuals is key to improving parks and recreation in Walnut Park. Nearly all of the identified potential opportunity sites are managed by other agencies or privately-owned, requiring collaboration to move forward. Furthermore, one of the best strategies for building support for a green space and keeping it safe is to have community support. Community-based partnerships build momentum for a greening project and help community members have greater ownership over a space.

PUBLIC AGENCIES

COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

Much of the community feedback received during the planning process included a desire for more streetscape and pedestrian improvements and traffic calming. Although these actions are outside of DPR's typical jurisdiction, they can help to improve park access and public perception of the overall greening of the community and should be considered via partnership with County Department of Public Works (DPW).

COUNTY ARTS COMMISSION

Community members strongly desire community arts projects in their community and see these works as strong opportunities for building community identity. In particular, youth who participated in the outreach process consider public art to be a strong factor in whether or not they like a public space. Los Angeles County Arts Commission helps to create public art projects throughout the County. Partnership with the Arts Commission could be beneficial in developing new plaza areas as well as creating new arts programming or events.

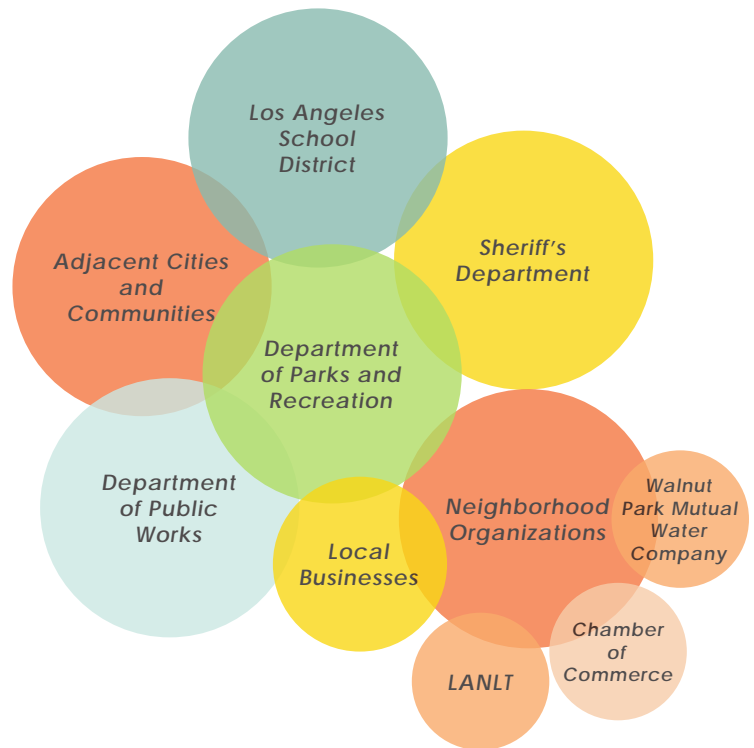
SCHOOLS

The only existing park in Walnut Park is located on a school grounds and open to the public through a joint-use agreement. Developing new joint-use agreements with other schools in the community could provide new park resources, particularly in areas with limited opportunity sites. If pursued, it will be important to clearly articulate when the spaces are open to the public and ensure that they are open at those times.

Schools might also serve as locations for green space outside of parks, such as community or educational gardens. Although this might not be a partnership project for DPR, supporting these facilities through grant assistance and operational guidance will help to increase overall green space.

WALNUT PARK MUTUAL WATER COMPANY

This unique utility company, in which residents are stakeholders, provides water to Walnut Park. They operate a facility with large water tanks on Florence Avenue. Like other water companies across the state, Walnut Park Mutual Water Company is dealing with constraints from the drought emergency and potential partnership opportunities could include educational installations about water conservation, such as demonstration gardens to teach residents about drought-tolerant species or murals on the water tanks with water conservation themes or history of California water use.



SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT YOUTH ACTIVITY LEAGUE (YAL)

Currently the County Sheriff's Youth Activity League (YAL) does not operate at Walnut Nature Park. However, these programs are popular in other areas of the County and could potentially be expanded into Walnut Park through partnership with the Sheriff's department.

ADJACENT CITIES

Some of the sites identified in the plan are located at community boundaries, which would require partnering with neighboring communities, including the City of South Gate and the unincorporated community of Florence-Firestone. These facilities could be resources for residents from both communities.

