

### **INTRODUCTION**

*This section describes the impact of the Verdugo Gardens project on existing and future parks and recreation facilities in the City of Glendale. Information for this section was derived from the City of Glendale Recreation Element, the City of Glendale Open Space and Conservation Element, and communications with City staff.*

### **ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING**

#### **Existing Conditions**

##### ***Developed Park and Recreation Facilities***

The City of Glendale Parks, Recreation, and Community Services Department owns and operates public parks and recreation facilities in the City. More than 6,098 acres of public open space exists within the boundaries of the City, of which 5,020 acres are City owned.<sup>1</sup> City-owned open space consists of undeveloped parkland in the form of regional and community parks such as Brand Park, Deukmejian Wilderness Park, Verdugo Mountain Park, and Lower Scholl Canyon. The remaining 1,078 acres of public open space includes lands owned by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), Los Angeles County, Southern California Edison Company, and the Los Angeles County Department of Public Works, Flood Control Division.<sup>2</sup>

In addition, privately held properties comprise a total of 1,302 acres of open space. Privately held open space includes unsubdivided land and developed recreation and education facilities (e.g., golf courses, youth camps, and religious retreats).<sup>3</sup>

The City's park system consists of approximately 281 acres of developed parkland in 37 parks.<sup>4</sup> Six types of parks within the City are defined in the General Plan Recreation Element, these include regional parks, community parks, neighborhood parks, mini parks, community centers, and special facilities. Definitions of each recreation facility type and the associated characteristics of each are summarized in **Table 4.10-1, Park and Recreation Facilities Classification and Service Area Standards**.

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<sup>1</sup> Personal correspondence with George Balteria, CIP Project Development Coordinator, Glendale Parks, Recreation & Community Services Department, June 5, 2006.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., *see also*, City of Glendale, Open Space and Conservation Element, 1993, p. 4-3.

<sup>3</sup> Personal correspondence with George Balteria, CIP Project Development Coordinator, Glendale Parks, Recreation & Community Services Department, June 5, 2006.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

**Table 4.10-1  
Park and Recreation Facilities Classification and Service Area Standards**

<b>Component</b>	<b>Service Area</b>	<b>Size (acres)</b>	<b>Amount per 1,000 Population (in Acres)</b>	<b>Desirable Uses</b>	<b>Site Characteristics</b>
Regional Park	Several cities (1 hour drive time)	30+	N/A	Picnicking, play area, boating, fishing, swimming, camping, trails	Contiguous to or encompassing natural resources.
Community Park	1-mile radius	10–30	5.0–8.0	Athletic fields and courts, gymnasiums, swimming pools, picnic sites, play areas	Suited for intense development. May encompass natural resources.
Neighborhood Park	0.5-mile radius	2–10	1.0–2.0	Athletic fields and courts, play areas, picnic sites, wading pools	Suited for intense development with safe pedestrian and bike access. May be developed as a school site facility.
Mini Park	Less than a 0.25-mile radius	1 or less	0.25–0.5	Play equipment areas, wading pools	Suited for high- density multi- family and senior housing units.
Community Center	2-mile radius	0.5–5	N/A	Multipurpose building and gymnasium, open play area	Suited for intense development with safe pedestrian access.
Special Facilities	No applicable standard	N/A	N/A	May include golf courses, historic grounds or buildings, botanical gardens, commercial plazas or squares, nature centers	

Source: City of Glendale General Plan Recreation Element, 1996.

In addition to City recreation facilities, trailhead access to regional trail systems outside the City, including trail systems in the Verdugo Mountains, San Rafael Hills, Santa Monica Mountains, and Angeles National Forest (San Gabriel Mountains), is provided from the City's community parks.

For purposes of planning its recreation facilities, the City has established 11 "Recreation Planning Areas" in accordance with patterns of community boundaries and park facility accessibility, as defined by mountains, freeways, and other barriers to use. The Verdugo Gardens project site is located in Recreation Planning Area No. 6, which encompasses a 768-acre area characterized by residential, commercial, and industrial uses.<sup>5</sup>

Several City park and recreation facilities are located within an approximately 1-mile radius of the Verdugo Gardens project site. The locations of these facilities are shown in **Figure 4.10-1, City of Glendale Parks and Recreation Facilities Within One Mile of the Project Site**, and the characteristics of each are summarized below in **Table 4.10-2, City of Glendale Parks and Recreation Facilities Within 1 Mile Radius of the Project Site**. Currently, the closest facilities to the proposed project are Milford Mini Park, located approximately three to four blocks southwest of the project site, and Fremont Park, located about 5 blocks northwest of the project site. Amenities at Milford Mini Park include a children's play area and picnic facilities while amenities at Fremont Park include a basketball court, children's play area, four horseshoe courts, picnic areas, eight tennis courts, volleyball, and a wading pool.

