

City of Huntington Park

Action Plan

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

Action Plan

1. Parks & Recreation Staff continue to strengthen relationships with other City Departments within the City; particularly with the Field Services Department, the City Engineer's office and other staff involved in the prioritization, budgeting, and management of CIP projects within the parks system, and the Police Department. With the significant challenge of developing joint-use opportunities within the gigantic LAUSD organization, Parks & Recreation Staff must develop personal rapport with local School Faculty & Staff. Winning over the local-site Principal to expanded recreational programs being allowed within this Principal's facility is likely the critical pathway to greater success.
2. Significantly increase the priority of upgraded Parks and Facilities Maintenance; both in-doors and out-doors. This should include a professional evaluation of the Maintenance Contract, and increased action in the enforcement of all Contract Services.
3. Find other venues for Carnival and Circus events in the City outside of the public park facilities. Any temporary increase in recreational opportunities, offered by these activities, is far outweighed by year-round negative impacts to the quality of the Park Facilities, caused by these Carnivals and Circus events.
4. Multi-divisional City Staff draft a policy statement on the acquisition of additional property for the expansion of City-owned park property. This effort should also address an accelerated, refined program for securing funding through all levels of government grant programs.
5. Improvements to the Parks Facilities needs to include the following:
 - a. Salt Lake Park:
 - i. Expansion of Salt Lake Park through the acquisition of the 3-acres of residential properties at the southwest corner of the park. An alternative increase of recreational space would be to re-locate the Public Works and the Parks Department Yards from Bissell Street to an undetermined alternative site outside of Salt Lake Park. Either of the above options will facilitate the development of (2) synthetic turf soccer fields. (Please see two Conceptual Plans at the conclusion of this Section).
 - ii. The renovation of the "soccer circle" multi-purpose field to support healthy turf.
 - iii. The addition of an outdoor amphitheatre and group picnic area.
 - iv. The renovation of the wading pool area into an interactive water play area.
 - v. In-lieu of construction of a swimming pool, expand the Recreation Programs to include frequent excursions to other water venues in the region.
 - vi. Until a final determination is reached on the acquisition of the 3-acre properties, discussed in "i", above, the Consultant does not recommend any facilities development in the area south of the fenced soccer field. Staff's discussions of developing a "camp muni facility"

received no support through the Public Survey and Public Input Meeting process.

- b. Westside Park:
 - i. Renovation of the Multi-purpose field to provide a healthy turf sports field.
- 6. Strengthen relationships with neighboring communities' Parks & Recreation Staffs. Explore opportunities for the following:
 - a. Shared staff training
 - b. Shared "high participation" Recreational Program ideas
 - c. Shared use of Park Facilities

Assessment of local Non-City Parks and Facilities

- 1. Based on our assessment of the other limited facilities available to residents, an important action that needs to be undertaken is to continue to work on building personal relationships between local School District staff and City staff. With the school district being one of the major players in controlling what other field space and meeting room space is available, and with the LAUSD being so large, the only apparent way to access use of those facilities is through one-on-one relationships with local school site personnel.

Assessment & Analysis of Art-in Public Places Program

- 1. While there are no completed Art-in-Public Places projects to date, the City is working on some entry monuments that will be completed this year. The program supports the strong Community interest in Cultural Arts.
- 2. The City should continue to look for ways to introduce Public Art in their new developments, both public and private, along with continuing to develop programs like their "Art in the Alley Program".
- 3. In renovating existing facilities, areas for concerts and outdoor performances should be considered. As previously stated in the Master Plan, any increases in activities that will impact the surrounding neighborhoods should include neighborhood meetings and a site-specific Master Plan or Concept Plan that thoroughly address all impacts and specifically sites proposed improvements.
- 4. The City should continue to develop recreation programs that reflect all the different segments of the Cultural Heritage found in the Community by looking at the early founders of the Community and blending the new majority of residents who are first or second generation Hispanics into a Community that celebrates all of the diversity that Huntington Park is built upon.

Recreation Program Assessment & Analysis

- 1. In surveying the surrounding communities, Huntington Park had more recreation class offerings than any of the other communities.
- 2. The class fee schedule was also pretty consistent with surrounding cities.