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS AND GREEN SPACE ADVOCATES

Partnership agreements with community-based organizations are another tool for development. Currently, there are no green spaces managed by community groups in Walnut Park, although throughout the county, there are numerous examples, such as community gardens, playgrounds, and pocket parks. Walnut Nature Park was constructed in partnership with the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, a non-profit dedicated to preserving open space in the Santa Monica Mountains and the greater Los Angeles Area; however, the group is not active in other parts of the community. Local residents are very interested in creating a community green space where they can hold community events and create a stronger bond between neighbors.

FIGURE 7.1 PRECEDENT PROJECTS



*Richardson Family Park
South Los Angeles, CA
source: Los Angeles Neighborhood Land Trust*



*Whittier Greenway Trail
Rails to Trails Project
Whittier, CA
source: TrailLink*



*Parklet at El Machin on Whittier Boulevard
East Los Angeles, CA
source: Pasadena Star News*

Residents are excited about creating new green space in their community and their enthusiasm should be encouraged and supported. These groups will have the greatest insight into the types of facilities that will work best in their community and the commitment to ensuring that they become a reality. Their vision can be supported by outside green space advocacy groups, like the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, that can help to bring the vision to life. In particular, Rail-to-Trails, a non-profit group that advocates for the conversion of unused railways to trails, could be a strong ally in the development of the linear corridor along the southern edge of Walnut Park. The Los Angeles Neighborhood Land Trust could also be a strong ally in the development of smaller green spaces and gardens within Walnut Park. Creating a citizen's green space advisory committee from local leadership and partnering with established green space advocacy groups will ensure that new parks, trails, and greening projects in Walnut Park will be well-used and well-loved.

Potential community partners for projects in Walnut Park include (but are not limited to):

- Los Angeles Neighborhood Land Trust
- Líderes en Acción de Walnut Park
- Walnut Park Residents' Association
- Walnut Park Mutual Water Company
- Communities for a Better Environment
- Rails to Trails Conservancy
- Los Angeles Parks Foundation
- Los Angeles Community Garden Council
- Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy
- Mountains Recreation Conservation Authority
- Los Angeles Conservation Corps
- Restore Neighborhoods LA
- Trust for Public Land
- Los Angeles Bicycle Coalition

PRIVATE OWNERS AND LOCAL BUSINESSES

Limited land availability for new parkland development suggests that creative strategies to provide recreational options to residents may be necessary. Partnering with local businesses and community groups to create "pop-up" parks in parking lots or along streets could be beneficial in the short-term before new parks can be developed.

Additionally, DPW is partnering with local businesses in other communities to create parklets in front of their properties. Businesses along Pacific Boulevard and Florence Avenue, particularly those that serve food, could benefit from parklet development. These spaces would provide new nodes for gathering, or exercise if fitness equipment is integrated into the design, as is found in other parklets in Los Angeles.

FUNDING SOURCES

There are consistent sources of funding for developing new parks and renovating existing parks. However, this funding is typically in short supply in relation to the need. While funds from California’s Proposition 84 have facilitated new parks over the past several years, these funds have largely been expended.

The following sources of parks construction funds are divided into traditional funding sources, financing and other revenue-raising mechanisms, partnerships and other creative solutions, and grants. It may take more than one of these sources to build or renovate a park. Because there are many grants available that may apply to parks in Los Angeles County, the bulk of this section describes those grants.

CONVENTIONAL FUNDING SOURCES

The primary traditional sources of parks funding are the County’s General Fund and developer dedication of land or in-lieu fees.

QUIMBY ACT FEES

Since the passage of the 1975 Quimby Act,¹ cities and counties have been authorized to pass ordinances requiring that developers set aside land, donate conservation easements, or pay fees for parks. Revenues generated through the Quimby Act cannot be used for the operation and maintenance of park facilities.² A 1982 amendment (AB 1600) requires agencies to clearly show a reasonable relationship between the public need for the recreation facility or park land, and the type of development project upon which the fee is imposed. Cities and counties with a high ratio of park space to inhabitants can set a standard of up to 5 acres per thousand persons for new development. Cities with a lower ratio can only require the provision of up to 3 acres of park space per thousand people.