### ***Planned Park Acquisition, Development, and Construction***

The City of Glendale is currently devoting additional resources for the acquisition, development, and construction of parks within residential areas throughout the City. Future acquisition of land for recreational use will provide a wide array of activities and facilities. The following is a list of tasks currently being undertaken by the City related to acquiring land for park recreation purposes.<sup>6</sup> It should be noted that the tasks listed below are in different stages of acquisition, development, and/or construction.

#### **Mini Park Development**

- Construction of Adams Square Mini Park (0.33 acre); and
- Development of Maryland Mini Park (0.5 acre).

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<sup>5</sup> City of Glendale, Recreation Element, 1996, p. 5-9.

<sup>6</sup> Personal correspondence with George Balteria, CIP Project Development Coordinator, Glendale Parks, Recreation & Community Services Department, June 5, 2006.

**Table 4.10-2  
City of Glendale Parks and Recreation Facilities Within 1 Mile of the Project Site**

<b>Facilities</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Features</b>
1) Piedmont Park	0.25	Mini Park: No Facilities.
2) Wilson Mini Park	0.3	Mini Park: Children's play area and picnic facilities.
3) Maple Park	3.8	Neighborhood Park: Children's Play Area, Community Building, Gymnasium, Picnic Areas, Special Facilities, and Tennis Court.
4) Glendale Central Park /Adult Recreation Center	3.2	Special Facility/Neighborhood Park: Senior citizen center and tennis courts.
5) Americana at Brand Park	3.0	Neighborhood Park: No Facilities. <sup>1</sup>
6) Harvard Mini Park	0.33	Mini Park: Children's play area and picnic facilities.
7) Edison/Pacific Park	5.9	Community Center/Neighborhood Park: The Community Center includes a multi-purpose gymnasium, computer lab, arts and science room, game room, conference room, and a variety of meeting rooms. Park facilities include a little league ball field, group picnic area, multi-purpose field, multi-purpose court, children's playground, water-play area, and outdoor theatre.
8) Milford Mini Park	0.3	Mini Park: Children's play area and picnic facilities.
9) Fremont Park	7.9	Neighborhood Park: Basketball Court, Children's Play Area, 4 Horseshoe Courts, Picnic Areas, 8 Tennis Courts, Volleyball, and Wading Pool.

