

## 4.11 RECREATION

### 4.11.1 Setting

**a. Existing Park and Recreation Facilities.** The City of San Luis Obispo currently features over 30 parks (including seven community parks, 10 neighborhood parks, and eight mini parks), one ten hole golf course, one community center, and multiple focused use facilities (such as the Senior Center, SLO Skate Park, Damon Garcia Sports Fields, Sinsheimer Stadium, and the SLO Swim Center). Currently, there are approximately 152 acres of parkland in the City, of which approximately 34 acres are neighborhood parks. In addition to developed parks, the City owns and/ or manages over 6,970 acres of open space within and adjacent to the City, providing passive recreational activities accommodate hiking and mountain biking (City of San Luis Obispo, Land Use and Circulation Element Update Environmental Impact Report [LUCE Update EIR], 2014). The general characteristics of the City's recreational facilities are described below. Currently, the San Luis Ranch Specific Plan Area is not located within the City of San Luis Obispo and no parkland exists on the site.

Community Parks. Community parks are intended to serve the entire community. Usually identified by unique features, community parks may be constructed for specialized and uses, and attract users from throughout the City whose recreational needs are not met in the community's smaller parks. The City currently has six community parks (which includes the Jack House Gardens and Mission Plaza), totaling approximately 113 acres (City of San Luis Obispo, 2014).

Neighborhood Parks. Neighborhood parks are defined as areas that are convenient and accessible for active and passive recreation to residents in adjacent and nearby neighborhoods. Neighborhood parks often include turf playfields, playground equipment, and landscaped picnic/seating areas, and may provide facilities such as hard-surfaced courts, restrooms, group barbecues, natural or cultural features, and on-site parking. The optimum site for a neighborhood park is in the center of a neighborhood within safe walking or bicycling distance of neighborhood residents. Playfields are sometimes a component of neighborhood parks and can provide opportunities for organized recreation activities. The City currently has ten neighborhood parks, totaling approximately 34 acres (City of San Luis Obispo, 2014).

Mini Parks. Mini parks are typically small recreational sites that provide neighborhoods or commercial areas with passive or active recreational facilities. This type of park may be appropriate in areas where larger parks are not feasible or accessible to residents and employees in the immediate area. The City currently has eight mini parks, totaling approximately five acres (City of San Luis Obispo, 2014).

Joint Use Sites. Joint use sites include facilities and/or properties where long-term uses are shared between the City and another agency through a formal agreement. Joint use facilities in the City include Sinsheimer Park as well as several fields and gymnasiums on San Luis Coastal Unified School District property located within the City that are available for scheduled recreation programs and public use after school hours (City of San Luis Obispo, 2014).



Special Facilities. Special facilities such as pools, civic centers, and golf courses, provide specific recreation opportunities for residents and visitors.

Recreation Facilities Near the Project Site. The closest recreation facility to the San Luis Ranch project site is Laguna Lake Park and Natural Preserve. The 40-acre community park is located just northwest of the project site boundary, across Madonna Road.

The locations of existing parks and open space within the City and in the vicinity of the project site are shown in Figure 4.11-1. Tables 4.11-1 and 4.11-2 describe the type, location, and amenities provided by parks and special facilities in San Luis Obispo.

