



CHAPTER 8 RECREATION AND TRAILS

Hemet desires to create a city rich with parks and recreation opportunities that will enhance the lives of current residents and visitors and remain an asset for future generations. The Recreation and Trails Element establishes the framework to integrate these resources and encourage partnerships with other private and public organizations.



T-Ball Opening Day Ceremonies

The purpose of the Recreation and Trails Element is to describe the current parks and recreational resources available in the City of Hemet and the Planning Area, acknowledge deficiencies in the provision of these resources, establish goals and objectives to enhance the public's ability to access and enjoy these resources, and present an implementation strategy to meet the element's goals and objectives.



Recreation is an optional element permitted under California planning law. It is included in this General Plan to demonstrate the importance the City places on achieving an exceptional quality of life for its residents. Recreational and outdoor activities provide many tangible and intangible benefits for residents of all ages and interests. The City is committed to ensuring that a diverse array of opportunities is available to meet the needs of all persons regardless of socioeconomic status, physical capabilities, or age.



8.1 ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Several important recreational issues and opportunities are confronting Hemet:

Changing Demographics On average, Hemet’s population is older, with a higher median age than Riverside County as a whole. This specialized demographic has resulted in a greater need for recreation and cultural facilities that support the lifestyles of the area’s large and well-established retirement population in addition to its growing family population. Facilities and activities must be cooperatively designed to accommodate the needs of all residents.



Walkers and Soccer Players at Mary Henley Park

Shared Management of Parks and Recreation Services The provision and management of local parks and recreational services is shared between the City and Valley-Wide Recreation and Park District (Valley-Wide). The City does not have a recreation department, although it does lease the Simpson Center to the YMCA for recreation, classes, health care, and referral services available to residents of all ages and economic means. The shared management of parks and recreational services requires coordination between the two organizations to cover needed services and facilities; however, it also provides an opportunity to maximize available financial and personnel resources.

Increasing Demand for New Facilities and Services The influx of families seeking housing opportunities and a safe community has increased pressures on the City, Valley-Wide, and other organizations to keep up with the demand for recreation services and cultural activities that target children and youth. The population increase also provides opportunities to expand cultural and artistic experiences as new residents begin participating in and providing leadership in community activities and organizations.

Community Cohesion Local recreational activities can bring together diverse segments of the community who find value and interest in the same activities and sports events. Sports and recreational activities promote teamwork and good sportsmanship.

Conservation-Oriented Park Design One of the best economic opportunities available to the City is the maximization of its open space and outdoor recreational resources. Both the City and the Planning Area contain significant natural assets and features. Where appropriate, these resources could be incorporated into park design, thus ensuring their preservation and creating renowned park facilities. Additionally, new park design could contain sustainable infrastructure such as naturalized stormwater management, water recycling, alternative energy sources, and integration into off-road trail systems and other transportation networks. Valley-Wide has already incorporated conservation measures into its park design specifications.



Stoney Mountain Park



Financial Challenges Changes in the economy over the past several years at the local, regional, and national levels have created new challenges in the provision, operation, and maintenance of adequate parks and recreation programs. To keep pace with the needs of residents, the City has recognized a need to not only continue its coordination efforts with Valley-Wide, but to also form partnerships with other public and private sector entities to achieve its goals. For example, private parks and developer-provided amenities within housing developments can supplement publically provided and managed facilities. A multipronged approach fosters unprecedented opportunities for discussions on strategic planning, efficiency improvements, priorities, and sustainable implementation measures. In the face of challenging fiscal times, it is important to recognize the importance of community volunteerism to offset financial and resource challenges while simultaneously engendering a spirit of “community pride” and “ownership” in the quality of our region.

8.2 RELATED PROGRAMS, PLANS AND REGULATIONS

The City of Hemet is home to numerous national recreation events such as the Tinsel Triathlon and the Hemet Double Century bike ride. Both of these events are among the largest of their kind in the nation and serve to illustrate Hemet's attraction for recreational lifestyle activities and the City's desire to promote a healthy community concept throughout the 21st century

The provision of adequate parks and recreational facilities as well as art, music, and cultural activities is a concerted effort between the private and the public sectors and between individual and group interests. The following key regulations, organizations, and programs may affect decision making:

National Recreation and Parks Association The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) is a membership organization that focuses on advancing parks, recreation, and environmental conservation efforts that enhance the quality of life for all people. The NRPA provides many services related to parks and recreation, including the development of youth programs, parks and recreation career information, safety, and education. The NRPA also publishes national guidelines for developing and conserving parks and recreation.

California Subdivision Map Act (Quimby Act) Section 66477 of the Government Code provides local jurisdictions with the authority to acquire parklands in association with new land divisions. This provision of state law allows a city, by ordinance, to require the dedication of land, dedication of improvements, payment of an in-lieu fee, or any combination of these items, for park and recreational purposes as a condition of approving a subdivision map. These provisions are included in Chapter 70 Subdivisions, Article 5, of the Hemet Municipal Code.

Riverside County Regional Park and Open Space District Trail activities are managed by the Natural and Cultural Resources Division of the Riverside County Regional Park and Open Space District. The County is in the process of making revisions to its general plan's Circulation Element. The changes update policies concerning trails and bikeways, revise the countywide trail map, and revise area plan trail maps. The City of Hemet is cooperating with the effort by ensuring that City trails connect with regional trails.



Valley-Wide Recreation and Park District The Valley-Wide Recreation and Park District was formed on July 27, 1972, to provide recreation and park services to residents within an 800-square mile area that includes Hemet, San Jacinto, Valle Vista, Sage, Aguanga, Winchester, Menifee, and French Valley. Valley-Wide is funded by four sources of revenue: property tax, program fees, benefit assessments, and grants. In addition to owning and operating parks and ball fields within Hemet, Valley-Wide has worked cooperatively with the City on the construction, renovation, or maintenance of City-owned parks including the construction of Mary Henley Park, the renovation of the Santa Fe Ball Fields, the scheduling of shuffle board courts, and the fertilization of lawn bowl courts. Valley-Wide also provides a variety of recreational programs available to Hemet residents including classes, sports activities, day camps and preschool, and trips and excursions.

City of Hemet Measure C On June 7, 1988, Hemet voters approved a measure to require updating the City's General Plan to incorporate performance measures related to traffic, drainage facilities, water storage and distribution facilities, park and recreational facilities, police services, fire services, and sanitary sewers. These performance standards were incorporated into the 1992 General Plan as a component of the Public Services and Facilities Element. They are incorporated by into the various goals, policies, and implementation programs within General Plan 2030 and are attached as Appendix G.

8.3 PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES

The City has a continuing goal to establish and maintain a system of park, recreation, and open space lands of sufficient size and in the appropriate locations to serve the needs of Hemet residents of all ages and physical capability. The facilities comprise public parks, private parks and recreation facilities, golf courses, joint use facilities with the Hemet Unified School District, and special use parks that offer a range of amenities and recreational activities. An inventory of the parks is provided in Tables 8.1 and 8.2. A map of existing park locations is provided in Figure 8.1.

An adequate parks system benefits a city in several ways, as summarized below from a publication of The Trust for Public Land, entitled, "Measuring the Economic Value of a City Park System":

Health Value Parks provide *health value* with opportunities for exercise and a more active lifestyle, which reduces obesity and its many effects, and promotes good health. Research suggests that access to parks can help people increase their level of physical activity through amenities such as ball fields; playgrounds; trails for walking, jogging, and biking; tennis courts; basketball courts; and horseshoe pits.



