



4.16 RECREATION

This section describes the parks and other recreational facilities on or near the Development Site and evaluates the potential impacts of the Development Project on those facilities. This section also discusses the existing setting of recreational facilities within and near the City of Banning (City) and sets forth the relevant regulatory requirements that apply to the analysis of the Development Project's impact on recreational facilities. This section is based, in part, on information provided in the Open Space and Conservation Element and Recreation Element of the City's General Plan, the Banning Parks and Recreational Master Plan, and applicable provisions of the City's Municipal Code.

While development of the Mt. San Jacinto College (MSJC) Site is not anticipated at this time, a programmatic analysis of potential impacts to recreation facilities and services associated with development of the MSJC Site is provided in **Chapter 5.0** of this EIR.

4.16.1 Scoping

The City received nine comment letters during the public review period of the Notice of Preparation (NOP). For copies of the NOP comment letters, refer to **Appendix A** of this EIR. Two comment letters included comments related to recreation and recreational facilities.

- The letter from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) dated March 1, 2021, suggested that a discussion of potential impacts from human activity (e.g., recreation and dumping) and their potential to affect biological resources be included in the Draft EIR. This analysis is presented in **Section 4.4** of this EIR.
- The letter from the Sierra Club-San Geronimo Chapter dated March 1, 2021, requests that the Draft EIR analyze health impacts on those that utilize the proposed park within the Development Site. This analysis is presented in **Section 4.3** of this EIR.

No public comments related to recreation facilities or services were received during the February 18, 2021 Public Scoping meeting.

4.16.2 Methodology

Impacts to recreational facilities were assessed based on the availability of parkland in the City to meet the goals and policies of the General Plan and whether the Development would generate increased demand on recreational facilities that could result in deterioration of, or contribute toward substantial accelerated deterioration of, those facilities or require the construction of new facilities or expansion of existing facilities that could have an adverse physical effect on the environment. For the purposes of this analysis, "recreational facilities" are defined as parks and designated public areas used for active or passive recreation. The Open Space and Conservation Element and Recreation Element of the City's General Plan states that recreational resources include parks, schools, community facilities, and privately owned recreational facilities. The Parks and Recreation Element of the General Plan Program 1.B identifies a park standard of 5 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents.¹

¹ City of Banning. 2006. City of Banning, General Plan Community Development Element, pages III-90 and III-96.



4.16.3 Existing Environmental Setting

4.16.3.1 Existing Development Site and Surrounding Land Uses

The approximately 533.8-acre Development Site is occupied by undeveloped grasslands, with three named, existing natural drainages (Pershing Creek, Smith Creek, and Highland Wash). No occupied structures are located on the Development Site. Surrounding land uses include residential subdivisions, public facilities, and open space. The Sun Lakes Country Club, comprising a large age-restricted residential community and private golf courses, is located along the west side of Highland Homes Road. The Rancho San Gorgonio (RSG) Specific Plan, an approved 831-acre master planned residential community, is located east of Sunset Avenue, south of the eastern extension of Sun Lakes Boulevard.

4.16.3.2 Existing Recreational Facilities Within the City

Developed public parks/recreation facilities in the City range in size from the approximately 0.33-acre Carpenter-Hamilton Park to the 20-acre Dysart Equestrian Park.² As shown in **Table 4.16.A: Parks and Recreational Facilities in the City of Banning**, the developed parkland acreage in the City of Banning totals 66.7 acres, including both active and passive recreational areas. These areas consist of sports fields, picnic and play areas, and other recreational structures and facilities. The City's Community Center/Municipal Pool occupies an additional 14.0 acres. The nearest parks to the Development Site are Dysart Park and Sylvan Park, located approximately 0.63 mile east and 0.51 mile north, respectively. The nearest private recreational facility is the Sun Lakes Community Association Golf Course adjacent to the western boundary of the Development Site.

The City classifies parks as community, neighborhood, or mini-facilities based on size. In addition, the City recognizes school parks and special use park lands. In 2009, Banning Unified School District (BUSD) and the City executed a joint use agreement allowing City residents to use school playfields during non-school hours.

