



CITY OF GARDENA PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN

2024



City of Gardena

Parks and Recreation Master Plan

May 2024

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Gardena Parks and Recreation Master Plan will serve as a guide and implementation tool for the management and development of parks and recreation facilities throughout the city. This document represents a summary of the community outreach, research, and professional analysis conducted. The culminating result is a community inspired plan for the future of parks and recreation in the City of Gardena.

The process began with a review of pertinent planning documents, existing park resources, and recreation opportunities. Following the initial inventory, a community outreach campaign was developed. In-person workshops, online video presentations, one-on-one stakeholder interviews, a statistically-valid multimodal survey, public online surveys, and direct website feedback were conducted to analyze the community recreation demand in the city. Throughout the process, project updates and summary results were posted to the project website. This website enabled community members to review updates and provide immediate feedback at any point during the project. This resource allowed anyone in the community to have a voice in the process regardless of when and where meetings were held.

The Master Plan includes capital improvements of \$39,759,250 (\$30,299,250 in planned projects and \$9,460,000 in unplanned projects). Based on the findings, this Master Plan outlines key park and facility improvements as well as maintenance recommendations identified in Section Four, detailed reports of these analysis are available in the appendix. The following are key strategies developed to balance the available inventory with the community's recreational desires.

Each of the following recommended key strategies are designed to balance the equation of where existing recreation resources exist and how they relate to the needs of the community. Through this analysis recreation development can flourish and continue to support a thriving outdoor community.

Key Strategy #1: Preserve the city's most cherished resources through enhanced maintenance support and park improvements.

Goal 1.1: Increase funding and staffing for park and facility maintenance to address aging infrastructure and upkeep challenges.

Goal 1.2: Develop a lifecycle replacement schedule for playgrounds, focusing on redesigning older playgrounds and incorporating universal design standards.

Goal 1.3: Implement renovations suggested in the CASp Study report, including upgrades to older community buildings to maintain current codes and standards.

Key Strategy #2: Strengthen the bond between community and the natural environment.

Goal 2.1: Develop strategic park facilities and green spaces to align with community desires and improve overall parkland quality.

Goal 2.2: Enhance neighborhood park trail loops and promote local nature preserves to meet community needs for walking and hiking paths.

Key Strategy #3: Develop new park facilities to support growing demands.

Goal 3.1: Add three new pickleball courts to meet the growing local and visiting player demand.

Goal 3.2: Develop a new dog park within the city and amend municipal codes to allow leashed dogs in some parks.

Key Strategy #4: Enhancing community togetherness and small town feel through events.

Goal 4.1: Expand staffing and collaboration for community events to enhance economic benefits and cultural offerings.

Goal 4.2: Incorporate Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) features in park improvement projects and consider testing a park ranger program.

Key Strategy #5: Refine program development to meeting the needs of the community.

Goal 5.1: Expand after-school offerings through partnerships and ensure adequate resources and facilities are available.

Goal 5.2: Partner with local facilities to meet aquatic needs during the construction of a new pool and consider developing specific aquatic programming.

Goal 5.3: Develop and market diverse fitness and lifelong learning programs targeted at older adults.

Goal 5.4: Enhance the marketing of dance programs and expand facilities as needed to support the programs.

Goal 5.5: Increase awareness and participation in martial arts programs through targeted marketing and community partnerships.

Photo by the City of Gardena



Photo by the City of Gardena Facebook

SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION



1.1 Purpose of a Master Plan

The City of Gardena has numerous parks and recreation opportunities available for its community members. Through these parks and recreation facilities, people can exercise, socialize, and connect with nature. In accordance with the City of Gardena's mission to ensure the highest quality of life for residents, this Master Plan has been developed for the sound management and governance of city's parks and recreation resources.

Mission Statement

To provide leadership and resources that ensure the highest quality of life possible for residents, support business development, welcome visitors, and establish a positive work environment for city employees.

- City of Gardena Website

The community outreach process provides a clear understanding of the community's desires and needs for parks and recreation. Having this understanding enables strategic expenditures and improvements within the recreation system, while maximizing the community impact. In pursuit of these guiding principles and in concert with the city's vision for recreation in Gardena, this report was developed to ensure the resources dedicated to sustaining recreation in Gardena is continuously in line with the community expectations and desires.

The Master Plan presented here is intended to be flexible and should be evaluated and/or modified every five (5) years as the city responds to unforeseen opportunities and constraints, as well as changes in residents' needs and demands in the context of other city priorities.



Photo by the City of Gardena

Benefits of Parks and Recreation

1.2 Benefits of Parks and Recreation

The California Park and Recreation Society (CPRS) Vision Insight and Planning Project - Creating Community in the 21st Century identifies the mission of California's park and recreation agencies:

“To create community through people, parks and programs.”

The CPRS VISION also identifies benefits of park and recreation services including:

- [Foster Human Development.](#) Parks and recreation services foster social, intellectual, physical, and emotional development.
- [Promote Health and Wellness.](#) Participation in recreation improves physical and emotional health.
- [Increase Cultural Unity.](#) Parks and recreation increase cultural unity through experiences that promote cultural understanding and celebrate diversity.
- [Facilitate Community Problem-Solving.](#) Park and recreation professionals have skills in facilitation and leadership that can be applied to resolve community problems and issues.
- [Protect Natural Resources.](#) By acquiring and protecting valuable resources as open space, such as rivers, streams, greenways, viewsheds, forests, and other habitat areas, natural resources are protected and habitat required for the survival of diverse species is preserved.
- [Strengthen Safety and Security.](#) Park and recreation professionals provide safe environments for recreation and design programs and services specifically to reduce criminal activity.
- [Strengthen Community Image and Sense of Place.](#) Parks, recreation facilities, programs, and community events are key factors in strengthening community image and creating a sense of place.
- [Support Economic Development.](#) Recreation programs and facilities attract and retain businesses and residents, as well as attract tourists. Parks and recreation provide jobs and generate income for the community and for local businesses.



Thornburg Park

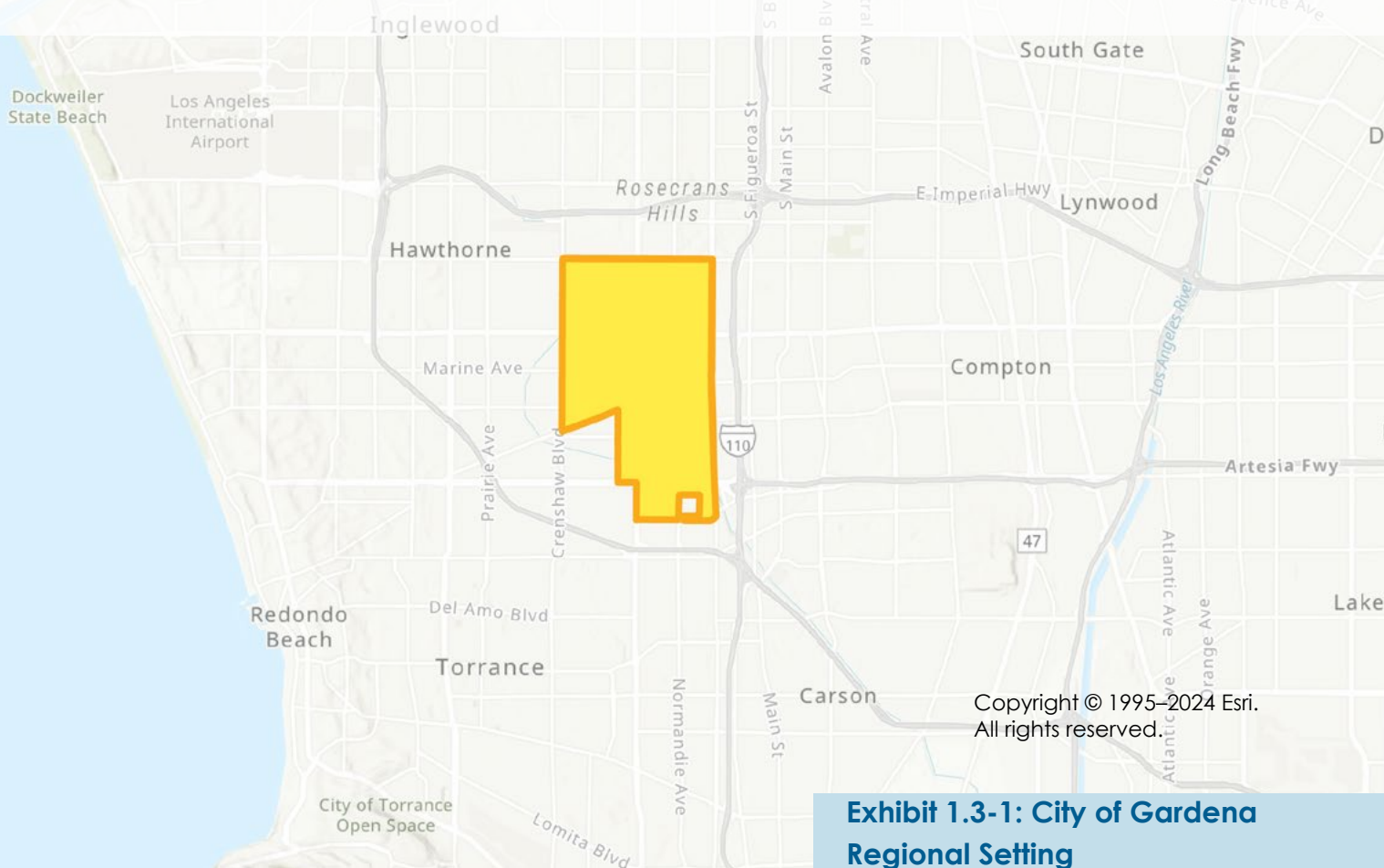


1.3 Regional Setting

Gardena is a city in Los Angeles County in California's Southern Region. The city is approximately 6 square miles.

Gardena is located north of the San Diego (405) Freeway, south of the Century (105) Freeway, west of the Harbor (110) Freeway, and east of the 91 Freeway.

Gardena is bounded by the unincorporated areas of West Athens to the North, and West Rancho Dominguez to the East, and the cities of Carson to the Southeast, Torrance to the Southwest, and Lawndale and Hawthorne to the West.



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Exhibit 1.3-1: City of Gardena Regional Setting

Local Setting

1.4 Local Setting

In September of 1930, the City of Gardena was officially incorporated. Gardena is situated in the Los Angeles metropolitan area and has a unique local setting and character. Gardena features a mix of residential neighborhoods, commercial districts, and industrial areas. The city has a diverse population and a range of housing options, from single-family homes to apartments and condominiums. Additionally, the city's proximity to major transportation routes and the Port of Los Angeles contributes to its economic vitality.

Within the Gardena city boundaries, several significant man-made features help shape neighborhoods and provide both opportunities and constraints with respect to parks, recreation, transportation, and community life. These include:

- 1 – South Western Avenue Major Arterial
- 2 – Dominguez Channel



Photo by Google Maps

South Western Avenue Major Arterial

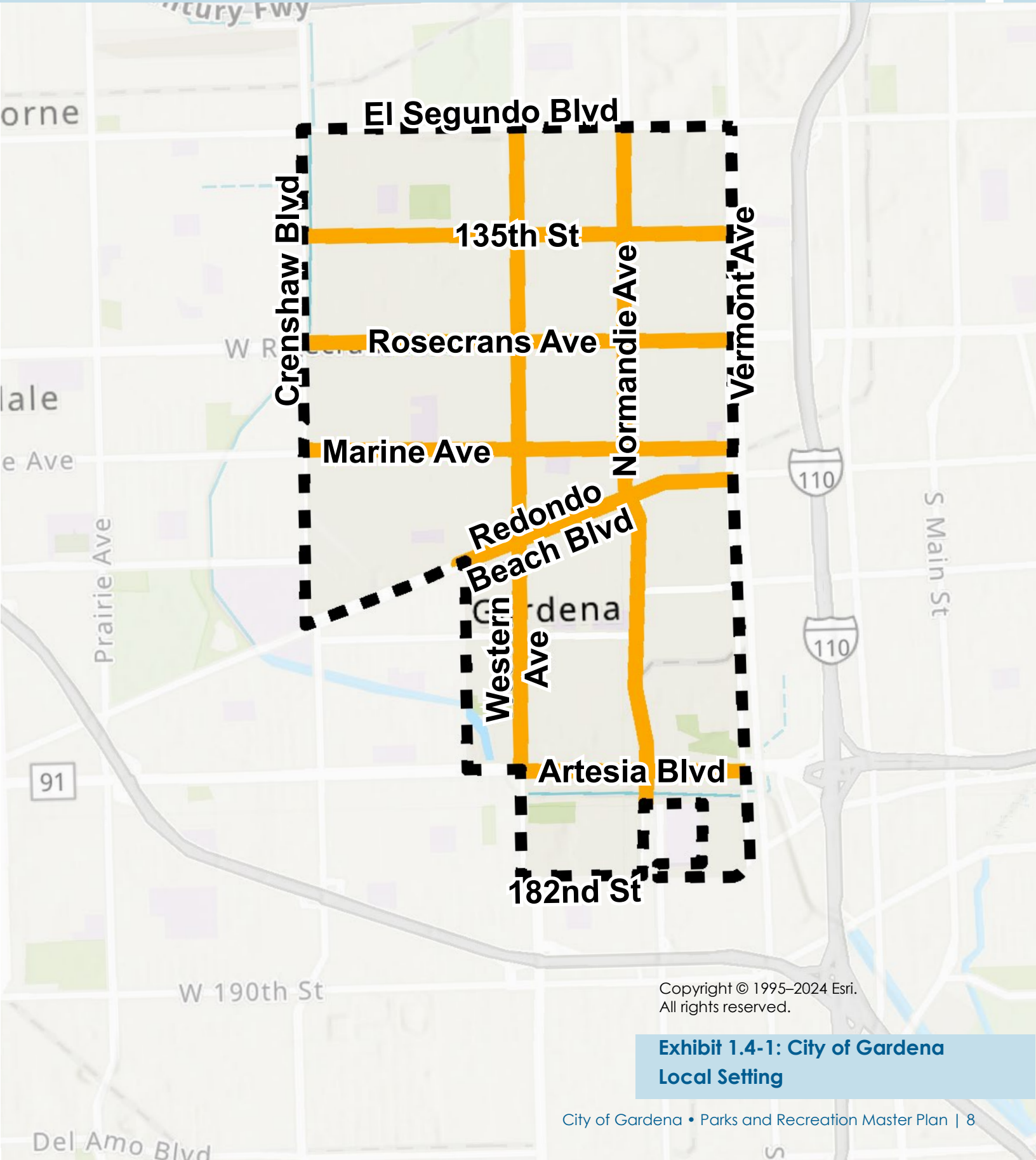
South Western Avenue runs in a North-South direction through Gardena, beginning in the south around the vicinity of Artesia Boulevard and extending northward to intersect with El Segundo Boulevard and eventually into the City of Los Angeles.



Photo by Google Maps

Dominguez Channel

The Dominguez Channel is a significant flood control channel located in Gardena, California, in Los Angeles County. It is part of the larger Los Angeles County Flood Control District's system of channels and stormwater management infrastructure. The primary purpose of the Dominguez Channel is to manage stormwater runoff during heavy rain events.



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**Exhibit 1.4-1: City of Gardena
Local Setting**

Master Plan Process

1.5 Master Plan Process

As illustrated in Exhibit 1.5-1, Project Timeline, the Parks and Recreation Master Plan process began in April of 2023 and included a year of research, community outreach, and reporting. Critical to the process was the development of the Community Voice. Through the lens of the community, program and facility priorities are set, leading to the recommendations that will assist in the future development of parks and recreation in Gardena.

Over a five-month period (June-October) focused community outreach methods were used to collect data from various segments of the community. Stakeholder interviews, community workshops, online surveys, direct feedback surveys, and a statistically valid, multimodal community survey were each conducted to gather insight into the community's views and desires for recreation programs, services, and facilities.

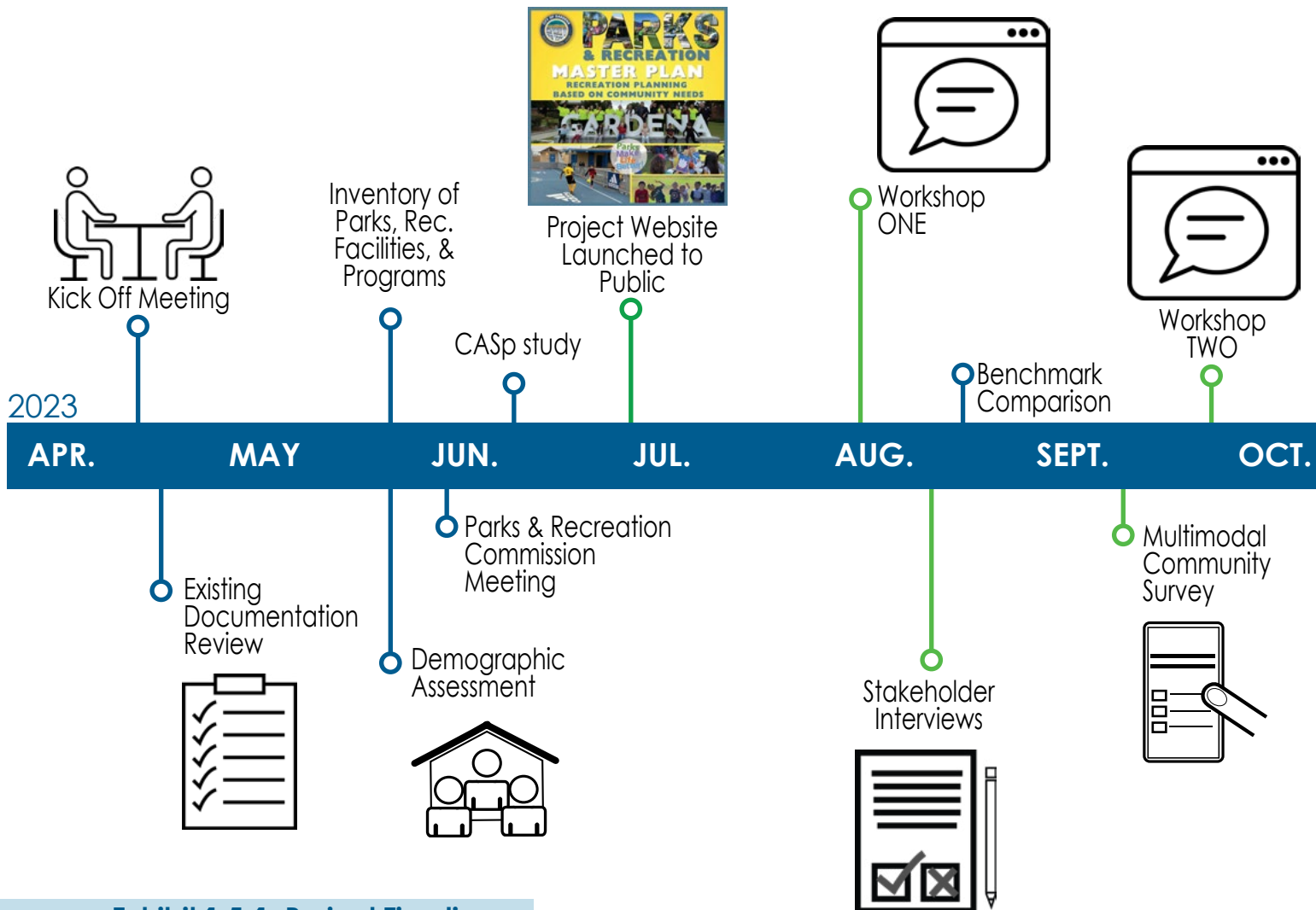
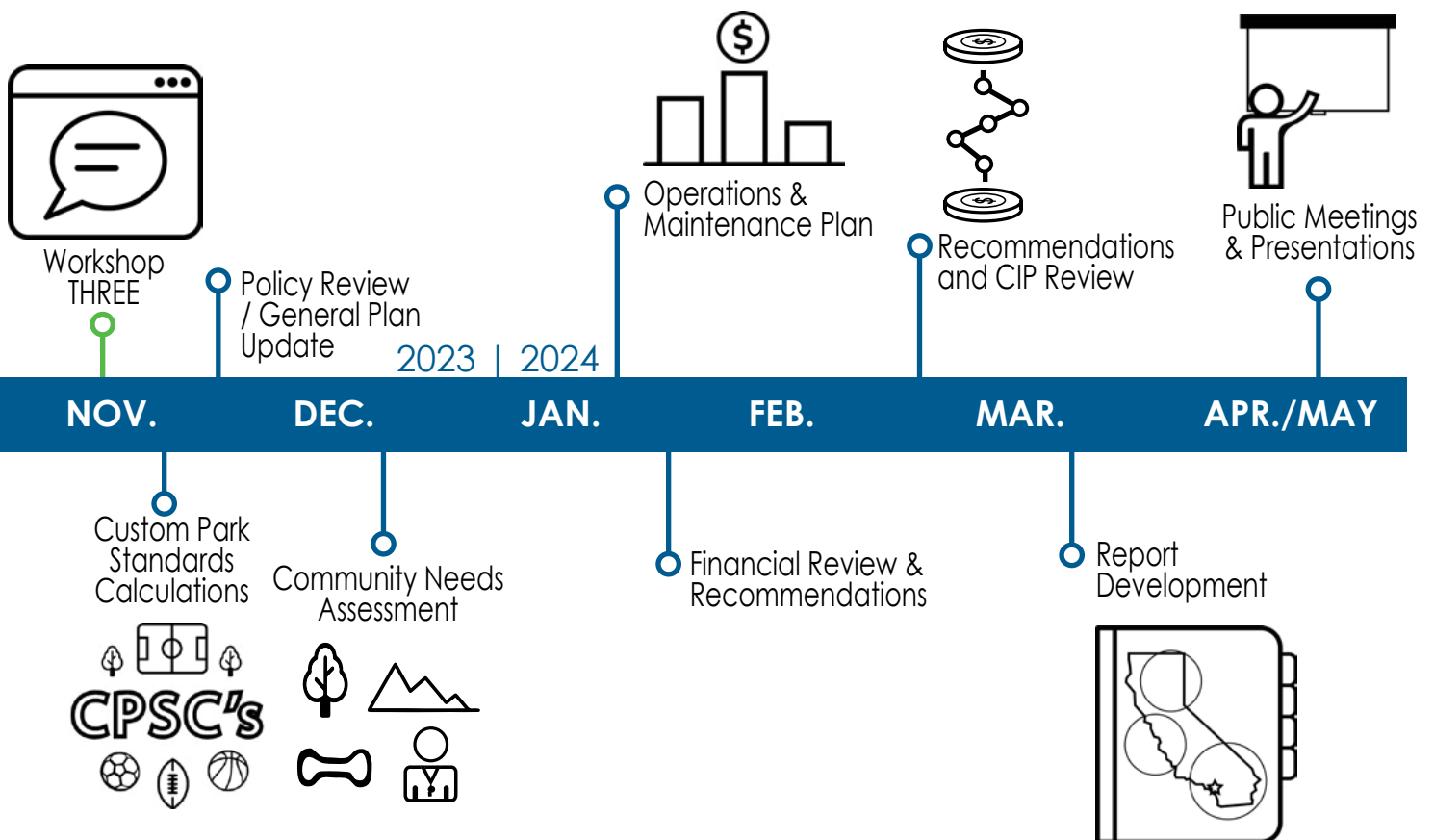


Exhibit 1.5-1: Project Timeline



A project website was developed that outlined the Master Plan goals and objectives and identified a schedule of dates on how to be involved in the outreach opportunities. As each segment of the community outreach was completed, the results were published on the website for the community to view and provide feedback. This component extended the ability for anyone to review the information collected and provide feedback at any time.

After the outreach process was completed, the data was synthesized into a prioritized programs and facilities matrix clearly portraying the voice of the community. This list of priorities was then compared against the inventory of existing facilities. The results of the comparison formed the basis for the recommendations presented in this report. In early 2024, this report and subsequent presentations were developed to clearly illustrate what facilities exist, what the community priorities are, and how the two can align today and in the future.