In Los Angeles County, in order to determine the local park space obligation for a subdivision, a formula is used which considers the number of dwelling units in the subdivision, the average household size by Park Planning Area (PPA) (which differs for single family, multifamily, mobile home developments, and by PPA), and the adopted ratio of 3 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents, per the Quimby Act. However, it should be noted that in accordance with the County’s General Plan parkland dedication standards, as a condition of zone change approval, General Plan amendment, Specific Plan approval, or Development Agreement, the County may require a subdivider to provide 4 acres of local parkland per 1,000 residents in unincorporated areas, and 6 acres of regional parkland per 1,000 residents in the county as a whole.³

It should also be noted that Walnut Park has very limited Quimby funding because there have been very few new residential subdivisions in the community.

GENERAL FUND

The County’s General Fund is primarily comprised of revenues from property taxes, and a portion is allocated annually to parks to address existing needs. In 2013-2014, recreation and cultural functions cost \$722 million, or 3 percent of Los Angeles County’s budget, with parks and recreation receiving \$112 million.⁴

FINANCING AND REVENUE MECHANISMS

To raise new sources of revenue, DPR can consider various mechanisms. These include relying on private development to finance parks, privatizing parks services, or developing parks services that charge a fee to users.⁵

BONDS AND LEVIES

Taxpayer-approved measures to issue a bond or levy a tax are commonly used financing tools, but they require significant political support. Proposition A, approved in 1992, provided \$52 million per year through a tax levy of an average of \$13 per year per homeowner in the County to fund parks. Proposition K, passed in 1996, provides \$28 million per year and will expire in 2019. A new bond or tax levy would need to be approved in order to continue this source of funding for parks in the County.

LEASE FINANCING

Lease-purchase agreements allow an agency to lease a facility while purchasing it in order to obtain a facility with a smaller investment up front. Cities have used the sale of Certificates of Participation to finance park improvements and the purchase of open space. Lease-purchase financing does not require voter approval.⁶

RAISING REVENUES

There are several ways to raise revenues by using existing parks infrastructure. Some strategies tend to be controversial, such as privatizing or outsourcing services, while others are more common, including soliciting business sponsorships of facilities or events. Charging a fee to use facilities is another controversial source of revenue. However, many parks and recreation departments already do this with some services, such as swimming pool use. The most profitable fee-for-service facilities include golf courses, tennis courts, and event facilities.⁷ To reduce inequitable access to parks facilities, many parks departments will provide subsidies for low-income users.

1 [California Government Code §66477](#)

2 [Westrup, Laura, 2002, Quimby Act 101: An Abbreviated Overview, Sacramento: California Department of Parks and Recreation. \(<http://www.parks.ca.gov/pages/795/files/quimby101.pdf>\).](#)

3 [Draft 2035 General Plan, Policy P/R 3.1.](#)

4 <http://ceo.lacounty.gov/pdf/budget/2013/2012-13%20Recommended%20Budget%20Charts.pdf>

5 <http://www.pps.org/reference/financeparks1/>

6 <http://ceres.ca.gov/planning/financing/chap6.html>

7 <https://www.tpl.org/sites/default/files/cloud.tpl.org/pubs/ccpe-localparks-localfinancingvol2-textonly.pdf>

Another option is to charge voluntary annual fees, allowing residents to choose whether to donate or fill out a form in order to receive a membership card.

GRANTS

Grants are available for parks and parks-related construction. In addition to grants intended to build parks, specialized grants that may apply to various Los Angeles County Parks include environmental, trails, community development, waterways, urban forestry, or landscaping funds. The grants described below are organized by these categories. Grants may require a local match in either funds or volunteer labor.

PARKS & RECREATION FACILITIES

- **EXCESS FUNDS GRANT PROGRAM.** These grants were established through the Safe Neighborhood Parks Propositions of 1992 and 1996 and are intended to provide funding for “high priority” parks and recreation projects in Los Angeles County. Competitive grants can be received for projects that include urban tree planting, restoration of natural land, and at-risk youth recreation, among others.⁸
- **CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS FOUNDATION PARK ENRICHMENT GRANTS.** These grants are small, suitable for programming or small repair/restoration projects. Only State Parks are eligible.⁹
- **LISC/NFL FOUNDATION GRASSROOTS PROGRAM.** Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) and the National Football League (NFL) provide grants to restore or build football fields as gathering places and recreational facilities to support the development of young people and their parents, particularly in poorer communities.¹⁰
- **LISC HEALTH & ENVIRONMENT PROGRAM.** The Los Angeles branch of LISC has a Youth Development Recreation component of their Health & Environment program, listing recreation facilities in addition to football fields.¹¹
- **NATIONAL PARK SERVICE RIVERS, TRAILS, AND CONSERVATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.** This provides technical assistance only, offering a National Park Service employee to help recipients organize, strategize, build capacity and public participation, and implement a conservation or recreation project. Example include parks