**Table 4.11-1  
Existing City of San Luis Obispo Parks and Recreation Facilities**

<b>ID Number</b>	<b>Park Name</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Facilities</b>	<b>Acres</b>
<b>Community Parks</b>				
1	Damon-Garcia Sports Fields	680 Industrial Way	Four regulation soccer fields with lights (configurable for up to nine smaller fields); rentable concession stand; restrooms	20.0
2	Jack House Historic Home and Gardens	536 Marsh Street	Site of Historic Jack House; patio area with fountain; kitchen and utility building; barbeque area; restrooms; Washhouse Gift Shop	0.8
3	Laguna Lake Park	504 Madonna Road.	Group barbeque areas; three small picnic areas; par course fitness trail; disc golf course; restrooms; fishing, sail boating, row boating; dog park	40.0
4	Meadow Park	2333 Meadow Street	Individual and group picnic/barbeque areas; horseshoe pits; sand volleyball courts; multi-use basketball court; softball field; playground; fitness course; walking trails; community garden	14.0
5	Mission Plaza	989 Chorro Street	Mission Plaza amphitheater; arbor patio area; restrooms	4.0
6	Santa Rosa Park	Santa Rosa and Oak	Two group barbecue areas; drop-in picnic areas; ten lighted horseshoe pits; lighted softball field; youth baseball field; lighted multi-use court for roller hockey, roller derby, and basketball; large playground area	11.0
7	Sinsheimer Park	900 Southwood Street	Two group barbecue areas; six tennis courts; playground; nine-hole disc golf course; sand volleyball court; Railroad Recreational Trail; horseshoe pits; SLO Stadium; Stockton Field	23.5
<i>City Community Parks Acreage Subtotal</i>				113.3
<b>Neighborhood Parks</b>				
8	Anholm Park	870 Mission Street	Picnic tables; play area	0.1
9	De Vault Park	1651 Spooner Street	playground; picnic tables	0.9



**Table 4.11-1  
Existing City of San Luis Obispo Parks and Recreation Facilities**

<b>ID Number</b>	<b>Park Name</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Facilities</b>	<b>Acres</b>
10	Emerson Park	1316 Beach Street	Sports field; basketball courts; bocce ball courts; children's play area; adult fitness zone; community garden; picnic tables	3.0
11	French Park	1040 Fuller Road	Multi-use court; youth baseball/softball field; sand volleyball court; tennis court; horseshoe pits; individual picnic/barbecue area; large barbecue area; children's playground	10.0
12	Mitchell Park	1400 Osos Street	Playground; individual picnic tables; horseshoe pit; barbeque area; bandstand	3.0
13	Islay Hill Park	1151 Tank Farm Road	Youth baseball/softball field; basketball court; tennis court; sand volleyball court; picnic areas; children's play area; restrooms	5.0
14	Johnson Park	1020 Southwood Drive	Children's playground; large barbecue area; basketball courts; restrooms	4.5
15	Laguna Hills Park	890 Mirada Drive	Picnic tables; play area	3.5
16	Throop Park	510 Cerro Romauldo	Picnic tables; play area; softball/baseball field; restrooms	3.0
17	Vista Lago Park	1170 Vista Lago	Picnic tables; play area; benches	0.5
<i>Neighborhoods Parks Acreage Subtotal</i>				33.5
<b>Mini-Parks</b>				
18	Buena Vista Park	100 Block of Buena Vista	Circular grass area	0.4
19	Cheng Park	1038 Marsh Street	Chinese commemoration theme, benches	0.1
20	Eto Park	South and Brook Street	Pond; bench area	0.3
21	Ellsford Park	San Luis Drive near California	Two creek-side grass areas	1.0
22	Stoneridge Park	535 Bluerock Drive	Small, grass-covered neighborhood lot	0.5
23	Osos/Triangle Park	Santa Barbara Street at Osos Street	Picnic site	0.3
24	Las Praderas Park	Las Praderas and Mariposa Drive	Creek-side lot, benches	1.8
25	Priolo-Martin Park	Vista del Collados and Vista del Arroyo	Benches; Laguna Lake Pathway	0.5
<i>Mini-Parks Acreage Subtotal</i>				4.9
<b>Joint-Use Facilities (Not included towards park standard)</b>				
N/A	C.L. Smith Elementary School	1375 Balboa Street	Baseball/softball diamonds; soccer and athletic fields; children's play area; basketball courts	4.8
N/A	Sinsheimer Elementary School	2755 Augusta Street	Gymnasium; youth baseball/softball field; large turf area	N/A
N/A	Hawthorne Elementary School	2125 Story Street	Gymnasium; youth baseball/softball field; large turf area	N/A