Community Cohesion Parks provide opportunities for *community cohesion* with structured activities such as sports leagues and informal interactions at playgrounds and park benches. Studies have shown that the more webs of human relationships a community has, the stronger, safer, and more successful it is. Parks provide opportunities for people of all ages to interact, communicate, compete, learn, and grow.





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Table 8.1
Inventory of City Parks

Name of Park	Location of Park in Hemet	Amenities	City ¹ Acreage	VW ² Acreage
Mini Parks			2.75 acres	
Rodeghier Green	Northeast corner of Acacia and Palm	Landscaped area; bench.	0.25	–
Spencer Park	Palm, south of Stetson	Landscaped area; picnic area.	0.50	–
Welch Green	Northwest corner of Florida and Palm	Landscaped area; seating area.	1.00	–
Cawston Park	Cawston at Devonshire	Landscaped area; picnic area; toddler playground.	1.00	–
<i>Total Mini Parks</i>			<i>2.75</i>	<i>0.0</i>
Neighborhood Parks			26 acres	
Weston Park	700 East Florida	Playground; basketball court; restroom; landscaped area; shuffleboard courts.	4.0	–
Santa Fe Ball Field	252 S. Santa Fe	Softball field; radio controlled racetrack.	–	5.0
Bill Gray Park	25330 Lake	Ball field; two half-court basketball areas; play area; picnic area.	–	5.0
Oltman Park	Cawston at Eaton	Dog park; landscaped trail; gated playground.	6.0	–
Stoney Mountain Park	Inglestone at Cinnabar	Basketball court; playground; covered picnic area; short trail; beautiful large rock outcropping.	6.0	–
McSweeney Park	McSweeney Parkway at Village Loop	Under construction	5.0	–
<i>Total Neighborhood Parks</i>			<i>21.0</i>	<i>10.0</i>
Community Parks			98 acres	
Gibbel Park	2500 W. Florida	Two lighted tennis courts; baseball field; half-court basketball; large play area; picnic area; restroom; lawn bowling and large turf area; horseshoe pits; Veterans Memorial.	11.0	–
Searl Youth Sports Park	1001 N Buena Vista	Three lighted baseball fields; lighted soccer field; picnic area; snack bar; community building with restrooms.	–	11.0
Mary Henley Park	801 S. Kirby	Half-court basketball area; play area with restrained swing; picnic area; restroom; large turf area.	16.0	–



**Table 8.1
Inventory of City Parks**

Name of Park	Location of Park in Hemet	Amenities	City ¹ Acreage	VW ² Acreage
Brubaker Park and Hemet Youth Baseball Fields	Park: 3703 W. Harrison Fields: Cawston at Mustang Way	Brubaker Park: A basketball court, play area, and picnic area are developed on 5 acres. Youth Baseball Fields: A dozen baseball fields of various sizes are operated by Hemet Youth Baseball. Passive Use: The remainder of the acreage is open space preserved for passive use.	60.0	–
<i>Total Community Parks</i>			<i>87.0</i>	<i>11.0</i>
Regional Parks			604.5 acres	
Valley-Wide Regional Park and headquarters for the Valley-Wide Recreation and Park District ³	901 West Esplanade, San Jacinto	Three lighted baseball fields; six lighted tennis courts; six soccer fields; picnic area; play area; batting cages; volleyball court; horseshoe pits; fitness trail; gymnasium; multipurpose room; snack bar.	–	36.0
Diamond Valley Lake Community Park	1801 Angler	Existing 35 acres: aquatic center; eight lighted ball fields; three soccer fields; two pickle ball courts; play areas; restrooms. Planned 50 acres: five soccer fields; four basketball courts; six tennis courts; seven volleyball courts; picnic areas; fitness trails; undeveloped open space.	–	85.0
Simpson Park	28505 Rawlings	Wilderness park; sheltered picnic area; hiking and off-road cycling trails; restroom	483.5	–
<i>Total Regional Parks</i>			<i>483.5</i>	<i>121.0</i>
SUBTOTAL PARK ACREAGE			594.25	142.0
TOTAL PARK ACREAGE			736.25	

¹ Owned and managed by the City of Hemet

² Owned and managed by Valley-Wide (VW) Recreation and Park District

³ Not located in the City of Hemet



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Table 8.2
Inventory of Planning Area Parks

Name and Type of Park	Location of Park in Hemet	Amenities	Acreage	Ownership
Valle Vista Park, Neighborhood Park	25175 Fairview	Basketball court; play area; picnic shelter; restroom; horseshoe pits; community center.	5.0	Valley-Wide Recreation and Park District (Valley-Wide)
Louis Jackson Park, Community Park	43935 Acacia	Three baseball fields; two lighted softball fields; play area; large picnic area; community center.	10.0	Valley-Wide
Exchange Club Park, Community Park (planned)	Mayberry at Fairview	BMX track; soccer field; day care center.	8.0	Valley-Wide and Hemet Unified School District
Maze Stone Park, Special Use Passive Park	Lakeview Mountains	Open space area that contains the Maze Stone, a prehistoric petroglyph and a California State Historical Landmark.	5.0	Riverside County
TOTAL ACREAGE			28.0	



Tourism Economy Parks play a role in a city's *tourism economy*. Parks and recreational venues attract tourists, who may stay overnight, dine, or shop, and who share their positive experiences with their friends and acquaintances, who become new tourists. The Hemet area has stellar parks, trail systems, outdoor venues, museums, and ecological reserves that provide outstanding opportunities for economic development through tourism. The forming of partnerships between the City, Valley-Wide, Diamond Valley Lake, the Hemet–San Jacinto Chamber of Commerce, the Hemet Unified School District, and other interested parties will help ensure the success of tourism-oriented events and programs.



Property Values Studies indicate that parks have a positive impact on residential *property values*. People are willing to pay more to live near a nice park or in a community with parks that offer natural beauty and views as well as direct use value. Economists call this phenomenon “hedonic value.” Hedonic value for parks is generally judged by two factors: quality of the park and distance to the park. A community with many excellent parks offers a higher quality of life for its residents.



Stormwater Management Parkland reduces stormwater runoff, thereby reducing *stormwater management* costs by capturing precipitation and/or slowing runoff. When rainwater flows off roads, sidewalks, and other impervious surfaces, it causes temporary flooding and picks up pollutants that enter the stormwater drainage system. Large, pervious surface areas in parks allow precipitation to infiltrate and recharge the groundwater, providing conservation of water resources and reducing the costs of managing and treating stormwater runoff.



Clean Air Parks contribute to *clean air* through the removal of air pollution by vegetation. Air pollution is a significant and expensive urban problem, injuring health and damaging structures. Trees and shrubs remove air pollutants such as nitrogen dioxide, sulfur dioxide, carbon monoxide, ozone and some particulates. Leaves absorb gases, and particulates adhere to the plant surface, at least temporarily. Vegetation in parks plays a role in improving air quality and reducing pollution costs.



8.3.1 PUBLIC PARKS BY CLASSIFICATION

Park facilities in the Hemet area range from less than an acre to 483 acres at Simpson Park. Depending on size and/or special purpose, each park offers differing levels of recreational amenities, from passive to active to wilderness to open space. Table 8.1 lists City parks by classification and ownership. Valley-Wide Regional Park is included in the Hemet park inventory because it is a regional park located on the boundary of the City with a service area that includes Hemet residents. Table 8.2 inventories Planning Area parks.



