

3.1.6 Recreation

This subchapter describes and evaluates the potential impacts to recreational resources and facilities associated with the project.

3.1.6.1 Existing Conditions

Regulatory Setting

California State Government Code §66477 (The Quimby Act)

Cities and counties have been authorized since the passage of the 1975 Quimby Act (California Government Code §66477) to pass ordinances requiring that developers set aside land, donate conservation easements, or pay fees for park improvements. Revenues generated through the Quimby Act cannot be used for the operation and maintenance of park facilities. The County implemented the Quimby Act by adopting the Park Lands Dedication Ordinance (PLDO). The PLDO is the mechanism that enables the funding or dedication of local parkland in the County, and is discussed in detail below.

County of San Diego Code of Regulatory Ordinances § 810.101 – 810.114 (Park Lands Dedication Ordinance)

The PLDO establishes several methods by which developers may satisfy their park requirements. Options include the payment of park fees, the dedication of a public park, the provision of private recreational facilities, or a combination of these methods. PLDO funds must be used for the acquisition, planning, and development of local parkland and recreation facilities. Local parks are intended to serve the recreational needs of the communities in which they are located.

County of San Diego Code of Regulatory Ordinances § 812.201 – 812.214 (Trails Ordinance)

The County's Trails Ordinances specify the uses allowed on trails (mountain bicycling, hiking, and horseback riding) and the activities that are prohibited (motorized vehicles, tampering with or destroying trail signs, etc.). Other County ordinances that pertain to trails include Ordinance Number 9701, which amended multiple sections of the San Diego County Code Relating to Subdivision Improvements. This ordinance determined that there is a significant demand for recreational trails throughout the unincorporated area of the County, but that there are not enough trails to meet this demand. This ordinance also determined that the Subdivision Ordinance should be amended to provide for the dedication and improvement of trails in conjunction with the approval of major and minor subdivisions and revised maps.

County Zoning Ordinance Section 4900 (Usable Open Space Regulation)

These regulations promote the availability of outdoor areas for leisure and recreation throughout San Diego County by establishing requirements for minimum areas of usable open space for residential developments with three or more dwelling units per lot or building site. The provisions for usable open space include standards for surfacing,

location, size and shape, accessibility, openness, screening, and maintenance of the required usable open space.

County of San Diego Department of Parks and Recreation, Strategic Plan

The mission of the County of San Diego Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) is to provide opportunities for high quality parks and recreation experiences and to preserve regionally significant natural and cultural resources. The DPR Strategic Plan discusses what DPR does, including how it implements programs and achieves objectives.

County of San Diego Trails Program

In January 2005, the County Board of Supervisors adopted the County Trails Program (CTP). The components of the CTP include a CTMP and Regional Trails Plan, as described below. The CTP also included the Trails Ordinance (described above). The CTP allows the County to develop a system of interconnected regional and community trails and pathways. These trails and pathways are intended to address an established public need for recreation and transportation, and also provide health and quality of life benefits associated with hiking, mountain biking, and horseback riding throughout the County's biologically diverse environments. For certain discretionary projects, the County may require the dedication and improvement of trails. Dedication will be considered only if (1) the land for which the approval is sought includes some or all of a trail corridor as shown on the Regional Trails Map or on a community trail map in the CTMP; and (2) there is the necessary rough proportionality between the required dedication and the impacts of and/or benefits to the proposed development.

Community Trails Master Plan

The CTMP is the implementing document for the CTP and contains adopted individual community trails and pathways plans. The CTMP involves trail development, maintenance and management on public, semi-public and private lands. The main focus of the CTMP is to implement and maintain a realistic system of interconnected and continuous regional and community trails. The CTMP also includes development and management guidelines that can be applied to community level trail systems. The community trails maps contained in the CTMP depict corridors of general alignments. The term "general alignment" is used to describe the general location of a future trail generally within a quarter-mile wide corridor.

Regional Trails Plan

The Regional Trails Plan identifies County-approved general alignment corridors of regional trails in the County. Regional Trails have characteristics and conditions that serve a regional function by covering long linear distances, transcending community and/or municipal borders, having state or national significance, or providing important connections to existing parks and preserves. There are no Regional Trails within the vicinity of the project site.