4.16.3.3 Community Parks

Community parks provide active and passive recreation opportunities on a larger scale than neighborhood parks. The desirable size for community parks ranges from 20 to 50 acres, and they are designed to serve an area within a 3- to 5-mile radius. Dysart Park (20 acres), Lions Park (16.12 acres), Repplier Park Complex (13.6 acres), and Roosevelt Williams Park (5.5 acres) are the four major community parks located in the City.³ Community parks serve neighborhoods and offer recreational opportunities for large groups. These parks are generally over 10 acres in size and include a variety of facilities, including active recreational facilities such as athletic fields and group picnic areas. Although Roosevelt Williams Park is only 5.5 acres, it is considered a community park because it provides many community-related recreation opportunities including the Boys and Girls Club facility.

² Banning, City of. 2010. *City of Banning Parks and Recreation Master Plan*, <http://www.ci.banning.ca.us/ArchiveCenter/ViewFile/Item/1000> (accessed August 29, 2023).

³ Ibid.



Table 4.16.A: Parks and Recreational Facilities in the City of Banning

Recreational Facility	Location	Type	Size (acres)	Amenities
Carpenter-Hamilton Park (at City Hall)	San Gorgonio Avenue at Ramsey Street	Mini	0.33	Veterans memorial, benches, fountains
Dysart Equestrian Park	2107 West Victory Avenue	Community	20.00	Community garden, rodeo grandstand, vendor pads, equestrian arena and staging area, meeting rooms, restrooms, parking
Lions Park	Charles Street at Hargrave Street	Community	16.12	Three baseball diamonds, football field, softball field, concession building, playground/tot lot, picnic tables, restrooms, parking
Repplier Park Complex	201 West George Street	Community	13.60	Playhouse Bowl Amphitheatre, Banning Aquatics Center, two tennis courts, multipurpose field, softball field, skate park, playground/tot lot, picnic shelter/gazebo, picnic tables, gymnasium, two community buildings, barbecues, restroom, parking
Richard Sanchez Park	Mountain Avenue at Cypress Street	Neighborhood	3.32	Basketball court, playground/tot lot, picnic shelter/gazebo, picnic tables
Roosevelt Williams Park	Wilson Street at Blanchard Street	Community	5.50	Two basketball courts, multipurpose field, soccer field, community building, playground/tot lot, picnic shelter/gazebo, picnic tables, pedestrian walkway, restroom, parking
Sylvan Park	2801 West Nicolet Street	Neighborhood	7.80	Baseball field, two basketball courts, multipurpose field, softball field, volleyball court, playground/tot lot, picnic shelter/gazebo, picnic tables, barbecues, restroom, parking
Banning Community Center/Banning Municipal Swimming Pool	789 North San Gorgonio Avenue/ 749 North San Gorgonio Avenue	Community	14.0	Gym/community room, a basketball court, meeting rooms, and commercial-grade kitchen facilities. Programs and services include instructional classes, youth basketball, summer day camps, and after school programs. The Municipal Swimming Pool provides facilities for swimming classes and aquatic special events. It includes a 6-lane, 25-yard competition pool with dive tank.

Source: Banning, City of. 2010. City of Banning Parks and Recreation Master Plan, <http://www.ci.banning.ca.us/ArchiveCenter/ViewFile/Item/1000> (accessed August 2, 2021).

4.16.3.4 Neighborhood Parks

Neighborhood parks are generally located within residential areas and tend to be under 10 acres in size and include a combination of passive and active recreation elements that address daily recreation needs. Neighborhood parks are generally located within walking distance of residences. Park facilities are usually oriented toward the recreational needs of children, but may also include volleyball courts, half-size basketball courts, and picnic and play areas that serve all age groups. Restrooms or off-street parking are also usually available. Richard Sanchez Park is approximately 3 acres and provides a playground, picnic opportunities, pedestrian trail, and outdoor basketball for the residents in this area. Sylvan Park is almost 8 acres and provides a variety of recreation opportunities including a playground, picnicking, barbecues, ballfield, and outdoor basketball. Support facilities at Sylvan Park



include parking and a restroom. Open play areas are used for informal volleyball games and unstructured open play.

4.16.3.5 Mini-Parks

Mini-parks or pocket parks are 0.5 to 3 acres in size and are typically used for limited, isolated, or unique purposes. Carpenter-Hamilton Park is a 0.33-acre park located at the Banning City Hall. This is the only mini-park in the City. The park includes a veterans’ memorial, benches, and fountains.

4.16.3.6 Regional Parks

Although owned and maintained by the County of Riverside (County), Gilman Historic Ranch and Wagon Museum is located in Banning, and Bogart County Park is about 0.75 mile northwest of the City’s boundary.