Spencer Park

The parks are classified by size, use, and ownership, as described in the text immediately below:

Mini Parks Mini parks, also known as pocket parks, are generally smaller than 2 acres and contain passive facilities, such as small landscaped spaces with benches and picnic tables, and buffering from adjacent urban land use activities. These parks are intended to serve the immediate neighborhood within a one-quarter-mile radius of the park. Mini parks in Hemet consist of Rodeghier Green, Spencer Park, Welch Green, and Cawston Park.



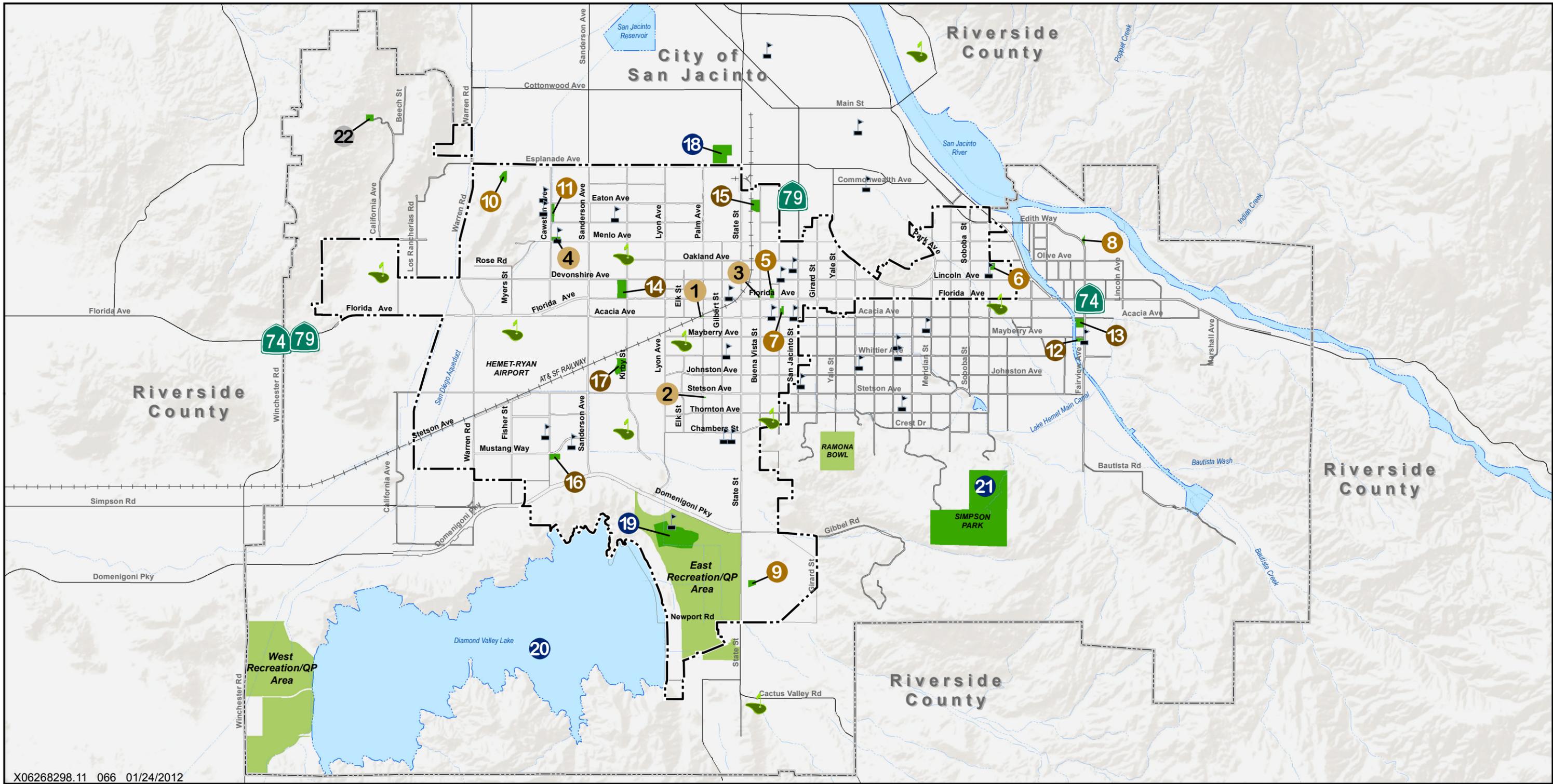
Oltman Park

Neighborhood Parks Neighborhood parks satisfy nonprogrammed recreational needs and include passive open space, active play areas, and limited practice and play fields. Neighborhood parks are typically between 5 and 10 acres. Neighborhood parks service an area of approximately one-half mile. Neighborhood parks in Hemet consist of Weston, Santa Fe Ball Fields, Bill Gray, Oltman, and Stoney Mountain Parks.

Community Parks Community parks serve a broader purpose than neighborhood parks, accommodating more structured activities with lighted athletic complexes and group picnic areas as well as passive parkland. Community parks are intended to serve the recreational needs of several neighborhoods and generally have a service area of up to 2 miles. Community parks are generally between 20 and 30 acres. Hemet's community parks were primarily built at a time when the City demographics favored an older population; therefore, the parks are undersized for the current demographics and the active park amenities are deficient. Community parks in Hemet consist of Gibbel, Searl Youth Sports, Mary Henley, and Brubaker Parks and Hemet Youth Baseball Fields.



Swing for paraplegic youth at Mary Henley Park



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LEGEND

- Golf Courses
- Schools
- Existing Parks
- Potential Recreation/Quasi-Public/Cultural
- MINI PARKS**
- 1 Rodeghier Park
- 2 Spencer Park
- NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS**
- 3 Welch Green Park
- 4 Cawston Park
- 5 Weston Park
- 6 Bill Gray Park
- 7 Santa Fe Ball Field
- COMMUNITY PARKS**
- 12 Future Exchange Club Park
- 13 Louis Jackson Park
- 8 Valle Vista Park
- 9 McSweeney Park
- 10 Stoney Mountain Park
- 11 Oltman Park
- 14 Gibbel Park
- 15 Searl Youth Sports Park
- 16 Brubaker Park
- 17 Mary Henley Park
- REGIONAL PARKS**
- 18 Valley Wide Regional Park
- 19 Diamond Valley Lake Community Park
- 20 Diamond Valley Lake
- 21 Simpson Park
- 22 Maze Stone Park



Sources:
Census Tiger Line Data 2005
ESRI 2010

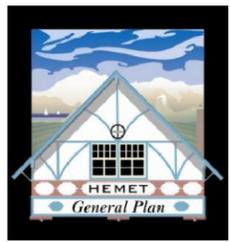
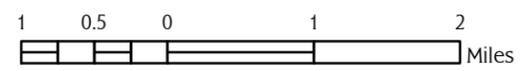


Figure 8.1
PARKS
Hemet General Plan



Back of Figure 8.1



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Diamond Valley Lake Community Park Aquatic Center

Regional Parks Regional parks generally provide facilities for a wide range of sports and recreational activities including field sports, volleyball, swimming, tennis, basketball, fitness activities, hiking or cycling trails, and play. Regional parks are generally 40 acres or larger and may include a community center or gymnasium for indoor activities. They are intended to satisfy recreational needs citywide or regionally. The three regional parks that serve Hemet are Simpson Park, Valley-Wide Regional Park, and Diamond Valley Lake Community Park. Valley-Wide Recreation and Park District manages Valley-Wide Regional and Diamond Valley Lake Community Park. Simpson Park, the City's premier regional park, is described in detail in Section 8.3.2.