**Table 4.11-1  
Existing City of San Luis Obispo Parks and Recreation Facilities**

<b>ID Number</b>	<b>Park Name</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Facilities</b>	<b>Acres</b>
N/A	Bishop Peak/Teach Elementary School	451 Jaycee Drive	Gymnasium; large turf area	N/A
N/A	Pacheco Elementary School	261 Cuesta Drive	Gymnasium; large turf area	N/A
<b>Park Acreage Total</b>				<b>151.7</b>

Source: City of San Luis Obispo, General Plan Background Report, 2014

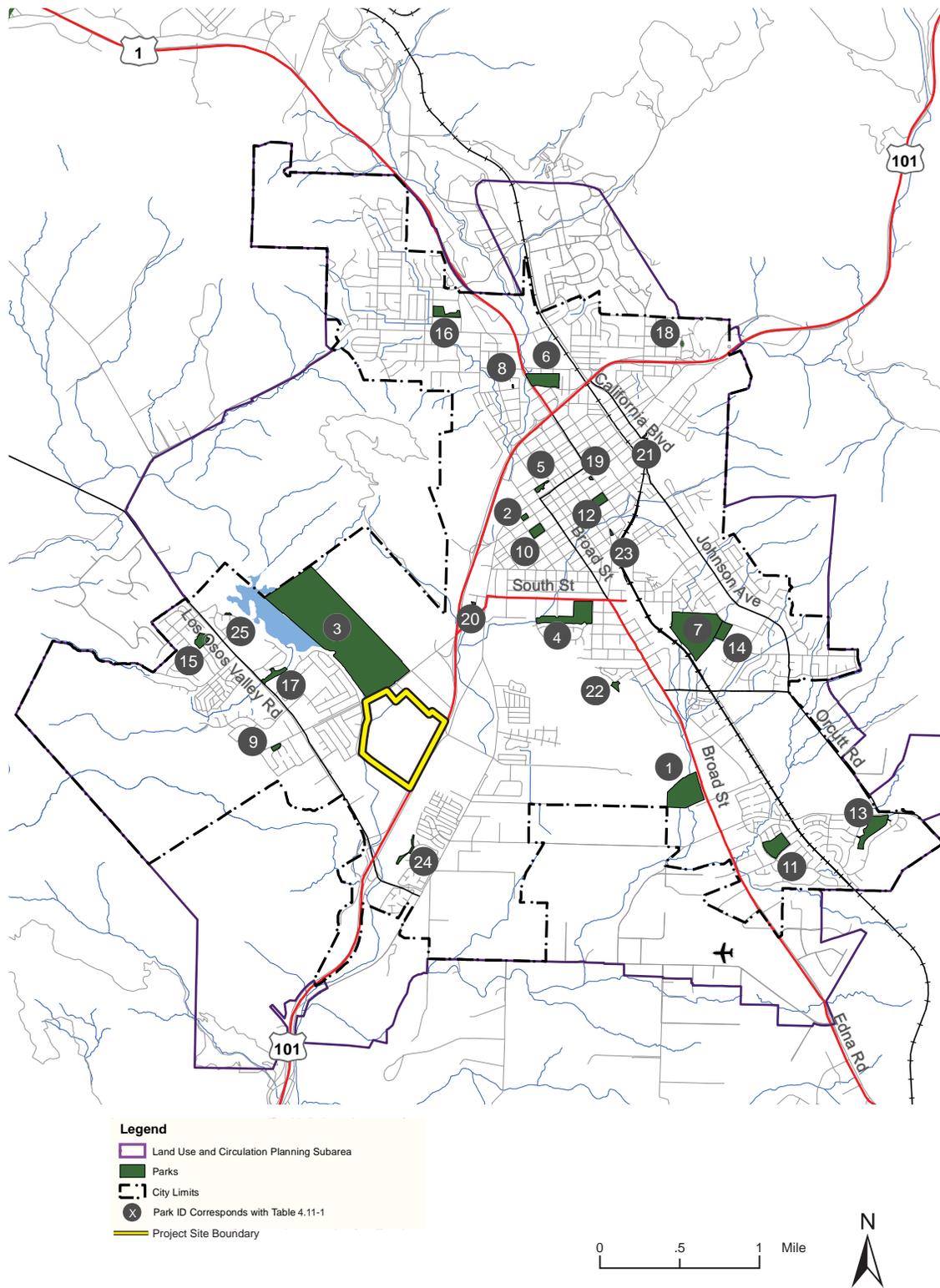
**Table 4.11-2  
Existing City of San Luis Obispo Special Facilities**