- Gilman Historic Ranch and Wagon Museum, at 1901 West Wilson Street in Banning, is approximately 160 acres and includes a wagon museum, historic ranch house, and adobe. It offers interpretive programs for students and the general public, including California Gold Rush and Native Americans of the Pass programs.⁴
- Bogart County Park, at 9600 Cherry Avenue in the unincorporated community of Cherry Valley in Riverside County, includes picnic patios, playgrounds, a campground, an equestrian campground, and trails, and it spans more than 400 acres.⁵

4.16.3.7 Schools

As stated previously, in 2009, BUSD and the City executed a joint use agreement allowing City residents to use school playfields during non-school hours. **Table 4.16.B: Joint Use School Facilities** outlines the park and sports facilities available at the six BUSD campuses.

Table 4.16.B: Joint Use School Facilities

Schools	Amenities
Banning High School	2 indoor basketball courts, 8 outdoor basketball courts, 8 soccer fields, 1 gymnasium, 2 picnic shelters, 20 picnic tables
Central Elementary School	3 outdoor basketball courts, 2 playground/tot lots, 6 picnic tables
Coombs Middle School	3 baseball fields, 4 outdoor basketball courts, 1 football field, 2 volleyball courts, 35 picnic tables
Hemmerling Elementary School	2 softball fields, 1 soccer field, 2 playground/tot lots, 1 picnic shelter, 30 picnic tables
Hoffer Elementary School	1 baseball field, 2 outdoor basketball courts, 1 soccer field, 1 playground/tot lot, 1 picnic shelter, 25 picnic tables
Nicolet Middle School	1 baseball field, 1 indoor basketball court, 8 outdoor basketball courts, 1 concession building, 1 football field, 1 gymnasium, 2 softball fields, 2 soccer fields, 4 tennis courts, 10 picnic tables

Source: Banning, City of. 2010. City of Banning Parks and Recreation Master Plan, <http://www.ci.banning.ca.us/ArchiveCenter/ViewFile/Item/1000> (accessed August 29, 2023).

⁴ Riverside County Parks. 2021. Gilman Historic Ranch and Wagon Museum, <https://www.rivcoparks.org/gilman-ranch-wagon> (accessed August 29, 2023).

⁵ Beaumont Cherry Valley Recreation and Park District. 2021. Bogart Regional Park, <https://www.bcvparks.com/more-information> (accessed August 29, 2023).



4.16.3.8 Other Public Park and Recreation Areas

San Bernardino National Forest. The San Bernardino National Forest (SBNF) abuts the City's northern boundary. A separate section of the SBNF, encompassing the San Jacinto Mountains and most of the Santa Rosa Mountains, is about 3.5 miles southeast of the Development Site. The SBNF spans 679,000 acres and includes dozens of campgrounds, three ski resorts, and hundreds of miles of trails.

San Gorgonio Wilderness. The San Gorgonio Wilderness spans 148 square miles of the southeast San Bernardino Mountains and is partly in the SBNF and partly on land managed by the Bureau of Land Management.

Sand to Snow National Monument. President Obama designated the Sand to Snow National Monument on February 11, 2016. The national monument spans 154,000 acres stretching from the western boundary of Joshua Tree National Park on the east and encompassing the San Gorgonio Wilderness on the west.⁶ The monument includes two critical wildlife movement corridors and provides recreational opportunities, including hiking, horseback riding, backpacking, fishing, and bird watching. At higher elevations, recreational activities include snowshoeing, cross country skiing, and hiking along a portion of the Pacific Crest Trail. The southwest boundary of the monument is about 3 miles north of the Development Site.

4.16.3.9 Private Recreation Facilities

Sun Lakes Country Club and Serrano del Vista are two private, gated communities that serve the 55 and older population in Banning. Amenities include golf courses, tennis courts, pools and spas, billiards, fitness rooms, and hobby/recreation clubs.

There are also several public golf courses in the area, including Morongo Golf Club at Tukwet Canyon and Oak Valley Golf Club in nearby Beaumont.⁷

Additionally, many of the residential developments and commercial/industrial open space facilities within the City feature recreational amenities, including clubhouses, pools, tennis courts, walking paths, and other related recreational facilities. Although they are not included in the City's parkland inventory, these facilities complement public recreational amenities.

4.16.4 Regulatory Setting

4.16.4.1 Federal Regulations

There are no federal regulations regarding parks and recreation applicable to the Development Site.

4.16.4.2 State Regulations

There are no State regulations regarding parks and recreation applicable to the Development Site.