Valle Vista Park

Planning Area Parks Located outside of the City's boundaries, but within the Planning Area, are two parks owned and managed by Valley-Wide: Valle Vista Park and Louis Jackson Park. Additionally in the Planning Area is Maze Stone Park, located west of Hemet in the Lakeview Mountains of unincorporated Riverside County. It is a passive, special-use park. The park's purpose is to preserve, protect, and interpret the prehistoric petroglyph known as the Hemet Maze Stone. Refer to Section 9.4.2 for more information about the Maze Stone. Details about the Planning Area parks are shown in Table 8-2.



Hiking trails in Simpson Park

8.3.2 SIMPSON PARK

Simpson Park is a 483-acre wilderness park located in the Santa Rosa Hills. It is named after James Simpson, mayor of the City of Hemet from 1950 to 1966, and councilmember from 1947 to 1948. The park is regionally known for its vistas and for its current and potential hiking and off-road biking trails. Scattered throughout Simpson Park are numerous single-track trails of various lengths and levels of difficulty that link to trails in the Santa Rosa Hills. Many of these trails have been mapped and ranked by regional cycling organizations. Current and proposed trails are further discussed in Section 8.4. The City is working with private organizations and other public agencies to connect the park with regional biking trails within unincorporated Riverside County. The community involvement in maintaining trails and preserving the environment has been a fundamental aspect of the park's success over the last 20 years.



Mountain biking at Simpson Park

8.3.3 DIAMOND VALLEY LAKE RECREATION/EDUCATION AREA

Owned and managed by MWD, the Diamond Valley Lake Recreation/Education Area covers 6,500 acres of land and water, which includes the reservoir/lake, conservation areas, active recreation facilities, museum facilities, areas for passive recreation, campgrounds, and restricted commercial uses in four general areas: Diamond Valley Lake; Diamond Valley Lake Park/East Recreation Area; West Recreation Area; and a portion of the Southwestern Riverside County Multi-Species Reserve. The Reserve surrounds the lake and connects it on the south to Lake Skinner. Figure 8.2 shows the DVL Recreation/Education Area. Each of the components is briefly described below.

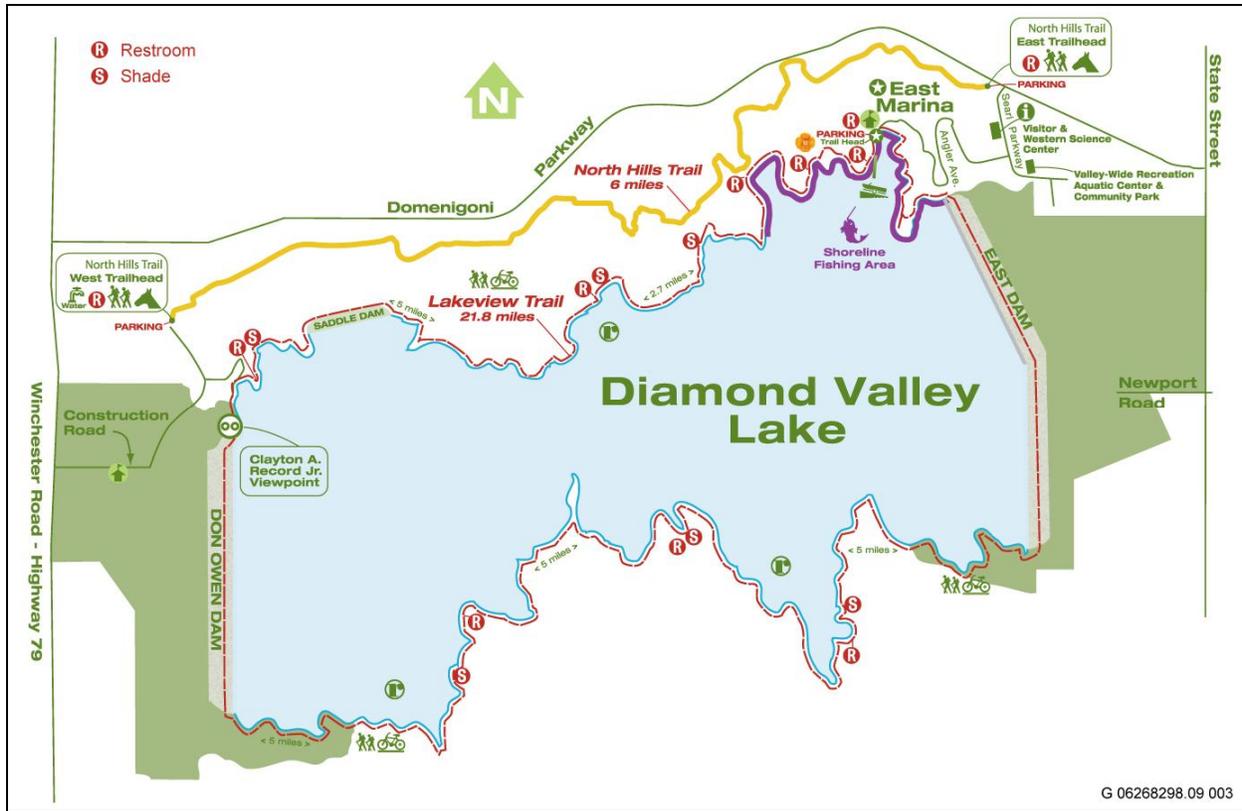


Figure 8.2. Diamond Valley Lake Recreation/Education Area

Diamond Valley Lake is a regional storage reservoir that holds enough water to meet the area’s emergency and drought needs for 6 months. The lake is an important component in MWD’s water supply plans for southern California. Although body contact with the water is prohibited, the lake has become an active and popular shoreline and boat fishing venue stocked with many varieties of coldwater (e.g., trout) and warmer water (e.g., bass) fish. MWD is establishing a substantial trail system that will allow visitors to hike and bike through the hills surrounding the reservoir, and eventually through the multispecies reserve. Currently open is the 21.8-mile Lakeview Trail for cyclists and hikers, the 5.9-mile North Hills Trail for hikers and equestrians, and a shorter looping hiking trail for viewing seasonal wildflowers located with the reserve. The City is working with MWD and other organizations to connect its trails to the Diamond Valley Lake trail system.