3. The City of Bell, which is next door to Huntington Park, does have some non-resident program fees that are quite high. Apparently they do this to discourage non-residents from participating so that they can minimize wear and tear on their fields and facilities.
4. The City of Huntington Park may want to explore resident / non-resident fees for programs like soccer, football, and baseball since these programs have a negative impact on an already overloaded playing field infrastructure. (Please see discussions on dedicated Renovation Periods in the Park Facilities Maintenance Section of this Master Plan).
5. In reviewing Huntington Park Resident Program Surveys, Community input, and looking at current recreation trends on a local, state and national level, these are some programs that the Parks and Recreation Department may want to consider offering:
 - a. Programs that build Self Esteem in youth and young adults. These could be mentoring programs that assist individuals get into college, or help them with employment opportunities.
 - b. Programs that encourage family interaction, like concerts in the park, family excursions to local museums, beaches, or aquatic facilities.
 - c. Tutoring programs that assist with homework, or English-as-a-Second-Language.

In looking at an overall review of Recreation Programs, it is important to continue to develop programs that support the strong Community Characteristics that we found in Huntington Park: Families, Culture, and Education.

Another step that could be done in recreation programming is to begin to collect data that shows the impact programs are making on the Community. For example, if you offer an after-school program that assists young students with homework, data should be taken from the local school, in which most of the young students are attending, to see what their current test scores and attendance rates are at the start of the homework program, and then checked a year later to see if the students test scores or attendance has improved. This data can provide powerful impacts on the annual competitive budget process.

Fiscal Analysis & Recommendations

1. Fees charged for programs and classes in 8 classes or programs, was slightly higher than the other 11 communities surveyed. The other 35 classes were lower than the 11 surrounding communities. While an increase in fees would generate a little additional revenue, the loss of revenue from residents who could not participate would probably offset any financial gain. In order to have some meaningful benefit for residents, the only change in fees might be a resident / non-resident rate for sports. That is because sports have such a high maintenance cost associated with them.
2. Sponsorships for programs would be another way to generate funds. Several surrounding Communities have their Summer Concert series sponsored by a local business or group of businesses.

3. Most of the grants that Huntington Park currently have are for “brick-and-mortar” projects. While the demographics of the Community would make it very competitive for program grants as well as brick-and-mortar grants. The neighboring City of Bell has been very successful in utilizing a Grants Consultant who has helped them not only secure grants, but also does all of the paper work associated with them. This person would most likely pay for themselves if they were able to help the City acquire two or three grants to provide additional programs.

General Issues that pertain to the Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Carnivals and Circuses

1. Carnival and Circuses have a very negative impact on an already heavily used park system. While there are some positive things that can come from the events, like family entertainment, the cost to the Community in loss of park use by park participants, and maintenance cost to try and repair the area where the Carnival or Circus is held, does not seem to make the event worthwhile.
2. Encouraging the local churches to host these events, once or twice a year, would be much better for the community. The residents would still have a low cost entertainment venue, and the parks would not be damaged from the heavy equipment, or crowds.

Facilities that are needed

1. One of the facilities that came up during the development of this Master Plan was a swimming pool, or aquatic playground. The cost to build and operate a swimming pool is very expensive. The other issue is finding a place to locate the facility. So while an aquatic playground with some aquatic pieces of equipment like water canons, or spray boats might go nicely within the parks system, a new swimming pool at this time is not an idea that can be supported.
2. Another way to begin to meet the Community demand for swimming is to combine family excursions, or youth excursions, with swimming and take some field trips to neighboring communities to use either their swimming pools or their beaches. This is great low-cost way to begin to meet the aquatic needs of the Community.

Improvements Identified in the Projected Cost Estimates Section

1. A detailed list of upgrades and added amenities is listed park-by-park. The City will need to prioritize the accomplishment of park facility improvements, as the collective costs are very significant. It is critical that infrastructure improvements generally be installed prior to spending budgeted monies on surface amenities that become installed above underground infrastructure.
2. Project-specific Improvement Plans & Specifications will be required for most recommended Improvements to assure that the City receives both quality materials and workmanship. These consultant costs have not been included in the Projected Cost Estimates Section.