⁶ White House Office of the Press Secretary. 2016. FACT SHEET: President Obama to Designate New National Monuments in the California Desert. February 12. Website: <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2016/02/12/fact-sheet-president-obama-designate-new-national-monuments-california> (accessed August 29, 2023).

⁷ Banning, City of. 2010. *City of Banning Parks and Recreation Master Plan*. Website: <http://www.ci.banning.ca.us/ArchiveCenter/ViewFile/Item/1000> (accessed August 29, 2023).



4.16.4.3 Regional Regulations

There are no regional regulations regarding parks and recreation applicable to the Development Site.

4.16.4.4 Local Regulations

City of Banning Development Impact Fee. The City of Banning currently charges impact fees to fund the expansion of fire, police, traffic control, parkland and parks, general city, water, and wastewater facilities to serve new development. The parkland and parks impact fee funds parkland and parks facilities needed to serve new development.

City of Banning Municipal Code. The City of Banning Municipal Code identifies land use categories, development standards, and other general provisions that ensure consistency between the City's General Plan and proposed development projects. The following provision addresses recreation:

- **Chapter 15.68 (Open Space and Parks Fees):** Imposes fees on new residential, commercial, and industrial development to pay for the costs incurred by the City in acquiring, improving, and expanding open space areas, scenic drives, parks, playgrounds, and recreational facilities to meet the increased needs for those facilities resulting from the effects of new development.⁸

Banning Parks and Recreation Master Plan 2010. The *City of Banning Parks and Recreation Master Plan* provides a guide for orderly development and management of parks and recreational facilities in Banning. The plan details existing recreation facilities and programs and includes a needs assessment for recreation facilities as well as recommendations. Opportunity sites for future recreation facilities and parks are also mapped. This plan restates the City's General Plan policy of providing 5 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents.

Open Space and Conservation Element and Recreation Element. The Open Space and Conservation Element and Recreation Element of the City's General Plan describe existing park and recreational facilities within the City. The Parks and Recreation Element identifies the following programs related to the provision of park facilities:

Program 1.B The Parks Master Plan shall maintain a standard of 5 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents.

Program 5.B Develop a program by which the City can accept parkland gifts and dedications that would be beneficial to the community demands.

4.16.5 Thresholds of Significance

The City has not established local CEQA significance thresholds as described in Section 15064.7 of the *CEQA Guidelines*. The thresholds for recreation impacts used in this analysis are from Appendix G of the *CEQA Guidelines*. The Development Project may be deemed to have a significant impact with respect to recreation if it would:

⁸ Banning, City of. 2010. Municipal Code Section 15.68.050 - Parkland and Park Facilities Development Impact Fee. Website: https://library.municode.com/ca/banning/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=TIT15BUCO_CH15.68DEIMFE_15.68.050PAPAFADDEIMFE (accessed August 29, 2023).



Threshold 4.16.1: 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.

Threshold 4.16.2: Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment.

4.16.6 Impact Analysis

4.16.6.1 Increase the Use of Existing Neighborhood and Regional Parks

Threshold 4.16.1: Would the Development 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?

As previously detailed in **Table 4.16.A**, the City of Banning maintains seven parks and a Community Center/Municipal Pool complex, totaling 80.7 acres of developed park and recreational land. The park facilities include one mini-park, four neighborhood parks, one community park, one regional park, and one private park. Public facilities include three picnic shelter areas; three parks with ball and soccer fields; tennis courts; basketball courts; a new skateboard park; a senior center; and a community center with gymnasium, kitchen area, and meeting rooms.⁹ The City's General Plan establishes a parkland acreage need of 5 acres per 1,000 residents. Population estimates (July 2022) state the City has a population of 30,683 residents;¹⁰ therefore, the City requires 153.42 acres of parkland to meet its current standard. Currently, the City does not meet its established park standard. Based on its July 2022 population and the current inventory of park and recreation land, the City currently maintains only 2.63 acres per 1,000 residents. The City owns land identified as Smith Creek Park, which is under reconsideration for development as a park. Smith Creek Park is approximately 214.57 acres. Including the future development of Smith Creek Park, the current population to parkland ratio would be 6.6 acres per 1,000 residents. With the development of Smith Creek Park, the City would achieve its target of 5.0 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents. However, as the City has not identified funding to develop this park, it is concluded that the City does not currently meet its standard for parkland acreage.