8 http://file.lacounty.gov/dpr/cms1_196810.pdf

9 <http://www.calparks.org/whatwedo/grants/park-enrichment.html>

10 http://www.lisc.org/docs/resources/ydr/2014_NFL_Grassroots_Program_Description.pdf

11 http://www.lisc.org/los_angeles/programs/health_&_environment.php

and trails, conservation and access improvements to rivers and natural areas, and creation of recreation opportunities through locally-led partnerships.¹²

- **US FOREST SERVICE BALTIMORE RESTORATION PARTNERSHIP.** The US Forest Service (USFS) recently implemented a unique commitment between the USFS and the City of Baltimore to foster partnered attention on the sustainability and social-ecological restoration of its inner-city neighborhoods. While this agreement currently exists only in Baltimore, the County of Los Angeles could explore the innovative partnerships the USFS might be open to in order to support Los Angeles’ disadvantaged neighborhoods.¹³
- **URBAN PARK AND RECREATION RECOVERY (UPARR) PROGRAM.** The federal UPARR program was designed to offer matching grants and technical assistance for rehabilitation to economically distressed urban communities. However, UPARR has not been funded since 2002.¹⁴
- **CORPORATE GRANTS.** Many small-scale grants and sponsorships are available to support the development and revitalization of parks and recreation. Some of these are through established corporate giving programs such as PowerBar’s Direct Impact on Rivers and Trails program, which has provided funds up to \$5,000 to create, maintain, improve, or restore access to valued recreational areas. While smaller companies are less likely to have established programs, local businesses often designate funds for donation to their community and can be tapped for sponsorships of local projects that support the community.¹⁵

ENVIRONMENTAL

- **WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD.** The Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) provides public access funding and can enter into cooperative project agreements with local agencies or nonprofit organizations for the development of facilities for “public access for hunting, fishing, or other wildlife-oriented recreation,” such as wildlife viewing and bird watching. The WCB may fund the construction of project elements such as trails and interpretive facilities. Applications are accepted on a continuous basis.¹⁶

12 <http://www.nps.gov/orgs/rtca/index.htm>

13 <http://www.fs.usda.gov/detailfull/prc/home/?cid=stelprd3804156&width=full#Baltimore+Restoration+Partnership>