San Diego County Board of Supervisors Policies

F-26 Utilization of Park Fees and Interest Derived from Park Fees

This policy establishes guidelines and procedures for the acquisition and development of parkland with fees derived from the PLDO and the maintenance and operation of County parks with the interest accumulated on Park Lands Dedication fees.

BOS G-6 User Fees for County Parks and Recreation Facilities

This policy defines a policy for charging fees for the use of County operated parks and recreation facilities and to establish certain group exemptions to this policy.

BOS G-15 Design Standards for County Facilities

This policy establishes general principles and objectives for the design, construction and improvement of owned or leased County facilities.

DPLU CP-15 Public Passive Park/Recreational Areas

This policy establishes criteria to assist in the evaluation of proposals for Public Passive Park/Recreational Areas, as defined in the County Zoning Ordinance. Public Passive Park/Recreational Areas may be of any size and may include wilderness, ecological or natural preserves. These areas are classified in the Zoning Ordinance (Section 1335) as an example of the Essential Services use type.

County of San Diego General Plan

The General Plan includes numerous goals and policies related to parks and other recreational facilities.

Land Use Element

GOAL LU-12

Infrastructure and Services Supporting Development. Adequate and sustainable infrastructure, public facilities, and essential services that meet community needs and are provided concurrent with growth and development.

Policies

LU-12.1 Concurrency of Infrastructure and Services with Development. Require the provision of infrastructure, facilities, and services needed by new development prior to that development, either directly or through fees. Where appropriate, the construction of infrastructure and facilities may be phased to coincide with project phasing.

LU-12.3 Infrastructure and Services Compatibility. Provide public facilities and services that are sensitive to the environment with characteristics of the unincorporated communities. Encourage the collocation of infrastructure facilities, where appropriate.

Mobility Element

GOAL M-12

County Trails Program. A safe, scenic, interconnected, and enjoyable non-motorized multi-use trail system developed, managed, and maintained according to the County Trails Program, Regional Trails Plan, and the Community Trails Master Plan.

M-12.1 County Trails System. Implement a County Trails Program by developing the designated trail and pathway alignments and implementing goals and policies identified in the Community Trails Master Plan.

M-12.2 Trail Variety. Provide and expand the variety of trail experiences that provide recreational opportunities to all residents of the unincorporated County, including urban/suburban, rural, wilderness, multi-use, staging areas, and support facilities.

M-12.4 Land Dedication for Trails. Require development projects to dedicate and improve trails or pathways where the development will occur on land planned for trail or pathway segments shown on the Regional Trails Plan or Community Trails Master Plan.

Housing Element

GOAL H-2

Neighborhoods That Respect Local Character. Well-designed residential neighborhoods that respect unique local character and the natural environment while expanding opportunities for affordable housing.

Policy

H-2.2 Projects with Open Space Amenities in Villages. Require new multi-family projects in Villages to be well-designed and include amenities and common open space areas that enhance overall quality of life.

Conservation and Open Space Element

GOAL COS-21

Park and Recreational Facilities. Park and recreation facilities that enhance the quality of life and meet the diverse active and passive recreational needs of County residents and visitors, protect natural resources, and foster an awareness of local history, with approximately ten acres of local parks and 15 acres of regional parks provided for every 1,000 persons in the unincorporated County.

Policies

COS-21.1 Diversity of Users and Services. Provide parks and recreation facilities that create opportunities for a broad range of recreational experiences to serve user interests.

COS-21.2 Location of Parks. Locate new local parks and recreation facilities near other community-oriented public facilities such as schools, libraries, and recreation centers where feasible, so that they may function as the “heart” of a community.

COS-21.3 Park Design. Design parks that reflect community character and identity, incorporate local natural and cultural landscapes and features, and consider the surrounding land uses and urban form and cultural and historic resources.

COS-21.4 Regional Parks. Require new regional parks to allow for a broad range of recreational activities and preserve special or unique natural or cultural features when present.

COS-21.5 Connections to Trails and Networks. Connect public parks to trails and pathways and other pedestrian or bicycle networks where feasible to provide linkages and connectivity between recreational uses.