Related Studies

1.6 Related Studies

There are existing documents and reports that relate to the planning of parks and recreation and influence the Master Plan recommendations. These documents and their relationship to the planning process include:

[Gardena General Plan \(2006\)](#)

The City of Gardena General Plan 2006 serves as a comprehensive planning document for the city. It includes various elements such as the Community Development Element, Economic Development Plan, Community Design Plan, Circulation Plan, Housing Element, Community Resources Element, and Community Safety Element. The purpose of the General Plan is to provide a long-term vision for the city's growth and development, address various aspects of development and community enhancement, and guide development decisions. The document also includes information on the planning area, supporting documents such as the Existing Conditions Report and Environmental Impact Report, and the community participation process. The vision for Gardena is to be a diverse community that values cultural diversity, provides a safe and attractive living environment, and has a strong and diverse economy.

[Open Space Plan \(2006\)](#)

The purpose of the plan is to encourage the preservation of existing open spaces and recreation facilities and the development of new resources. The plan outlines goals and policies to maintain and upgrade existing recreation programs and considers new parks, open space provisions, and recreation programs to

meet the needs of all residents of the city. These include the Quimby Act, which allows the dedication of land or payment of fees for park and recreational purposes as a condition of approval for a final tract map or parcel map. Los Angeles County Proposition A established a regional park and open space district to improve the safety of recreational areas and acquire, restore, and preserve open space resources. Federal and state parks and open space standards set minimum requirements for park space per 1,000 residents. The city Municipal Code also requires the dedication of land or payment of fees based on a minimum of three acres of usable park area per 1,000 persons residing within a subdivision. The document also provides information on the existing parks and recreation resources in Gardena. The goals include maintaining and upgrading existing parks and recreation facilities to meet the needs of all residents and increasing the city's supply and quality of parkland, open space, and recreational programs. The policies include maintaining city parks in a clean, functional, safe, and attractive condition, encouraging joint-use agreements with LAUSD for schoolyard playgrounds and ball fields, and promoting adequate funding and capital improvement programs for ongoing maintenance and rehabilitation of city facilities.



Los Angeles Countywide Comprehensive Park & Recreation Needs Assessment (2016)

The L.A. County Needs Assessment included a study area profile for the City of Gardena, providing information on park metrics, park needs, amenity quantities and conditions, and project cost estimates. It includes a map showing the location of parks and open spaces, as well as a table summarizing the condition and quantity of amenities in each park. The document also lists the prioritized park projects in Gardena, along with their descriptions and costs. Additionally, it mentions the total deferred maintenance costs for the City of Gardena.

Land Use Plan (2023)

The Land Use Plan for the City of Gardena, updated in 2023, aims to improve land use and address changes in the marketplace and housing demands. It includes elements such as land use, circulation, housing, conservation, open space, noise, safety, and environmental justice. The plan considers regional plans and programs, such as SCAG CONNECT SoCal 2020-2045. The Gardena Municipal Code is used to implement the goals and policies of the plan. The document provides information on current land use in Gardena, including the percentage of land used for residential, commercial, industrial, and other purposes. The plan introduces overlay and mixed-use designations to accommodate housing needs. The goals and policies aim to preserve and protect existing residential neighborhoods, promote high-quality housing, develop and preserve commercial centers and clean industrial uses, and provide high-quality public facilities. The document also includes a holding capacity analysis, which indicates limited available land for future development. Overall, the Land Use Plan guides the future growth and development of Gardena.

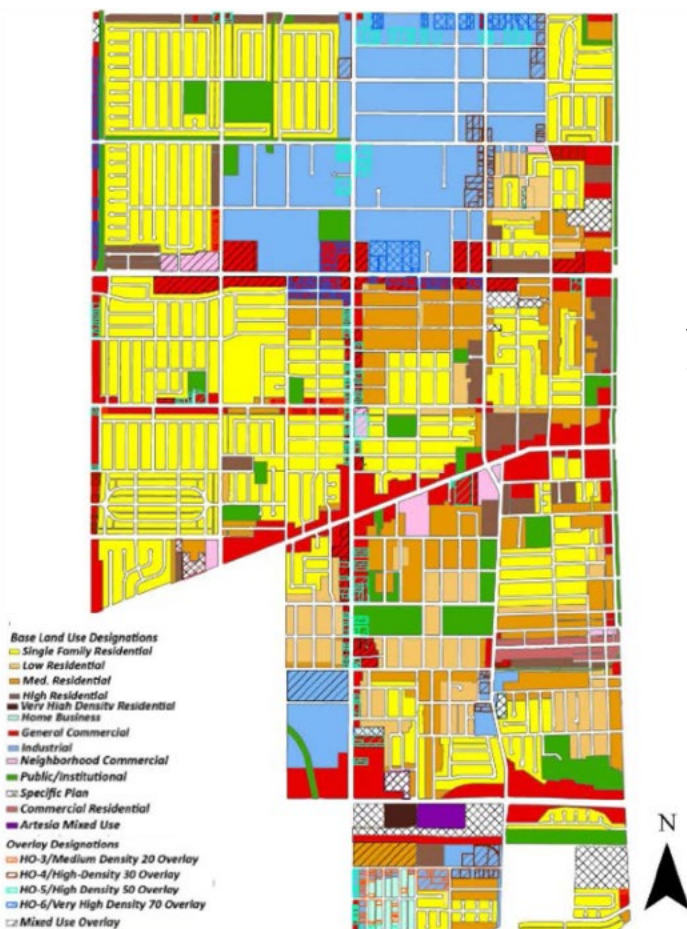


Exhibit 1.6-1: City of Gardena Land Use Map

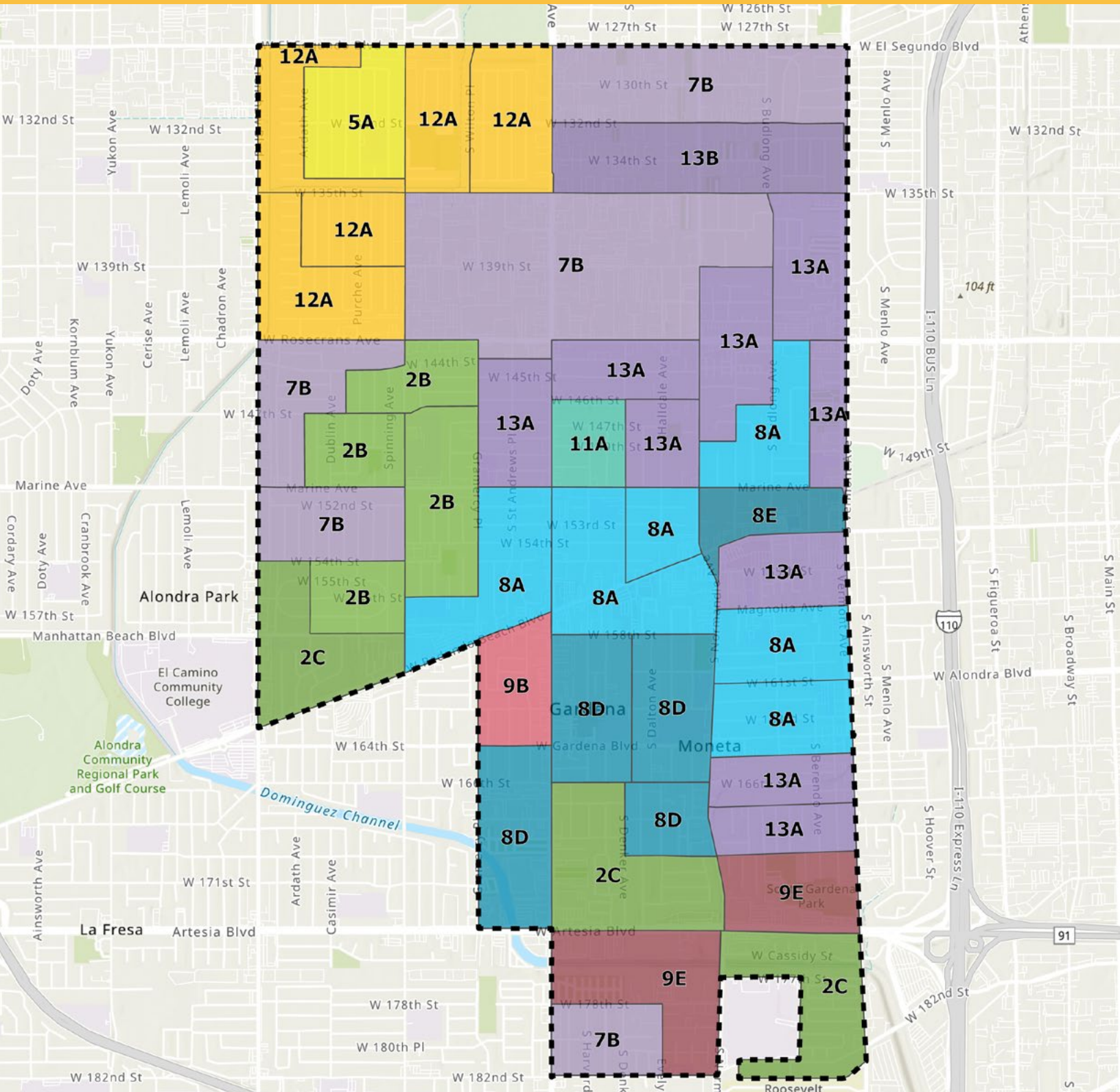


Exhibit 2.1-1: Gardena Tapestry Map

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SECTION TWO: COMMUNITY VOICE



2.1 A Community Profile - Who is Gardena?

Understanding the demographic context of a community can create a valuable perspective for understanding current parks, recreation facilities, and program requirements. It is also crucial for anticipating needs in the future. A complete demographic analysis was developed utilizing the 2022 Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI) demographic datasets including the Tapestry Segmentation. This information provides a deeper understanding of “who” the community is and “where” they are geographically and economically.

Most (97%) of Gardena households (HH) fall into one of six Tapestry LifeMode groups:

| | | |
|----|--|---|
| 13 | <p>13A % of Gardena HH: 26.57% Average Age: 32.8 Average Income: \$46K</p> | <p>Typically married couples with children. Mostly Spanish speaking households. Generally interested in active recreation including soccer. Enjoy music and theme parks. May use public transportation.</p> |
| 8 | <p>8A, 8D, 8E % of Gardena HH: 26.23% Average Age: 37 Average Income: \$50.3K</p> | <p>Mix of single/married, renters/homeowners, and middle/working class. Majority attended college. Internet savvy. Commonly interested in night life and outdoor activities.</p> |
| 2 | <p>2B, 2C % of Gardena HH: 15.48% Average Age: 42.7 Average Income: \$93K</p> | <p>Typically prosperous married couples living in older suburban neighborhoods or townhomes. Majority are homeowners. Many with older children. Generally interested in active recreation and fitness.</p> |
| 12 | <p>12A % of Gardena HH: 10.69% Average Age: 39.6 Average Income: \$43K</p> | <p>Typically residents who grew up close to home. Close knit community. Young families. Older children, living at home is common. Focus on religion and strong character values.</p> |
| 7 | <p>7B % of Gardena HH: 9.48% Average Age: 34 Average Income: \$62K</p> | <p>Typically young married couples with children and grandparents who are multi-generational and multilingual. Focus on children activities. Generally interested in sports and water/theme parks. Comfortable with technology.</p> |
| 9 | <p>9B, 9E % of Gardena HH: 7.03% Average Age: 53.1 Average Income: \$57K</p> | <p>Married empty nesters or singles living alone. Have cell phones and land lines. Tend to have regular exercise routine and are health conscience.</p> |

The remaining two Tapestry Lifestyle mode groups (11A and 5A) include less than 3% of the resident population.

Community Profile

How old are Gardena residents?

The Age Profile as illustrated in Exhibit 2.1-2, shows significant large portions of the population to be classified in the 35-64 category (38% of the total population). The under 19 years of age segment (23%) is slightly lower than the Los Angeles County population (24.6%). The 65 and over category is 18% which is higher than the L.A. County average of 14.5%.



23%
Pop <19



20%
Pop 20-34



38%
Pop 35-64



18%
Pop 65+

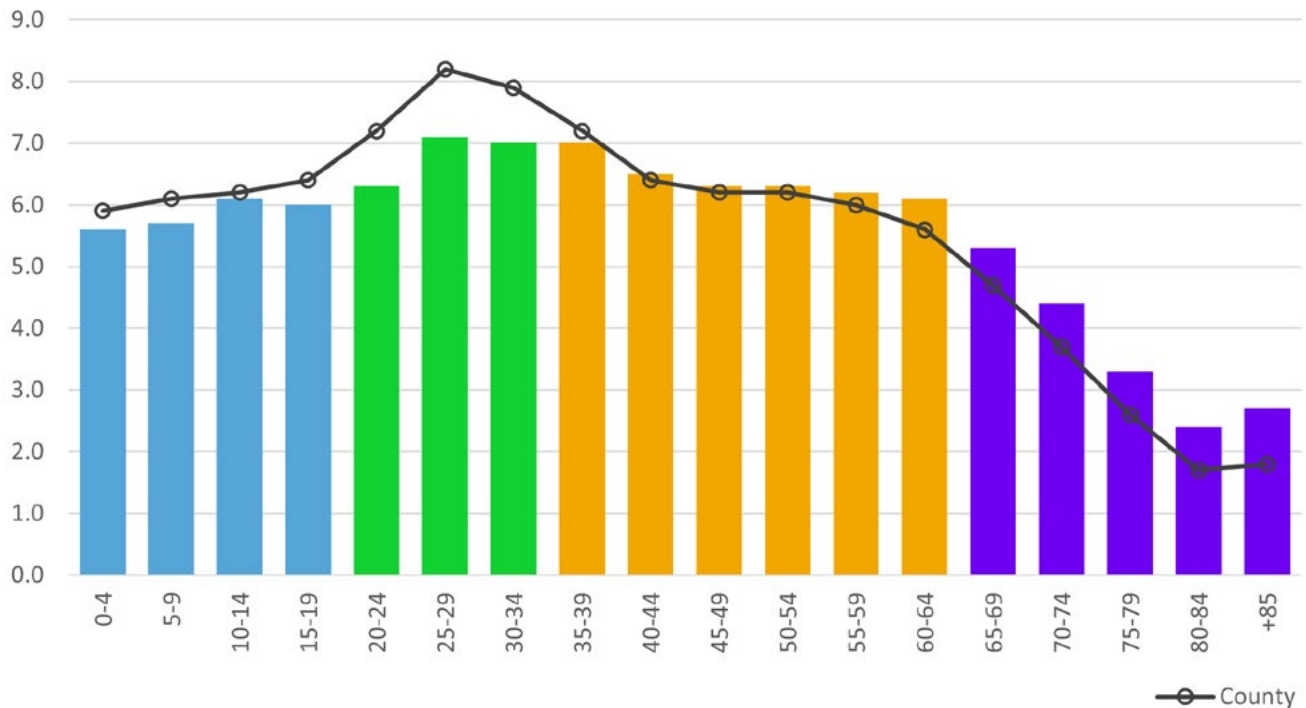
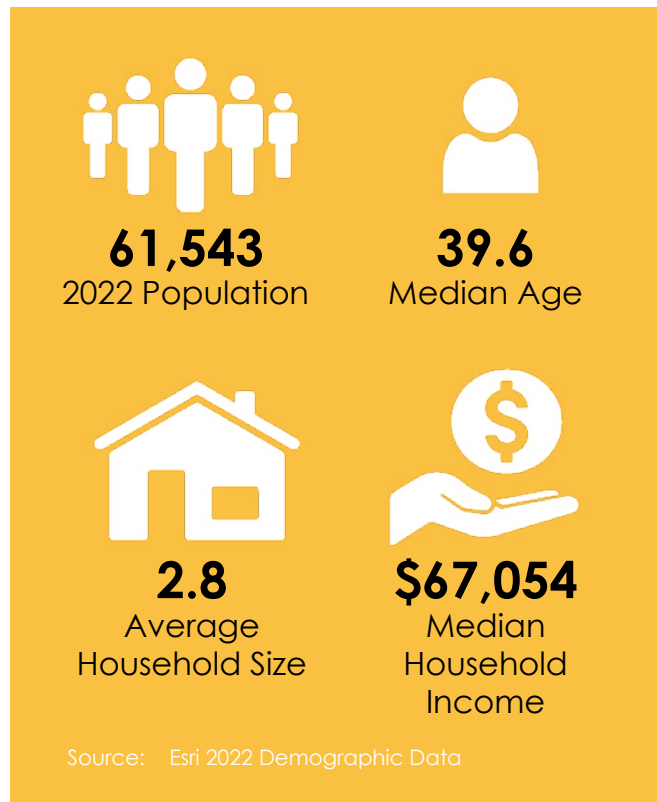


Exhibit 2.1-2: Gardena Age Profile Compared to Los Angeles County



To enhance the demographic analysis, population growth, housing unit growth, and age profiles for the resident population were compiled. Highlights of these demographic trends include:

- The Esri forecast data set indicates the population will decrease slightly to 61,068 by 2027. The five year population change of -0.8% from 2022 to 2027 is lower than the County’s average growth rate of -1.9% change from 2022 to 2027. The forecasted population for the City of Gardena in 2032 is 61,794.
- Housing unit growth in the city during the 2010 to 2022 time frame occurred at a 5.3% rate, with approximately 95.42 more housing units documented each year on average. The city housing unit growth during the 2010-2022 time frame (5.3%) was above the rate in the County which was 4.9%.
- The average household size in the City of Gardena decreased slightly from 2.82 persons per household in 2010 to 2.78 persons per household in 2022, which is right under the County average of 2.86 persons per household in 2022.



Community Profile Overview

Gardena, features a stable demographic landscape with a working-age majority and a high proportion of residents aged 65 and over. To benefit the community, the City of Gardena can provide tailored recreational programs for the working-age demographic, and community engagement efforts to foster cohesion across generations. Understanding these demographics is vital for shaping targeted initiatives that align with the evolving needs of this diverse community.

Outreach & Engagement

2.2 Outreach and Engagement

The community outreach campaign developed for this Master Plan utilized multiple methods of information sharing and data collection including in-person presentations, online video presentations, one-on-one stakeholder interviews, public online surveys, a statistically valid multimodal survey, and online website feedback surveys.

Throughout the process, project updates and summary results were posted to the project website. This website enabled community members to review updates and provide immediate feedback at any point in time. This resource enabled anyone in the community to have a voice in the process regardless of when and where meetings were held.

The purpose of gathering community input through a variety of methods is to ensure that the Master Plan is as inclusive as possible and that it reflects the views, preferences, and recreation patterns of Gardena residents. Within this section, community feedback has been recorded in three (3) separate modes:

1 **Mode One: One-on-One Stakeholder Interviews**

Direct one-on-one interviews with key stakeholders and elected officials were conducted in a format where participants discussed key issues and opinions on facility and program needs that should be considered in the Master Plan.

2 **Mode Two: Statistically Valid Surveys**

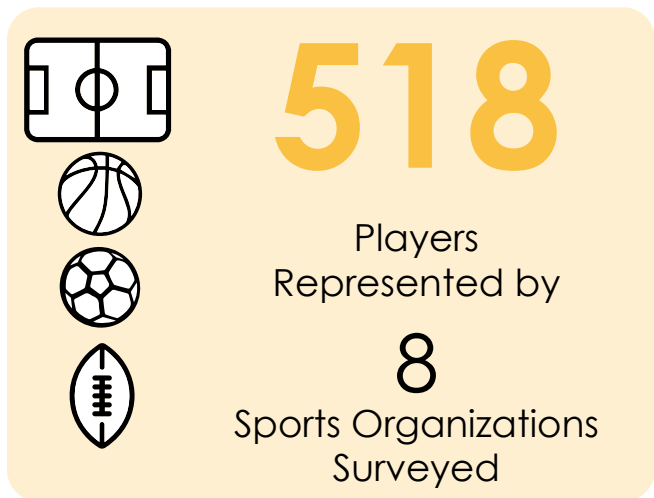
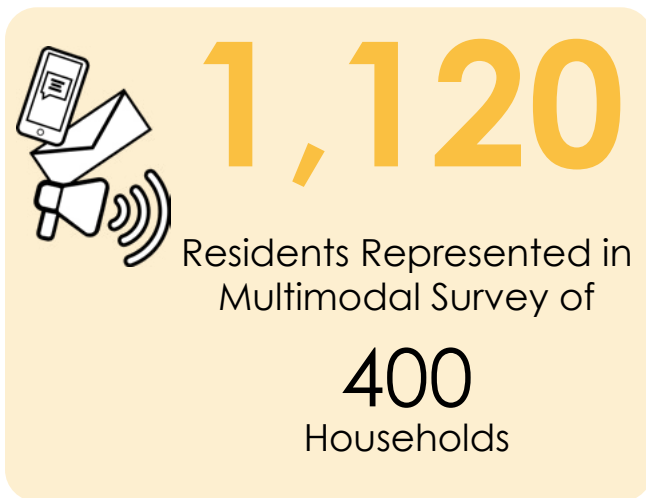
Direct survey responses were collected through a statistically valid, multimodal survey. This survey was conducted via telephone (land lines and cell numbers), text, and email to ensure the entire population demographic was represented. Additionally an analysis of sports organizations that utilize city facilities was conducted to evaluate surplus or deficit of sports facilities.

3 **Mode Three: Community at Large Public Workshops**

Public community consensus-building workshops were held via in-person and online meetings. Meetings were open to the public where community members could learn about past survey results, ask questions of the design team, and participate in surveys.



Total Combined Participants Reached:



All participation numbers as of 4/9/24.

Mode One - Stakeholder Interviews

Stakeholder Interviews:

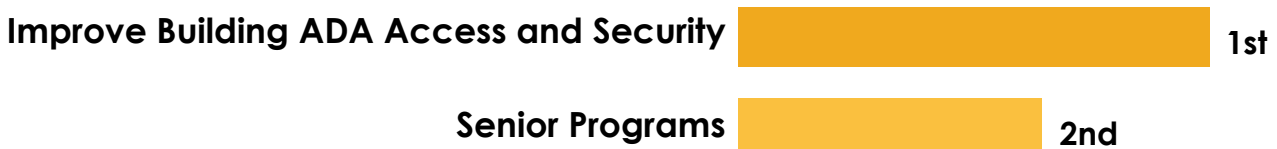
The following summarizes the results of the eight (8) stakeholder interviews conducted as a part of the public outreach effort to assist in the preparation of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. The interviews were held between August 14, 2023 and February 13, 2024. Stakeholders were interviewed in a one-on-one environment in either in-person meetings or over a secure online virtual meeting. Over a series of questions, various topics were discussed to identify important recreation issues, programs, facilities, as well as areas the Recreation and Human Services and Public Works Departments could improve upon. The following charts illustrate the frequency of similar responses.

What are the most important issues in Gardena related to the parks, recreation facilities, programs, and services currently provided?



Additional responses included: Allocate Resources to Operate and Maintain Willows, Wetland Preserve, Expand After School Programs, Need More Parking & Handicapped Parking.

What are the most important parks, recreation facilities, and services for residents in the future?



Additional responses included: Dog Park, Exercise Equipment, Get Funding to Open Willows Wetland Preserve to the Public, Homelessness Solutions, Modernize Equipment and Infrastructure, Pickleball Courts, Renovated Restrooms, Rush Gymnasium Renovation, Staffing, Stay Ahead of Trends to Attract People to Parks, Upgrade Existing Parks to Support Multimodal Transportation, Use Parks to Address "Digital Divide Concerns", Walking Trail.



2

What does the Recreation and Human Services Department do best in providing to community residents?

Affordable Programs  **1st**

Events & Activities for All Ages, Kids, and Seniors  **2nd (tied)**

Attentive, Caring, and Supportive Staff  **2nd (tied)**

Additional responses included: After School Programs, Community Outreach, Youth Sports Program.