14 <http://www.nps.gov/uparr/>

15 <http://www.americantrails.org/resources/funding/DIRTfund.html>

16 <https://www.wcb.ca.gov/>

- **URBAN WATERS FEDERAL PARTNERSHIP.** This partnership between federal agencies and nonprofit organizations is intended to improve water systems and promote their economic, environmental and social benefits. The Urban Waters small grants give \$40-60k to support activities that improve water quality while supporting community revitalization and other local priorities. The Los Angeles River Watershed is one of the designated Urban Waters locations. Both Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) and the UCLA Institute of the Environment and Sustainability received grants for education and engagement in the 2013-2014 funding round.¹⁷
- **HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND.** This State fund provides support for nature interpretation programs, protection of plant and animal species, and acquisition and development of wildlife corridors and trails. These funds require a 50 percent match.¹⁸
- **FEDERAL LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND (LWCF).** This fund can be used by cities and counties to reimburse development costs for outdoor recreation areas and facilities. These are matching funds and will cover up to 50 percent of project costs.¹⁹
- **TOXIC SUBSTANCES CONTROL REVOLVING LOAN FUND.** The Department of Toxic Substances Control Revolving Loan Fund provides subgrants or loans for the redevelopment of brownfields to municipalities, nonprofits, or developers who are bona fide purchasers, innocent land owners, or contiguous property owners.²⁰
- **CA WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD ORPHAN SITE CLEANUP FUND (OSCF) PROGRAM.** The OSCF program provides grants to clean vacant sites in urban areas contaminated by a petroleum underground storage tank. Such abandoned sites, upon cleanup, might become available for recreation.²¹
- **CA WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD PETROLEUM UNDERGROUND STORAGE TANK CLEANUP FUND.** This State fund reimburses the cost of remediation for underground petroleum storage tanks. Such abandoned sites, upon cleanup, might become available for recreation.²²
- **EPA BROWNFIELDS CLEANUP GRANTS.** The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) provides funds to clean and reuse former toxic and industrial sites. California recipients have included the City of Brea, which received \$200,000 to clean a former railroad row, the City of Los Angeles, which received \$200,000 to clean a former industrial site in South Los Angeles for use as a natural wetlands park, and Nevada City, which received \$600,000 for three mine cleanup grants to incorporate the areas into a trail system.²³
- **EPA FINANCIAL TOOLS AND FUNDING SOURCES.** The EPA has a web page where it announces information about existing and upcoming financial tools and funding.²⁴
- **US EPA ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE.** The EPA Environmental Justice program is available to fund partnerships and programs. While these grants are not used for construction or implementation of projects, partnerships and programs are a key aspect of developing and operating successful parks and recreation facilities.²⁵
- **CLEANUP AND ABATEMENT ACCOUNT.** These State funds support cleanup or abatement of a condition of pollution when there are no viable responsible parties available to undertake the work.²⁶
- **CALIFORNIA RIPARIAN HABITAT CONSERVATION PROGRAM.** This State program of the Wildlife Conservation Program provides grants for protecting, restoring, and enhancing riparian habitat systems.²⁷
- **HABITAT ENHANCEMENT AND RESTORATION PROGRAM.** This California Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) program provides funds for restoring and enhancing fish and wildlife resources. Eligible projects include native fisheries restoration; restoration of wetlands; and restoration of coastal, tidal, or fresh water habitat. Other native habitat restoration projects include coastal scrub oak, grasslands, and threatened and endangered species habitats, in-stream restoration projects, including removal of fish passage barriers and other obstructions, and other projects that improve the quality of native habitat throughout the State.²⁸

17 <http://www.urbanwaters.gov/>

18 http://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=21361

19 <http://www.nps.gov/lwcf/index.htm>

20 https://www.dtsc.ca.gov/SiteCleanup/Brownfields/Loans_Grants.cfm

21 http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/ustcf/oscf.shtml

22 http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/ustcf/

23 http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/cleanup_grants.htm

24 <http://www2.epa.gov/envirofinance/tools>

25 <http://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/grants/index.html>

26 http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/grants_loans/caa/

27 <http://rlch.org/funding/california-riparian-habitat-conservation-program>

28 <https://www.wcb.ca.gov/Programs/Habitat-Enhancement>

HEALTH

- **PREVENTIVE HEALTH AND HEALTH SERVICES BLOCK GRANT.** These are federal funds available for State use. The California Department of Public Health's Project Leaders Encouraging Activity and Nutrition (LEAN), has used this funding.²⁹
- **NATIONAL NATURE SACRED AWARDS PROGRAM.** This program is unique in that it supports projects that combine the creation of tranquil, restorative spaces in urban environments with rigorous study of their impact on users' well-being and resilience. Recent research has shown that careful design and maintenance of urban greening facilities can also provide human health and well-being benefits, such as stress recovery, improved mental health, faster healing, and improved community situations. This program is designed to both facilitate such facilities and support further research into their impacts.³⁰

TRAILS

- **FEDERAL RECREATIONAL TRAILS PROGRAM.** These federal transportation funds are administered by the California Department of Parks and Recreation. The 2013 California apportionment was over \$5.7 million. The funds are intended to benefit recreation, including hiking, bicycling, in-line skating, equestrian use, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, off-road motorcycling, all-terrain vehicle riding, four-wheel driving, or using other off-road motorized vehicles. The program requires at least a 12 percent local match and encourages applicants to develop cooperative agreements with qualified youth conservation or service corps to perform trail construction and maintenance.³¹
- **NATIONAL TRAILS FUND.** The American Hiking Society provides micro-grants to trail crews to support hiking trails. Grants are available in amounts between \$500 and \$5,000 to members of the American Hiking Society's Alliance of Hiking Organizations for projects that have hikers as the primary constituency; are seeking to secure trail lands; and build and maintain trails resulting in visible and substantial ease of access, improved hiker safety, or avoidance of environmental damage. Higher preference is given to projects with volunteer labor.³²

