

City of Huntington Park

Parks & Recreation Master Plan

May 2008

Prepared For:

**City of Huntington Park
Parks & Recreation Department**

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City of Huntington Park Parks & Recreation Master Plan

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APPENDIX

*** Bound Separately*

City of Huntington Park

Master Plan Introduction / Executive Summary

**Prepared as part of the City of Huntington Park
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Master Plan Introduction

PROCESS

Execution of General Plan: Open Space & Conservation Element: Policy 4.7

As a part of the 1992 adopted General Plan for the City of Huntington Park, within the Open Space & Conservation Element, is stated as Policy 4.7: *Develop and maintain a public parkland master plan which identifies City open space and recreational needs.* This specific Policy is one of nine policies that are detailed within the Open Space Element's Goal 4, which states: *Develop and maintain a balanced system of open space, public parks, and recreational facilities.*

It is appropriate that this more specific Parks & Recreation Master Plan support the broadly defined goals of the City's General Plan.

Professional Consultant Retained

The City of Huntington Park selected Richard Fisher Associates, on March 20, 2007, to team with City Staff, to provide the leadership and complimentary expertise to perform critical steps in preparing the following Master Plan. It is worthy to note that the City had never prepared such a directional document for guidance in further development of its parks system nor for the further development of its Recreational Programs.

Collection of Existing Information

The Parks & Recreation Master Plan process began by collecting all available records from the City's Parks & Recreation Department, Field Services Department, and the Engineering Division of Community Development. In addition, Salt Lake Park was flown for aerial photogrammetry. We found that modifications had been made to most of the parks over the years with limited documentation of those modifications. During subsequent site visits, observation of existing conditions and the inventorying of amenities was prepared, to include such improvements as picnic areas, structures, playground equipment, walkways, ball diamonds and soccer fields, parking, as well as picnic tables, benches, drinking fountains, and BBQ facilities.

Documents that reflected current Recreation Programs were also gathered to begin an understanding of both the level of participation and diversity of Recreation Programs. The locations where various Programs were conducted were also inventoried.

Site Evaluations

Other existing conditions, such as terrain, site access, adjoining improvements or lack thereof, adjacent land uses, available parking, site orientation and layout were all noted and evaluated. Damaged or missing park equipment, sidewalks, curbs, gutters, both handicap access ramps and any barriers, or other improvements to actual park site or adjoining public right-of-way were identified and located. (See Section H for detailed discussions).

Executive Summary

In the broad overview, the park system for the City of Huntington Park is significantly undersized for the population of this city. Statewide, Park Acreage Standards provide the goal of attaining a ratio of 5 acres of parkland per 1,000 population. Huntington Park currently provides 0.44 acres of parkland per 1,000 population. **

Secondly, LA County's regional park facilities are not in the immediate vicinity to absorb the deficiency of the local municipal park system. Additionally, a high percentage of the community constituents are single vehicle (or less) family units, and transportation to more regional recreation facilities must rely, primarily, on the mass transportation system serving the regional area.

Thirdly, there continues to be a general unwillingness on the part of the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) to enhance local recreational facilities for public post-school hour use, through joint-use agreements. Therefore, the City's parks receive intense use in an attempt to meet the local recreational demands.

As a generalization, the parks system provides only limited compliance with Federal ADA Accessibility criteria. Although the parks are primarily very flat, which allows for full accessibility to all like activities, acceptable surfacing for "paths of travel" are rarely provided. With all future Capital Improvement Projects, with the exception of such improvements as replacement irrigation systems and renovation of plantings in the parks, the City must comply with upgrading ADA Accessibility as a part of each project.

The horticultural maintenance program, and to a lesser degree, the overall park operations management is in need of wholesale upgrade. Performance-based specifications, combined with an on-going user group feedback program must be undertaken to gain a higher level of parks. These modifications do not necessarily mean the City must spend more money, annually, to reach these goals. There is a high likelihood that the City is paying for more than what it is currently receiving. An audit of compliance with contracted services is warranted. The Parks & Recreation Master Plan is not intended to be an Operational Manual nor a prioritized list of renovations and capital improvement upgrades. The appropriate expertise and ensuing reports must yet be undertaken for this assistance.

The Parks & Recreation Department and Field Services Department should establish a much stronger system for on-going dialogue with community user groups, for feedback on the success in meeting community needs. The three Commissions, which have some level of interaction with the Parks & Recreation Department, should be used to a much higher level of reaching out into the community for input. The Parks & Recreation Commission should be much more involved during the annual budget process to assist the City Council in establishing priorities in Capital Improvements.

Training of both Recreation staff and park operations staff (Field Services Department) should be provided with on-going training to provide them with new leadership skills to move the programs and facilities to a higher level of service to the community.

All of the above issues are addressed in greater detail throughout the following document.

** Based on 2005 Census Population Statistics