

City of Huntington Park

Baseline Level of Park & Recreation Services

**Prepared as part of the City of Huntington Park
Parks & Recreation Master Plan
May 2008**

Baseline Level of Park and Recreational Services

The baseline established for Huntington Park's park and recreational services is the existing park and recreational opportunities and services currently being offered to the citizens of Huntington Park during the period that the Parks & Recreation Master Plan was being prepared. The Baseline level of park and recreational services are included as part of the Parks & Recreation Master Plan so that the City of Huntington Park has a point of reference for future evaluations. By using a baseline level of service, and comparing it to future levels of service, the City can determine if they have increased or decreased the level of recreational services provided to the citizens.

Other factors, besides the number of services and opportunities, should be considered when making comparisons with the baseline level of services. Participation rates (number of people using services) and fees for services (cost to the participant for using the services) are as important as the number of services being provided, and should be considered when evaluating changes in the levels of recreation.

Budgets for providing recreational services can be an effective tool for comparison of the number of services and the participation rates, to evaluate changing costs for services, or how efficient the Departments are operating. For example, if in five years, the City of Huntington Park is providing 10% more recreational opportunities and the recreation operating budget and fees for services have not changed during those five years, then the City may be operating its recreational programs more efficiently, or the cost to provide services has gone down. If in five years, the City is providing less recreational programming, than either the costs for services has gone up or the Department is running less efficiently.

One of Huntington Park's recreation goals is to provide recreational services that are not duplicated in the private sector or by another agency. The City does not want to compete with other groups or businesses that provide recreational services or opportunities and encourages volunteers, businesses, and private organizations to provide recreational services and programs within the City.

The baseline level of park facilities that were offered in the City of Huntington Park during the period the Master Plan was being prepared:

Community Parks

1. Salt Lake Park	20.9 acres
2. Civic Center Park	<u>4.0 acres</u>
Subtotal	24.9 acres

Neighborhood Parks

1. Westside Park	3.8 acres
2. Freedom Park	1.5 acres
3. Senior Citizen Park	0.5 acres
4. Chesley Park / Circle	<u>0.2 acres</u>
Subtotal	6.0 acres

Total Park Acreage **30.9 acres**

Within the City of Huntington Park's General Plan; Open Space and Conservation Element, dated February 18, 1992, Goal 4.0, Policy 4.1 is stated: "Provide active and passive park and recreational facilities, based on the distribution of population within the City, to serve the needs of residents of all ages, economic levels, and physical conditions". This comprehensive document does not directly set a park acreage standard for the City.

Statewide, Park Acreage Standards have been adopted by a wide range of municipalities, to guide their long-range planning and acquisition of parklands. For informational purposes, these Acreage Standards are as follows:

Community Parks	2 acres / 1,000 people
Neighborhood Parks	<u>3 acres / 1,000 people</u>
Total Acreage Standard	5 acres / 1,000 people

It is readily apparent that the City of Huntington Park will not be able to ever achieve the above stated Statewide Standard. However, in comparison, the current ratio of combined community and neighborhood parks is:

0.44 acres / 1,000 people (using the 2005 Census data population number of 70,600, provided by HP Community Development Department). This comparative analysis strongly suggests that both existing park acreage must be developed to its ultimate potential, and the City should continue to acquire additional parkland acreage.

Within the Master Plan's Action Plan, will be several items that address upgrades to the existing parks, and the prioritized negotiations and acquisition of 3 additional acres at Salt Lake Park.

The following is the baseline level of recreation services that were offered in the City of Huntington Park during the period the Master Plan was being prepared:

As a generalized statement, Huntington Park offered more classes than any of the other 11 regional cities surveyed. Local residents had 46-opportunities for individuals to participate in a class, or program, compared to as few as 5 in the City of Lynwood. Of the 46 classes or programs, 28 were Music or Cultural Arts. This is programming that closely parallels the needs of the Community, based on consistent input received at the Community Meetings and Stakeholders interviews.

The other request from the Community, based on both one-on-one interviews and Community Meetings were additional classes in English-As-A-Second-Language. This might be a class that could be offered at the local middle and senior high schools, due to the limited space in City facilities. Frank Vasquez, the Principal at Nimitz Middle School, thought this might be a program that could work at his school. His reasoning included: the teachers have access to their classrooms, which is a major hurdle in the Joint-Use Agreement between the City and LAUSD; teachers don't want to open their classrooms up to outside instructors because they personally purchase many of the supplies in their classrooms and do not want to risk theft or vandalism. Perhaps, if it is their classroom and they are the contract instructor for the City, it would give the City several more sites at which to offer these programs and allow the teachers to earn a little extra income. Costs for these classes should include the cost of the Instructor plus City administrative costs.

Huntington Park Baseline Recreation Services that were offered during the time that the Master Plan was being prepared.

Huntington Park Programs Age Matrix

Program	Child	Youth	Adults	Seniors
Aerobics – Beginner		•	•	•
Ballet and Tap	•	•	•	•
Baseball		•	•	
Basketball	•	•	•	
Belly Dancing		•	•	•
Cake Decorating		•	•	•
Floral Arranging			•	•
Folklorico – Beginner		•	•	•
Folklorico – Intermediate		•	•	•
Folklorico – Advanced		•	•	•
Guitar		•	•	•
Hip Hop		•	•	
Karate		•	•	•
Piano – Beginner		•	•	•
Piano – Intermediate		•	•	•
Piano – Advanced		•	•	•
Pilates		•	•	
Salsa & Merengue		•	•	
Soccer (AYSO)	•	•		
Softball (Youth, Adult Men & Women)		•	•	
Tee-ball and Super Tee-ball	•	•		
Tennis		•	•	•
Tiny Tots	•			
Volleyball (Men, Women, Coed)			•	

The breakdown of classes for different age groups is pretty evenly divided among the various age groups.

The history roster data that was provided by the City showing program classes and registration, has approximately 121 cultural arts programs (art, music, dancing, piñata making) and 111 sports or fitness programs. There were approximately 57 miscellaneous classes, such as cake decorating, balloon decorating, tiny tots, floral arranging & jell-o making.

Enrollment in the sports/physical fitness classes was approximately 1,350 participants, while the cultural arts programs had approximately 2,181 participants. These numbers indicate that Cultural Arts Programs appear to be very important to the residents in Huntington Park.

All of the above-described classes are being held at Salt Lake Park.

In reviewing both previous rosters and current rosters, it was noted that there are very few classes for adults that are offered during the day. One of the classes on the current roster, "Introduction to English", is during the day from 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. This class had 31 participants register - the highest number of adult participants for any class on the current roster.

This high number could be because of either the type of class or the time of day. Since this class does not appear on the previous roster, the assumption is that this is a new class. On the community survey, this is the type of class the community felt had value - 35% of the respondents listed self-improvement has the second highest benefit for recreation programs. The only higher one was physical fitness at 62%.

With this type of success for an adult class, the department should consider trying some other adult classes during the day. Those classes could include more "Introduction to English" classes, the process for citizenship, and literacy programs.

In conclusion, one of the strong components of the Recreation and Parks Department is the contract class program. This is based on the wide variety of programs that are offered and the cost at which these programs are offered to the Community.