Diamond Valley Lake Park Specific Plan/East Recreation Area
 The Diamond Valley Lake Park Specific Plan provides for a variety of recreation-related land uses on approximately 538 acres located within the City of Hemet in the East Recreation Area. The specific land area is divided into six planning areas. As of 2010, only Planning Area 1 and approximately half of Planning Area 2 had been developed. A new land use plan may be proposed in the future for the undeveloped planning areas; however, the current vision is described below:



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- ❖ *Planning Area 1:* Consists of approximately 22 acres and includes the visitor center, the Western Science Center museum and research facility, and park entry signage.
- ❖ *Planning Area 2:* Consists of an 85-acre regional park operated by Valley-Wide and named the Diamond Valley Lake Community Park. Approximately 40 acres have been developed, including an aquatic center and other recreational amenities as described in Table 8.1.
- ❖ *Planning Area 3:* Plans include a recreation lake (body contact) and day-use park encompassing approximately 266 acres in the center of the specific plan area.
- ❖ *Planning Area 4:* Plans designate approximately 58 acres for additional recreation-related uses such as campgrounds, lodges, a golf course, restricted commercial, an expansion of Diamond Valley Lake Community Park, parking, or similar uses.
- ❖ *Planning Area 5:* Plans envision a 40-acre outdoor education facility oriented toward youth and intended to provide a camplike environment for groups of young people.
- ❖ *Planning Area 6:* Plans for the approximately 34-acre area include recreational-related uses such as a golf course, restricted commercial, a special events area, campgrounds, and hiking trails.

West Recreation Area This area is located between Winchester Road and the west dam face outside of the City's current jurisdictional boundaries. MWD is considering a number of potential uses for this currently undeveloped area including regional recreational uses such as campgrounds, hiking and cycling trails, restricted commercial, and renewable energy production. There is also an existing area developed with equipment and utilities supporting the operation of the lake/reservoir.

Southwestern Riverside County Multi-Species Reserve The reserve consists of 14,000 acres surrounding and connecting Diamond Valley Lake with Lake Skinner via the 2,500-acre Dr. Roy E. Shipley Reserve purchased by MWD as partial mitigation for the project. A portion of the reserve is located within the DVL Recreation/Education Area: it surrounds the lake and extends to approximately 100 feet above the Lakeview Trail and includes a 500 and 1,000 foot wide wildlife corridor at the base of the West and East Dam, respectively. The reserve is cooperatively managed by MWD, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the California Department of Fish and Game, the Riverside County Regional Park and Open-Space District, and the Riverside County Habitat Conservation Agency. Trail systems or other means of public access require the approval of each of these agencies, but present an opportunity for passive recreation and the interpretation of natural resources that are unique to Hemet and western Riverside County. The reserve is home to at least eight types of habitat and up to 16 sensitive bird, animal, and plant species. Three types of habitat dominate: Riverside coastal sage scrub, nonnative grasslands, and chaparral.



Smaller habitats include coast live oak woodland, southern willow scrub and live oak, and cottonwood willow riparian forests.

8.3.4 RECREATIONAL SERVICES

Recreational services in Hemet are currently shared between the City, Valley-Wide, and Hemet Youth Baseball. Facilities and services offered and managed in the City by the three organizations are outlined below:

Simpson Center The James Simpson Memorial Center and Senior Wing is a neighborhood center that has been operated by the City since 1978. The center offers a variety of services and activities including blood pressure checks, immunizations, education about nutrition, support groups, a blood bank, a paralegal, AARP mature driving classes, and senior resource and referral. Additional activities are exercise classes, movies, crafts, games that provide opportunities for interaction and fun, and beginning in 2011, a veteran’s resource center. In 2011, the City entered into a contract with the YMCA to run the programs at the Center and expand services and programs for all age groups.



Dancing on Recycled Tires at Simpson Center

Hemet Youth Sports The City, with assistance from Valley-Wide, developed a dozen baseball fields at Brubaker Park. The City continues to maintain the fields. Hemet Youth Baseball provides the scheduling and the management of the fields. Other youth sports organizations, such as the American Youth Soccer Organization (AYSO) also operate in the valley and provide programs at city park and school facilities.

Classes and Excursions Valley-Wide offers a variety of classes and sports activities to Hemet residents at its regional park facility and at the four parks it operates in Hemet. Residents may also participate in excursions offered by Valley-Wide.

Hemet Police Activities League Hemet Police Activities League (PAL) is a joint program with Valley-Wide dedicated to building the bond between “cops and kids.” Hemet PAL offers a variety of activities by providing video games, a movie room, a computer, board games, pool and ping pong tables, field trips, and a boxing program. Police department employees provide the supervision and leadership.



Four Seasons Golf Course

Coordination and management of services and facilities between the three organizations is a constantly evolving effort. Jurisdictional authority and management of parks and recreational services is an issue that will be addressed in the City’s park and recreation master plan.

8.3.5 OTHER PARK AND RECREATION FACILITIES

In addition to public parks and special use parks, there are other public and private recreational amenities in the City that enrich the quality of life of residents and visitors, as noted below.



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Golf Courses There are nine golf courses in the Planning Area: four nine-hole courses and five 18-hole courses (Table 8.3). The courses serve the retirement community and the increasing number of younger residents moving to the area. Additionally, the public courses are components of country/golf clubs that provide enhanced amenities such as driving ranges, golf shops, restaurant facilities, and banquet facilities. The location of each of the golf courses is shown in Figure 8-1.

Table 8.3
Golf Courses in the Hemet Area

Name	Location	Type	Holes
Arroyo Fairways	42751 E. Florida Avenue	Private	9
Colonial Country Club	601 N. Kirby Street	Private	18
Diamond Valley Country Club	31220 Sage Road	Public	18
Echo Hills Golf Course (closed 2010)	545 E. Thorton Avenue	Private	9
Hemet Golf Club	7375 World Cup Avenue	Public	18
Hemet West Mobile Estates	5001 W. Florida Avenue	Private	9
Panorama Village Golf Course	1401 Teakwood Place	Private	9
Seven Hills Golf Course	1537 S. Lyon Avenue	Public	18
Soboba Springs Country Club	1020 Soboba Road, San Jacinto	Public	18

Private Parks and Amenities Private parks and recreational amenities are generally located within a planned community or subdivision, are owned and operated by a homeowners association or other private entity, and are geared toward the interests of the residents. Golf, putting greens, shuffleboard facilities, pools, community centers, and passive open space are common examples of amenities. Communities with private amenities include Peppertree, Sweeny Ranch, Seven Hills, and Willowwalk.

School Facilities The Hemet Unified School District provides recreational uses at each of its schools such as ball fields and playgrounds. The City has both current and potential park facilities located adjacent or close to schools. Opportunities exist to expand the joint use of school-city facilities to create additional or better designed parks and recreational amenities to better serve the community.

Parkways and Trails The City has adopted development standards for scenic highway parkways, applied to specified streets within the City. The scenic highway parkways have wide, landscaped setbacks and meandering sidewalks that provide a pleasant location for walking, jogging, or biking. Existing and proposed trail systems are further addressed in Section 8.4.

8.3.6 PARKLAND NEEDS AND SERVICE AREAS

By initiative in 1988 (Measure C), the City established a park ratio of 5.0 acres of developed parkland for every 1,000 residents. The City has met this standard citywide with the provision of regional parks. However, a



community is best served when there are numerous mini, neighborhood and community parks serving residents within walking distance of their homes, generally a radius of one-half to 2 miles. A shortage of public neighborhood and community parkland coverage exists throughout the City and Planning Area. In addition, the size and design of the community parks is insufficient to adequately meet the community needs of a younger population. Parkland coverage in the unincorporated areas of Riverside County east of the City is also deficient, which means that these residents are relying on City parks to serve their park and recreational needs, placing further pressure on park maintenance and service.