PROGRAMS

What is one program, class, or activity you would most like to see added or expanded in Gardena to meet the needs of the community?

- MOST COMMONLY IDENTIFIED:**
- Aquatic Programs / Swimming Lessons

- Additional Responses Included:**
- Coding/Robotics
 - Dance Program
 - Events
 - Partnerships/Collaborate with Others
 - Pickleball Classes/Program
 - Martial Arts/Self Defense Class
 - Senior Programs
 - Technology/Computer Training
 - Tennis Lessons/League

FACILITIES

What is the one park feature or recreation facility you would most like to see added or improved in Gardena to meet the needs of the community?

- MOST COMMONLY IDENTIFIED:**
- Pickleball Court
 - Walking Paths or Trails

- Additional Responses Included:**
- Computer Lab
 - Dance Studio
 - Dog Park or Off Leash Dog Area
 - Picnic Area Improvements
 - Playground Improvements
 - Renovate Community Buildings
 - Security Cameras at All Parks
 - Tennis Court
 - Willows Wetlands Preserve

The full summary report and additional details that were discussed are available in the appendix document.



Subjects explored in the context of the multimodal survey included:

49%

Use Parks or Recreational Facilities in Gardena at Least Once a Month

78%

Are Satisfied with Existing Parks, Recreational Facilities, and Programs

27%

Listed Rowley Park as the Most Often Used Park or Recreation Facility

80%

Are Satisfied with the Maintenance of Parks and Recreation Facilities

44%

Visit Playgrounds at Least Once a Month in the City of Gardena

20%

Participate in Recreational Programs at Least Once a Month

What Park or Recreation Facility Residents Would Most Like to See Added or Improved

- 19%** Swimming pool/Pools
- 14%** Dog park
- 8%** Playground/Jungle gym/Swings
- 6%** Pickleball/Pickleball court
- 6%** Gym/Fitness equipment/Exercise machines
- 5%** Tennis/Tennis court
- 4%** Environment/Gardens/Ponds/Trees
- 4%** Walking path/Hiking trail/Running
- 3%** Classes/Events
- 3%** Cleanliness/Trash cans/Garbage
- 3%** Soccer fields

What Recreation Program, Class, or Activity Residents Would Most Like to See Added or Improved

- 11%** Exercise/Workouts/Gym
- 10%** Yoga
- 9%** Pool areas/Swimming
- 7%** Self defense classes (martial arts)
- 6%** Activities/Events/Programs/Classes (general)
- 6%** Arts/Crafts
- 4%** Dance
- 4%** Senior programs
- 4%** Volleyball
- 3%** Safety/Protection
- 3%** Pet training
- 3%** Basketball
- 3%** Sport leagues
- 3%** Food nutrition/Cooking
- 3%** Youth camp

The full summary report and additional details that were discussed are available in the appendix document.

Mode Two - Sports Organizations

Sports Organization Survey






A questionnaire was designed and distributed to the city in regards to organized sports groups that use the city facilities. This questionnaire obtained information regarding the number of players and teams in the league or sports organization, age ranges of the players, what seasons they play, if they travel outside Gardena to play, and if they participate in tournaments¹.

The questionnaire was filled out by city staff and five (5) sports were recorded. The information regarding the number of players, size of teams, seasonality and turnover of facilities for both games and practice are used to better define peak day demand and convert that to the number of facilities required to meet the needs of this segment of the recreation market. Information regarding which of the facilities are currently being used by the sports groups provides input to the inventory of sports facilities regarding usage for adult sports, youth sports and practices.

The questionnaire addresses the percentage of the players in each organization that live within the City of Gardena. This varies widely by type of sport, and in Gardena, reflects that a number of participants in certain sports reside outside of the city. The demand for facilities to accommodate organized sports are adjusted to accommodate all players in the leagues, regardless of whether they are living in Gardena.

¹ Participation in sports programs has been increasing since the closure of all sports programs due to the Covid pandemic in 2020.

Sports Organizations*

| Organization name | % Residents |
|--|-------------|
|  City of Gardena Baseball | 71% |
|  City of Gardena Futsal | 69% |
|  City of Gardena Basketball | 62% |
|  City of Gardena Soccer | 53% |
|  City of Gardena Football | 52% |

Note: See Custom Park Standards Calculations & Facility Demand in Section 3 for the CPSC's based on the sports organization survey.





2



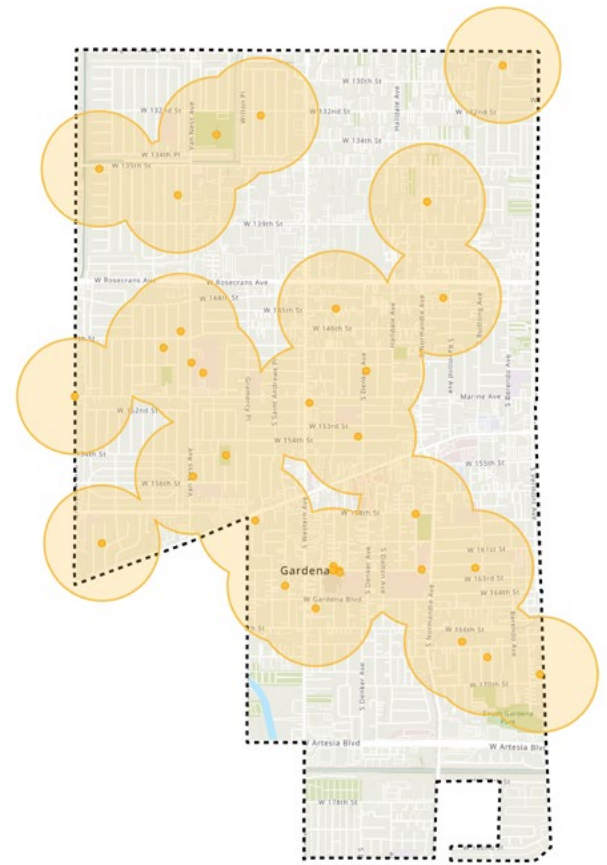
Photo by the City of Gardena

Mode Three - Community Workshops

Community Workshop #1

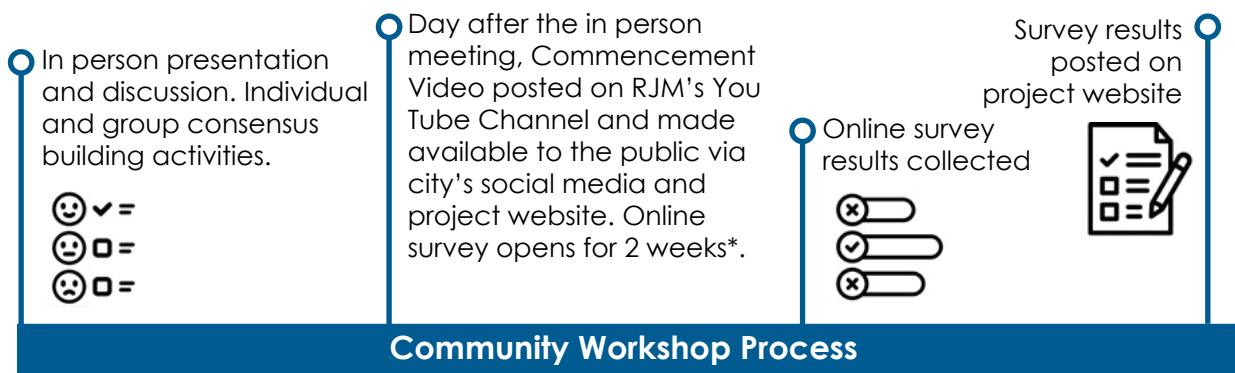
The first community workshop was focused on seeking high-level information about the community characteristics, issues, and trends, as well as what role the city can play in supporting those community characteristics that make Gardena a great place to live, work, and play. Workshop #1 commenced on August 17, 2023 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Nakaoka Community Center. The workshop was in person and the presentation was made available on the project website for those who could not attend. Twenty-four (24) attendees participated in the evening workshop.

The Workshop #1 Survey was open for over two weeks until September 3, 2023. The survey was available online and paper copies were available at all community centers and city pop-up events. The Workshop #1 Survey was also advertised on the city's social media, and website. Sixteen (16) online surveys were received and one hundred sixty-seven (167) paper copies were collected, including the surveys collected at the workshop, for a total of one hundred eighty-three (183) surveys. Exhibit 2.2-1 illustrates the location and distribution of the Workshop #1 Survey participants.



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Exhibit 2.2-2: Workshop #1 Survey Distribution Map



*Paper copies of surveys made available at all community centers and city pop-up events.

Summary report developed



2

What are the most important community characteristics that make the City of Gardena a great place to live, work and play?



Additional responses included: Diversity, Location/Environment, Play at the Parks, Street Maintenance, Community Programs & Summer Programs, Food, Family Orientated Events, Small Town Feel

What are the issues or trends that may be negatively impacting those important community characteristics and should be considered in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan?



Additional responses included: Cleanliness, Parking, None, Staff Training, Funding, Outdoor Areas, Trees/Green Space, Gardens, Youth Engagement/Classes, Dog Park, Affordability/Cost of Living, Downtown Renovations

What role can the Recreation and Human Services Department play in addressing those issues and support the community characteristics that make the City of Gardena a great place to live, work and play?



Additional responses included: Cleanliness/Graffiti, More Green Spaces/Trees/Nature, Staffing/More Awareness from Staffing, Youth Activities/Programs, Community Outreach Events, Grant Funding, Walking Paths/Trails, Homeless Outreach/Homeless Programs, Maintenance/Update Infrastructure, After School Activities/Sports, Upgrades to Building/Parks, Teen Programs/Gang Prevention.

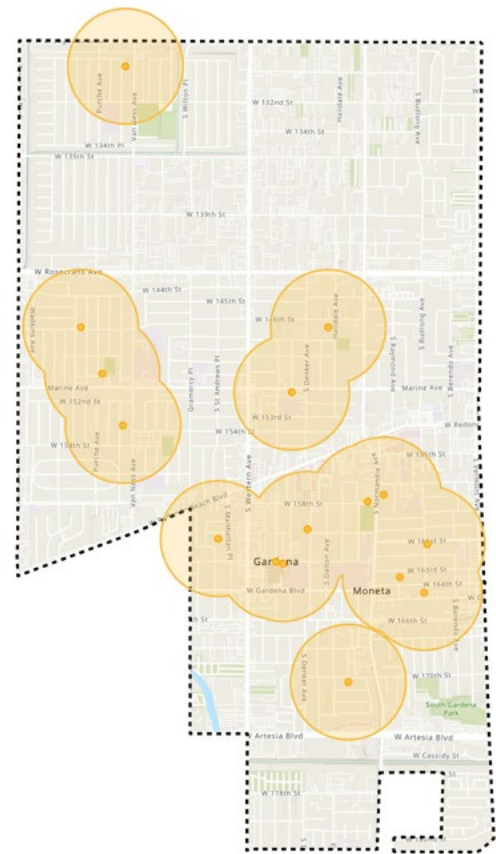
Note: The Public Works Department is responsible for park maintenance and graffiti abatement. The full summary report and additional details that were discussed are available in the Appendix document.

Mode Three - Community Workshops

Community Workshop #2

Residents of the City of Gardena were invited to the community workshop to learn about the Parks and Recreation Master Plan process, and to participate in the second survey. Workshop #2 commenced on September 27, 2023, at 6:00pm to 8:00pm at the Nakaoka Community Center. The workshop was in person and available online for those who could not attend. Thirty-one (31) attendees participated in the evening workshop.

The Workshop #2 Survey was open for two weeks until October 12, 2023. The survey was available online and paper copies were available at all community centers and city pop-up events. The Workshop #2 Survey was also advertised on the city's social media and city website. Fourteen (14) online surveys were received and one hundred seventy-three (173) paper copies were collected, including the surveys collected at the workshop, for a total of one hundred eighty-seven (187) surveys.



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Exhibit 2.2-3: Workshop #2 Survey Distribution Map



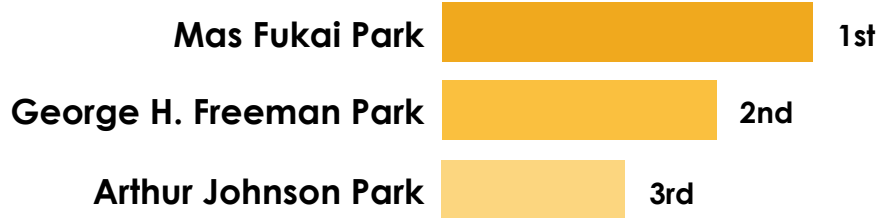
Photo by RJM Design Group

Community Workshop 2 on September 27, 2023

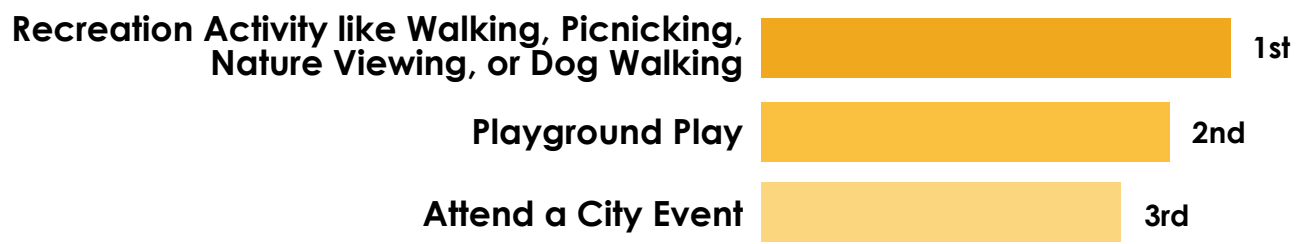


2

What is the name of the park or recreation facility in Gardena that members of your household visit the most?



Why do you visit this park the most often?



FACILITY DESIRES

- Aquatic Facilities
- Baseball & Softball Field Improvements
- Benches/Seating
- Dog Park or Off Leash Dog Area
- Exercise Equipment/Fitness Stations
- Lighting in Parks & Parking Lots
- Modernize/Upgrade Existing Park Amenities
- Parking Lot Improvements
- Pickleball Court
- Playground Improvements
- Renovate Community Buildings
- Restroom Improvements
- Shade Structures
- Tennis Court
- Trees and Green Space
- Walking Paths or Trails
- Willows Wetlands Preserve

PROGRAM DESIRES

- After School Program
- Aquatic Programs / Swimming Lessons
- Dance Program
- Events
- Exercise
- Family Programs
- Farmers Market
- Gardening Class
- Martial Arts/Self Defense Class
- Pickleball Classes/Program
- Senior Programs
- Soccer Program
- Teen Programs
- Tennis Lessons/League
- Yoga

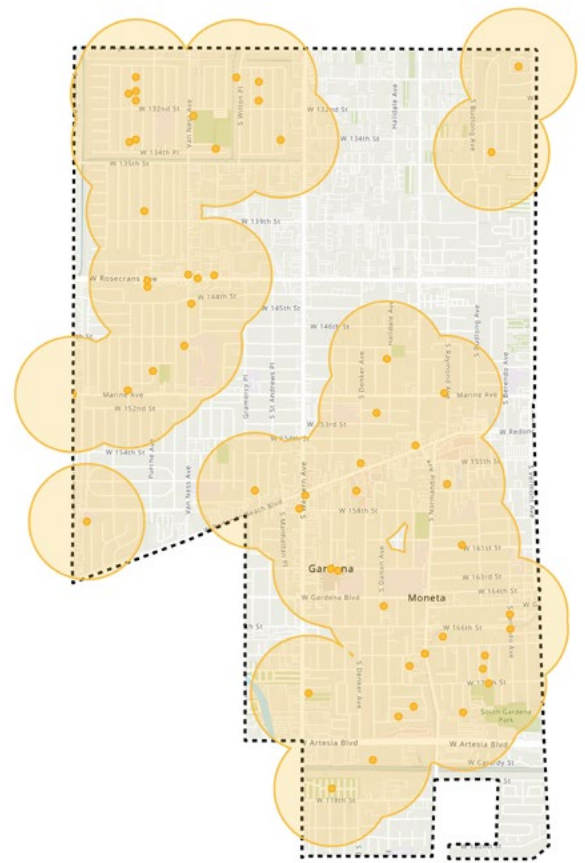
The full summary report and additional details that were discussed are available in the Appendix document.

Mode Three - Community Workshops

Community Workshop #3

Residents of the City of Gardena were invited to the community workshop to learn about the Parks and Recreation Master Plan process, and to participate in the third Survey. Workshop #3 commenced on October 26, 2023, at 6:00pm to 8:00pm at Rowley Park. The workshop was in person and available online for those who could not attend. Fifty (50) attendees participated in the evening workshop. Workshop participants filled out the survey individually and then discussed their answers to achieve a consensus among their group.

The Workshop #3 Survey was open for over five weeks until December 3, 2023. The survey was available online and paper copies were available at all community centers and city pop-up events. The Workshop #3 Survey was also advertised on the city's social media, city website, and city pop-up events. A total of two hundred sixty-eight (268) surveys were completed.



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Exhibit 2.2-4: Workshop #3 Survey Distribution Map



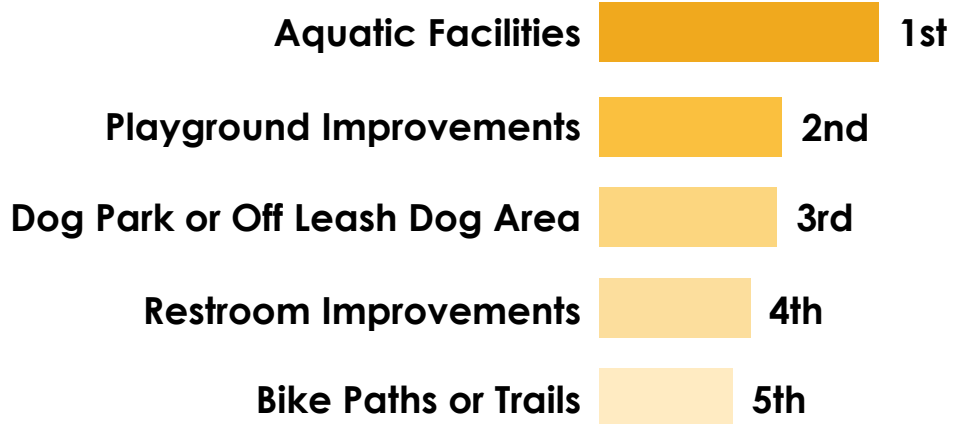
Photo by RJM Design Group

Community Workshop 3 on October 26, 2023



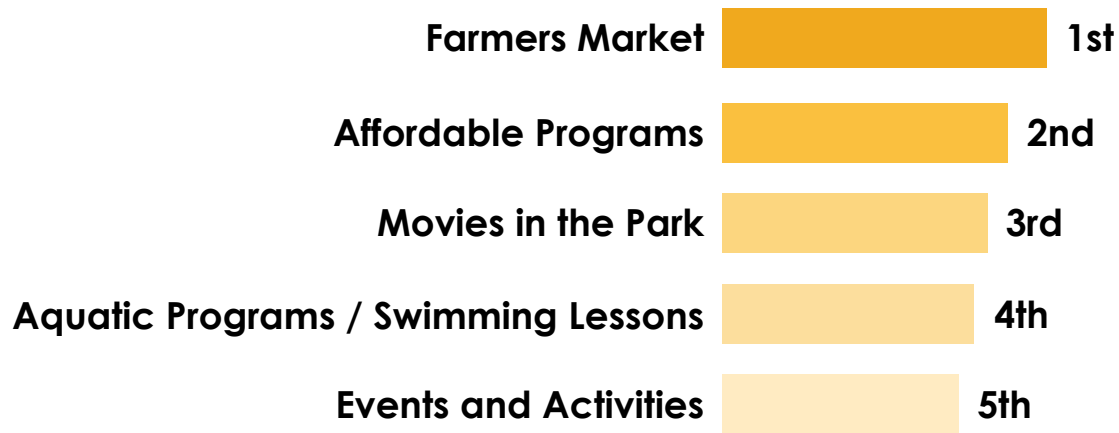
2

Please choose your top 5 park feature and/or recreation facility you would most like to see added or improved in Gardena.



Additional responses included: Gym with Fitness Equipment, Park Maintenance, Gardens, Lighting in Parks & Parking Lots, Walking Paths or Trails.

Please choose your top 5 programs, classes, or activities you would most like to see added or improved in Gardena.



Additional responses included: Homelessness Solutions, Arts & Crafts Class, Dance Class, Teen Programs, After School Program.

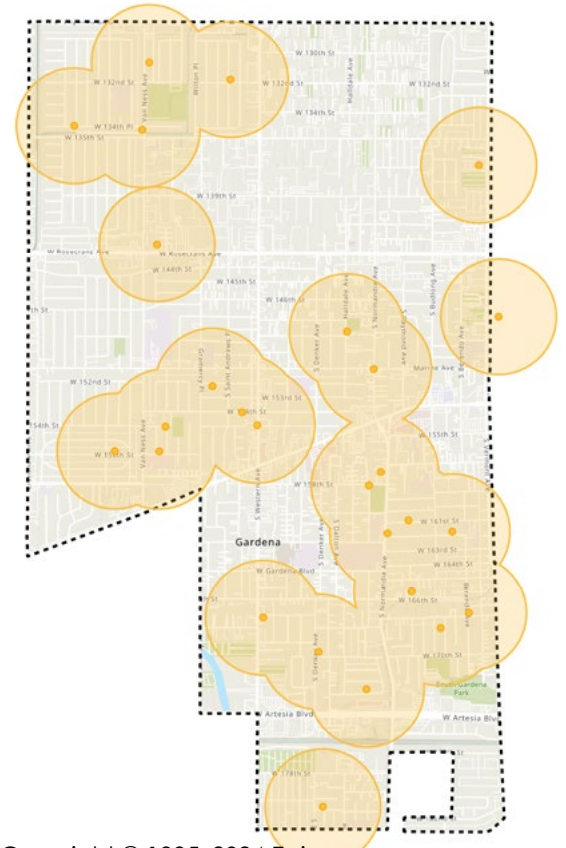
The full summary report and additional details that were discussed are available in the Appendix document.

Mode Three - Website Feedback Comments

Project Website and Feedback

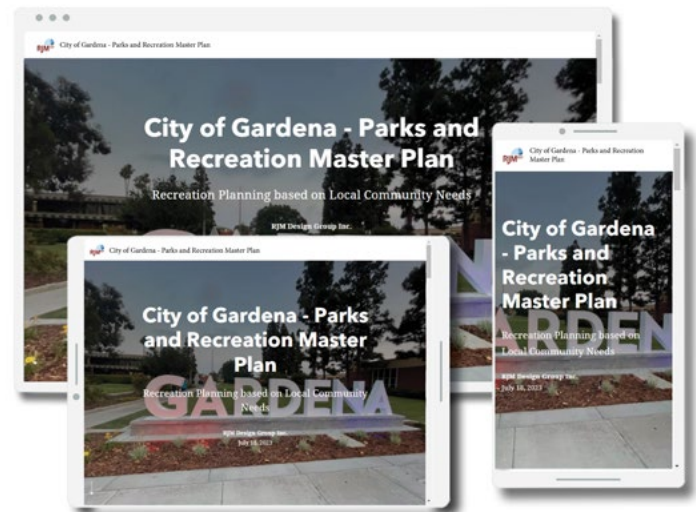
A project website was developed to keep the community informed all day, everyday. The website launched to the public on July 24, 2023. Throughout the project, updates were published and surveys made available on the project website. Website views totaled 1,961, averaging 5 views per day.

A total of 52 feedback comments were received throughout the project. The feedback survey option was available on the project website and opened with the website launch in July 2023 and remained open for the duration of the project.