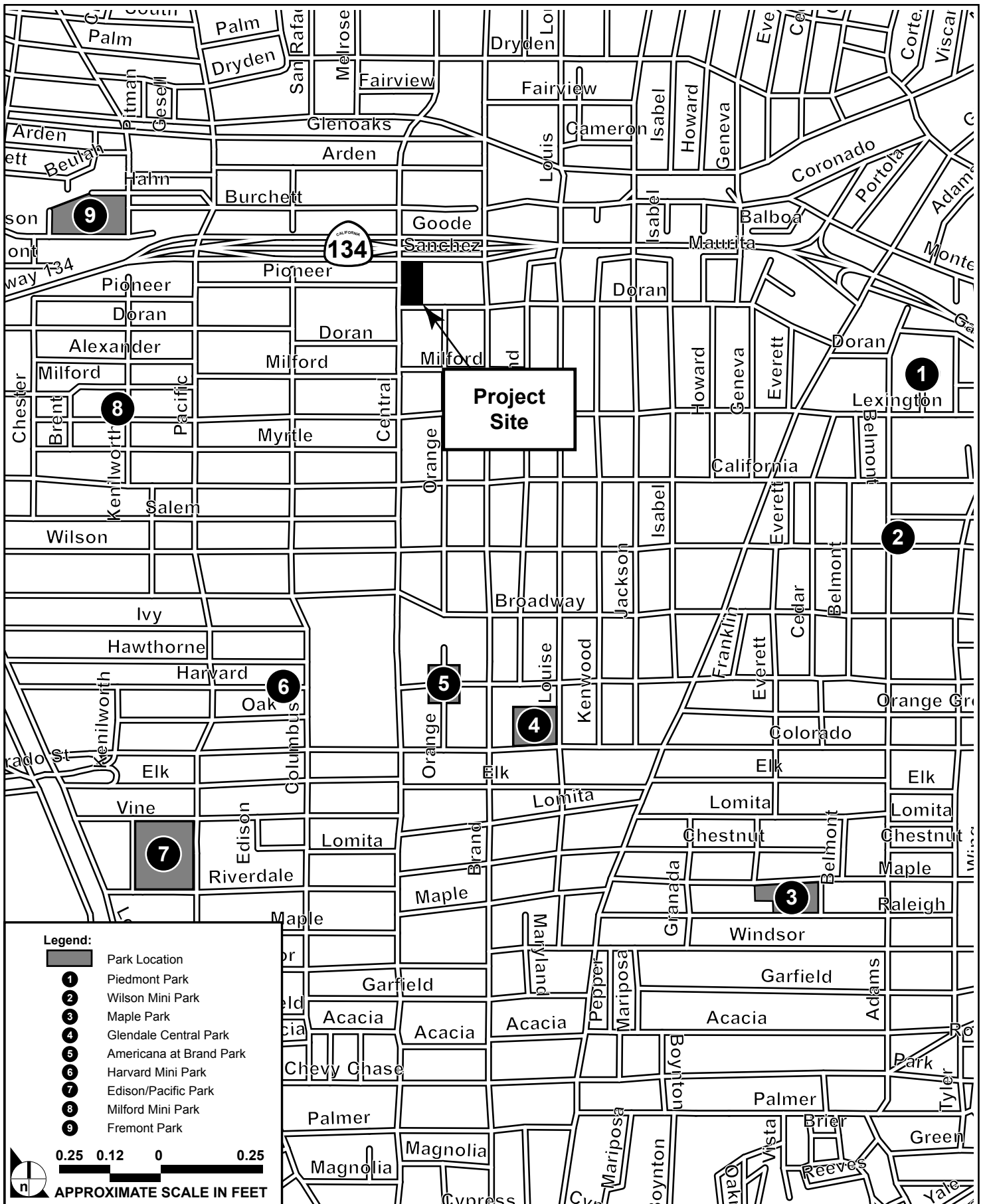
Source: City of Glendale Parks, Recreation & Community Services Website, [Online] November 13, 2006. <http://www.ci.glendale.ca.us/parks/>

<sup>1</sup> City of Glendale, Glendale Town Center EIR, certified April 2004.

### **Joint City/School Parks Development**

- Construction of approximately 1 acre of property adjacent to Cerritos Elementary School.

In addition to the above, the City's Parks, Recreation, and Community Services Division is actively looking for opportunities to acquire and develop new park facilities. Some of the possibilities include the development of subterranean parking facilities with rooftop recreational use, as well as rooftop use of existing aboveground parking structures.



SOURCE: Impact Sciences, Inc. – April 2007

FIGURE 4.10-1

City of Glendale Parks and Recreation Facilities Within One Mile Radius of the Project Site

## REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

### Recreation Element of the General Plan

#### *Parks and Recreation Facility Service Standards*

The Recreation Element of the Glendale General Plan addresses the City's parks and recreation needs, management of parks and use of these facilities, and the development of additional park resources. The City's park classification system, recommended that service radii and area standards adhere closely to those established by the National Recreation and Park Association's (NRPA) Recreation, Park and Open Space Standards (1983), which serves as the national standard for the assessment of park land in cities. Specifically, the Recreation Element establishes a standard of 6 acres per 1,000 residents of neighborhood park and community parkland combined.<sup>7</sup> This standard calls for the provision of 1 acre of neighborhood parkland per 1,000 residents and 5 acres of community parkland per 1,000 residents. Currently, the City's parkland-to-resident ratio is 1.4 acres per 1,000 residents. It should be noted that this standard represents a goal and is not considered a threshold.

#### *Parks and Recreation Goals, Policies and Objectives*

The Recreation Element also contains general recreation-related goals, objectives, and policies. Goals in the Recreation Element include: having a variety of recreational opportunities and programs for all residents; the conservation and preservation of cultural, historical, archaeological, and paleontological structures and sites as links to community identity; the management of aesthetic resources, both natural and manmade to create a visually pleasing City; and the development of new parks and recreation facilities responsive to particular neighborhoods or areas in the City, as identified in the Recreation Element. A description of applicable goals, policies, and objectives is provided in **Section 4.1, Land Use and Planning**. As discussed in **Section 4.1**, the Verdugo Gardens project does not conflict with applicable General Plan goals and policies relating to recreation.