GOAL COS-22

Park and Recreational Services. High-quality parks and recreation programs that promote the health and well-being of County residents while meeting the needs of a diverse and growing population.

Policies

COS-22.1 Variety of Recreational Programs. Provide and promote a variety of high quality active and passive recreation programs that meet the needs of and benefit County residents.

GOAL COS-24

Park and Recreation Funding. Adequate funding for acquisition, development, maintenance, management, and operation of parks, recreation facilities, and preserves.

Policies

COS-24.1 Park and Recreation Contributions. Require development to provide fair-share contributions toward parks and recreation facilities and trails consistent with local, state, and federal law.

COS-24.2 Funding Opportunities. Maximize funding opportunities for the following: (1) the acquisition, expansion, and development of parks, recreation facilities, preserves, and trails; (2) the operation, maintenance, and management of parks, recreation facilities, preserves, and trails.

Environmental Setting

Types of Parks, Recreational Facilities, and Trails

There are a wide range of park and recreation opportunities within the San Diego region provided by cities, state entities, federal entities, special districts, school districts, and private nonprofit organizations, in addition to those provided by the County:

Local Parks—Local parks range in acreage depending on the uses and community or neighborhood they serve, and may be associated with joint use facilities such as schools. Typically, local parks contain recreation areas such as a community center, athletic fields, or facilities of special interest to the community. Smaller local parks may be located within or near town centers, where they can be used as common recreation and gathering areas by the community.

In order to address a diverse range of conditions within various communities, the amount and type of local parks are tailored to an individual community's needs. For example, some communities may want larger, community parks while others may prefer an extensive system of smaller, neighborhood parks. The acreage goal identified for local parks in the General Plan is 10 acres per 1,000 residents. There are three different types of local parks within the County. These are described below.

1. **Mini-parks** are small specialized facilities that serve a limited population who live, work or shop in a distinct area. They are typically less than one acre in size. Mini-parks generally offer active, child-oriented recreation, such as tot lots and picnic benches, combined with passive recreational uses.
2. **Neighborhood Parks** serve a residential area, and should be located to minimize walking distances for residents. They typically range in size from five to ten acres, and may be associated with other public use facilities such as a school. Neighborhood parks provide both active recreation areas and/or facilities, such as game courts and jogging trails, and passive recreational areas such as family picnic areas and benches.
3. **Community Parks** serve the community as a whole. They typically range in size from 20 to 50 acres and may be associated with other public use facilities such as a school. Community parks typically contain recreation areas including a community center, athletic fields, or facilities of special interest to the community. Smaller community parks may be located within or near town centers, where they can be used as common recreation and gathering areas by the community.

Regional Parks—Regional parks serve County residents and visitors and are often larger than 200 acres, although smaller facilities may be appropriate for specific sites of regional interest. Regional parks include a variety of passive and active recreational uses and may include an interpretive center. Most regional parks contain open space, natural resources, cultural resources, and multi-use trails. Most regional parks also contain a local park element by serving as the recreation outlet for a community.

Trails—Trails provide recreational opportunities and allow for enjoyment by the public of parks and open space preserves. Trails provide connection between recreation uses. The CTMP developed a simplified approach to trail classification rather than rigid standards. This approach resulted in a classification of three trail types (A, B, C) and two pathway types (D and D-Special), discussed in detail below.

1. **Urban/Suburban Trail:** Trail type intended for an intense volume of use generally associated within an urban/suburban setting. These trails provide the widest tread so they may function as both recreation and transportation facilities and will be accessible to all trail users.

2. **Rural Trail:** Trail type intended for medium volume of use generally associated within a rural setting. These trails are intended to function as recreation and transportation facilities. Although accessible to all trail users, some uses may not be practical in steep terrain.
3. **Primitive Trail:** Trail type intended for medium to low volume of use generally associated within a primitive or wilderness setting. They have the smallest trail tread and are intended to function as low impact, remote recreational experiences, and connector trails. Steep terrain and remote wilderness areas dictate that accessibility is limited and may not be suitable for all persons or user groups.
4. **Pathway:** A specific type of trail called a “pathway” is intended for a high volume of use located within a public road right-of-way. These trails are generally intended for transportation purposes including bike, hike, pedestrian and equestrian use, although they may be utilized for establishing trail connections and recreational experience in areas with trail Type A-C constraints. Grade and accessibility will be established by the grade of the right of way. This restriction may impede the ability to provide accessibility to pedestrian traffic within the industry standards. The “typical” type D pathway refers to those which currently exist. The “special” type D pathway refers to new pathways.