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Exhibit 2.2-5: Feedback Survey Distribution Map





PROGRAMS

- Affordable Rental Facilities
- After School Programs
- Community Events (street fairs, farmers markets, cultural heritage celebrations, art fairs)
- Martial Arts/Self Defense Classes
- Nature Education/Conservation Class
- Security Guard/Park Ranger for Park Surveillance/Safety
- Senior Center and Activities
- Teen Programs

FACILITIES

- Adjusting Operating Hours for Pools, Fields and Facilities
- Cleanliness (litter, graffiti, maintenance)
- Dog Park
- Exercise Stations/Equipment
- Increased Trees and Planting
- Lighting
- Playground Improvements (equipment upgrades, more imaginative)
- Pickleball Court
- Renovate Community Buildings
- Shade
- Walking Path/Circulation in Parks (reflexology barefoot path)
- Willows Wetlands (keep open, increase funding)

The full summary report and additional details that were discussed are available in the Appendix document.



Photo by RJM Design Group



2

Summarizing the Community Voice

2.3 Summarizing the Community Voice

Throughout the process, numerous needs have been identified and recorded across multiple modes of outreach (Individual Interviews, Community at Large Workshops, and a Statistically Valid Survey). The community voice is developed through synthesizing all the data into a single summary, representing both program and facility needs. It is generally helpful to attempt to determine which needs have the highest priority as perceived by the largest number of residents (identified as the area of maximum community impact).

To achieve this analysis, each response recorded from the community is cataloged in a matrix. As an individual program or facility need is brought up (dog park, walking paths, swim lessons, events, etc.), it is recorded for frequency in the specific outreach mode in which it was received. Needs that have been identified in each of the three modes have a higher impact across the community than needs identified in only one of these modes.

Exhibits 2.3-1 and 2.3-2 illustrate the classification of these needs by grouping them into categories – Frequent (3 modes), Apparent (2 modes), and Identified (1 mode). The number of times the need was listed across all modes outlines an area of maximum community impact. For example, playground improvements (5) is ranked higher than park maintenance (4) because it was identified in each of the three outreach modes. The recommendations illustrate where improvements will have the maximum impact across the entire community.

FACILITIES

Frequent:

- Dog Park or Off Leash Dog Area
- Pickleball Court
- Playground Improvements
- Walking Paths or Trails

Apparent:

- Park Maintenance
- Renovate Community Buildings
- Trees and Green Space (more)

PROGRAMS

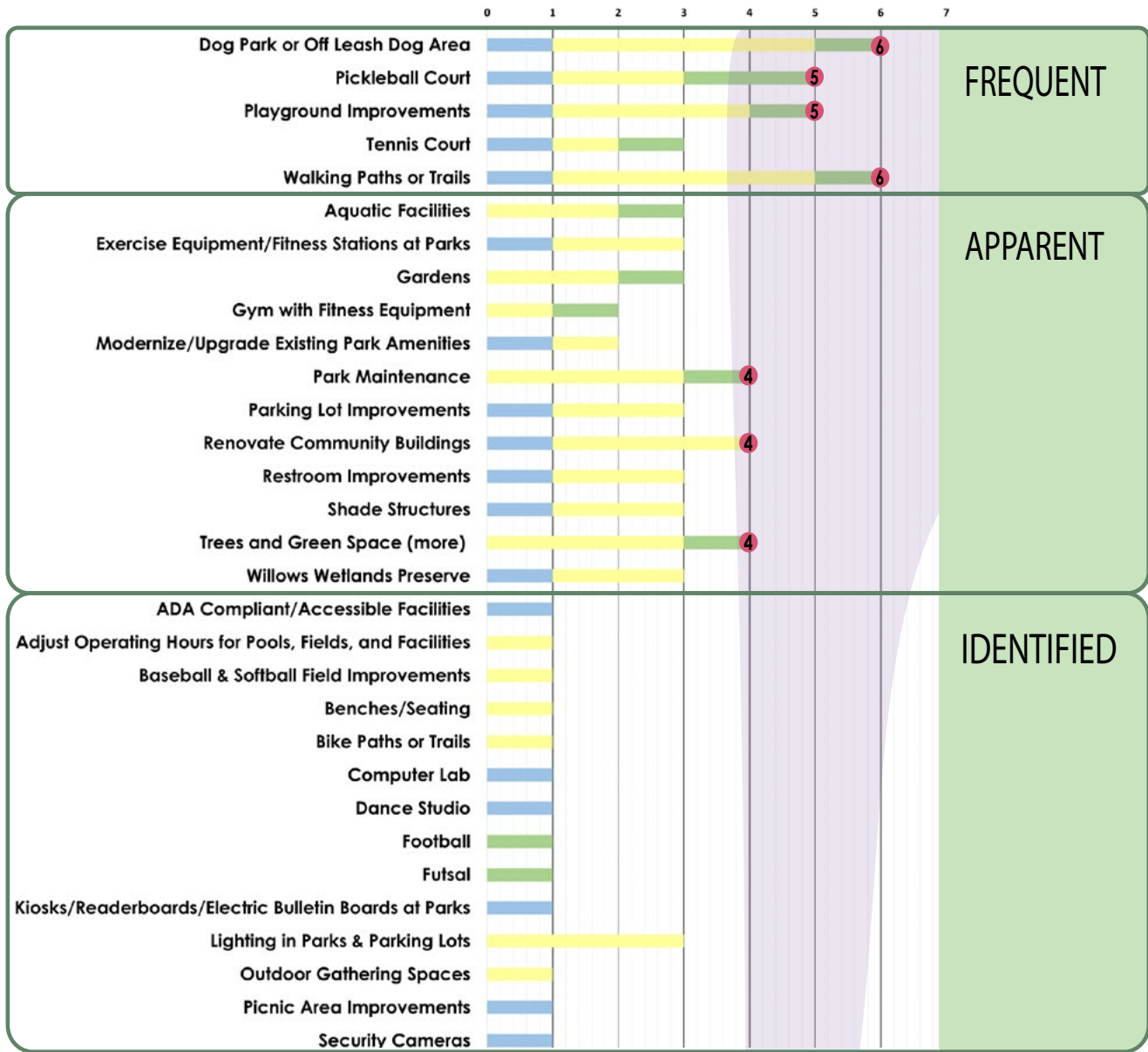
Frequent:

- Aquatic Programs / Swimming Lessons
- Dance Program
- Events
- Martial Arts / Self Defense Class
- Security Guard / Park Ranger for Park Surveillance / Safety
- Senior Programs

Apparent:

- After School Program

Facility Priorities



Small Group
Stakeholder Interviews

Public/Community
Workshop 1 / Workshop 2 /
Workshop 3 / Feedback Comments

Surveys
Multimodal Community Survey /
CPSC's

Area of maximum community impact

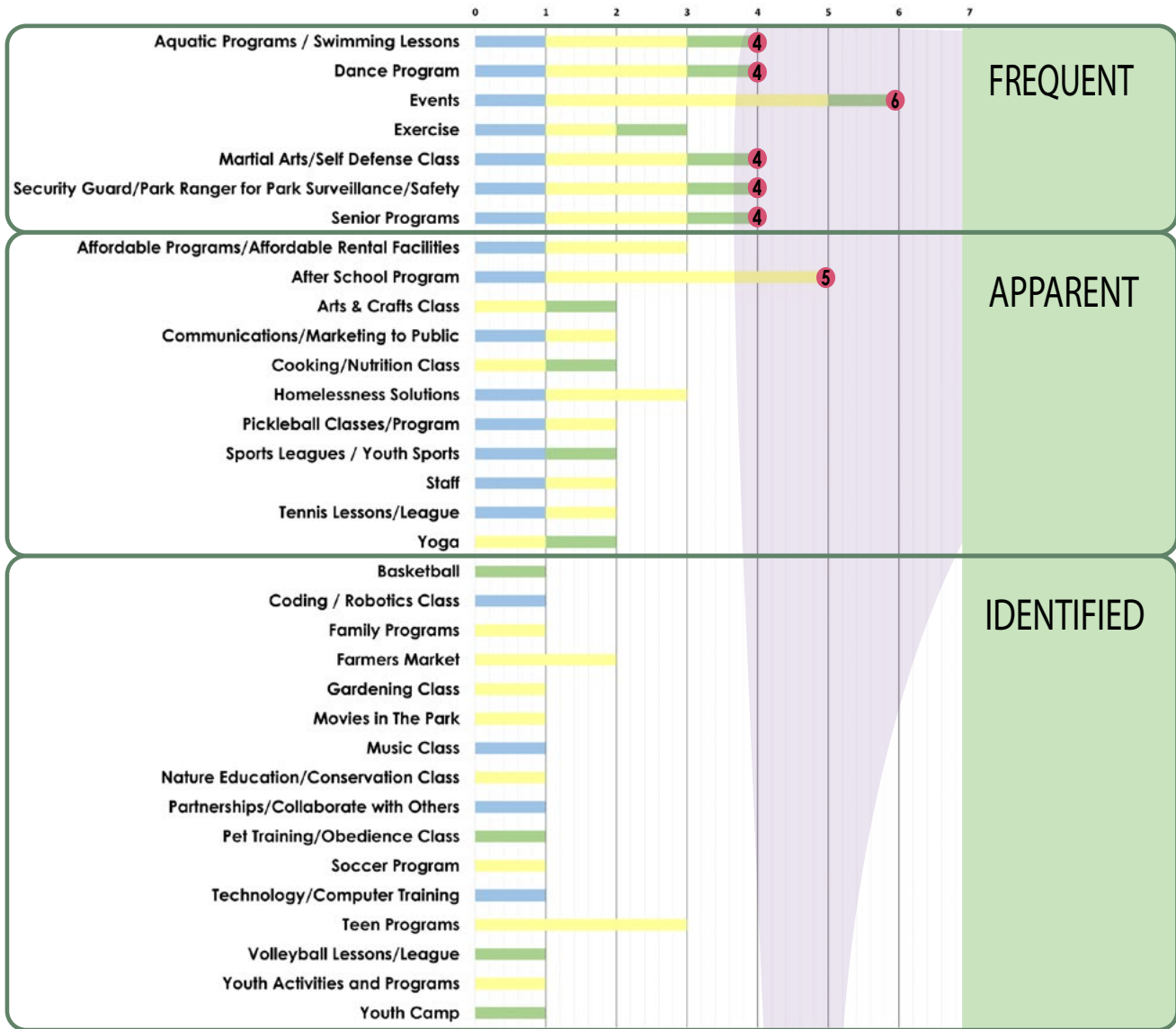
*Facilities are encompassing of multiple "similar" community comments. Individual comments are identified in the recommendations and appendix.

Exhibit 2.3-1: Facility Priorities

Program Priorities



2



Small Group
Stakeholder Interviews

Public/Community
Workshop 1 / Workshop 2 /
Workshop 3 / Feedback Comments

Surveys
Multimodal Community Survey

Area of maximum community impact

*Programs are encompassing of multiple "similar" community comments. Individual comments are identified in the recommendations and appendix.

Exhibit 2.3-2: Program Priorities



Photo by the City of Gardena Facebook

SECTION THREE: NEEDS ASSESSMENT



3.1 Existing Conditions

What parks exist and where are they?

The process for evaluating the community needs relies heavily on what recreation facilities exist today and how they may or may not meet the needs of the community. Carefully balancing the inventory with the community needs and desires will allow resources to be directed to critical areas maximizing the community benefit.

Park Types

The City of Gardena's General Plan Open Space Plan does not have park type definitions or park type classifications. This Parks and Recreation Master Plan proposes a classification system of parks to further detail uses and acceptable features of each type of park and/or recreation facility. Recommended classification definitions are:

Parkette: small in size, less than 2 ½ acres, serving only the immediate neighborhood. Parkettes provide a landscaped respite from neighborhoods and often offer places to picnic or play. The parks may contain limited assets such as benches, picnic tables, open play areas, and playgrounds.

Neighborhood Park: these parks are from 2 ½ to 10 acres and serve the surrounding neighborhoods within ½ mile radius (15-20 minute walk) without significant architectural barriers. Neighborhood parks should be easily accessible by pedestrians and bicyclists. Park features may include open play area, barbeques, picnic tables, sport court, improved paths, and may include restroom facilities and/or a parking lot.

Community Park: vary in size and meet the recreational needs of a larger segment of the community. They may also preserve unique landscapes and open spaces. Community park sites should be accessible by arterial and/or collector streets, as well as accessible by pedestrian and bicyclists. Geographic range of users is up to 3 miles or city-wide if park contains or is adjacent to a community recreation facility. These parks serve multiple uses and provide recreational facilities that accommodate group activities not typically provided in neighborhood parks. Parking lot and restroom facilities are typically provided at these parks.

Recreation Facility or Special Use Park: this category refers to stand-alone park or facility that is designed to serve one particular use such as a community center, senior center, teen center, or aquatics facility.

Joint Use Facilities: These are often School District sites that supplement community parks and during non-school hours can serve broader city-wide recreation needs. These joint use sites may contain various assets, often for active recreation, and are programmed accordingly. Restroom facilities and parking are generally provided for users. Geographic range of users can be city-wide. These facilities do not count towards the city's parkland acreage goals as they are not owned by the city.

Acreage Analysis

Acreage Analysis

The City of Gardena currently has eight (8) parks and three (3) recreation buildings which encompasses 49.4 acres of developed parkland and open space.

Park Acres by Park Type Summary

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| Parkette | 0.2 Acres |
| Sister City Harvard Parkette | 0.2 Acres |
| Neighborhood | 4.4 Acres |
| Edward Thornburg Park | 2.5 Acres |
| Vincent Bell Memorial Park | 1.9 Acres |
| Community | 33.4 Acres |
| Arthur Johnson Park | 6.8 Acres |
| George H. Freeman Park | 3.0 Acres |
| Mas Fukai Park | 4.9 Acres |
| Paul Rowley Park & Gymnasium | 18.7 Acres |
| Special Use | 8.0 Acres |
| The Willows Wetland Preserve | 8.0 Acres |
| Recreation Facility | 3.4 Acres |
| Aquatic Center & Senior Center | 0.7 Acres |
| Nakaoka Community Center | 1.8 Acres |
| Rush Gymnasium / Human Services Building | 0.9 Acres |
| Total Park Acreage | 49.4 Acres |

NOTE: The Nakaoka Community Center acreage includes the lawn area and parking lot. The Rush Gymnasium / Human Services Building also includes the parking lot.

Based on the park acreage identified above and the city's 2022 population of 61,543 the city currently has:

Acres per 1000 Residents

| | |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| Developed Parks | 0.80 Acres |
|-----------------|-------------------|

The Gardena General Plan has a goal of 3 acres per 1,000 persons. The city needs approximately 135.6 acres (185 acres of parkland total) of additional parkland to reach the 3 acres per 1,000 parkland acreage goal.

The city has recently acquired two (2) properties that will increase the city's Park acreage. These two opportunity sites are:

- Rosecrans Site (approximately 1 acre)
- Thornburg Park Expansion Site (approximately 0.1 acre)

Rosecrans Park and Recreation Center (10.3 acres), a city of Los Angeles park that is on the city border of Gardena and West Rancho Dominguez, is not included in the city-owned parkland acreage.

Opportunities to increase the city's Park acreage could also be accomplished through joint use of public-school athletic fields. The city does not currently have a joint use agreement with the school district.

Creating new parks in the City of Gardena faces challenges due to the densely developed urban landscape and the expensive real estate market. Despite these limitations, community members can still benefit from adding smaller green spaces and improving existing recreational areas.



Photo by RJM Design Group
Willows Wetland Preserve

Circulation Routes

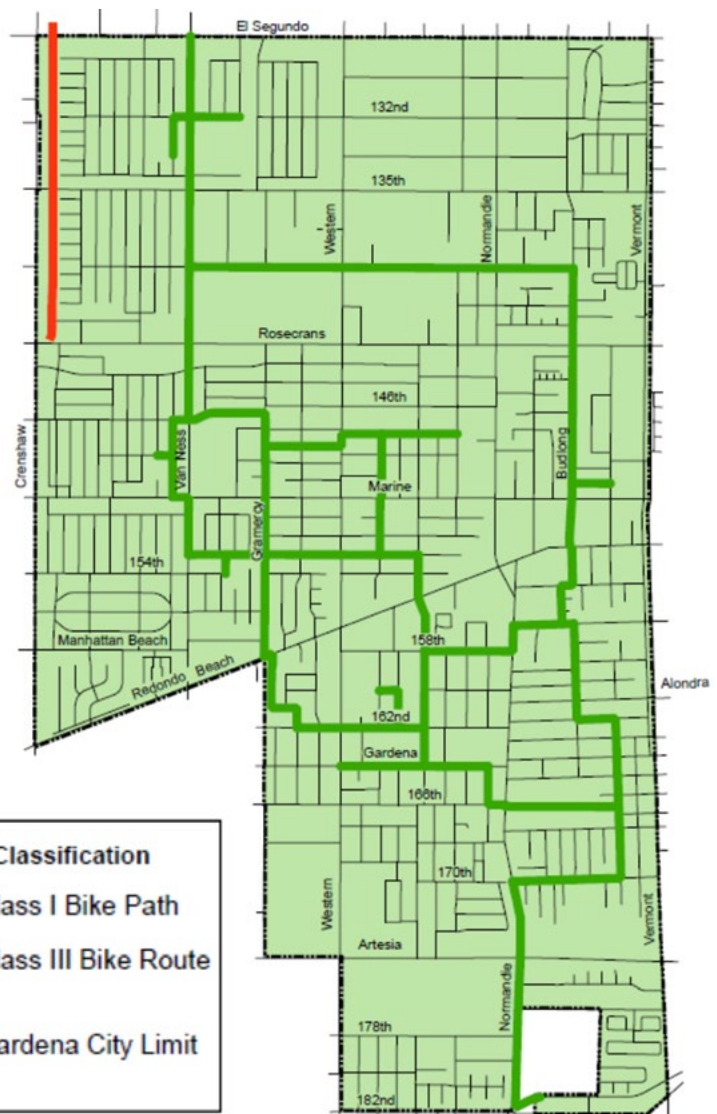
Bike Trails

The existing Class III bicycle routes throughout the City of Gardena can be used to reach existing parks. Currently most bicycle routes within the city are Class III routes, defined as a bicycle way designated within a public right-of-way. The purpose of a Class III bicycle route is to encourage a sharing of the roadway between vehicles and bicycles. They are identified by signage along the street that denotes "BIKE ROUTE." There is one Class I route in the northwest from El Segundo Boulevard to Rosecrans Avenue that follows the Dominguez Channel. A Class I bicycle path is a special facility that is designed exclusively for the use of bicycles and are physically separated from motor vehicle traffic.

Pedestrian Circulation

The connectivity of a sidewalk system plays a crucial role in facilitating pedestrian movement in the city. Sidewalks serve as safe havens, shielding pedestrians from vehicular traffic and providing a secure pathway for walking.

The Community Development Element, Circulation Plan, recommends that sidewalks remain unobstructed in order to effectively support circulation. When essential equipment like utility poles, fire hydrants, traffic signals, or streetlights needs placement on a sidewalk, it should be done in a way that minimizes disruption to pedestrian flow. Similarly, any street furniture that impedes pedestrian movement should either be prohibited or relocated to a neighboring street segment with wider sidewalk facilities.



Source: City of Gardena General Plan

Exhibit 3.1-3: Gardena Existing Bicycle Trails Map

School Facilities

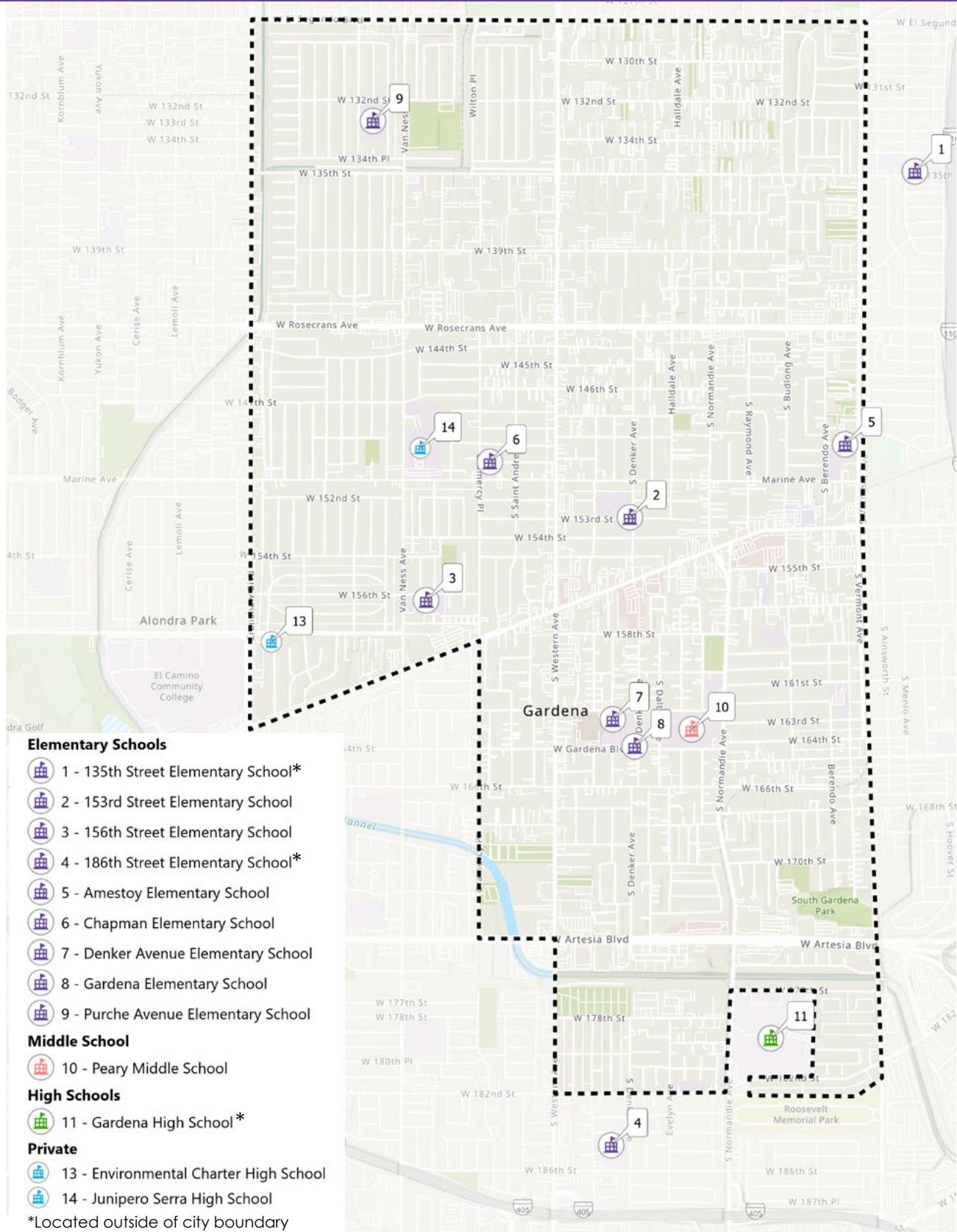


Exhibit 3.1-4: School Facilities Map

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Joint Use Agreements

Recreation and Human Services currently has no joint use agreement with the Los Angeles Unified School District in place. Joint use agreements are typically made for the use of city facilities or with the local school district for use of school facilities and sports fields.

With limited resources for both capital construction and operations, it is important that the city work cooperatively with the Los Angeles Unified School District, private schools, and other public agencies to evaluate the costs and benefits of new city facilities versus the costs and benefits of joint use facilities.



Photo by the City of Gardena Instagram

Other Parks and Recreation Facilities

Other Parks and Recreation Facilities Open to the Public

Additional County, neighboring cities, and private parks and recreation facilities exist in and outside the City of Gardena. Though not directly owned or controlled by the city, these parks also provide recreation opportunities to the community. Such facilities are important to identify so not to duplicate city facilities in areas that may already be served through non-city owned recreational opportunities. The following are parks and facilities that have been identified in this category:

Alondra Community Regional Park, Lawndale



Alondra Community Regional Park is a large public Los Angeles County park located in Lawndale. It is a well-maintained and spacious park that offers a variety of recreational amenities and outdoor activities for visitors to enjoy. Unique to this park is its beautiful Japanese Garden featuring lush greenery, ponds, and bridges. Additional amenities in the park include a skate park, gymnasium, baseball fields, fishing, and a splash pad is open May through September.