The neighborhood and community parkland acreage shortage has caused selected facilities and parks to be overused. Additionally, as the demographics in the City change and lifestyles evolve, park facilities need to be regularly refurbished to meet the needs and choices of residents. For example, younger families increase the need for play grounds, sports fields, rollerblading and skateboarding facilities, and rock climbing equipment. Ideally, parks and public spaces should be multigenerational and serve the needs of all ages. Valley-Wide is looking for a site in the Hemet area to construct a skate park or "skateable art" area. Skateable art is a small area incorporated into an existing park or green belt that serves as both an attractive amenity and a safe venue for skating.

Park and Recreation Master Plan To address the parkland shortages and evolving parkland needs, periodically updating the City's park and recreation master plan is necessary. Issues to be considered in the master plan update include:

- ❖ establishing priorities for the allocation of limited resources,
- ❖ establishing a plan showing how the balance of park types will be met in accordance with the park standard,
- ❖ creating park designs that meet changing demographics,
- ❖ incorporating water conservation standards, the preservation of significant natural resources, and a tree replacement policy,
- ❖ identifying financing mechanisms,
- ❖ exploring the use of joint use facilities with the Hemet Unified School District,
- ❖ determining appropriate service coordination with Valley-Wide,
- ❖ recognizing that community members and organizations have a tradition of volunteerism and could be considered as a potential resource to offset financial and staffing constraints in the development and maintenance of specific park or trail areas, and



RECREATION AND TRAILS

- ❖ evaluating the best administrative structure for parks and recreation within the City including establishing an implementation system for ongoing and future projects and programs.

8.4 OFF-ROAD TRAILS

The Hemet area is rich with existing and potential recreation trails for walking, jogging, biking, and horseback riding. The value and strengths of a community-based trail system include:

- ❖ promoting Hemet's identity as a location for outdoor activities and a community that values health and fitness;
- ❖ providing opportunities to link with the Riverside County Regional Trail System and the Diamond Valley Lake trail system, including the proposed "Pines to Vines" trail concept that links the Idyllwild mountain community to Temecula Wine Country;
- ❖ endorsing exercise and fitness by offering a positive approach to avoid inactivity and obesity, particularly for young residents;
- ❖ encouraging the preservation of open space and rural areas for safe and accessible recreational activity;
- ❖ offering practical and natural connections to the Ramona Bowl, Simpson Park, Diamond Valley Lake, and Salt Creek;
- ❖ cultivating appreciation of the natural setting and environmental beauty of the Hemet area; and
- ❖ fostering community involvement in the support, development, and maintenance of the trail system to reduce the costs to the public sector and ensure its viability.

8.4.1 OFF-ROAD TRAILS BY CLASSIFICATION

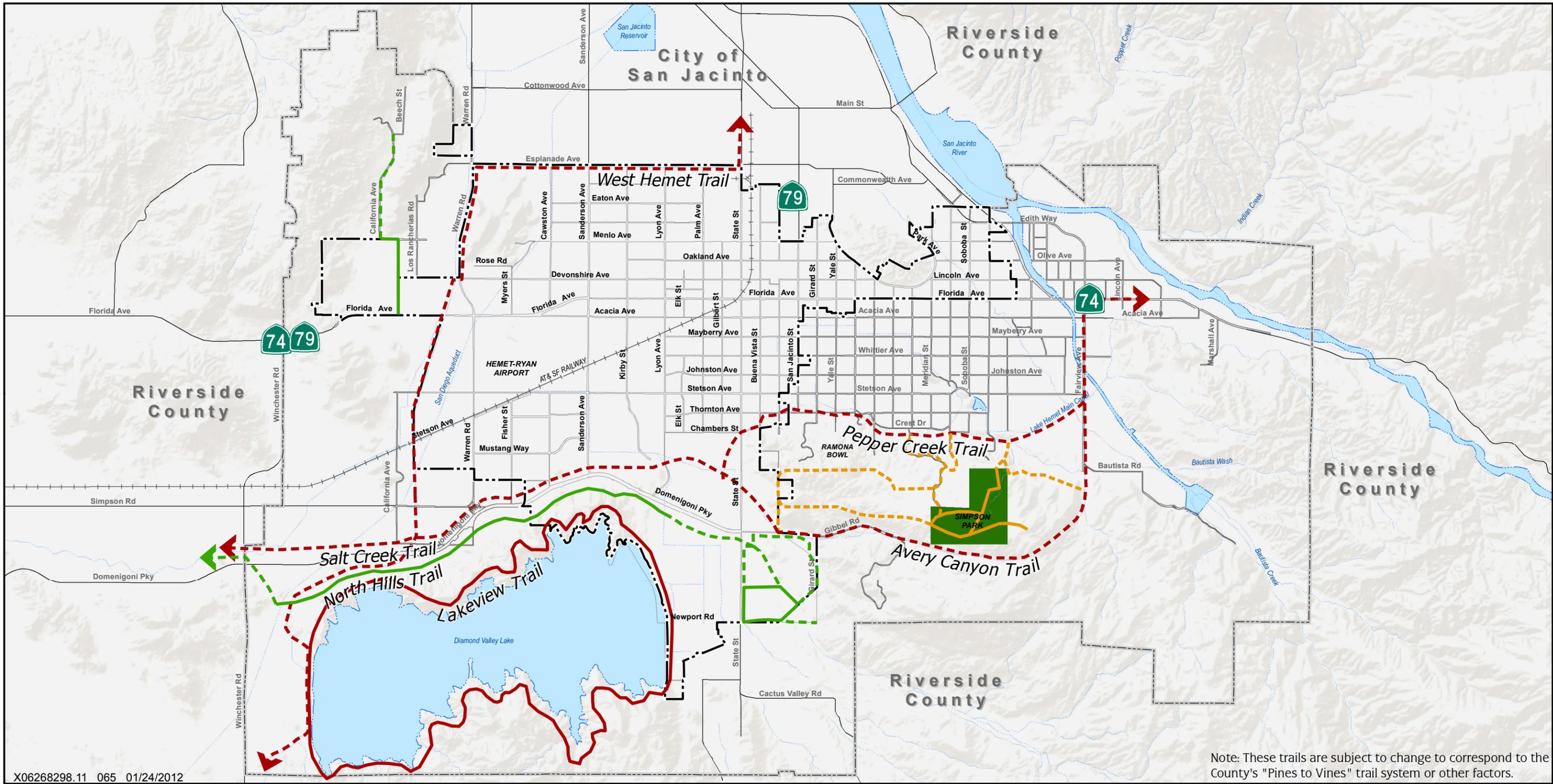
The off-road recreational trails in the Hemet area are classified below by use. On-road bicycle trails that are frequently located next to or on the outer edge of roadways are a component of the Circulation Element (Chapter 4); therefore, are not discussed in this element. They are, however, often integrated into the off-road recreation trail system and serve as important cycling commuter routes to shopping, schools, and parks.

Open Space Trails Open space trails are unpaved trails located primarily in the Santa Rosa hills and Simpson Park for recreational hiking and mountain bike riding. The trails are generally 2–4 feet wide with 2-foot buffers on either side as described in Table 8.4. Local cyclists have mapped some of the 11 miles of trails in the hillsides. These trails would link to the Riverside County regional trail system and the City trail system to enable nonvehicular access.