Recreation Facilities—Recreational facilities include community centers, teen centers and gymnasiums and are operated and maintained by County staff, volunteers, and service contracts.

Preserves—Preserves include areas of environmental significance and beauty. The dual purpose of preserves is to protect biological, cultural, and historical resources, as well as community character, and to make these resources available for public recreation opportunities. However, typically only minimal improvements such as trails, parking, and restroom facilities are found in preserves. Some preserves may also provide interpretive or educational amenities. Preserves vary in size depending on the resources being protected, and public access can be limited according to the sensitivity of the resources.

Existing Recreational Facilities

There are no local parks, regional parks, recreational facilities, or preserves within the project site. The CTMP shows two County (public) trails planned to cross the project site. The first trail roughly parallels Old West Lilac Road in an east-west direction along the northern boundary of the project site and is classified as a “Third Priority” Pathway by the County. The second trail, also classified as a “Third Priority” Pathway, is planned to cross from east to west along an existing VCMWD water easement, near the southern boundary of the project.

The nearest regional park is the planned San Luis Rey River Park, located approximately 3 miles north of the project site, which will include open space areas including trails, staging areas, and habitat preservation corridors. The nearest preserve is the 1,900-acre Hellhole Canyon Preserve, which includes 13.5 miles of trails. The preserve is located approximately 15 miles to the east of the project site.

Existing community parks within the Valley Center community planning area include the Valley Center Community Park (14 acres), located approximately 7 miles east the project site; and Robert Adams Community Park (38 acres), located approximately 7 miles east of the project site. Both facilities are managed by the Valley Center Parks and Recreation District. The BCP area does not have any community parks.

According to the County General Plan Update EIR (see Table 2.14-4), the VCCP area is currently 126 acres short of its identified park acreage goal. The BCP area is currently 93 acres short of its identified park acreage goal.

3.1.6.2 Analysis of Project Impacts and Determination of Significance

The project would result in a significant impact if it would:

1. *Deterioration of Parks and Recreational Facilities:* Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facilities would occur or be accelerated
2. *Construction of New Recreational Facilities:* Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which would have an adverse effect on the environment.

Issue 1: Deterioration of Parks and Recreational Facilities

Guidelines for the Determination of Significance

Based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, the project would have a significant impact if it would increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facilities would occur or be accelerated.

Analysis

The project would provide a variety of on-site recreational opportunities to future residents of the project site, and thus would not substantially increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks within the community. As discussed above, the PLDO establishes several methods by which developers may satisfy their park requirements. Options include the payment of park fees, the dedication of a public park, the provision of private recreational facilities, or a combination of these methods. The project requires 15.09 acres of public parks pursuant to the PLDO. The project would exceed the PLDO requirement by providing a total of 23.6 acres of parkland. As shown on Figure 1-9, the project would provide numerous parks located throughout the project site including a 13.5-acre public park, and 12.1 acres of private parks which would include private recreation facilities. The public park would be dedicated to and owned by the County, and maintained by the HOA.

The 13.5-acre public park would be located in the center of the community (see Figure 1-9), adjacent to the school site. This park would serve the project residents as well as the general public, and would allow for joint use with the school. Detailed park concept plans are included in Section III of the Specific Plan.

A private recreational facility would also be located within the project site (Planning Area CPF, Phase 3) and would provide active indoor and outdoor uses possibly including, a swimming pool, gym, basketball courts, and tennis courts. The facility would be privately operated and maintained. A smaller private recreational center would be constructed in Phase 1. The Phase 1 private recreational center would include two tennis courts, one multi-use field (approximately 110 feet x 175 feet), a pool, spa, 3,600-square-foot clubhouse, and 1,850-square-foot classroom/reception hall.