Rosecrans Park and Recreation Center, Gardena

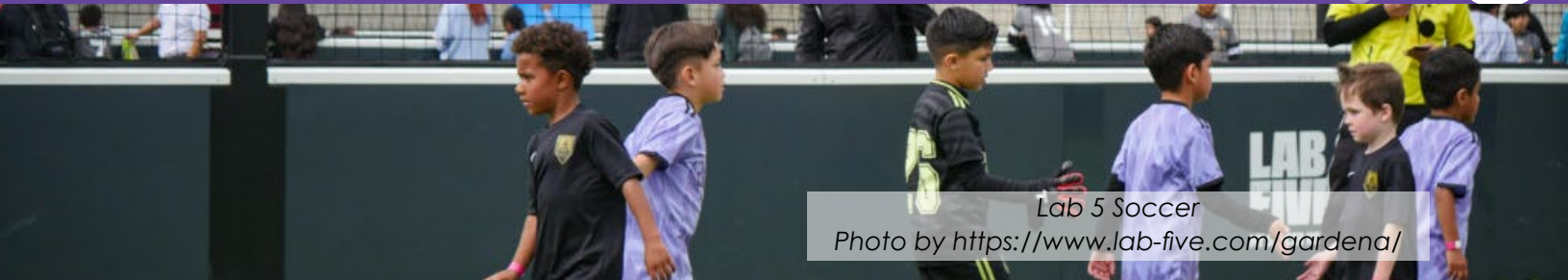


Rosecrans Park and Recreation Center is a Los Angeles city park located on the Northeastern border of Gardena that offers diverse recreational activities for all ages. With sports leagues, fitness classes, arts workshops, and more, it fosters a sense of community through events and volunteer opportunities. Its modern facilities include basketball courts, a gymnasium, and multipurpose rooms, making it a cherished resource for locals.

Helen Keller Park, Los Angeles



Helen Keller Park in Los Angeles is a serene and inclusive green space that honors the legacy of the renowned advocate for the deaf and blind, Helen Keller. Situated in the heart of the city, this park offers a tranquil escape for visitors of all abilities, featuring accessible pathways, recreational facilities, and beautifully landscaped gardens.



Lab 5 Soccer
Photo by <https://www.lab-five.com/gardena/>

Lab 5 Soccer, Gardena



Photo by <https://www.lab-five.com/gardena/>

The privately run LAB 5 Soccer facility in Gardena provides a dynamic and modern environment and offers state-of-the-art fields equipped with high-quality turf, ensuring optimal playing conditions year-round. LAB 5 Soccer provides a variety of programs, including youth leagues, adult leagues, and training sessions, catering to both recreational players and competitive athletes.

Laguna Dominguez Trail



Photo by <https://www.alltrails.com/trail/us/california/laguna-dominguez-trail/photos>

The Laguna Dominguez Trail runs approximately 3 miles from Lawndale to Hawthorne with a portion of the trail running through Gardena. This trail serves as a vital urban pathway along the Dominguez Channel. At its southern end lies the Alondra Community Regional Park in Lawndale that provides recreational facilities such as a golf course, ballfields, and a pool.

Casinos (Lucky Lady and Hustler)



Photo by thehustlercasino.com

Gardena was once known as the Poker Capital of the World. These two card clubs amount to the second largest source of revenue for the city. Both Lucky Lady Casino and Hustler Casino are popular destinations for poker players and card enthusiasts in the Gardena and broader Los Angeles area.

Park Service Gap Analysis

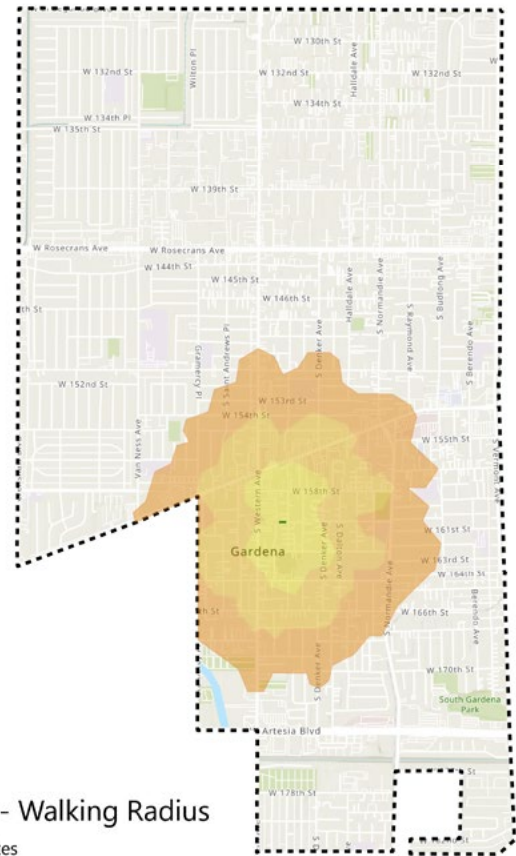
In addition to providing appropriate quantities and types of recreation facilities, the City of Gardena strives to provide them in useful and appropriate locations. The service area gap analysis examines how parks are distributed throughout residential areas in the city.

“Everyone deserves a park within walking distance of their home.”

-NRPA (National Recreation and Parks Association)

Proximity to parks is more than a convenience issue. It helps to establish an excellent park system by providing improved air quality, circulation, and overall improved community health and wellness. One-half (.5) mile is approximately a 10-15-minute walk for most people. Most residences should be within one-half mile of a neighborhood park or amenity that satisfy common recreation needs.

The 5-10-15 minute walk map outlines the service availability around the existing parks that are available to Gardena residents. The service area boundaries also reflect the physical obstructions to pedestrian travel created by arterial roadways, freeways, etc. which limit easy access to parks and are reflected by truncated shapes in the service areas shown on the following exhibits.






Parkette - Walking Radius

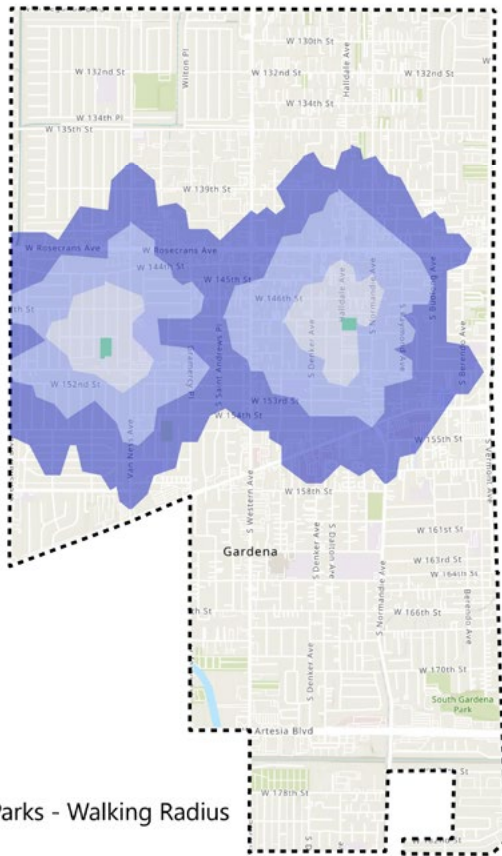
- 5 Minutes
- 10 Minutes
- 15 Minutes

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Exhibit 3.1-5: Service Area Gap Analysis for Parkettes

Parkettes

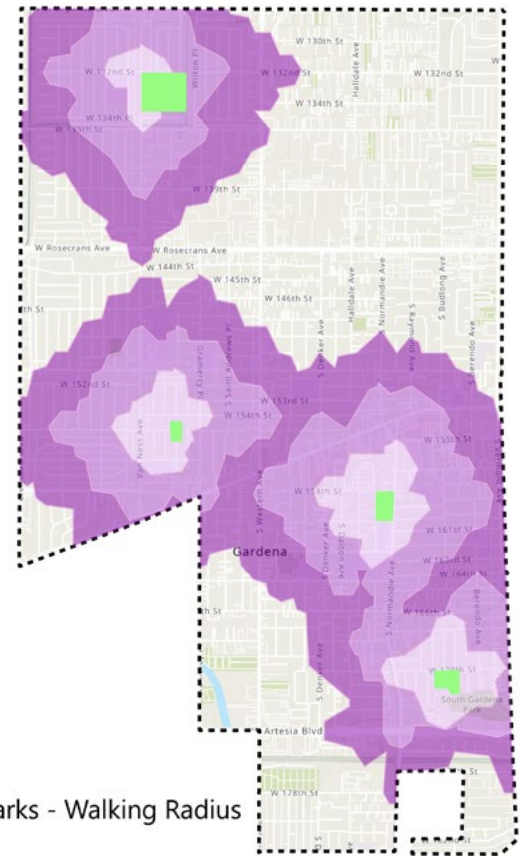
| | | | |
|---|-------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|
|  | 5 Min Walk | 1.9% of population | 1,158 pop / .2 sq. miles |
|  | 10 Min Walk | 8.9% of population | 5,505 pop / .77 sq. miles |
|  | 15 Min Walk | 19.8% of population | 12,163 pop / 1.63 sq. miles |



Neighborhood Parks - Walking Radius

- 5 Minutes
- 10 Minutes
- 15 Minutes

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Community Parks - Walking Radius

- 5 Minutes
- 10 Minutes
- 15 Minutes

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Exhibit 3.1-6: Service Area Gap Analysis for Neighborhood Parks

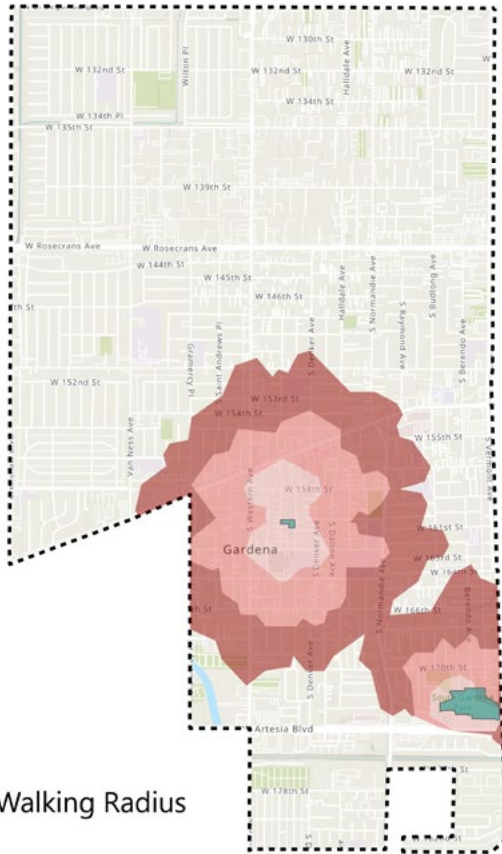
Neighborhood Parks

| | | | |
|--|-------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|
| | 5 Min Walk | 7.4% of population | 4,551 pop / .35 sq. miles |
| | 10 Min Walk | 21.3% of population | 13,124 pop / 1.41 sq. miles |
| | 15 Min Walk | 38.2% of population | 23,521 pop / 2.91 sq. miles |

Exhibit 3.1-7: Service Area Gap Analysis for Community Parks

Community Parks

| | | | |
|--|-------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|
| | 5 Min Walk | 8.5% of population | 5,213 pop / .66 sq. miles |
| | 10 Min Walk | 28.6% of population | 17,616 pop / 2.46 sq. miles |
| | 15 Min Walk | 53.3% of population | 32,794 pop / 4.74 sq. miles |



Special Use - Walking Radius

- 5 Minutes
- 10 Minutes
- 15 Minutes

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Exhibit 3.1-8: Service Area Gap Analysis for Special Use Parks

Special Use Parks




| | | | |
|---|-------------|---------------------|---------------------------|
|  | 5 Min Walk | 3.2% of population | 1,968 pop / .24 sq. miles |
|  | 10 Min Walk | 11.6% of population | 7,111 pop / .91 sq. miles |
|  | 15 Min Walk | 22.7% of population | 13,953 pop / 2 sq. miles |



Photo by the City of Gardena

Park Service Area Gaps

Base Land Use Designations

- Single Family Residential
- Low Residential
- Med. Residential
- High Residential
- Very High Residential
- Home Business
- General Commercial
- Industrial
- Neighborhood Commercial
- Public/Institutional
- Specific Plan
- Commercial Residential
- Artesia Mixed Use

Park Types

- Parkette
- Neighborhood Park
- Community Park
- Special Use Park

Parkette - Walking Radius

- 5 Minutes
- 10 Minutes
- 15 Minutes

Neighborhood Parks - Walking Radius

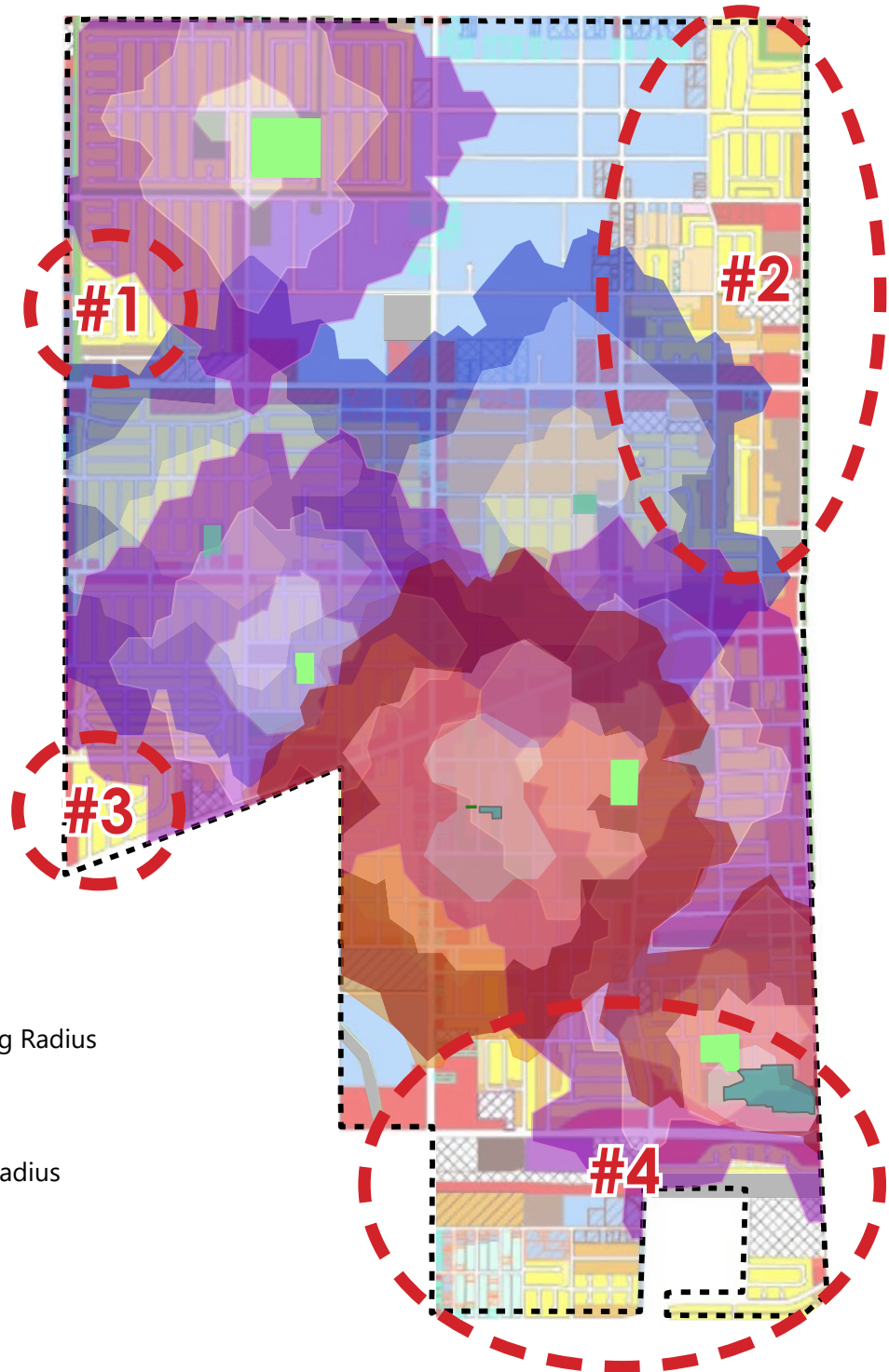
- 5 Minutes
- 10 Minutes
- 15 Minutes

Community Parks - Walking Radius

- 5 Minutes
- 10 Minutes
- 15 Minutes

Special Use - Walking Radius

- 5 Minutes
- 10 Minutes
- 15 Minutes



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Exhibit 3.1-9: Service Area Gap Analysis Map



It is important to consider that Community Parks (Johnson, Freeman, Fukai, and Rowley Parks) serve a larger active recreational community need and have also been evaluated using a 3-mile drive radius. Residents within a short drivable distance to Community Parks (measured in a 3 mile radius due to the vehicle-centric design and programming) are estimated to be 100% of the total 2022 population.

To analyze the distribution of existing city parks, a service area radius map is created for city-owned parkette, neighborhood, community, and special use parks (see Exhibit 3.1-9).

When areas zoned for residential use fall outside of these service area designations, they are identified as an underserved neighborhood or “gap area”. The city has excellent coverage providing park space that is geographically distributed throughout the community. There are however some gaps as identified in exhibit 3.1-9.

- #1** This residential neighborhood located in the Northwest area of the city, north of Rosecrans Avenue, has access to the Laguna Dominguez Trail. Additionally, residents in this area will have a park or recreation facility within walking distance when the opportunity site, Rosecrans Site, is developed.
- #2** There are several neighborhoods in the Northeast portion of the city that do not have a City of Gardena park within walking distance. However, Rosecrans Park and Recreation Center and Helen Keller Park in the city of Los Angeles are nearby and serve this community. There is a utility corridor in this area that could be developed through a joint use agreement to add parkland in this area.
- #3** This neighborhood area is less than a mile away from Alondra Park, a city of Lawndale park. This large park serves this residential area.
- #4** This gap area in the Southern portion of the city would benefit from the increasing access to the Willows Wetland Preserve. Additionally, a joint use agreement with the school district could increase access to the Gardena High School playing fields. Guenser Park in Torrance is also located less than a mile away.

Custom Park Standards Calculations (CPSC's)

3.2 Custom Park Standards Calculations & Facility Demand

A key element in any planning strategy is an understanding of the nature of “demand” for parks and recreation facilities. This report assesses the demand for recreation facilities by the participants of organized sports within Gardena, and participation data from the statistically valid, multimodal community survey. Without this understanding, a policy can only be based on general standards of supply and demand, such as population ratios (acres per thousand population) or service area (distance to a park). Such standards are useful guides lacking specific detailed planning and assessment.

“The 2023 NRPA Agency Performance Review does not present park and recreation “standards,” nor do the benchmarks represent any standards against which every individual park and recreation agency should measure itself. The reason for this is simple: there is not a single set of standards for parks and recreation because different agencies serve different communities that have unique needs, desires and challenges. Agencies also have diverse funding mechanisms.”

- 2023 NRPA Agency Performance Review

The Custom Park Standards Calculations (CPSC's) for the City of Gardena are based on the 2022 Esri population level of 61,543 and participation data gathered in the Sports Organization Survey. The Custom Park Standards Calculations provide an estimate of the number of facilities or 'demand' required to accommodate peak day demand in the context of the local design standards. The local facility design is based on the information received from the City of Gardena about the sports organizations identifying the number of players, team size, and facility turnover for each facility type. The CPSC Methodology is illustrated in Exhibit 3.2-1.





Exhibit 3.2-1 CPSC Methodology

To provide an additional comparison of the Gardena Local Needs, a comparison of the 2023 NRPA Benchmark facility report is provided in Exhibit 3.2-2. The comparison illustrates how each city is unique in its recreation patterns. The city should not rely solely on benchmarking.

Exhibit 3.2-2 below uses the 2023 NRPA Benchmark data to compare with the City of Gardena's existing inventory. The NRPA National Standard is used to calculate the NRPA Facility Need for Gardena using the City of Gardena's 2022 population of 61,543.

| Facility | Local CPSC Facility Need Ratio for All Players | Local Facility Need | NRPA National Standard (50,000 to 99,999 population) | NRPA Facility Need |
|------------------------|--|---------------------|--|--------------------|
| Baseball Field (youth) | 1/15,386 | 4.0 | 1/7,237 | 8.5 |
| Basketball Court* | 1/34,475 | 1.8 | 1/8,790 | 7.0 |
| Football Field | 1/20,514 | 3.0 | 1/29,374 | 2.1 |
| Soccer Field (youth) | 1/61,543 | 1.0 | 1/7,207 | 8.5 |
| Futsal Court (youth) | 1/22,379 | 2.8 | Not Available** | Not Available** |

*NRPA does not specify indoor or outdoor.
 **NRPA does not provide statistics on Futsal.

Exhibit 3.2-2 Local Needs vs. NRPA Needs

Custom Park Standards Calculations (CPSC's) continued

The following illustrations identify the individual sports evaluated as part of the local CPSC's for Gardena. Existing facilities are compared to the local needs and surplus / deficit calculations are presented for current (2023) as well as future (2032) demand needs. It is important to note that the needs in this section are based on organized sport data and does not take into account additional unstructured recreation desires by the community.

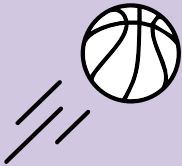
Baseball (youth) Summary:



| | |
|----------------------------|------|
| Total Facilities Available | 9.0* |
| Current Needs | 4.0 |
| Current Surplus / Deficit | 5.0 |
| Future Needs | 4.0 |
| Future Surplus / Deficit | 5.0 |

*Baseball is played on softball fields.

Basketball Indoor (youth) Summary:



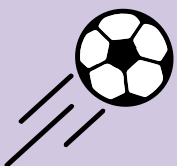
| | |
|----------------------------|-----|
| Total Facilities Available | 2.0 |
| Current Needs | 1.8 |
| Current Surplus / Deficit | 0.2 |
| Future Needs | 1.8 |
| Future Surplus / Deficit | 0.2 |

Football (youth) Summary:



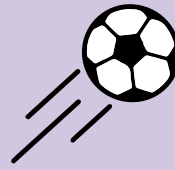
| | |
|----------------------------|------|
| Total Facilities Available | 0.0 |
| Current Needs | 3.0 |
| Current Surplus / Deficit | -3.0 |
| Future Needs | 3.0 |
| Future Surplus / Deficit | -3.0 |

Futsal (youth) Summary:



| | |
|----------------------------|------|
| Total Facilities Available | 2.0 |
| Current Needs | 2.8 |
| Current Surplus / Deficit | -0.8 |
| Future Needs | 2.8 |
| Future Surplus / Deficit | -0.8 |

Soccer (youth) Summary:



| | |
|----------------------------|-----|
| Total Facilities Available | 1.0 |
| Current Needs | 1.0 |
| Current Surplus / Deficit | 0.0 |
| Future Needs | 1.0 |
| Future Surplus / Deficit | 0.0 |

The City of Gardena offers adult softball leagues as part of its recreational sports programs. The adult softball leagues are seasonally organized, with games and practices held at local parks and recreational facilities. The city's Recreation and Human Services Department actively updates league schedules, standings, and registration. At the time of this report there were several teams playing over two divisions. These leagues are not counted in the CPSC's however do utilize the city facilities.

Utilizing the surplus field space has several benefits, including:

- Renting out unused or underutilized fields can generate additional revenue for the city. This income can be reinvested into maintaining and upgrading sports facilities or supporting other community services.
- With increased usage, there might be concerns about wear and tear; however, the additional revenue can help cover the costs of maintenance and ensure the fields remain in good condition for all users.