<b>Facility Name</b>	<b>Address/Location</b>	<b>Amenities</b>
Laguna Lake Golf Course	11175 Los Osos Valley Road	9-hole, 27-acre executive length golf course with additional features including small practice putting green and driving range, barbecue pit and picnic area and restrooms
SLO Swim Center	900 Laurel Lane	Square feet totaling 43,720 that includes a 50 x 25 meter pool, separate tot pool, restrooms, locker rooms, and a multi- purpose room
Ludwick Community Center	664 Santa Rosa Street	meeting rooms, gymnasium, preschool facility, shower facilities, and restrooms
Senior Center	1445 Santa Rosa Street	Multi-use room, meeting room, small specialty meeting rooms, restrooms, and a kitchen
Meadow Park Center	2333 Meadow Street	Multi-use facility and restrooms
Laurel Lane Community Gardens	Laurel Lane next to Fire Station	16 individual garden plots for annual rental
Broad Street Community Gardens	North Broad Street near U.S. 101 southbound exit	17 individual agriculture plots
Meadow Park Community Gardens	2333 Meadow Street	40 agriculture plots
Emerson Park Community Gardens	1316 Beach Street	39 agriculture plots
SLO Skate Park	Santa Rosa Park	15,500 square foot concrete skate park, amphitheater, low impact fitness path, public art, and streetscape plaza
Ken Hampian Hockey Rink/Multi-Use Court	Santa Rosa Park	Hockey rink/multi-use court

Source: City of San Luis Obispo, General Plan Background Report, 2014

**b. Planned Parks and Recreation Facilities.** Currently, there are a series of parks that are affiliated with new residential development proposed for the City. At this time, none of these parks are in the building permit issuance process. The current City Capital Improvement Projects that are park improvement related include the replacement of playground equipment at Sinsheimer Park during 2016 and, if approved with the 2017-19 Financial Plan, the





**City of San Luis Obispo  
Parks and Recreation Facilities**

Figure 4.11-1

Source: City of San Luis Obispo  
July 2012

City of San Luis Obispo

construction of lights at Sinsheimer Park Tennis Courts. Having consistently been brought to the City Council's attention, the City has determined that there is an unmet need for both tennis court and pickleball courts in the City as well as a desire by existing neighborhoods that are underserved by parks to renovate existing parks or to find locations for new parks within existing neighborhoods.

**c. Regulatory Setting.**

Quimby Act (1975). The Quimby Act gives cities and counties the authority, by ordinance, to require the dedication of land or payment of in-lieu fees, or a combination of both, for park and recreation purposes as a condition of approval of a tract map or parcel map. The Quimby Act allows fees to be collected for up to five acres of parkland per 1,000 residents.

San Luis Obispo Parks and Recreation Element and Master Plan (2001). The City's General Plan Parks and Recreation Element and Master Plan describe existing parks and recreation facilities, activities, and financing within the City. The Master Plan identifies unmet needs, details a park vision for the future, and outlines an implementation strategy for the development of new parks and recreation facilities and programs. The following Parks and Recreation Element policies establish parkland provision standards in the City:

***Policy 3.13.1. The Parks System.*** *The City shall develop and maintain a park system at a rate of 10 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents. Five acres shall be dedicated as a neighborhood park. The remaining five acres required under the 10 acres per 1,000 residents in the residential annexation policy may be located anywhere within the City's park system as deemed appropriate.*