Volunteers an un-tapped Resource

1. Several times in the Community Meetings and in the Surveys, people were expressing a desire to volunteer, to make the Community a better place in which to live.
2. There is a large population of stay-home Moms in Huntington Park that might be a good resource for volunteers. Volunteers can be used through-out the Parks & Recreation Department activities and facilities. They can be used to help with maintaining facilities such as ball fields and soccer fields, and assisting with many different types of recreation programs, such as mentoring and interactive programs and the arts.
3. Volunteers need well developed job descriptions, that are in writing and given to them to keep, so they can refer back to expected duties from time to time.
4. Volunteers need to be trained and supervised.
5. Volunteers need to be recognized and thanked.

But with all that said, volunteers are a Community's Greatest Resource!



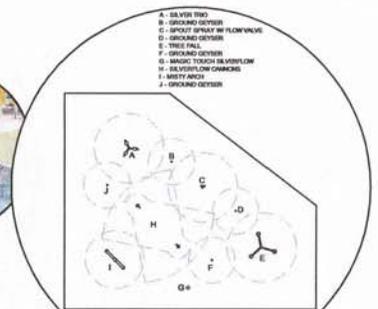
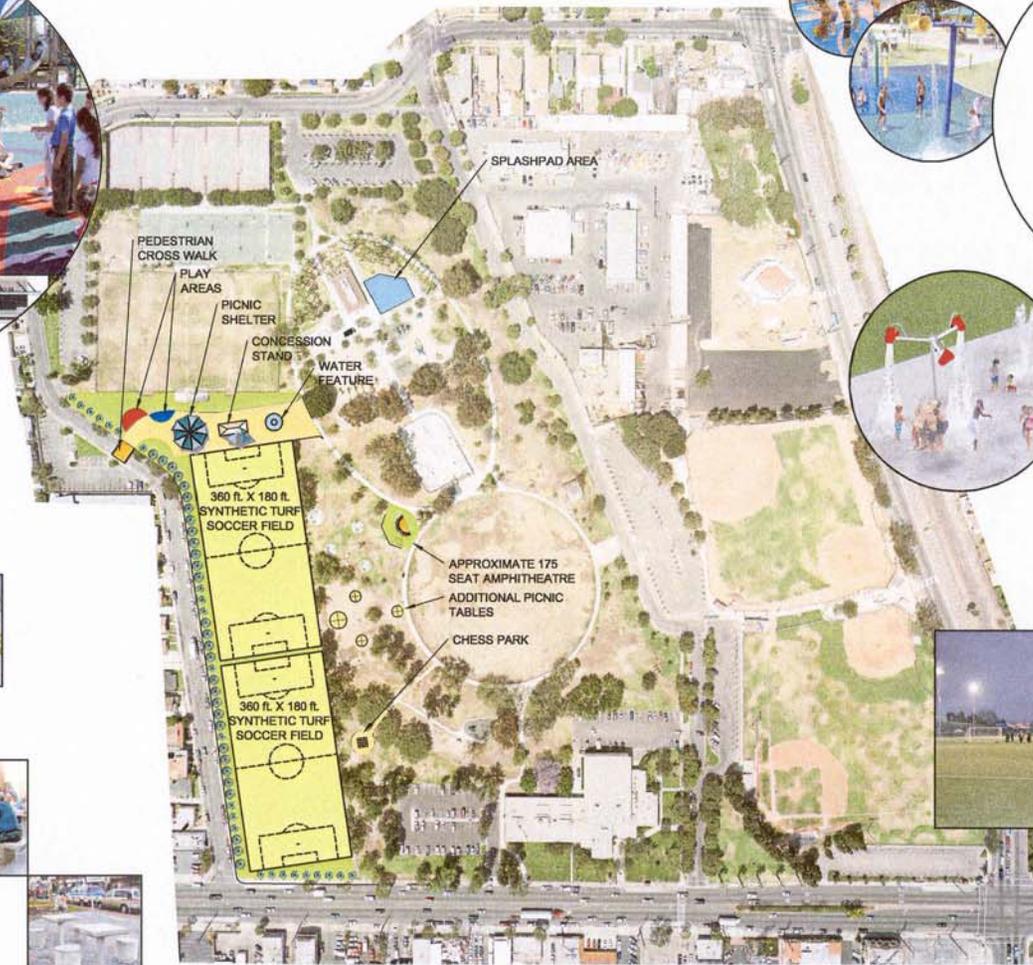
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CHESS PARK