Overall, while this policy can bring many benefits, it also requires careful management to balance increased usage with maintenance and to ensure that the fields are available for community events and programs as needed.

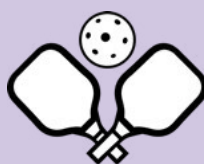
The Custom Park Standards Calculations for tennis, pickleball, and basketball are based on the 2022 population level in the City of Gardena of 61,543. The per capita participation is based on the information received from the 2023 statistically-valid, multimodal community survey identifying the annual participation for each facility type. The facility need ratio for each type of facility is calculated by dividing the total population by the number of facilities demanded. The city should continue to evaluate growth or decline in recreational activities when prioritizing new development.

Tennis Summary:



| | |
|----------------------------|-----|
| Total Facilities Available | 9.0 |
| Current Needs | 7.8 |
| Current Surplus / Deficit | 1.2 |

Pickleball Summary:



| | |
|----------------------------|------|
| Total Facilities Available | 4.0* |
| Current Needs | 7.0 |
| Current Surplus / Deficit | -3.0 |

*Planned. Available in 2025.

Basketball Summary:



| | |
|-----------------------------|-----|
| Total Facilities Available* | 11 |
| Current Needs | 9.5 |
| Current Surplus / Deficit | 1.5 |



Youth Futsal at Freeman Park

Recreation Program Inventory

3.3 Programs and Services

The City of Gardena 2023/2024 Adopted Budget describes the responsibilities of the Recreation and Human Services Department as:

“The Recreation and Human Services Department is responsible for providing a broad array of recreation, social and community services to a diverse community of individuals, families, and organizations.”

The City of Gardena offers a wide range of programs and services that promote health and well-being.

Aquatics

The city’s Primm Memorial Pool was built decades ago and has not been in operation since the summer of 2019 due to the deteriorating condition of the pool and related facilities. The existing pool facility was approximately 1,500 square feet with showers and locker rooms. The new facility will be 11,967 square feet and includes the city’s new senior center. Opening of the new facility is scheduled for Summer 2025. Aquatic programs that will be offered include:

- Aqua Aerobics.
- Swim Lessons (4 sessions)—Parent and Me, Youth, Teen, and Adult
- Lap Swimming
- Recreational Swim
- Seniors and Developmentally Disabled

Sports

Gardena offers a variety of sports programs for both youth and adults, including basketball, soccer, futsal, baseball, softball, karate, flag football, tennis, and pickleball.

In addition, youth sports clinics are held prior to the beginning of each sport season. These sports programs cater to different age groups and skill levels, providing opportunities for both youth and adults to participate in organized sports activities.

Human Services & Emergency Services

The Human Services Division of the Department provides a variety of services to the community, including youth and adult counseling, senior citizen outreach and meals programming, and care for those suffering from Alzheimer’s mental disease. The Division provides diversified programming which includes recreational activities, field trips, special holiday and summer programs. The Division is separated into three independent areas of operation:

- Senior Citizen’s Bureau.
- Senior Citizen’s Day Care Center for those with Alzheimer’s.
- Youth and Family Services Bureau.
- Homeless Services

Children, Youth, and Teen Services

Providing safe, accessible, and affordable programs for children and teens that extend learning opportunities outside of school time is a goal of the Department. Programs offered include after-school programs, summer youth day camps, traditional youth sports programming, and a Youth Commission.



Photo by City of Gardena Facebook

Kids to Park Fiesta

The city provides an after-school program for students ages 5-12 at Freeman Park, Johnson Park, the Nakaoka Community Center, and Rowley Park and a 9-week (depending on the summer dates) summer youth day camp for ages 5-12 and teen camp for ages 13-17. Campers participate in a variety of activities, including sports, fitness fun, cooperative games and team building, arts and crafts, excursions, and educational activities. Tiny Tot programs designed for ages 0-6 includes Ballet and Tap, Gymnastics Parent and Me, and Tiny Tots Gymnastics.

The Gardena Youth Commission is comprised of five members appointed by the city Council and five “at-large” members approved by the Commission and ratified by the city Council. The Commission, acting in an advisory capacity, identifies and evaluates youth and community problems, projects and concerns and develops recommendations presented to the City Council.

Adult Classes

The City of Gardena offers some classes for adults, including enrichment classes, fitness programs, and dance programs.

Senior Programs

Gardena currently offers senior recreation programming for those ages 50 and above at the Ken Nakaoka Community Center. With the demolition of Primm Pool, the city is developing a new Aquatic Center and Multigenerational/Senior Center on this site. This facility, with expected Summer 2025 completion, will be operated as the primary Senior Center with classes and activities. Meal

services will continue to be offered at the Nakaoka Community Center since the new center does not have a full kitchen. The city currently provides numerous senior programs and activities, lectures, health information, and an extensive social services support program including lunches and home delivered meals. Classes for seniors include senior exercise, line dancing, pickleball, and Tai Chi.

Community Special Events

Community special events that bridge the community and bring people together for recreation, cultural expression, community improvement, and entertainment are popular programs and well attended. These events unite the community and build community identity and vitality.



Photo by City of Gardena
MLK Parade

32%

Would like to see a program, class, or activity added or improved

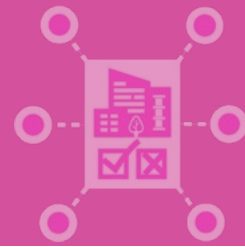
78%

Are satisfied with the Existing Parks, Recreational Facilities, and Programs

Source: 2023 multimodal survey



Photo by City of Gardena Facebook



The recommendations developed herein are founded in the desires and needs for recreation opportunities identified by the Gardena community in the outreach and engagement process conducted as part of this Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Specific recommendations are broken down into the seven key strategies that will advance the development of parks and recreation for the entire community.

The key strategies combined with the planned and unplanned parks and recreation facility projects (Exhibit 4.2-1) and the opportunity sites (page 87-88) outlines a roadmap to guide the development of the city's parks and recreation system.

4.1 Key Strategies

Each of the following five (5) recommended key strategies are designed to balance the equation of where exiting recreation resources exist and how they relate to the needs of the community.



Key Strategy #1: **Preserve the city's most cherished resources through enhanced maintenance support and park improvements.**



Key Strategy #2: **Strengthen the bond between community and the natural environment.**



Key Strategy #3: **Develop new park facilities to support growing demands.**



Key Strategy #4: **Enhancing community togetherness and small town feel through events.**



Key Strategy #5: **Refine program development to meeting the needs of the community.**

Key Strategy #1: Preserve the city's most cherished resources through enhanced maintenance support and park improvements

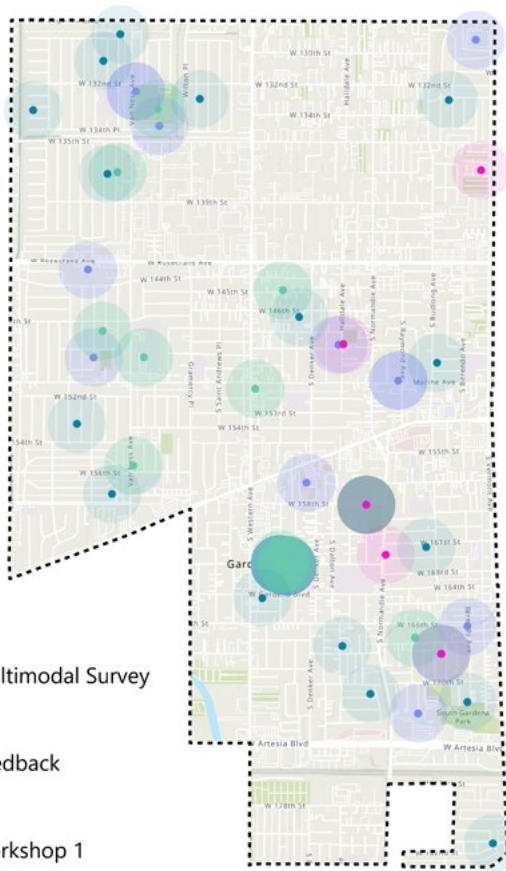


Park Maintenance:



Photo by RJM Design Group

Rowley Park



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Exhibit 4.1-1: Park Maintenance Distribution Map

Existing Conditions:

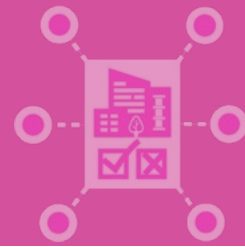
- The Public Works Department is responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of city parks, playgrounds, and facilities. Their goal is “To maintain and continually improve the safety and aesthetics of city streets, facilities, parks, medians, and city equipment at the highest level possible.” The City of Gardena, California, allocates approximately \$3,049,875 for park maintenance as part of its Public Works budget for the fiscal year 2023-2024.

Community Voice:

- When the community was polled about their satisfaction with the maintenance of Parks and Recreation Facilities, 80% of respondents stated they were somewhat to very satisfied.
- Park maintenance desires were recorded in workshop #1, workshop #3, feedback comments, and the multimodal survey.
- Specific mentions included: clean up, remove trash, trash and recycle receptacles, and removal of graffiti.
- Exhibit 4.1-1 illustrates the location of survey respondents that expressed a desire for park maintenance.

Recommendations:

- The city faces significant challenges in maintaining and operating its parks and recreation facilities due to a current shortfall in funding and staffing levels. The city should look to increase park and facility maintenance funding and staffing particularly as several of the facilities are aging and will require more significant improvements over time.
- Specific recommendations can be found in the Operations and Maintenance Plan and the CASp Study available in the appendix.



Playground Improvements:



Photo by RJM Design Group

Thornburg Park

Existing Conditions:

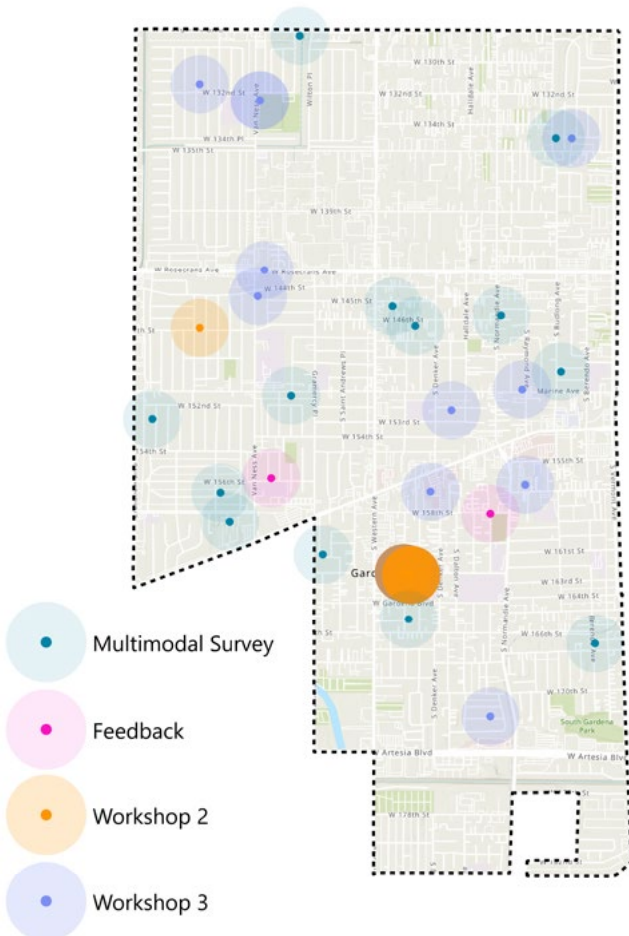
- The city has nine (9) playground areas located throughout the community. The playgrounds can be found in Parkette's, Neighborhood Parks, and Community Parks. While the city has several playgrounds there is a range of conditions from older model equipment to newer facilities with modern designed components and surfacing.

Community Voice:

- Playground Improvement desires were recorded in the stakeholder interviews, workshop #2, workshop #3, feedback comments, and the multimodal survey.
- Specific mentions included: adding a jungle gym, replace/add swings, remove sand, and provide better equipment.
- Exhibit 4.1-2 illustrates the location of survey respondents that expressed a desire for playground improvements.

Recommendations:

- The city should look at developing a playground life cycle replacement schedule.
- Additional consideration should be given to playgrounds with high visitor traffic. Areas with high traffic should be reviewed for regular maintenance.
- Older playgrounds that have exceeded their effectiveness should be redesigned.
- New playground designs should include universal standards including social-emotional concepts as well as all abilities equipment. Specific playground renovations can be found in Exhibit 4.2-1.



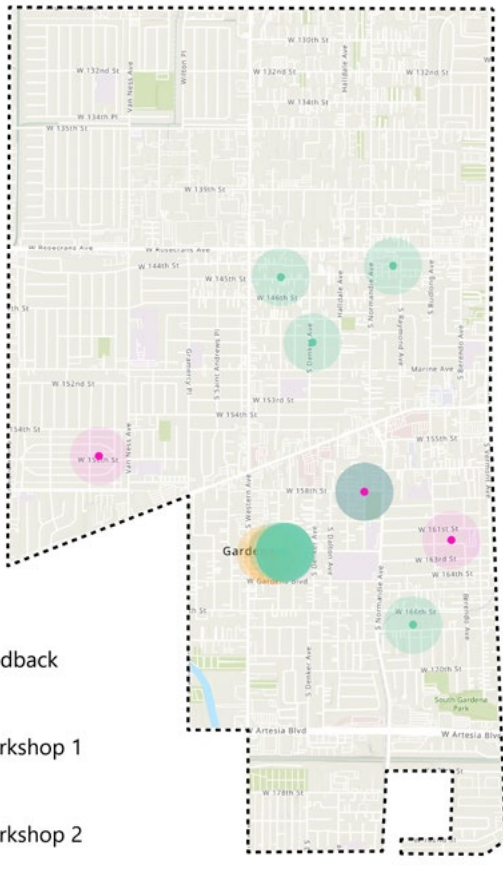
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Key Strategy #1: Preserve the city's most cherished resources through enhanced maintenance support

Renovate Community Buildings:



City Offices & Rush Gymnasium



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Exhibit 4.1-3: Renovate Community Buildings Distribution Map

Existing Conditions:

- The city has two (2) stand-alone community buildings, the Nakaoka Community Center and the James Rush Gymnasium / Human Services Building.
- In addition, there are several community buildings located in the parks, including: the Recreation Center and Gymnasium at Rowley Park, the new Senior Center at the Aquatic Park (opening in Summer 2025), and small buildings at Bell, Freeman, Johnson, Mas Fukai, and Thornburg Parks.
- A CASp Study (available in the appendix) was conducted on these facilities including City Hall.

Community Voice:

- Requests to renovate the community buildings were recorded in the stakeholder interviews, workshop #1, workshop #2, and the feedback comments.
- Specific mentions included: provide energy efficient improvements, fix up the rooms, add larger rooms, add more meeting spaces, modernize buildings, and building upgrades.
- Exhibit 4.1-3 illustrates the location of survey respondents that expressed a desire for renovating the community buildings.

Recommendations:

- The CASp report identified several specific recommendations based on its findings. Overall, the facilities have been maintained well, however they are showing their age and will require additional maintenance to keep up with current codes and standards.
- As the city looks to continue its program development and providing excellent services to its residents it should also consider implementing the renovations suggested in the CASp Study report including building upgrades. Specific recommendations per facility can be found in Exhibit 4.2-1.



KIYOTO KEN NAKAOAKA
MEMORIAL COMMUNITY CENTER
CITY OF GARDENA

Photo by RJM Design Group



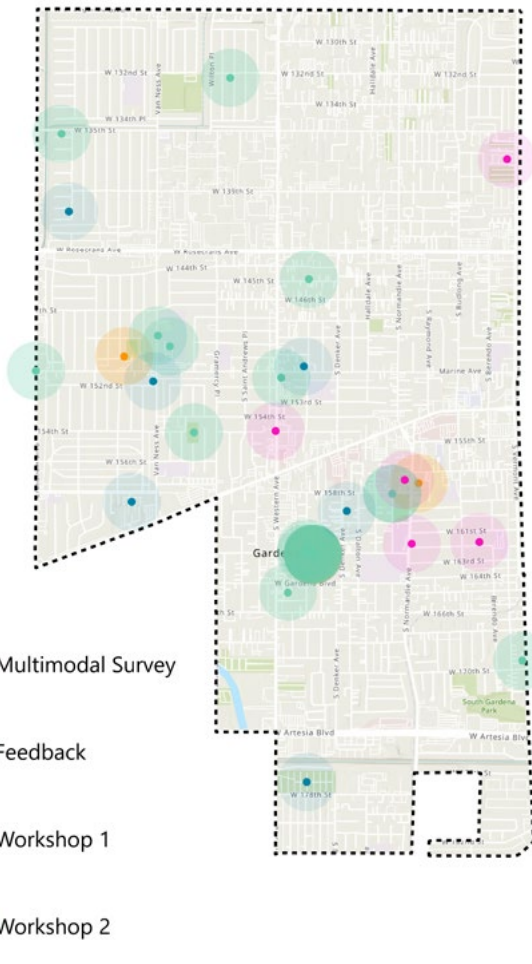
Key Strategy #2: Strengthen the bond between community and the natural environment

Trees and Green Space:



Photo by RJM Design Group

Thornburg Park



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Exhibit 4.1-4: Trees and Green Space Distribution Map

Existing Conditions:

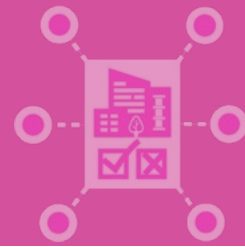
- The City of Gardena currently has eight (8) parks and three (3) stand-alone community buildings which encompass 49.4 acres of developed parkland and open space. This accounts for a total of 0.8 acres of developed parkland per 1000 residents. The city's General Plan has a goal of 3 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents.
- American Forests™ has developed a way to evaluate a city's Tree Equity Score. The score ranges from 0-100. The lower the score, the greater priority for tree planting. The City of Gardena has a Tree Equity Score of 55.

Community Voice:

- There were several mentions from the community regarding trees and green space recorded in workshop #1, workshop #2, feedback comments, and the multimodal survey.
- Specific mentions included: more outdoor areas/spaces, more trees, more parkland, and additional green space.
- Exhibit 4.1-4 illustrates the location of survey respondents that expressed a desire for trees and green space.

Recommendations:

- While the city does not currently meet its goal of 3 acres per 1,000 residents, the city should not only focus on increasing the acres of developed parkland, but develop strategic park facilities and green spaces as detailed here in the Master Plan report. When the community desires are in line with available parkland communities thrive in health benefits, social cohesion, economically, and overall quality of life.
- The city should pursue specific recommendations detailed in Exhibit 4.2-1 to improve existing parks, as well as develop the opportunity sites.

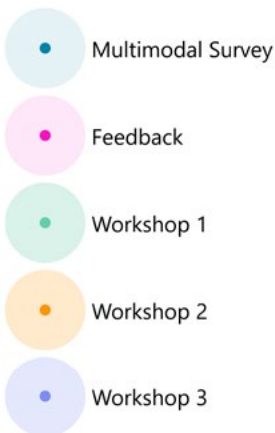
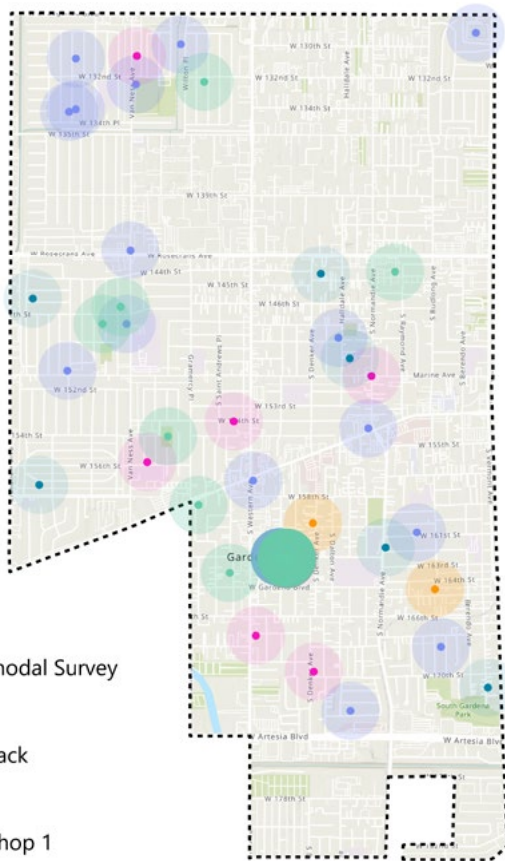


Walking Paths and Trails:



Photo by RJM Design Group

Rowley Park



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Existing Conditions:

- Connecting with nature and escaping our urban environment is easily achieved by taking regular walks in parks and in natural environments.
- The city is bordered by the 405, 105, and 110 freeways. The largest green spaces in the region include the Willows Wetland Preserve and two golf courses just outside the city boundaries (Chester Washington, and Alonda Park).
- The city does have a Class One bike trail on the northeast corner of the city along the Laguna Dominguez Trail and several Class Three bike lanes across the city.

Community Voice:

- Walking path and trail mentions were recorded from the community in the stakeholder interviews, workshop #1, workshop #2, workshop #3, feedback comments, and the multimodal survey.
- Specific mentions included: walking trails, walking paths, hiking trail, running path, bike paths, and a reflexology barefoot walking path.
- Exhibit 4.1-5 illustrates the location of survey respondents that expressed a desire for walking paths and trails.

Recommendations:

- The community outreach collected focused more on walking and hiking paths in nature and therefore class three bike trails do not satisfy this need.
- The city should look to improving neighborhood park trail loops, as well as promotion of the Willows Wetland Preserve Trails.
- See Exhibit 4.2-1 for specific park recommendations for walkways and trails.

Exhibit 4.1-5: Walking Paths and Trails Distribution Map



Key Strategy #3: Develop new park facilities to support growing demands

Pickleball Court:



Photo by RJM Design Group

Sample - Pickleball Courts in Huntington Beach, CA

Existing Conditions:

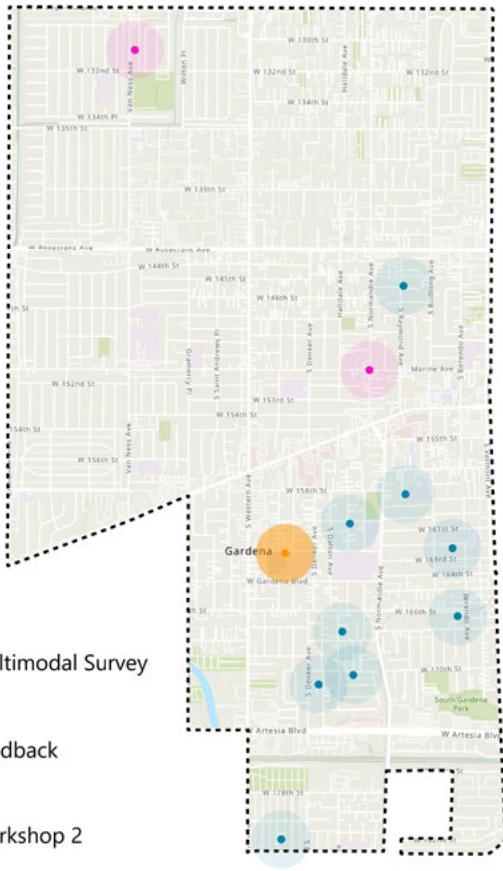
- The city will have 3 lighted pickleball courts at Mas Fukai Park, one temporary court in Rush Gymnasium / Human Services Building, and one multi-use court at Rowley Park.
- Pickleball has been a fast growing sport for over the last ten years.
- Based on the statistically-valid multimodal survey the number of people that reported playing pickleball was calculated against the city's population to develop a per capita ratio. The result is a demand for seven (7) pickleball courts in total.

Community Voice:

- Desires for new pickleball courts were recorded in the stakeholder interviews, workshop #2, feedback comments, and the multimodal survey.
- Specific mentions included: add more pickleball courts, pickleball classes, restripe tennis, and suggested use for badminton combined with pickleball.
- Exhibit 4.1-6 illustrates the location of survey respondents that expressed a desire for pickleball.