Table 8.4
Master Plan for Off-Road Trails in the Hemet Area

Location	Status in 2010	Open Space	Equestrian	Multi-Use	Description
City Trails					
Salt Creek Trail	Planned			X	Off-road trail that runs along Salt Creek and connects to the County Regional Trail System on the west and Pepper Creek Trail on the east. Phase 1 is a two-lane paved bikeway. Phase 2 is an adjacent pedestrian trail. No equestrian trail.
Pepper Creek Trail	Planned			X	Off-road trail that runs along Pepper Creek and connects to Salt Creek Trail on the west and the County Regional Trail System on the east.
Avery Canyon Trail	Planned			X	On-road trail that runs along Gibbel Road through Avery Canyon and connects to Salt Creek Trail on the west and the County Regional Trail System on the east.
West Hemet Trail	Planned			X	Off-road and on-road trail that connects to the City of San Jacinto at State Street, runs along Esplanade Avenue to Warren Avenue, south along Warren Avenue, around the west side of Diamond Valley Lake and south toward the City of Murrieta.
Simpson Park and Santa Rosa Hills Trails	Partially Completed	X			Unpaved trails for hiking and mountain cycling in a primarily open space area with views of the surrounding mountains and lakes.
California Street Trail	Partially Completed		X		Trail runs north along California Street from Florida Avenue into Reinhardt Canyon.
McSweeney Farms Trail	Partially Completed		X		Trail runs through and around the existing McSweeney Farms subdivision with plans to connect to the North Hills Trail.
Diamond Valley Lake Trails					
North Hills Trail	Partially Completed		X		The 2.5 mile trail runs south of Domenigoni Parkway from the western side of the reservoir to Searl Parkway. There are trailhead facilities at each end of the trail. Future plans connect it to the McSweeney subdivision on the east and the County regional equestrian trail on the west.
Lakeview Trail	Completed			X	The 21.8-mile Lakeview Trail circumvents DVL for pedestrians and cyclists.
Wildflower Trail	Varies; Seasonal	X			The wildflower trail is a seasonal series of loop hiking trails located within the Reserve. It is not shown on Figure 8.3.
Reserve Trails	Under Discussion	X			Trail through the Multi-Species Reserve to Skinner Lake. It is not shown on Figure 8.3.
Riverside County Trails					
Riverside County Regional Trail System. Planned trails to the Hemet Area include: 1 Bautista Canyon Trail 2 "Pines to Vines" Trail 3 West Hemet Trails	Partially Completed			X	Existing and planned trail system that functions as a regional connector designed to interface with local and community trail systems across the County from Idyllwild to the Temecula wineries and other points of interest. Consists of Class 1 (off-road), Class 2 (on-road, striped lane), and Class 3 (on-road, shared use) trails. These trails are not shown on Figure 8.3



Note: These trails are subject to change to correspond to the County's "Pines to Vines" trail system or other factors.

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LEGEND

- - - Multi-Use (Future)	 Hemet City Boundary
— Multi-Use	 Planning Area
- - - Equestrian (Future)	 Street
— Equestrian	 Railroad
- - - Open Space (Future)	 Creek/Canal
— Open Space	 River/Lake

Sources:
Census Tiger Line Data 2005
ESRI 2010

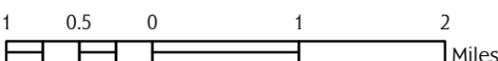




Figure 8.3
RECREATIONAL TRAILS
Hemet General Plan



Backside Recreational 8.3 Trails Map



RECREATION AND TRAILS



Open Space Trail in Simpson Park

Multiple Use Trails Multiple use off-road trails are designed to allow walkers, joggers, and bicycle riders to share the trail. These trails are generally built in phases, as funding permits, with the highest demand use being accommodated first. Phase 1 of the proposed Salt Creek Trail is being designed as a two-way bicycle trail on a separate right-of-way to enable its linkage to the proposed Riverside County Regional Trail System. Phase 2 is an adjacent pedestrian path. Tables 8.4 and 8.5 describe the location and design standards for the trails, respectively.

Equestrian Trails Equestrian trails are trails specifically designed for use by horseback riders. In the Hemet area, equestrian trails are located along California Street and the Four Seasons community into Reinhardt Canyon, at Diamond Valley Lake (North Hills Trail), and at the McSweeney Farms subdivision located on the east side of State Street, south of Domenigoni Parkway, as described in Tables 8.4 and 8.5 and shown in Figure 8.3. Equestrian trails are generally separated from jogging trails for safety and maintenance reasons. MWD maintains trailhead facilities at both ends of the 2.5 mile North Hills Trail.

Table 8.5 Suggested Standards for Trail Development			
Standard	Open Space	Equestrian	Multi-Use
Minimum Width (one-way)	2-4 feet	8 feet	--
Minimum Width (two-way)	–	10 feet	8–15 feet
Surface	Unpaved; minimize erosion	Hard-packed; no paving	Hardened: concrete, asphalt, or decomposed granite
Shoulder	0–2 feet	2 feet	2 feet



Equestrian Trail at the Four Seasons Community

Riverside County Regional Trail System Riverside County established a new trail classification, Class 1 Bike Path/Regional Trail (Combination Trail) that functions to describe a regional connector trail that links all of the major water bodies in western Riverside County and makes taking advantage of this system for long one-way or loop-type trips easier for long-distance users. The new classification will include a combination of existing and new linkages, easements, and connections. This type of trail is designed to interface with local and community trail systems across the County, allowing local access to a regional system. The regional trail will eventually connect Idyllwild to the Temecula wineries to Lake Elsinore to Riverside to Oak Glen and other regional destinations and linkages. The City's trail system is designed to link to the Riverside County Regional Trail System.

Table 8.4 outlines the master plan for off-road trails in the City and Planning Area. The trails are also mapped in Figure 8.3 with linkages shown to the Riverside County Regional Trail System, the City's trail system, and the Diamond Valley Lake trail system.



8.4.2 OFF-ROAD TRAIL DESIGN STANDARDS

Suggested standards for off-road trail development are shown in Table 8.5. Trail design standards will be further considered in the City's update to the park and recreation master plan. The multi-use trails are intended to be incorporated into the Riverside County Regional Trail System; therefore, standards will be modified accordingly. On-road bicycle standards are established in the Circulation Element (Chapter 4).



GOALS AND POLICIES

RECREATION AND TRAILS

GOAL RC-1	Provide an appropriate range of active and passive parkland facilities to meet park acreage standards and the recreational needs of residents.
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POLICIES

- RC-1.1 Diversity of Parks Develop a high-quality network of parks and open spaces that meet the needs of families, young adults, adults, seniors, children, and disabled individuals.

- RC-1.2 Park Standard Require adequate open space in new development for both passive and active recreation. Achieve and maintain a standard of 5 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents in the City.

- RC-1.3 Park Distribution Develop, upgrade, and rehabilitate parks in a manner to ensure neighborhood needs are met by neighborhood parks, community needs by community parks, and citywide needs by regional parks.

- RC-1.4 Park Prioritization Prioritize the acquisition and development of parks and recreational facilities in neighborhoods where a shortage of parkland exists.

- RC-1.5 Conversion of Marginal Land Require the utilization and maintenance of stormwater basins and undevelopable areas of any project (e.g., utility easements, undersized lots) for recreational uses such as tot lots, picnic areas, community gardens, or passive open space, as feasible.

- RC-1.6 Park and Recreation Master Plan Maintain a comprehensive park and recreation master plan that identifies park, recreation, and trail needs and requirements. The master plan shall also identify an administrative system for ongoing programs and maintenance, promote a hierarchy of parks, establish an allocation plan showing how a balance of park types will be achieved, establish types, locations, and development standards for recreational trails, and identify potential financing mechanisms.