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

- **NEIGHBORHOOD STABILIZATION PROGRAM.** These federal funds are intended to stabilize communities that have suffered from foreclosures and abandonment. The Housing and Community Investment Department of the City of Los Angeles (HCIDLA) was awarded \$13.7 million and is using these funds to acquire, rehabilitate, and resell foreclosed homes. City Recreation and Parks partnered with the Housing Department to establish neighborhood parks where the rehabilitation of a foreclosed home is not reasonable (see Consolidated Plan). As of 2014, Quarter 2, \$10.1 million of the funds had been expended.³³
- **PROPOSITION 1C. HOUSING RELATED PARKS PROGRAM.** The Housing Related Parks Program is funded by Proposition 1C, the \$2.85 billion affordable housing bond component of California's Strategic Growth Plan, which invests \$2.85 billion for housing and infrastructure programs to produce an estimated 118,000 housing units, 2,350 homeless shelter spaces, and infrastructure projects that help infill housing development such as water, sewer, parks, and transportation improvements. Run by the California office of Housing and Community Development (HCD), the program offers housing-related park grants in urban, suburban, and rural areas, expected to result in over 52,000 housing units. As of June 2013, there was \$163.6 million left of \$200 million designated from Proposition 1C.³⁴
- **INFILL INFRASTRUCTURE GRANT PROGRAM.** The Infill Infrastructure Grant Program is administered by HCD and funded by Proposition 1C. Grants are for the development of public infrastructure projects that facilitate or support infill housing construction estimated to result in about 32,000 housing units. Projects could include water, sewer, and transportation improvements; traffic mitigation; brownfield cleanup; and up to an additional \$200 million for parks. As of June 2013, there was \$80 million left of \$850 million.³⁵
- **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT.** The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) is a locally-administered federal program that addresses capital construction needs in low-to-moderate income neighborhoods. Parks and playground improvements are an allowed use of CDBG funds under Public Facilities & Improvements. Both the City and County of Los Angeles are granted annual entitlements.

29 <http://www.cdc.gov/phhsblockgrant/index.htm>

30 <http://naturesacred.org/our-approach/overview/>

31 http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/recreational_trails/

32 <http://www.americanhiking.org/national-trails-fund/>

33 http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/comm_planning/communitydevelopment/programs/neighborhoodspg

34 <http://www.bondaccountability.hcd.ca.gov/>

35 <http://www.hcd.ca.gov/fa/iig/>

The Community Development Commission runs the County program. According to the County's Consolidated Plan, Community Development and Housing Needs, the highest need reported by survey respondents total was for parks and recreational facilities.³⁶

WATER AND WATERWAYS

- **CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF BOATING AND WATERWAYS.** The California Department of Boating and Waterways has grants available for recreational boating facilities with public access. Grants are restricted to qualifying public agencies to fund boat launching ramps, boarding floats, and associated parking areas, restrooms, and lighting.³⁷
- **FLOOD CORRIDOR PROGRAM.** The California Department of Water Resources' Flood Corridor Program is intended to protect and restore floodplains and preserve or enhance wildlife habitat and agriculture.³⁸
- **URBAN STREAMS RESTORATION PROGRAM.** This California Department of Water Resources program funds stream restoration projects that reduce flooding or erosion; restore, enhance, or protect the natural environment; and promote community involvement, education, and stewardship in urban streams.³⁹
- **PROPOSITION 1 WATER BOND.** This Statewide bond measure, passed in 2014 to fund investments in California's aging water infrastructure, includes \$1.89 billion for habitat and watershed programs. It also includes \$810 million for water reliability, including stormwater capture. It is not yet clear how these funds will be made available.⁴⁰
- **U.S. FOREST SERVICE OF CALIFORNIA ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION WITH POWER AND WATER UTILITIES INITIATIVE.** Half of all surface water in California originates from national forest watersheds, with downstream consumers realizing an estimated value of nearly \$10 billion every year. This partnership brings together beneficiaries of these watersheds to support ecological restoration and reduction of wildfire threat in critical headwaters and near key utility transmission lines. They also strive to maintain the biomass infrastructure needed to increase the pace and scale of restoration activities in California's forests.⁴¹