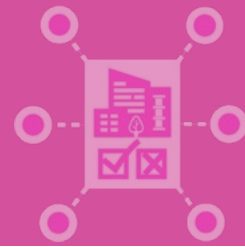
Recommendations:

- The city currently has a 3-court deficit for local community pickleball play.
- This sport is very social and often includes players from multiple communities gathering for local play or tournament games. As such there may be a greater number of players that come in from outside the community.
- It is recommended the city add an additional three pickleball courts to meet the growing demand.



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Exhibit 4.1-6: Pickleball Court Distribution Map

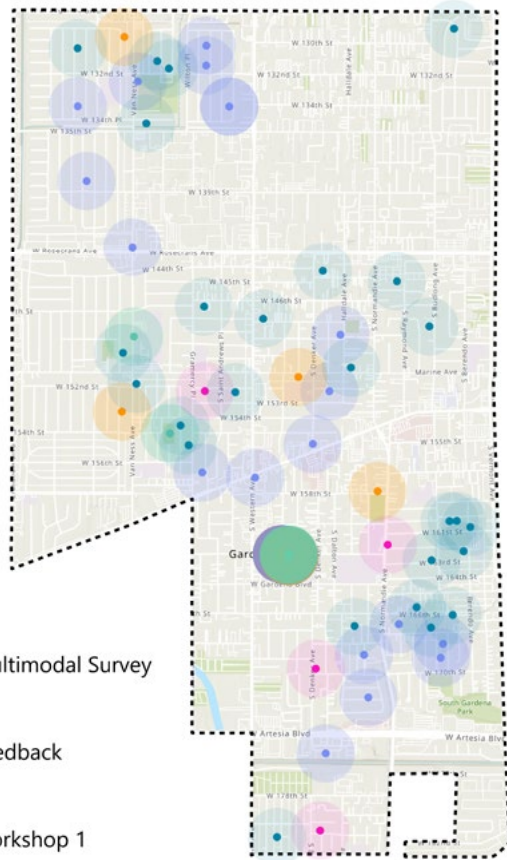


Dog Park or Off Leash Dog Area:



Photo by RJM Design Group

Sample - Dog Park in Mission Viejo, CA



- Multimodal Survey
- Feedback
- Workshop 1
- Workshop 2
- Workshop 3

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Existing Conditions:

- The city does not currently have a dog park.
- The nearest dog park to the city is Memorial Dog Park in Hawthorne and Magic Johnson Dog Park in Los Angeles.
- Participants of the statistically-valid multimodal survey (25%) identified that if the city had a dog park, they would visit it more than once a week. This included 9% identifying they would visit daily.
- The city's municipal code 6.02.050 (established in 1997) enforces that dogs or other animal on park premises is not allowed.
- Lack of dog park facilities can put an additional strain on local parks to provide open areas for dog owners to recreate. Having a dedicated dog park centralizes off leash dog activities.

Community Voice:

- Requests for a dog park or an off leash dog area were recorded in the stakeholder interviews, workshop #1, workshop #2, workshop #3, feedback comments, and the multimodal survey.
- The mentions were specific to requesting a dog park and or off leash dog area in a park.
- Exhibit 4.1-7 illustrates the location of survey respondents that expressed a desire for pickleball.

Recommendations:

- Dog park was one of the more frequent requests by the community. It is recommended the city look to develop a new dog park within the city.
- The city should consider amending municipal code 6.02.050 to allow leashed dogs in some of the parks.
- The city should install pet waste stations if allowing leashed dogs in parks.

Exhibit 4.1-7: Dog Park or Off Leash Dog Area Distribution Map



Key Strategy #4: Enhancing community togetherness and small town feel through events

Events:



Photo by <https://www.dailybreeze.com/2022/08/29/gardena-jazz-festival-celebrates-19-years-of-tunes/>

Gardena Jazz Festival

Existing Conditions:

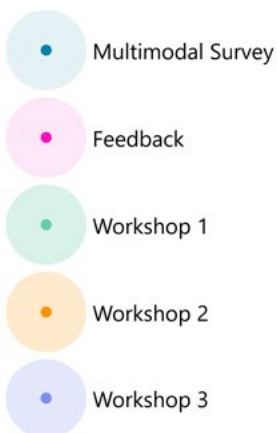
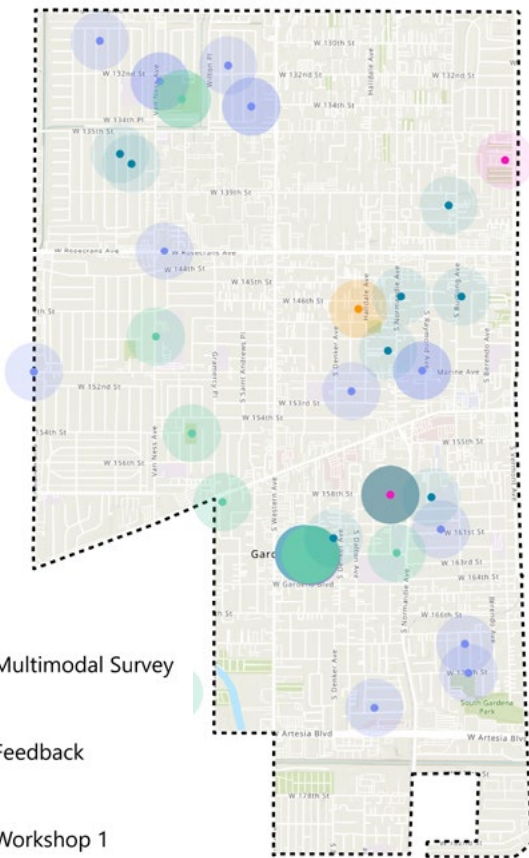
- The City of Gardena hosts a variety of community events annually, covering a wide range of interests and activities. Some of the key annual events include the Gardena Jazz Festival, Cinco de Mayo celebrations, the Food, Wine, and Brew Festival, and the MLK Parade.
- Additionally, the city regularly schedules other community gatherings such as cultural festivals, holiday events, and recreational activities throughout the year. These events are often well attended and loved by the community.

Community Voice:

- Desires for events were recorded in the stakeholder interviews, workshop #1, workshop #2, workshop #3, feedback comments, and the multimodal survey.
- Specific mentions included: field trips to the Willows Wetlands, more events, extracurricular/culturally diverse events, family friendly events, art fairs, and street fair.
- Exhibit 4.1-8 illustrates the location of survey respondents that expressed a desire for events.

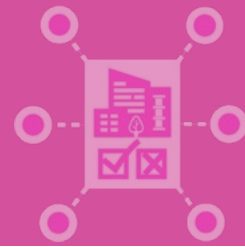
Recommendations:

- The Department should document the need for additional staffing that will allow a continued role in cooperating with the local Chamber of Commerce, Los Angeles County School District, civic organizations, non-profits, and businesses, to produce community-wide special events.
- The Recreation and Human Services and Economic Development Departments, in conjunction with the local Chamber of Commerce, should conduct and report to the city Council economic profile reports of special events held within city limits.

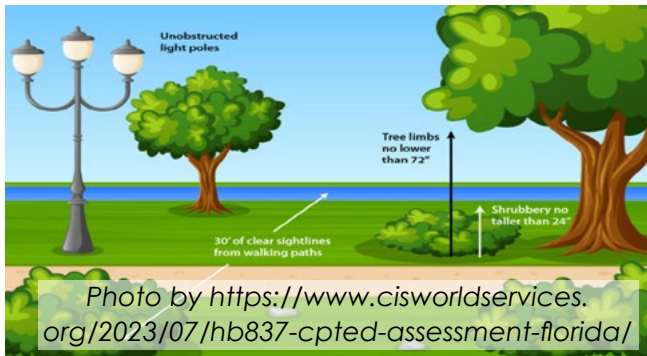


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Exhibit 4.1-8: Events Distribution Map



Security and Park Safety:



Sample of CPTED in park planning

Existing Conditions:

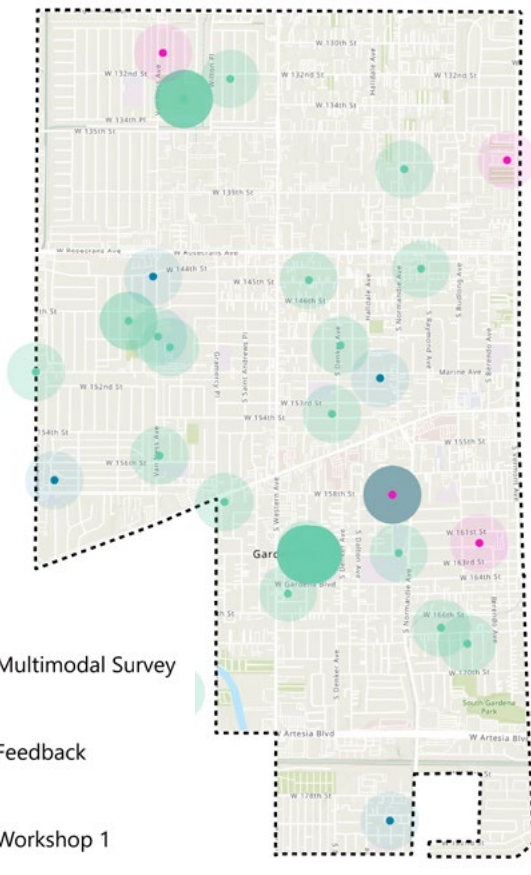
- The city does not currently have an established park ranger or security guard program.
- Park safety is a common concern in many cities across America.
- Modern park designs help limit nefarious and perceptions of potential unsafe conditions through Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) features. CPTED is a multi-disciplinary approach for crime prevention that uses urban and architectural design and the management of built and natural environments.

Community Voice:

- Desires for security and park safety was recorded in the stakeholder interviews, workshop #1, feedback comments, and the multimodal survey.
- Specific mentions included: safety, more security, surveillance, security cameras, park ranger, and protection.
- Exhibit 4.1-9 illustrates the location of survey respondents that expressed a desire for more security and park safety.

Recommendations:

- Park improvement projects as well as new park facilities should be designed to include Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) features.
- Research other communities park ranger programs and implement a test program.
- The city should evaluate the current remote camera system, and consider adding more cameras in parks with intense community use.



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Exhibit 4.1-9: Security and Park Safety Distribution Map

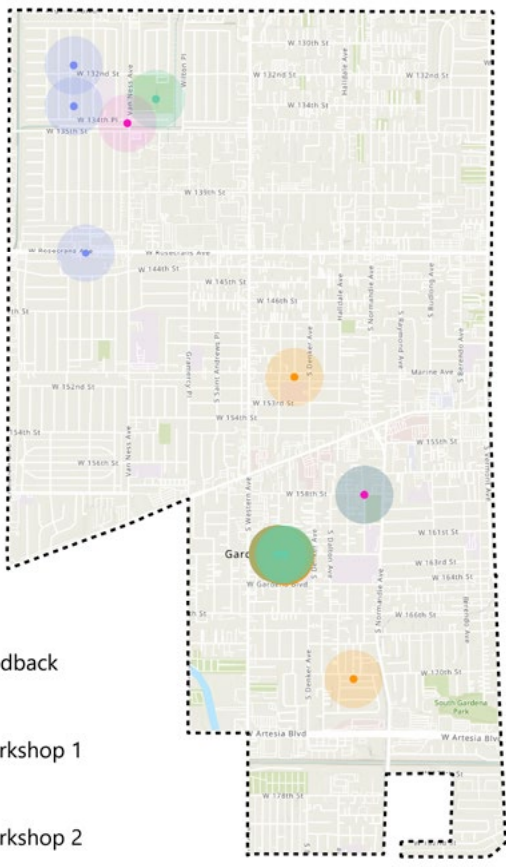


Key Strategy #5: Refine program development to meeting the needs of the community

After School Programs:



Gardena after school program



- Feedback
- Workshop 1
- Workshop 2
- Workshop 3

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Exhibit 4.1-10: After School Programs Distribution Map

Existing Conditions:

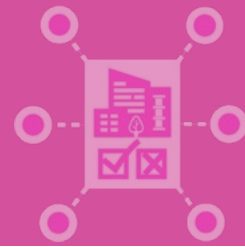
- The city provides an after school program for students ages 5-12 at Freeman Park, Johnson Park, Rowley Park, and at the Nakaoka Community Center. The program provides homework help, snacks, arts and crafts, and recreational activities.
- The Nakaoka Community Center after school program draws the largest number of participants, reaching as high as 98 for a registration period and over 2,700 for the entire year. The Freeman and Johnson Park Programs range from the high 40's to low 70's with all programs at or near capacity.
- Registrations for after school programs were very strong in 2022 and show slight increases in 2023.

Community Voice:

- Desires for after school programs were recorded in the stakeholder interviews, workshop #1, workshop #2, workshop #3, and in feedback comments.
- Specific mentions included: expand after school programs, after school activities, and additional after school programs.
- Exhibit 4.1-10 illustrates the location of survey respondents that expressed a desire for after school programs.

Recommendations:

- The city should look to expand the after-school programs through collaborative partnerships, marketing and assessments, and resource availability.
- Consider collaborating with local businesses, non-profits, and local colleges or universities that can bring in volunteers and interns who provide tutoring, mentoring, or lead extracurricular activities and balanced program offerings.
- Ensure that adequate facilities and resources are available to support expanded programs.



Aquatic Programs / Swimming Lessons:



Site plan for the new Gardena aquatic facility

Existing Conditions:

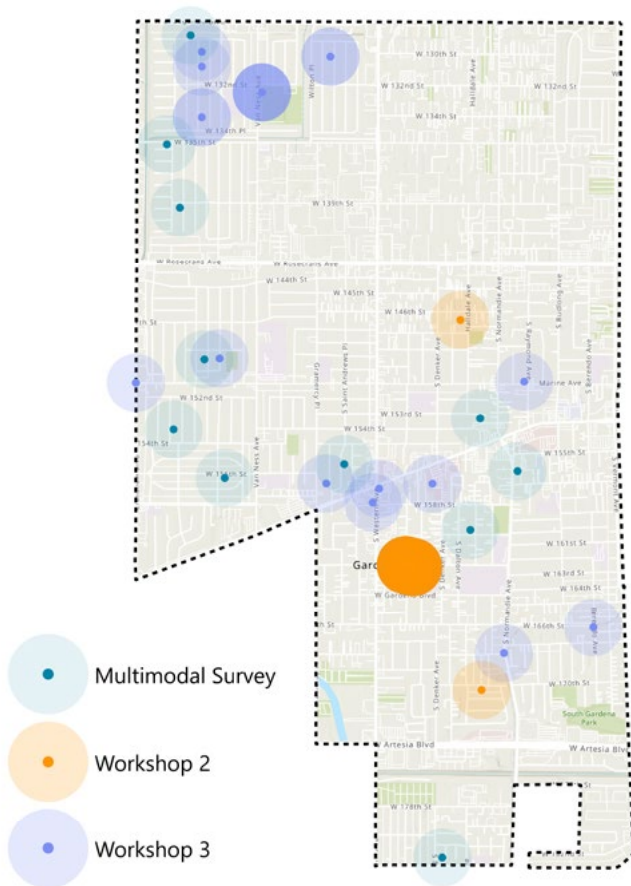
- The city has one swimming pool located at 1650 West 162nd Street. At the time of this report the facility was undergoing a complete renovation.
- The new aquatic facility will boast 8 lap lanes, a diving board, a recreation pool, cabanas, bleacher seating and layout areas. The new aquatic facility will also include a new two-story facility for seniors and multigenerational use as part of the construction.

Community Voice:

- Desires for aquatic programming and pool facilities were recorded in stakeholder interviews, workshop #2, workshop #3, and the multimodal survey.
- Specific mentions included: aquatic programming, swimming lessons, and pool areas.
- Exhibit 4.1-11 illustrates the location of survey respondents that expressed a desire for aquatic programs.

Recommendations:

- It is understandable there were requests for aquatic programming and a pool facility as the city's existing pool facility was demolished to make way for the new facility and not available during the construction period.
- The new pool facilities should satisfy the desires for a new pool in the city.
- While the city's new aquatic facility is under construction the city should look to partner with local and regional pool facilities to support the community's aquatic needs. Possible partnerships to consider are with Regal Swim, Redondo Union High School Aquatic Center, and /or South Bay Aquatics.



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Key Strategy #5: Refine program development to meeting the needs of the community

Senior Programs:



Photo by the City of Gardena

Example of a senior exercise class

Existing Conditions:

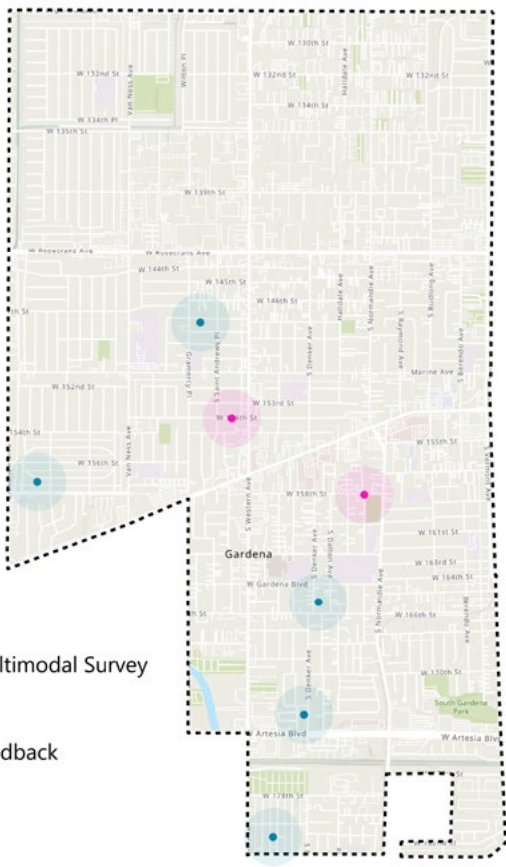
- Currently Gardena offers senior recreation programming for those ages 50 and above at the Ken Nakaoka Community Center and Rowley Park.
- With the demolition of Primm Pool, the city is expanding both the pool and developing a new Senior Center. With the reconstruction of the Primm Memorial Pool and the new Senior Center, the City of Gardena is in excellent shape to support the senior community.

Community Voice:

- Desires for senior programming were recorded in the stakeholder interviews, workshop #2, feedback comments, and the multimodal survey.
- Specific mentions included: computer/technology classes, senior exercise class, and more senior programs.
- Exhibit 4.1-12 illustrates the location of survey respondents that expressed a desire for senior programs.

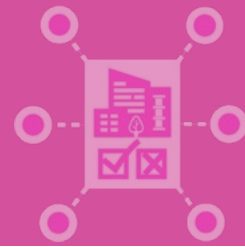
Recommendations:

- Develop senior aquatic programming when the new pool facility is open.
- Within existing programming, market to older adults with an emphasis on well-balanced fitness programs including gentler aerobics such as yoga, Tai Chi, and Pilates that offer a variety of benefits for health and disease prevention.
- Identify partners or collaborators to assist in developing an increase in programs for older adults at alternate locations. Possible partners may include libraries, AARP, faith-based organizations, health care providers, and educational institutions.
- Continue to offer and expand lifelong learning programs such as creative arts, technology classes, lectures, short courses, and leisure classes.



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Exhibit 4.1-12: Senior Programs Distribution Map



Dance Program:



Photo by the City of Gardena

Dance performance

Existing Conditions:

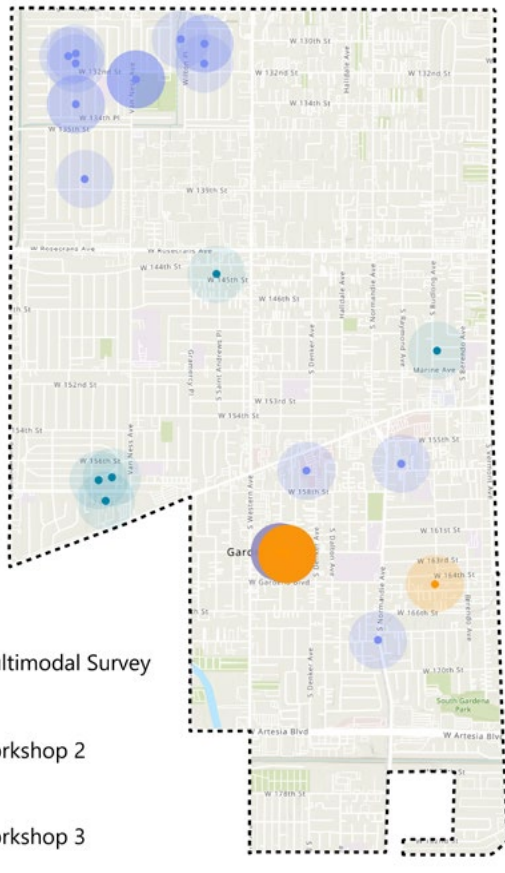
- The City of Gardena offers a variety of dance programs for different age groups, focusing on both recreational and developmental aspects. These programs are part of the city's broader effort to provide diverse recreational and developmental activities to its residents.
- The dance classes aim to not only teach dance techniques but also to enhance physical fitness, coordination, and self-expression among participants.

Community Voice:

- Community desires for dance programs were recorded in the stakeholder interviews, workshop #2, workshop #3, and in the multimodal survey.
- Specific mentions included: expand dance program to include performing arts, and more dance classes.
- Exhibit 4.1-13 illustrates the location of survey respondents that expressed a desire for dance programs.

Recommendations:

- Increase awareness of the city's dance programs and providers through effective marketing strategies. This might involve social media campaigns, partnerships with local media, and events that showcase the benefits of program participation to all ages.
- Utilize the marketing strategies found in the multimodal survey to target local communities.
- Expand or improve dance room as space becomes available either through new facilities or facility renovations.



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Key Strategy #5: Refine program development to meeting the needs of the community

Martial Arts/Self Defense Class:



Photo by RJM Design Group

Example of a martial arts class

Existing Conditions:

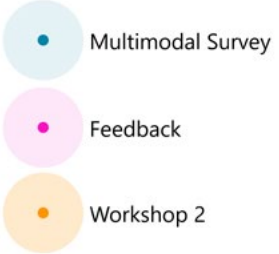
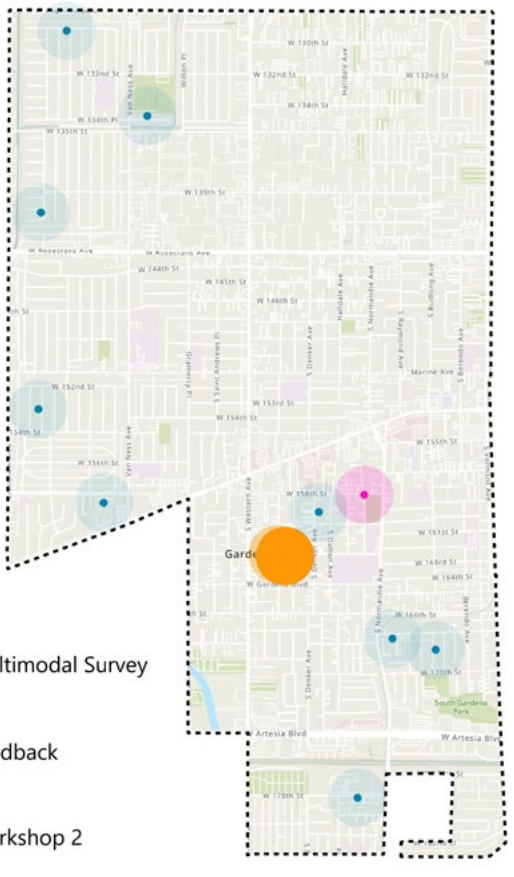
- The City of Gardena offers various karate classes as part of its self-defense program offerings, which cater to different age groups and skill levels.
- These programs help participants develop self-defense skills while also improving physical fitness, discipline, and self-confidence.
- Programs include Beginners Karate, Advanced Karate, Black Belt Karate and Kinder Karate (ages 4-6).