**GOAL
RC-2**

Increase the amount and diversity of recreation areas and facilities within the City through the development process, multi-agency partnerships, and the use of creative funding strategies.

POLICIES

- RC-2.1 Development Standards Require developers of new residential developments to provide on-site recreational amenities commensurate with the size of the project or contribute in-lieu fees for the development of facilities in accordance with the nexus standard.
- RC-2.2 Concurrent Development Require that development of recreation facilities occur concurrent with other residential development in an area.
- RC-2.3 Quimby Act Continue to implement the Quimby Act to provide park dedication and in-lieu fees for community recreational facilities.
- RC-2.4 Specific Plan Requirement Require a parks and recreation component in specific plans for new residential developments that:
- ❖ identifies public and private park sites in accordance with approved service standards;
 - ❖ defines park types, design guidelines, landscape standards, and user demand;
 - ❖ integrates parks with neighborhood centers and schools;
 - ❖ physically links parkland to residential areas and facilities through an integrated system of green spaces and the City's off-road and on-road trail system;
 - ❖ defines design standards and programming needs consistent with the demographic trends of the City; and
 - ❖ incorporates principles of energy, water, and natural resources conservation.
- RC-2.5 Acquiring or Accepting Parkland Establish the following criteria for acquiring or accepting parkland and recreational facilities:
- ❖ the City's need based on current and projected user demands,
 - ❖ the proximity of existing recreation and sports facilities,



RECREATION AND TRAILS

- ❖ the preservation of natural resources and historic and cultural areas,
 - ❖ the capability of the proposed site to accommodate the recreational needs of the population being served with a minimum of 5 acres,
 - ❖ the capability of the proposed site to accommodate energy and water conservation principles, and
 - ❖ the commitment of the developer to ensure the park is completed (e.g., a master developer bond).
- RC-2.6 Benefit Assessment Districts Promote the creation of benefit assessment districts and property owner associations for park and trail development and maintenance.
- RC-2.7 Diamond Valley Lake Recreation Area Coordinate with the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, Valley-Wide Recreation and Park District, and Riverside County to encourage development of a comprehensive program for recreation and to support commercial facilities at Diamond Valley Lake.
- RC-2.8 Community Facilities Integrate community facilities such as community centers, auditoriums, day care centers, and other public and quasi-public uses into or adjacent to park facilities, as appropriate.
- RC-2.9 Joint Use Agreements Pursue joint use agreements with the Hemet Unified School District, Valley-Wide Recreation and Park District, and Metropolitan Water District of Southern California to address the provision of park facilities, the type and use of facilities, liabilities, and other jurisdictional and user responsibilities.
- RC-2.10 Partnerships Establish partnerships with private sector agencies and groups to facilitate private investment in parks and facilities, and with public sector agencies such as Valley-Wide Recreation and Park District, the Hemet Unified School District, sports organizations, the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, Riverside County, and the City of San Jacinto to promote joint sponsorship of facilities, activities, events, and projects.
- RC-2.11 Funding Sources Pursue all forms of federal, state, county, corporate, private foundation and endowment support, volunteer groups, and partnerships with Valley-Wide Recreation and Park District, sports organizations, and Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, to assist in the acquisition, development, programming, operations, and maintenance of park and recreation facilities to insure long term fiscal sustainability of recreation facilities.



GOAL RC-3 Create and maintain a parkland system that is identifiable, safe, and accessible to all users.

POLICIES

- RC-3.1 **Park Siting** Situate community parks along major arterials and ensure adequate parking. Site neighborhood parks in high visibility areas on local or collector streets within the neighborhoods they serve and foster pedestrian access.
- RC-3.2 **Park Design** Design new parks and facilities consistent with modern safety and accessibility design codes and practices.
- RC-3.3 **Anti-Crime Design** Design park and recreation facilities and restrooms to discourage the potential for illicit and illegal activities.

GOAL RC-4 Design and manage a parkland system that is compatible with adjacent land uses.

POLICIES

- RC-4.1 **Park Design** Design new parks and redesign existing parks to ensure that site activities, such as sports fields, nighttime lighting and parking areas, do not adversely affect adjacent land uses.
- RC-4.2 **Accessibility** Provide well-designed and easily accessible linkages to pedestrian and bike trails to encourage park users to access the park by nonvehicular means.
- RC-4.3 **Historical Structures** Consider the use of the park system to preserve structures of historical significance by acquiring, siting, and reusing in an appropriate manner at a public park or recreation facility.

GOAL RC-5 Design and manage a parkland system that respects the features of the natural environment and incorporates conservation features into park design and operations.

POLICIES

- RC-5.1 **Open Space Corridors** Maintain open space corridors containing watercourses, riparian habitat, floodplains, wetlands, grasslands, and other natural resource areas as integral components of an open space system that is part of a continuous community.



RECREATION AND TRAILS

- RC-5.2 Open Space Buffers Provide open space buffer land in areas where development or recreational uses abuts important or ecologically sensitive natural resource areas in order to protect those resources and reduce potential adverse impacts from development.

- RC-5.3 Environmentally Sensitive Design and Landscaping Require that new parks be sited and developed in an environmentally sensitive manner with drought-tolerant landscaping, recycled water for irrigation, and natural drainage courses that recharge groundwater.

- RC-5.4 Conservation Areas Develop passive recreational facilities in conservation areas for natural resources (e.g., Simpson Park and the vernal pool complex), including nature interpretation areas, bird watching, wildlife photography areas, and similar facilities, where such activities can be reasonably provided in accordance with established environmental protections and habitat agreements.

- RC-5.5 Sustainable Recreation Promote water, energy, and resource conservation and best practices in the design, operation, and maintenance of new and existing parks, trails, and recreational facilities.

- RC-5.6 Replacement Trees Maintain an attractive and comfortable park environment by replacing any mature tree removed from a park setting with a California-friendly or shade tree of similar size and shape or with smaller trees at a 2:1 ratio, as reasonably feasible.

GOAL RC-6

Establish and maintain a public trail system that provides residents and visitors with safe, useable, and attractive hiking, cycling, and equestrian opportunities, linking areas within the City.

POLICIES

- RC-6.1 Trail Development Develop and maintain an off-road trail system in open space areas, greenways, and conservation corridor areas that provide recreational opportunities while protecting significant plant and animal species and other environmental resources.

- RC-6.2 Development Requirement Require new development to provide trails in accordance with the City's recreation and park master plan, specific plan requirements, and the policies of the General Plan.

- RC-6.3 Trail Design and Connections Design trails for a variety of uses: open space, equestrian, multiple use, and bicycle,



as conditions allow. Require that trail designs integrate with the existing and planned Riverside County Regional Trail System and the Diamond Valley Lake Trail System, as appropriate.

- RC-6.4 Trail Safety and Maintenance Work with Riverside County, Diamond Valley Lake (i.e., the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California), hiking and cycling organizations, and other interested parties to maintain the trail system for safety and enjoyment.
- RC-6.5 Simpson Park Promote the use of Simpson Park as a regional off-road cycling venue and consider year-round access as safety and fire hazard conditions permit.
- RC-6.6 Partnerships and Funding Opportunities Facilitate partnerships with other agencies, organizations, and volunteer groups to secure grants, donations, and funding for the design, implementation, and maintenance of trail systems.