***Policy 3.13.2.*** *Parks shall be designed to meet a variety of needs depending on park size, location, natural features and user demands.*

***Policy 3.13.8.*** *Park site acquisition should enhance the City's recreational trails, pedestrian transportation, and open spaces in keeping with adopted policies.*

***Policy 3.15.1. Neighborhood Parks.*** *San Luis Obispo residents shall have access to a neighborhood park within 0.5 to 1.0 mile walking distance of their residence.*

***Policy 3.15.3. Neighborhood Parks.*** *All residential annexation areas shall provide developed neighborhood parks at the rate of five acres per 1,000 residents.*

***Policy 3.15.4. Neighborhood Parks.*** *In neighborhoods where existing parks do not adequately serve residents, mini-parks may be considered.*

City of San Luis Obispo Land Use Element (2014). Section 8.1.4 of the City's General Plan Land Use Element provides direction for future development under the San Luis Ranch Specific Plan as follows:

*"This project site should be developed as a mixed use project that maintains the agricultural heritage of the site, provides a commercial / office transition to the existing commercial center to the north, and provides a diverse housing experience. Protection of the adjacent creek and a well-planned integration into the existing circulation system will be required."*



Although parks and recreational facilities are not explicitly mentioned in the policy framework for the site, the Land Use Element establishes a performance standard to include at least 5.8 acres of parkland within the San Luis Ranch Specific Plan Area.

#### 4.11.2 Previous Program-Level Environmental Review

The 2014 LUCE Update EIR previously analyzed overall Citywide impacts to parks and recreation facilities, including those associated with development of the San Luis Ranch Specific Plan Area, related to the adoption of the 2014 Land Use and Circulation Elements, including planned future land use development and proposed goals, policies, and programs. The LUCE Update EIR parks and recreation analysis determined that although the City's existing per capita parkland standard is not currently achieved, General Plan buildout would provide additional areas of parkland within the City and a slightly improved parkland per capita ratio when compared to existing conditions. General Plan buildout, including development of the San Luis Ranch Specific Plan Area, would result in an improvement in the per capita parkland ratio compared to existing conditions. Furthermore, the LUCE Update EIR determined that most of the future parkland to be provided in the City would be constructed as part of the buildout of previously approved (Margarita and Orcutt) or proposed (San Luis Ranch, Avila Ranch, Madonna) specific plans, which would facilitate park planning and design opportunities to minimize environmental impacts and land use conflicts. At the time of the LUCE Update EIR, the location, and uses of parkland area to be provided in the San Luis Ranch Specific Plan Area and other proposed specific plan areas had yet to be determined. However, based on the assumed buildout of these areas and the park planning and design opportunities to be included therein, the LUCE Update EIR concluded that impacts related to parks and recreation facilities would be less than significant.

#### 4.11.3 Impact Analysis

**a. Methodology and Significance Thresholds.** The following criteria are based on the City's Initial Study, and Appendix G of the *State CEQA Guidelines*. The effects of the project on recreation would be significant if the project would:

1. *Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated;*
2. *Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment.*

**b. Impacts and Mitigation Measures.**

Threshold 1	<i>Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?</i>
Threshold 2	<i>Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?</i>

**Impact REC-1** *The project would accommodate new residents in the City of San Luis Obispo who will use existing and planned parks and*



*recreation facilities. Provision of on-site parks and recreation facilities would not meet the adopted City parkland standard for the San Luis Ranch Specific Plan Area. Therefore, impacts to parks and recreational facilities would be Class II, potentially significant but mitigable.*

The project includes development of 3.4 acres of parkland within the San Luis Ranch Specific Plan Area. As shown in the project site plan (refer to Figure 2-6 in Section 2.0, *Project Description*), the parkland proposed for the project site would be within 0.5 to 1.0 mile of the proposed residential development. Therefore, the project would be consistent with Policy 3.15.1 of the Parks and Recreation Element. However, the proposed 3.4 acres of parkland would not meet the performance standard included in Policy 8.1.4 of the City's General Plan LUE which requires 5.8 acres of parkland to be provided within the San Luis Ranch Specific Plan Area.