As indicated above, the City determines park demand on a per resident basis. Industrial and commercial uses are not considered by the City to generate park and recreation demand. As described in **Section 4.14** of this EIR, the Development Project would not include the development of residential units and as a result buildout of the Development Project would not directly add to the existing population of the City and would not generate new residential park demand. Buildout of the Development Project is anticipated to increase employment in the City by approximately 5,993 jobs, the majority of which are anticipated to be filled by existing City residents or existing County residents as discussed in **Section 4.14** of this EIR. It can therefore be assumed that these existing City and County residents already use park and recreation facilities within the City and County. Some employees could relocate into the City or nearby unincorporated County land; however, the existing and planned

⁹ Banning, City of. 2023. City of Banning Parks and Recreation. Website: <http://banning.ca.us/97/Parks-Recreation> (accessed August 29, 2023).

¹⁰ United States Census Bureau. 2022. QuickFacts, Banning, California, July 1, 2022 (V2022). Website: <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/banningcitycalifornia#> (accessed November 27, 2023).



housing stock in the City is more than sufficient to accommodate the small number of employees who may relocate, and therefore buildout of the Development Project would not indirectly result in a population increase in the City that has not been accounted for. Therefore, the Development Project would not result in existing park and recreational facilities in the City being used by more residents. Nevertheless, and to offset the potential indirect increase in park and recreational usage by on-site employees, the Development Project would include approximately 12.6 acres of Open Space – Parks (comprising a 5.0-acre passive park and 7.6 acres of passive open space). **Figure 4.16-1: Development Site Passive Park** shows a conceptual site plan of the passive park that would be developed as part of the Development Project and conveyed to the City. The passive park may provide recreational amenities such as, but not limited to, a tot lot playground, picnic tables, walking paths, trails, and restrooms. Open field areas would be provided next to the tot lot and picnic tables, along with a looped walking path that would wind through the recreational area surrounded by trees and landscaping. As discussed in **Section 3.5.3.1** of this EIR, the public park would include security lighting to illuminate restrooms, the surface parking lot, the tot lot, and walkways. No lighted fields (i.e., lighted soccer fields or baseball/softball diamonds) would be provided in the public passive park.

The passive park on the Development Site would be open to the public and would be accessible to City residents and employees (including Development Site employees). The 5.0-acre passive park that would be developed as part of the Development Project would add to the existing park/recreation inventory of the City.

With the development of the 5.0-acre passive park, the Development Project would contribute to park and recreation facilities in the City. Although the City currently does not meet its per resident park requirements, because the Development Project is not expected to result in an unplanned increase in the number of residents in the City and the City does not consider industrial or commercial uses as generating park and recreation demand, the Development Project is not anticipated to generate an increased need for use of existing neighborhood or regional parks and other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of facilities would occur or be accelerated.

Level of Significance Prior to Mitigation: Less Than Significant Impact.

Regulatory Compliance Measures and Mitigation Measures: No Regulatory Compliance or Mitigation Measures are required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Less Than Significant Impact.

4.16.6.2 Include Recreational Facilities Physical Effects on the Environment

Threshold 4.16.2: Does the Development Project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?