As the Recreation Element makes clear, these parkland standards are desired goals for the City of Glendale, and are not applied to development projects on an individual basis. None of the Goals, Objectives, or Policies of the Recreation Element requires that individual development projects meet these standards. In addition, the Recreation Element does not require that new residential development comply with these standards, acknowledging that, "...[s]trict adherence to these standards would dictate that the City not permit anymore [sic] housing units in areas with a deficiency of park land," and that, "...[f]ollowing this argument to its logical conclusion, based on existing neighborhood park supply, it

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<sup>7</sup> City of Glendale, Recreation Element, 1996, p. 6-11.

would be difficult to permit any additional residential development.”<sup>8</sup> This language recognizes the problems faced by the City with respect to imposing a fee or exaction on new development.

The Recreation Element also discusses the relationship of this element to the other elements of the General Plan and other plans, policies, and programs. This discussion notes that the streetscape improvements and open space acquisitions discussed in the Strategic Plan will provide passive recreation opportunities and an improved quality of life for residents in the immediate area and Glendale’s general daytime population.<sup>9</sup> In addition, the Recreation Element sets forth a policy to promote and, when possible, provide recreational opportunities for the daytime population, specifically in the downtown, commercial, and industrial areas of the City.

## ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

### Methodology

An assessment of the impact of the Verdugo Gardens project on recreation facilities in the City is provided below. This assessment is based on the City’s planning standards for recreation facilities and the increase in population that will result from the project.

### Thresholds of Significance

The following thresholds for determining the significance of impacts related to recreation are contained in the environmental checklist form contained in Appendix G of the most recent update of the *California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines*.

- Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?
- Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities, which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?

### Impact Analysis

Each applicable threshold of significance is listed below followed by analysis of the significance of any potential impacts and the identification of mitigation measures that would lessen or avoid potential impacts. Finally, the significance of potential impacts after implementation of all identified mitigation measures is presented.

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 1-3

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., p. 2-5.

**Threshold:** *Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated.*

**Impact Analysis:** As described in **Section 4.2, Population and Housing** implementation of the proposed project would result in an estimated population increase of approximately 613 residents within the City of Glendale. This increase in population would incrementally increase the use of existing neighborhood and community parks in the City. Impacts would be most pronounced at Fremont Park and Milford Mini-Park, which are the closest facilities to the project site.<sup>10</sup> As discussed above, the City currently has a park land-to-resident ratio of approximately 1.4 acres of parkland for every 1,000 residents, while the City's park planning standard is 6 acres of neighborhood and community parkland per 1,000 residents. Even with implementation of all parkland under development, the parkland-to-resident ratio would remain relatively the same. Based upon the ideal park land-to-resident ratio standard, the project would require 3.6 additional acres. To maintain the existing park land-to-resident ratio, the project would require 0.8 acre.

Project amenities that would lessen the impacts associated with the project's impact on existing park and recreation facilities include 34,682 square feet of public open space, including a 7,637-square-foot ground-floor public sculpture garden and a 943-square-foot ground-floor community garden; and 30,770 square feet of common open space reserved for project residents, which consists of an 18,869-square-foot amenity deck on the 7<sup>th</sup> floor, a 7,233-square-foot pool deck on the 22<sup>nd</sup> floor, and five sky gardens totaling 4,668 square feet. Other common amenities include a fitness center, outdoor pool/spa, and barbecue area. Finally, private open space reserved for individual units totals 14,322 square feet and consists of balconies and private gardens.

These amenities will partially serve to reduce demand for public recreation facilities by project residents. However, the public open and park space and private recreation facilities included in the project will not meet the needs of project residents for neighborhood or community parks.

Existing park facilities are currently heavily used due to the deficit in parkland in the City. Even with the provision of common outdoor space and other amenities, the increase in use of neighborhood and community parks in the City that will result from the increase in residents associated with the project is considered significant and unavoidable.

**Level of Significance Before Mitigation:** Significant.

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<sup>10</sup> Written communication between David Ahern, Deputy Director of Developmental Services, and George Chapjian, Director of Parks and Recreation, March 5, 2007.

**Project Design Features:** The following are project design features that will lessen the impacts associated with the project's impact on existing park and recreation facilities.

PDF 4.10-1(a) The project will include a 7,637-square-foot ground-floor public sculpture garden.

PDF 4.10-1(b) The project will include a 943-square-foot ground-floor community garden.

PDF 4.10-1(c) The project will include an 18,869-square-foot amenity deck on the 7<sup>th</sup> floor.

PDF 4.10-1(d) The project will include a 7,233-square-foot pool deck on the 22<sup>nd</sup> floor.

PDF 4.10-1(e) The project will include five sky gardens totaling 4,668 square feet.