*Mitigative Components of the Specific Plan and Impact Conclusion.* The San Luis Ranch Specific Plan includes requirements intended to protect open space and recreation areas. Specific Plan Policies 1.5, 4.1, 4.4, and 5.4 require the promotion and integration of parks and recreational space throughout the plan area and development components. Although the project includes development of 3.4 acres of parkland it would result in a 2.4-acre shortfall in parkland standard for the San Luis Ranch Specific Plan Area. Therefore, the project would result in potentially significant impact to parks and recreational facilities.

**Mitigation Measures.** The following mitigation measure would be required to reduce impacts to parks and recreational facilities:

- REC-1**      **Parkland In-lieu Fees.** The project applicant shall pay parkland in-lieu fees in accordance with the City's parkland in-lieu fee program for the parkland shortage. The project's specific fee shall be determined by the City at the time of project approval, after accounting for parkland provided within the San Luis Ranch Specific Plan Area. The in-lieu fees collected from the project shall be directed to new projects or improvements to existing parks and recreation facilities within the City of San Luis Obispo parks system.

**Residual Impacts.** The City's parkland in-lieu fee program assesses fees based on each new lot in a subdivision in order for the City to meet the goals included in the Parks and Recreation Element of the General Plan. The environmental effects associated with implementation of planned parkland that would be facilitated by this fee payment were addressed in the LUCE Update EIR. With payment of the City's required parkland in-lieu fees to ensure compliance with the policies and performance standards in the City's General Plan as part of the project, impacts associated with parks and recreational facilities would be less than significant.

**c. Cumulative Impacts.** Buildout under the General Plan, which includes development of the project site, would potentially provide 52.4 acres of new park and recreation facilities in the City. As discussed in Section 4.11.2, the majority of the future parkland planned to be provided in the City would be constructed as part of the buildout of previously approved (Margarita and Orcutt) or proposed (San Luis Ranch, Avila Ranch, Madonna) specific plans,



which would facilitate park planning and design opportunities to minimize environmental impacts and land use conflicts.

The City of San Luis Obispo has a population of 45,802 (DOF, 2015). Based on the City's adopted parkland standard, approximately 458 acres of total parkland, including 229 acres of neighborhood parkland, should be provided in the City. There is currently approximately 152 acres of parkland in the City, of which approximately 34 acres are neighborhood parks. This results in approximately 3.3 acres of total parkland per 1,000 residents and 0.7 acre of neighborhood parks per 1,000 residents. Based on existing population and parks acreage conditions, the City needs an additional 306 acres of park land, of which 195 acres should be neighborhood parks, to meet its per capita parkland standard. Development of the project would add an estimated 1,293 residents to the City (546 new single family and multi-family dwelling units x 2.29 people/unit [Department of Finance 2015] and 34 new affordable units x 1.25 people/unit).<sup>1</sup> Based on the City's parkland standard of 10 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents, five acres of which must be neighborhood park (Policy 3.13.1 of the Parks and Recreation Element), the project would result in the additional need for approximately 12.9 acres of parkland, including 6.5 acres of neighborhood parkland. The project would add 3.4 acres of parkland in the City. As such, the project would not meet the Citywide parkland standards and would exacerbate the existing shortfall of parks and recreational facilities within the City. As a result, cumulative adverse physical effects on the environment from recreational development would be potentially significant, and the project's contribution to this impact would be cumulatively considerable. With payment of the City's required parkland in-lieu fees to ensure compliance with the policies and performance standards in the City's General Plan as part of the project, required by Mitigation Measure REC-1, the project contribution to cumulative impacts associated with parks and recreational facilities would be reduced to a less than significant level.

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<sup>1</sup> Population growth rate from City's Land Use and Circulation Element Appendix I Water Supply Assessment (page 9), as referred to in SB610 Water Supply Assessment – San Luis Ranch prepared by Cannon (2016; Appendix M).



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