- **THE COASTAL AND ESTUARINE LAND CONSERVATION PROGRAM.** The California Coastal Conservancy is the lead agency for the Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program (CELCP, pronounced "kelp"), a program of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration that provides matching funds up to \$1 million to state and local governments to purchase threatened coastal and estuarine lands or obtain conservation easements. To be considered, the land must be important ecologically or possess other coastal conservation values, such as historic features, scenic views, or recreational opportunities. These matching funds require an equivalent amount of non-federal funds, and that the general public has appropriate access to the subject property. The funds cannot be used for development of active recreation facilities.⁴²

URBAN FORESTS/LANDSCAPING

- **CALFIRE URBAN AND COMMUNITY FORESTRY GRANTS.** CalFire provides several urban and community forestry grants to reduce greenhouse gases (GHG), ranging from \$200,000 to \$1.5 million. Each of these grants requires a 25 percent local match. The following CalFire grants all fall under this category of Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (GGRF) grants.⁴³
- **CALFIRE GREEN TREES FOR THE GOLDEN STATE PROGRAM.** Grants are available for urban tree planting projects, including years of tree establishment care, with preference to communities identified as environmental justice communities using CalEnviroScreen 2.0. Preference is given to the planting of trees to optimize the multiple benefits of urban forests in environmental justice communities, with special attention given to GHG sequestration and avoided GHG emissions.⁴⁴
- **CALFIRE WOODS IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD PROGRAM.** The woods in the neighborhood program offers funds ranging from \$200,000 to \$1.5 million to assist local entities with purchasing and improving unused, vacant urban neighborhood properties in environmental justice communities or to serve such communities for purposes consistent with the Urban Forestry Act. These projects must demonstrate how GHG emissions will be reduced.⁴⁵

36 http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/comm_planning/communitydevelopment/programs

37 <http://www.dbw.ca.gov/Funding/>

38 <http://www.water.ca.gov/floodmgmt/fpo/sgb/fpcp/>

39 <http://www.water.ca.gov/urbanstreams/>

40 <http://www.acwa.com/spotlight/2014-water-bond>

41 <http://www.fs.usda.gov/detailfull/prc/home/?cid=stelprd3804156&width=full#California%20Ecological%20Restoration%20with%20Power%20and%20Water%20Utilities>

42 <http://coast.noaa.gov/czm/landconservation/?redirect=301ocm>

43 http://calfire.ca.gov/resource_mgmt/resource_mgmt_urbanforestry_grants.php

44 http://www.fire.ca.gov/resource_mgmt/resource_mgmt_urbanforestry_grants.php

45 http://calfire.ca.gov/resource_mgmt/resource_mgmt_urbanforestry_grants.php

- **CALFIRE GREEN INNOVATIONS GRANT PROGRAM.** The Green Innovations program offers grants to further AB 32, the California Global Warming Solutions Act, by reducing GHG emissions and improving greening in urban areas. These projects should be unique and forward-thinking and not fit one of the other CalFire greening grants. Projects must show how GHG emissions will be reduced. Selection will be strongly focused on environmental justice communities.⁴⁶
- **U.S.D.A. FOREST SERVICE NATIONAL URBAN AND COMMUNITY FORESTRY CHALLENGE COST-SHARE PROGRAM.** This grant program of the National Urban and Community Forestry Advisory Council provides funding to help enhance urban forest stewardship, support new employment opportunities, and help build resilience in the face of a changing climate. Categories in 2014 included: making urban trees and forests more resilient to the impacts of natural disasters and the long-term impacts of climate change, green infrastructure jobs analysis, and utilizing green infrastructure to manage and mitigate stormwater to improve water quality.
- **CALIFORNIA WELLNESS FOUNDATION.** The California Wellness Foundation’s program includes a grantmaking portfolio focused on promoting healthy and safe neighborhoods, which include access to safe parks, open spaces, and recreational activities to improve fun opportunities and social cohesion. The target population for these grants is low-income communities of color.⁴⁷
- **CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY FOUNDATION (CCF).** The CCF provides grants in a range of priority areas to serve low-income or underserved communities in Los Angeles County. While parks are not one of the priority areas, elements of parks and recreation projects may be eligible for funding in one of the areas such as arts and culture.⁴⁸

46 http://calfire.ca.gov/resource_mgt/resource_mgt_urbanforestry_grants.php

47 http://www.calwellness.org/grants_program/

48 <https://www.calfund.org/page.aspx?pid=742>