**Mitigation Measures:** No feasible mitigation measures are available. The City of Glendale is currently in the process of establishing a Citywide developer fee for parks and recreation facilities and the ordinance implementing the fee is planned for adoption. Although the General Plan and Municipal Code provisions allow payment of park fees in connection with all multi-family residential development (see Municipal Code Sections 30.36.150, 30.40.150, 30.44.150, 30.48.150, 30.50.140, 30.51.140 30.50.140), such a fee has not yet been imposed. The City Council has not established a park fee to be used by the City for the purpose of mitigating park/recreation impacts. If the City were to create a park fee program to apply to the entire City, it would need to devise an administrative mechanism for the collection of the fee and the acquisition of parkland. Additionally, a nexus study would need to be conducted to determine the appropriate amount of park fees to be charged for different types of development. These studies are important prerequisites to the successful implementation of such a program. Until the nexus study is completed and the ordinance is adopted, however, the City has no method to impose a condition on the project to provide for parks and recreation space.

**Level of Significance After Mitigation:** Significant and unavoidable.

**Threshold:** *Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities, which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment.*

**Impact Analysis:** As discussed above, the proposed project will provide residents with several amenities, including public and private open space, a fitness center, outdoor pool/spa, and barbecue area. These recreation facilities are incorporated into the design of the project and will be constructed concurrently with the project. The short-term impacts associated with the construction of these facilities are addressed in **Sections 4.4, Traffic, Circulation and Parking; 4.5, Air Quality; and 4.6, Noise**. Construction of these recreational facilities will not result in significant impacts, but it will contribute to the overall construction impacts.

*Level of Significance Before Mitigation:* Less than significant.

*Mitigation Measures:* None are required.

*Level of Significance After Mitigation:* Less than significant.

## Cumulative Impacts

The following cumulative analysis evaluates the impact of the proposed project and related projects on Parks and recreation in the City. Each applicable threshold is listed below in bold followed by an analysis of the cumulative impact of the project and related projects and their potential significance.

**Threshold:** *Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated.*

**Impact Analysis:** Implementation of the proposed project and related projects will increase the use of existing recreational facilities in the City. As discussed in **Section 4.2, Population and Housing**, direct and indirect population growth associated with the proposed project and related projects could result in the addition of 10,855 new residents to Glendale. As discussed above, the existing ratio of parkland to residents of the City is approximately 1.4 acres per 1,000, which is below the City's planning standard of 6 acres per 1,000 residents. The addition of 10,855 residents would lower this ratio to approximately 1.3 acres per 1,000 residents.

Given the existing deficiency of parkland in the City, the combined effects of the proposed project and related projects on existing facilities is considered cumulatively significant because the use of existing parks will increase, thus contributing to an acceleration in the physical deterioration of these facilities. Even with the provision of project amenities mentioned above, the contribution of the proposed project to this impact is considered to be cumulatively considerable and, therefore, is considered significant and unavoidable.

*Level of Significance Before Mitigation:* Significant.

**Mitigation Measures:** No feasible mitigation measures are available. The City of Glendale is currently in the process of establishing a citywide developer fee for parks and recreation facilities and the ordinance implementing the fee is planned for adoption. As stated above, until the ordinance is adopted, however, the City has no method to impose a condition on the project to provide for parks and recreation space.

*Level of Significance After Mitigation:* Significant and unavoidable.

**Threshold:** *Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities, which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment.*

**Impact Analysis:** In order to accommodate future related projects, as well as the existing deficiency of parkland within Glendale, the City is devoting additional resources to the acquisition and development of parks within residential areas throughout the City. It is reasonable to expect that all of these facilities will undergo CEQA review and that project-specific impacts associated with the development of each will be mitigated to the extent feasible. As a result, cumulative impacts associated with construction of future parks are expected to be less than significant.

As discussed above, the proposed project includes 34,682 square feet of public open space, 30,770 square feet of common space and 14,322 square feet of private space. This space will be incorporated into the design of the project and will be constructed concurrently with the project. While the proposed project as a whole is expected to result in a number of significant and unavoidable impacts associated with the construction on-site recreational amenities, which is attributed to construction activities, this construction activity is not anticipated to result in a significant impact when considered in conjunction with the construction of future park and recreational facilities elsewhere in the City of Glendale. Consequently, the incremental effect of the project would not be cumulatively considerable and cumulative impacts associated with the project would be less than significant.

**Level of Significance Before Mitigation:** Less than significant.

**Mitigation Measures:** None are required.

**Level of Significance After Mitigation:** Less than significant.