In addition, the project would include a network of trails and pathways that meander along streets and within open space areas. As detailed in Section II, 3 of the Specific Plan, the project would construct two CTMP trail segments. One Type D-Pathway Existing Conditions Multi-Use trail will be improved along the project boundary to the north (Old West Lilac Road), and the other, included as part of the Ranch Multi-Use Trail in the southern portion of the project site (along the VCMWD easement). These trail segments would be designed as a multi-purpose, Type D trail of decomposed granite per the Valley Center Community Road Design Guidelines and would provide an equestrian linkage, thus avoiding equestrian conflicts in the Village Center. The trails would be set back from the street and lined with an equestrian themed fence, where required for safety.

As shown in Figure 1-8, the project proposes a community trail network that would provide access from one neighborhood to another. The trail system would be designed to serve the project residents and surrounding area residents and would connect to the trails identified in the CTMP at each end of the project site, allowing access to other communities. Overall, the project trail system would include 1.4 miles of multi-use trails as shown on the CTMP; approximately 8 miles of ranch multi-use trails located in undeveloped and open space areas and/or landscaped easements parallel to the streets; approximately 4 miles of community trails primarily used to connect the Town Center with the northern Neighborhood Center, school site, and public park; and approximately 4 miles of feeder trails located within neighborhoods, on local streets. Other than the portion of the trails system within the Senior Citizen Neighborhood, the trail would be available for public use.

The parks, recreational facilities, and trails provided by the project are intended to provide convenient recreational opportunities for residents of the project site. The project would exceed the amount of parkland required by the PLDO. The new parks would be maintained by the HOA. The trail system has been designed concurrently with County staff to ensure impacts to sensitive habitats are minimized. Further, the new trails and pathways would provide connectivity to trails planned for in the CTMP. Overall, the project would provide adequate recreational facilities, and impacts associated with the deterioration of existing recreational facilities would be **less than significant**.

Issue 2: Construction of New Recreational Facilities

Guidelines for the Determination of Significance

Based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, the project would have a significant impact if it would include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which would have an adverse effect on the environment.

Analysis

The project would provide adequate parks and recreation facilities on-site to meet the needs of new residents. The timing of construction of the parks would be consistent with the requirements of the Specific Plan. No other new parks, recreational facilities, nor trails are within the identified development area for the project. Impacts for all environmental issues within the development area are addressed throughout the applicable issues analyses in Chapters 2 and 3 of this EIR. No other impacts would be associated with the construction of parks, recreation facilities, or trails, and impacts associated with the construction of new recreational facilities would be considered **less than significant**.

3.1.6.3 Cumulative Impact Analysis

The cumulative study area consists of the Valley Center and Bonsall Community Planning Areas.

Deterioration of Parks and Recreational Facilities

The project would provide parks, recreational facilities, and trails in accordance with PLDO and the CTMP, as would the cumulative projects. Smaller development projects would most likely contribute fees in accordance with the PLDO, which the County would use for acquisition or construction of new parks and parkland. The project would provide on-site facilities adequate to serve new residents and would not contribute to the deterioration of existing parks. If other cumulative projects include the construction and dedication of public parks and trails as a part of the project, residents of those cumulative projects would be able to use the provided facilities. Conformance with the PLDO, either through payment of fees or dedication of parkland, would ensure that **no cumulative impacts** associated with the deterioration of parks and recreational facilities would result.

Construction of New Recreational Facilities

The project would provide park and recreational facilities adequate to serve new residents in the project, would mitigate any significant impacts of the park and recreational facilities, and would not contribute to the need for off-site parks. Projects that involve the construction of parks and recreational facilities would likewise be subject to CEQA. All projects considered in the cumulative study area would result in an increased demand for parks. However, the County requires new development to construct parks to meet its demand. The project is providing adequate parkland to provide for its demand. Therefore, cumulative impacts associated with the construction of new recreational facilities would be **less than significant**.

3.1.6.4 Conclusion

Compliance with the PLDO and the CTMP would ensure that no significant direct or cumulative impacts associated with parks, recreational facilities, and trails would occur.