Community Voice:

- Desires for additional martial arts or self defense classes were recorded in the stakeholder interviews, workshop #2, feedback comments, and the multimodal survey.
- Specific mentions included: martial arts, self defense, boxing and karate classes.
- Exhibit 4.1-14 illustrates the location of survey respondents that expressed a desire for martial arts/self defense classes.

Recommendations:

- Increase awareness of the city's martial arts programs and providers through effective marketing strategies. This might involve social media campaigns, partnerships with local media, and events that showcase the benefits of program participation to all ages.
- Utilize the marketing strategies found in the multimodal survey to target local communities.



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NOTE: During the community outreach for this project, the martial arts program was closed. It has since re-opened and is now available.

Exhibit 4.1-14: Martial Arts / Self Defense Class Distribution Map



4



Park and Facility Funding Recommendations

4.2 Park and Recreation Facility Funding Recommendations

The cornerstone of the success of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan is Gardena's ability to secure adequate and stable funding for the development and operation of parks, recreation facilities, and programs. Two major cost centers require funding to implement the Master Plan. One is capital costs which includes potential acquisition and development of new required parklands and facilities and renovation of existing parks. The second major cost center is to develop long-term sustainable resources for operations and maintenance of existing and new facilities.

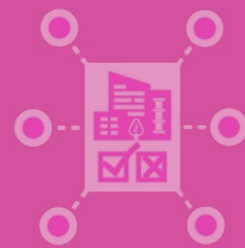
With difficult financial constraints and diminishing resources, it will be challenging to find the resources needed to build or renovate parks and facilities as well as maintain existing parks and infrastructure. Another vexing task will be sustaining the affordability of recreation fee supported programs to meet needs and demands for residents.

This section of the Master Plan provides information on funding options for park development, maintenance, and operations to assist Gardena in preparing for plan implementation. It discusses current funding mechanisms and identifies future possibilities and identifies key resources to meet future goals or strategic directions and guides the city staff in accomplishing the vision and goals of the Master Plan. Meeting these challenges will require equal amounts of vision, resourcefulness, partnership, and hard work.

The City of Gardena, through their efforts over the years, has pursued grants and other special funds to augment city services in specific program areas. Along with balanced careful budgeting, collaborative partnerships, and highly skilled staff the city has a Capital Improvement Plan adopted budget for FY 2023/2024 of \$50.9 million, the largest one-year CIP in the city's history.

Additional information on possible funding sources are available online and provided in the Appendix. The city should review and evaluate all available grant opportunities for each of the new projects considered. Some possible funding sources include:

- Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)
- Office of Grants and Local Services (OGALS)
 - California Land Water and Conservation Fund (LWCF)
 - Per Capita Grants
 - Recreation Trails Program
 - Outdoor Equity Grants
- MLB-MLBPA Baseball Tomorrow Fund
- United States Tennis Association (USTA) Facility Services Program
- U.S.A. Swimming Foundation Grants



The specific funding source for projects will depend on the timing of the new development, the funding sources available at that time, and/or those which may be more easily pursued when the project is anticipated to move forward. For major improvements, which include such facilities as community buildings, and sports facilities, the use of a capital project fund-raising effort may be needed.

Sponsorships and/or naming rights for major corporate or other private donors may also be a consideration. In some cases, the use of a professional fund-raising firm should be considered once a facility or project is identified. Other sources of funding may include development agreements, public/private partnerships, and/or grant opportunities.

Use of bonds, an increase in taxes, or special assessment districts requires voter-approval. Despite the dislike for taxes, voters in many communities have been willing to accept an increase when revenues are specifically earmarked for improvements or enhancements to public parks and amenities. Alternative funding recommendations are available in Recreation and Human Services/Public Works Departments Fiscal Summary and CIP Study located in the appendix.

Exhibit 4.2-1, on the following pages, identifies several recommended projects by park site and recreation facility for the City of Gardena based on the community outreach and professional site analysis during the Master Plan process. Project cost estimates are general in nature and developed to represent a master plan level cost for future budgeting. Costs should be considered as approximations of the proposed project. Actual costs will depend on design, size of facility, additional support facilities, utilities, infrastructure, environmental conditions, as well as site specific conditions which require additional study and have not been evaluated in the Master Plan. Based on these general project estimates and with all projects considered, the City of Gardena has a projection of \$39,759,250 in park and facility specific renovations. This includes \$30,299,250 of funded CIP projects and \$9,460,000 in unfunded future park specific recommendations.



Photo by the City of Gardena

Griffith Observatory Summer Camp Trip

Park and Facility Funding Recommendations

Existing park improvements can be combined by type and bid to specialty contractors for potentially more competitive pricing. The following categories represent specific improvements that are identified in several park or recreation facility locations:

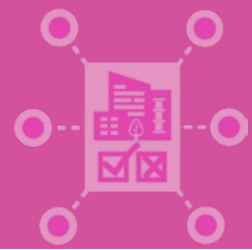
- Trail Improvements
- Walkway Renovations

While the city has ample resources for the immediate development and construction of new facilities the city will need to develop new revenue sources beyond those currently in use and/or increase funding levels for park maintenance to continue to meet the aging infrastructure. Proposals for future park operations must include adequate funding at a level necessary to sustain quality and safety in the city's parks, and cost-effective maintenance practices as described in the Operations and Maintenance Management Plan provided in the appendix document.

A funding section has been added to the exhibit for use in documenting potential funding sources as the city seeks to accomplish each recommendation. Several existing funded CIP projects have already been added to the funding key.

| PARK / FACILITY AND RECOMMENDATIONS | ESTIMATED COSTS | FUNDING KEY (see below) |
|---|---|-------------------------|
| CITY FACILITIES | | |
| <u>Nakaoka Community Center –</u> CIP Improvements 522 (c) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install two new specialized condenser coils on 40-ton existing condenser. CASp Improvements – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessible Parking Improvements (3.3) • Building Entries Improvements (3.4) • Restrooms and Drinking Fountain Improvements (3.6) • Interior Vertical Circulation Improvements (3.7) • Classrooms and Meeting Rooms Improvements (3.8) • Auditorium Improvements (3.9) | \$645,000 \$30,000 \$10,000 \$25,000 \$20,000 \$10,000 \$25,000 | C |
| <u>Rush Gymnasium / Human Services Building –</u> CASp Improvements – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessible Parking Improvements (4.3) • Building Entries Improvements (4.4) • Restrooms and Drinking Fountains Improvements (4.6) | \$30,000 \$40,000 \$30,000 | |
| <u>Paul A. Rowley Recreation Center</u> CASp Improvements – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Accessibility and Lobby Improvements (13.2) • Restrooms Improvements (13.3) | \$20,000 \$30,000 | |

Exhibit 4.2-1: Planned/Unplanned Parks and Recreation Facility Projects



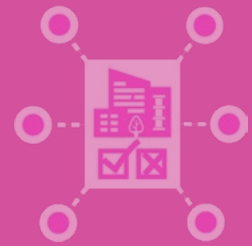
| PARK / FACILITY AND RECOMMENDATIONS | ESTIMATED COSTS | FUNDING KEY (see below) |
|---|---|-------------------------|
| CITY PARKS | | |
| Arthur Johnson Park – -New Parking Area and ADA Parking Improvements -New Playground -Basketball Court Resurfacing -Turf Renovations -Restroom Renovations CASp Improvements – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Site Accessibility (5.2) • Picnic Area (5.5) • Other Facilities (Building/Accessibility) (5.8) | \$70,000 \$600,000 \$20,000 \$20,000 \$70,000 \$10,000 \$10,000 \$20,000 | |
| Vincent Bell Memorial Park – -New Park Signage -New Parking Area and ADA Parking Improvements -New Playground (including remove/replace sand) CASp Improvements – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pathways Improvements (9.3) • Picnic Areas Improvements (9.5) • Sports Areas Improvements (9.6) • Drinking Fountain Improvements (9.8) | \$20,000 \$45,000 \$685,000 \$20,000 \$30,000 \$70,000 \$10,000 | |
| George H. Freeman Park – -New Playground (including remove/replace sand) CASp Improvements – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessible Parking Improvements (7.2) • Pathway Improvements (7.3) • Picnic Area Improvements (7.5) • Sports Areas Improvements (7.6) • Buildings Improvements (7.7) • Drinking Fountain Improvements (7.8) | \$775,000 \$70,000 \$70,000 \$30,000 \$15,000 \$300,000 \$10,000 | |
| Gardena City Hall – CASp Improvements – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessible Parking Improvements (2.3) • Building Entries Improvements (2.4) • Restrooms and Drinking Fountains Improvements (2.6) | \$30,000 \$10,000 \$10,000 | |
| Sister City Harvard Parkette – -New Playground (including remove/replace sand) CASp Improvements – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pathways Improvements (10.3) • Picnic Area Improvements (10.5) | \$707,000 \$10,000 \$30,000 | |
| Mas Fukai Park – CIP Improvements 820 (c) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reconstruction of community center, restroom facilities and enhance the overall park to maximize its use, improve energy efficiency while reducing maintenance costs, and provide a variety of additional features that can accommodate the needs of residents of all ages in an all-inclusive park. | \$7,032,000 | C, P, U |

Exhibit 4.2-1: Planned/Unplanned Parks and Recreation Facility Projects (Cont.)

Park and Facility Funding Recommendations

| PARK / FACILITY AND RECOMMENDATIONS | ESTIMATED COSTS | FUNDING KEY (see below) |
|---|--|-------------------------|
| CITY PARKS (continued) | | |
| Rosecrans Site – CIP Improvements 505 (c) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demo existing facility and develop a conceptual plan for new recreation element. | \$1,136,000 | C, S, U |
| Primm Pool (Community Aquatic and Senior Center) – CIP Improvements 978 (c) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reconstruction of pool and facility building to accommodate a new 25-yard (8) lane pool, diving bay, fitness pool with ADA ramp, new bleachers & shade structures, exercise equipment and a 12,000 square foot building that will house locker rooms for the pool as well as senior activities. | \$19,408,250 | C, R, S, U |
| Paul A. Rowley Park & Gymnasium – -New Park Loop Walking Paths -New Parking Area and ADA Parking Improvements -New Playground (including remove/replace sand) CIP Improvements 520 (c) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replace three (3) existing Carrier/BDP gas electric package units. CIP Improvements 530 (c) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Renovate/repair the existing basketball court and its drainage. CASp Improvements – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Picnic Area Improvements (11.5) Sports Facilities Improvements (11.6) Restroom Buildings Improvements (11.7) General Accessibility and Lobby Improvements (12.2) Restrooms Improvements (12.3) | \$150,000 \$500,000 \$778,000 \$468,000 \$467,000 \$30,000 \$1,800,000 \$30,000 \$10,000 \$30,000 | Q Q, R |
| Edward Thornburg Park – -New Parking Area and ADA Parking Improvements -New Playground (including remove/replace sand) CASP Improvements – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pathways Improvements (8.3) Picnic Area Improvements (8.5) Sports Area Improvements (8.6) Drinking Fountain Improvements (8.8) | \$100,000 \$730,000 \$20,000 \$30,000 \$60,000 \$10,000 | |
| The Willows Wetland Preserve – -Accessible Parking and Accessible Path of Travel -New Amphitheater -New Outdoor Education Center CASp Improvements – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Entry Bridge Improvements (6.3) General Trail Accessibility (6.4) Overlook Improvements (6.5) Zigzag Bridge Improvements (6.6) | \$50,000 \$100,000 \$800,000 \$20,000 \$130,000 \$20,000 \$25,000 | |

Exhibit 4.2-1: Planned/Unplanned Parks and Recreation Facility Projects (Cont.)



| PARK / FACILITY AND RECOMMENDATIONS | ESTIMATED COSTS | FUNDING KEY (see below) |
|---|---------------------|-------------------------|
| CITY PARKS (continued) | | |
| Other CIP Projects – | | |
| Civic Center Lighting Improvements 528 (c) • Installation of new lighting and landscape improvements. | \$293,000 | Q, T |
| Park Electronic Signage 529 (c) • Installation of new electronic signs for several parks. | \$600,000 | Q |
| Multi-Park Improvements 535 (c) • Renovate/repair and upgrade the existing park facilities and amenities. | \$250,000 | P, Q |
| Park Specific Recommendations Total | \$6,220,000 | |
| CASp Improvements Total | \$3,240,000 | |
| CIP Improvements Total | \$30,299,250 | |
| TOTAL AMOUNT | \$39,759,250 | |

Exhibit 4.2-1: Planned/Unplanned Parks and Recreation Facility Projects (Cont.)

FUNDING KEY (Potential Funding Sources)

| | |
|---|--|
| A. Developer Impact Fees | K. Sales Tax |
| B. Developer Special Agreement | L. Sale/Lease of Surplus Land |
| C. General Fund/CFD's/LMD's | M. User Group Contributions |
| D. Non-profit Organization | N. School District Joint-use Contributions |
| E. Public/Private Partnerships, Concessions | O. Other Dedicated Taxes |
| F. Grants-CDBG | P. Park Land in Lieu |
| G. Grants-Public Agencies & Private Foundations | Q. Measure A |
| H. Corporate Sponsorships | R. Prop 68 |
| I. Certificates of Participation | S. Federal Earmarks |
| J. Bonds | T. Deferred Maintenance Fund |
| | U. Measure G |

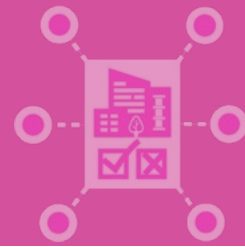
CIP

4.3 Multi-Year Capital Plan

Development of a multi-year capital budget is integral to sound financial planning, debt management, and reserve development. Exhibit 4.3-1 illustrates the recommended five-year needs for the City of Gardena, including renovation of existing facilities, redesign/modification of existing parks, and development of new sites. With this information, the city should develop the capital replacement and capital outlay requirements over a multi-year period to assist with planned cash and debt management. It should be noted that existing resources are limited and will not be able to fully fund the recommendations within this plan without additional funding considerations. The outline of the five-year capital needs is not intended to replace any existing CIP but outline the short and near term probable capital expenditures.



Photo by the City of Gardena



4

| PROJECTS | Estimated Costs | FY 2023-2024 | FY 2024-2025 | FY 2025-2026 | FY 2026-2027 | FY 2027-2028 |
|---|---------------------|---------------------|--------------------|---------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Current CIP Projects | | | | | | |
| Nakaoka Community Center | \$645,000 | - | - | \$645,000 | - | - |
| Mas Fukai Park | \$7,032,000 | - | - | \$7,032,000 | - | - |
| Rosecrans Site | \$1,136,000 | - | \$1,136,000 | - | - | - |
| Primm Pool (Community Aquatics and Senior Center) | \$19,408,250 | \$19,408,250 | - | - | - | - |
| Paul A. Rowley Park and Gymnasium | \$935,000 | - | \$935,000 | - | - | - |
| Civic Center Lighting Improvements | \$293,000 | - | \$293,000 | - | - | - |
| Park Electronic Signage | \$600,000 | \$600,000 | - | - | - | - |
| Multi-Park Improvements | \$250,000 | - | \$250,000 | - | - | - |
| Future Projects | | | | | | |
| Nakaoka Community Center | \$120,000 | \$120,000 | - | - | - | - |
| Rush Gymnasium / Human Services Building | \$100,000 | - | \$100,000 | - | - | - |
| Paul A. Rowley Recreation Center | \$50,000 | \$50,000 | - | - | - | - |
| Arthur Johnson Park | \$820,000 | - | - | \$820,000 | - | - |
| Vincent Bell Park | \$880,000 | - | - | \$880,000 | - | - |
| George H. Freeman Park | \$1,270,000 | - | - | - | \$1,270,000 | - |
| Gardena City Hall | \$50,000 | \$50,000 | - | - | - | - |
| Sister City Harvard Parkette | \$747,000 | - | - | - | - | \$747,000 |
| Paul A. Rowley Park and Gymnasium | \$3,328,000 | - | - | - | \$3,328,000 | - |
| Edward L. Thornburg Park | \$950,000 | - | - | - | - | \$950,000 |
| Willows Wetland Preserve | \$1,145,000 | - | - | \$1,145,000 | - | - |
| Total Costs | \$39,759,250 | \$20,228,250 | \$2,714,000 | \$10,522,000 | \$4,598,000 | \$1,697,000 |

Exhibit 4.3-1: Five Year CIP

Staffing and Maintenance Recommendations

4.4 Staffing and Maintenance Recommendations

Park maintenance is important to ensure the safety of public facilities, protect investments, and position parks as a source of pride for the local community. Often cities are forced to juggle preventative work with other concerns, including emergencies, staffing, and other resource shortages. Improving parks and other facilities often takes a community effort. In some cases, it may take the development of a volunteer program including donated labor and materials. In others, it may take an initiative that presses the community to act often resulting in a public vote to financially support park and recreational operations.

Gardena does not have adequate funding for the maintenance and operations of its park and recreation facilities. Based on the analysis conducted and reported in the Operations and Maintenance Report (available in the appendix) the city is experiencing a significant shortfall in staffing and budget for park and building maintenance. This is impacting their ability to perform necessary maintenance tasks and to implement preventative maintenance programs.

Exhibit 4.4-1 illustrated how Recreation and Public Works budgets have risen from fiscal year (FY) 20/21 from \$4,699,702 to \$7,363,018 in FY 23/24.

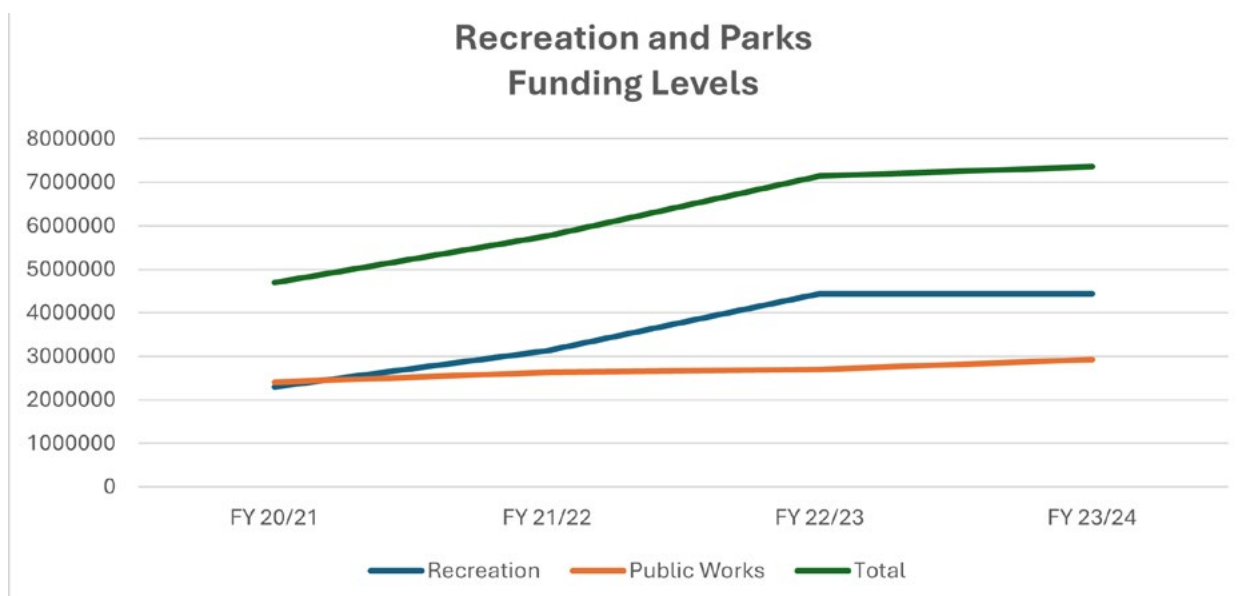
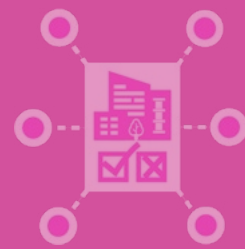


Exhibit 4.4-1: Recreation and Parks Funding Levels



In comparison with other cities, Gardena's per capita spending on parks maintenance is substantially lower than other local cities. For instance, Gardena spends \$47.60 per capita, which is inline with the benchmark average of \$46.07, however far less than the highest figure within the benchmark, which is \$77.96 for the City of Carson. The NRPA report found a median level of \$120.70, lowest quartile at \$73.64, and the highest quartile at \$197.47.

In addition to the funding shortage, the city is experiencing a shortfall in staffing for park and building maintenance. Gardena is experiencing a shortage of staffing, particularly in the parks and building maintenance area of the Public Works Department. The city had budgeted for 12.5 full-time equivalents (FTEs) in FY 21/22, which declined following the fiscal year due to a frozen Parks Superintendent position, remaining unchanged thereafter. Gardena is short by about 2 full-time positions from what would be needed to enhance daily park and building maintenance effectively. While Gardena is making efforts to address its parks and recreation needs, current funding levels and resources appear to be less than ideal to fully meet long-term maintenance and development goals of the city. By investing in the maintenance staff and infrastructure, the city can ensure that its parks and facilities are safe, attractive, functional, and sustainable, and that they provide a high level of service and satisfaction to the users. While the Department is able to deliver quality public facilities, there is a current shortfall in staffing and budget to complete other mandatory tasks including:

- A fully operational preventative maintenance program and schedule. Currently only limited time is available for preventative maintenance activities.
- No current staff trained in playground safety inspection through the Certified Playground Safety Inspector (CPSI) program, offered by the National Recreation and Park Association.
- Limited ability to perform regular and formal safety inspections of park and building facilities by City staff.
- Backlog of deferred maintenance projects within the City buildings and the park system.
- Limited ability to perform proactive basic equipment maintenance, including playgrounds, fields, nets, water drinking fountains, and other public amenities.
- Aging infrastructure of City buildings results in increased level of maintenance, repair, and special projects.
- Little to no time is available to develop new sustainability programs and policies.

Opportunity Site Recommendations

4.5 Opportunity Site Recommendations

As outlined in this Master Plan report there are several “common threads” or areas where the community desires for parks and programs align together. Out of the combination of these threads a community tapestry takes shape. This tapestry represents the recreation desires in the City of Gardena. They illustrate a desire for ensuring equitable access to well-maintained parks and facilities, upgrading playgrounds and community buildings, expanding green spaces, and developing trails to encourage interaction with nature.

As the city looks to develop and expand the recreational opportunities for the local community it must evaluate potential opportunity sites for future improvements. The following are potential opportunity sites that have been identified. Each of these sites should be carefully evaluated for a potential green renovation.

- i. **Bell Park Building:** There is an existing building of approximately 2,400 SF that is currently not in use. This building is in poor condition and should be demolished and evaluated for potential restroom building and picnicking opportunities.
- ii. **Rosecrans Site:** The city purchased the Rosecrans site located at 2501 Rosecrans Avenue. The site is approximately 1.1 acres. This site has both building and parkland opportunities. As the city moves forward this site should be evaluated to accommodate as many of the program and facility recommendations as possible. Parking capacity is limited at this site.
- iii. **Thornburg Park Building:** There is an existing building of approximately 2,500 SF that is currently used for the martial arts program. This building should be evaluated for potential local site programming opportunities and rentals due to its location and proximity to both residential and parkland.
- iv. **Thornburg Park Expansion Site:** The city purchased this land located at 15016 Nadar Place, adjacent to Thornburg Park. This site currently includes a barn-type building.
- v. **Willows Wetland Preserve:** The Gardena Willows Wetland Preserve is a significant natural area located behind Arthur Johnson Park between Normandie and Vermont Avenues. It spans 8 acres and represents the last intact remnant of the former Dominguez Slough, a once extensive marsh and riparian forest. This preserve is particularly important as it supports a diverse range of native plant and wildlife species. The wetlands are fed by urban runoff and rain via storm drains, which have shifted its ecology somewhat but also highlight the interaction between urban environments and natural ecosystems. The wetland has significant opportunities to develop internal walking loops, program development, and collaborative partnerships.

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Photo by the City of Gardena