SPLASHPAD AREA



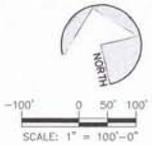
SOCCER FIELDS

SALT LAKE PARK

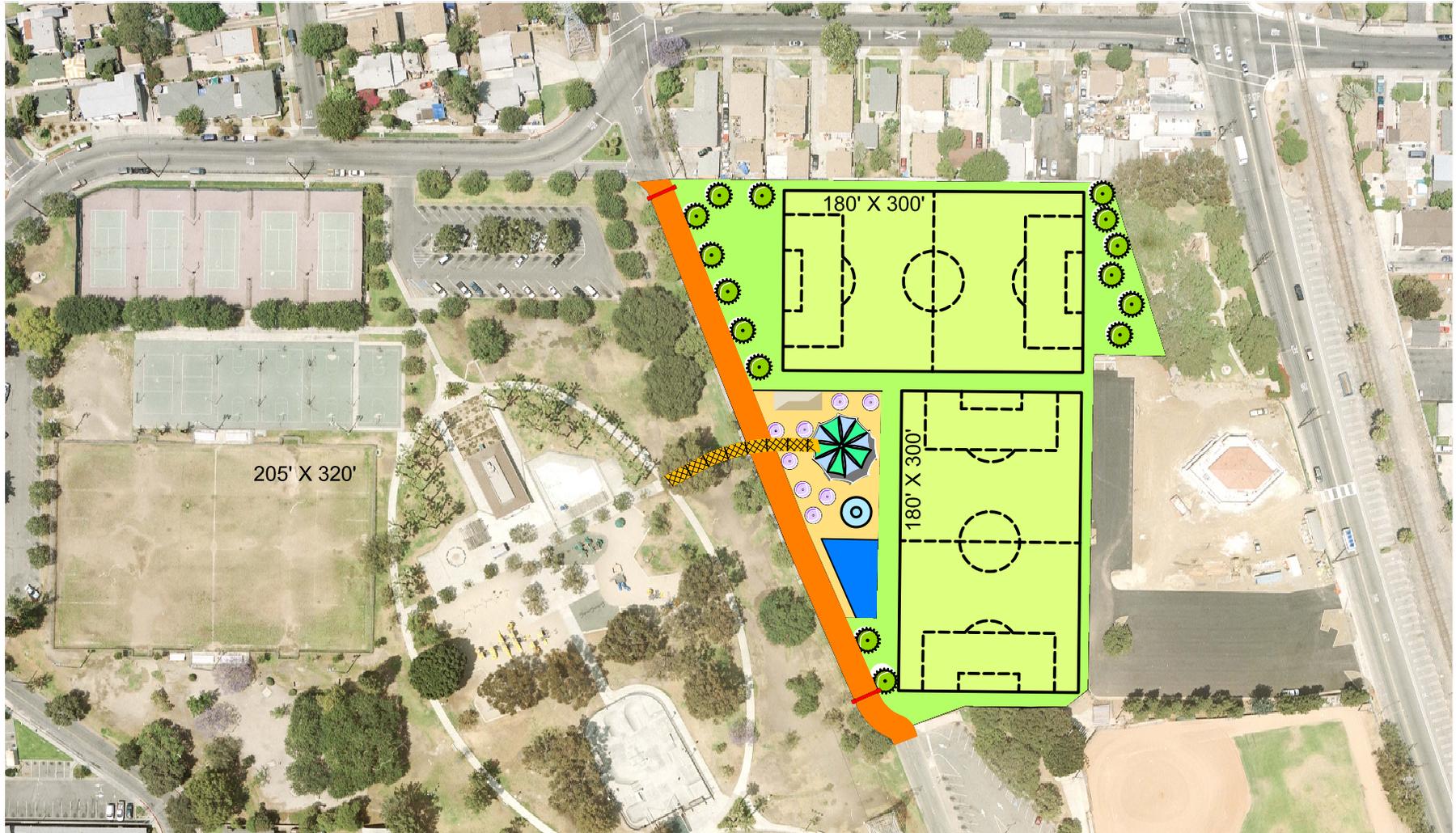
CITY OF HUNTINGTON PARK

OCTOBER 2007

CONCEPTUAL PLAN

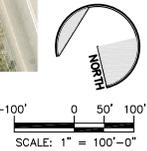


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SALT LAKE PARK
CITY OF HUNTINGTON PARK APRIL 2008

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