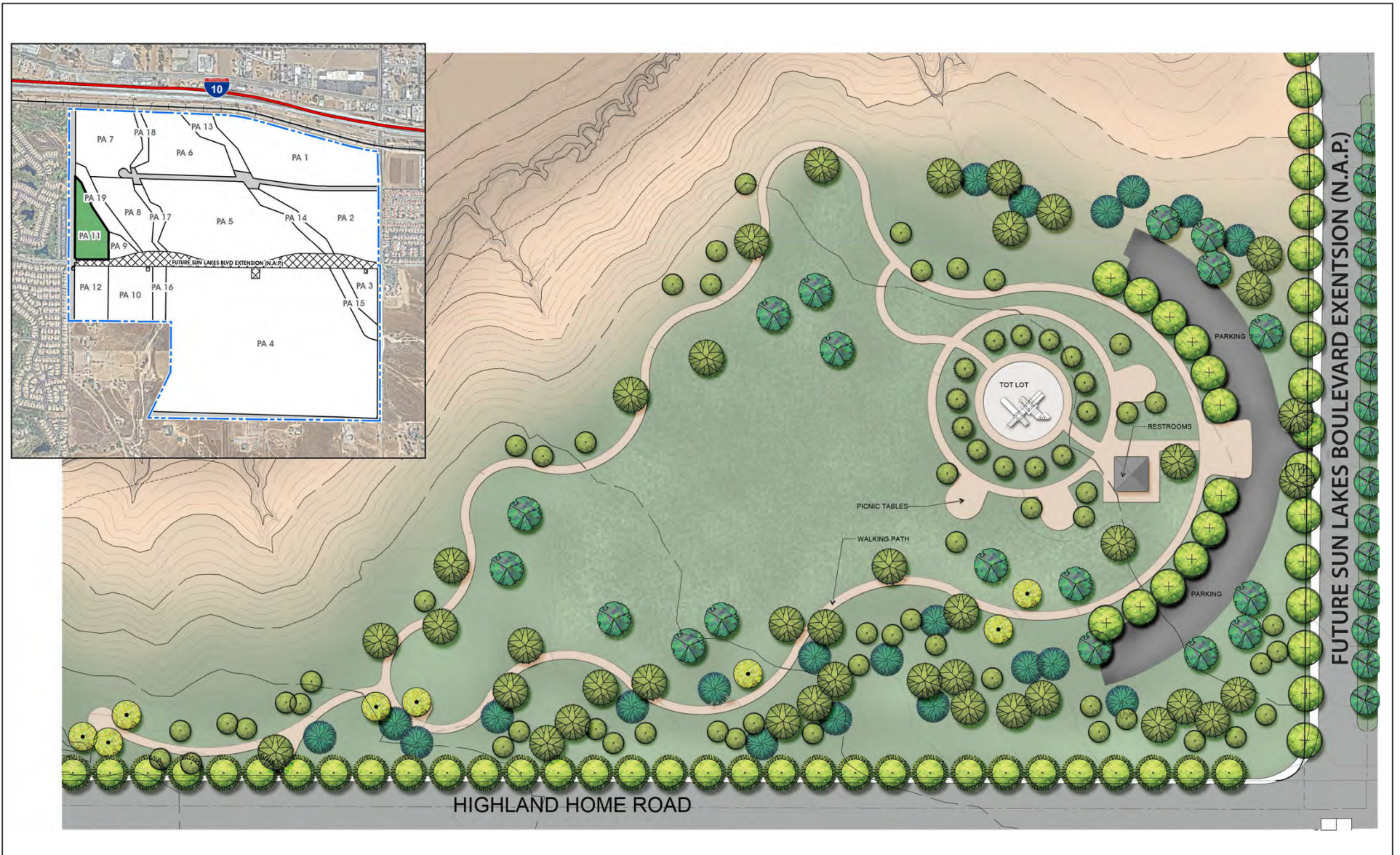


FIGURE 4.16-1

LSA



NOT TO SCALE

SOURCE: Hunter Landscape (05-25-2021)

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Sunset Crossroads
Development Site Passive Park



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The Specific Plan would guide commercial, industrial, open space, and open space park development within the Development Site. Planning Areas 11 through 19 of the Specific Plan would be retained as Open Space – Resources (53.0 acres) and Open Space – Parks (12.6 acres). Within the 12.6-acre Planning Area 11, Open Space – Park uses include 5.0 acres to be utilized as a passive park, with the remaining 7.6 acres utilized as passive open space. The 5.0-acre passive park would provide recreational amenities including a tot lot playground, picnic tables, trails, walking paths, surface parking lot, and restrooms. The 7.6-acre passive open space area would include a trail system. The 12.6-acre Open Space – Parks use would be publicly accessible and would more than likely be used by employees on the Development Site and existing off-site residents in the City and adjacent unincorporated County areas.

Development and operation of the proposed 5.0-acre passive park and 7.6-acre passive open space may have an adverse physical effect on the environment as ancillary incremental portions related to other uses within the Development Site. Construction and operation of the proposed passive park on the Development Site has been evaluated throughout this EIR under the appropriate resource sections (air quality, biological resources, etc.) and is included in the analysis of environmental impacts of the Development Project in this EIR. Potentially adverse impacts to the environment that may result from the creation of parkland pursuant to buildout of the Development Project would be less than significant upon the implementation of the Specific Plan’s goals, policies, and actions and existing federal, State, and local regulations. Future park developments within the Development Site would also be required to adhere to the development standards and design guidelines of the Specific Plan. Furthermore, subsequent City review would be required for approval and development of future park sites on the Development Site. Therefore, a ***less than significant*** impact relating to new or expanded park and recreational facilities would occur and no mitigation is warranted.

Level of Significance Prior to Mitigation: Less Than Significant Impact.

Regulatory Compliance Measures and Mitigation Measures: No Regulatory Compliance or Mitigation Measures are required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Less Than Significant Impact.



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