

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

The Parks, Recreation and Trails Element of the General Plan will serve to guide future development of parks, recreational facilities, multi-use trails, bikeways and open space areas to serve the recreation needs of existing and future city residents. This element is an optional General Plan Element, authorized by Section 65303 of the California Government Code represents the eighth element of the City's General Plan. The goals, objectives and policies of each of the other elements of the General Plan have been integrated here to the extent that they affect parks, recreation, trails and open space.

Specifically, the Parks, Recreation and Trails Element serves the following purposes:

1. The Parks, Recreation and Trails Element informs the public of the City's goals, objectives, and policies for development of future parks, recreational facilities and the like, and it will provide a basis for funding prioritization and program development.
2. The Parks, Recreation and Trails Element includes the City's Local Open Space Plan as required by Section 65560 of the California Government Code.
3. The Element provides standards for the development of multi-use trails and bikeways and establishes the general alignment of these facilities. With this information, the City can better compete for State and Federal grants which fund construction of these recreation features.
4. The element serves as an informational document for city residents and other interested groups and individuals in determining how future parks and recreational facilities will be designed and constructed.

SECTION 2: GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

GOAL PRT1: Provide adequate parks to meet the needs of existing and future residents. (Objective PS5.4)

Objective PRT1.1: Adopt and implement a standard of 5 acres of parkland per 1,000 population for the City (**Policy PS5.4.1**).

Policy PRT1.1.1: Of the 5 acres/1,000 population, active park land must comprise no less than 3 acres per 1,000 population; open space may comprise 1 acre per 1,000 population; and the remainder can be composed of other public recreational facilities including Desert Aire Golf Course, portions of school sites which provide recreation facilities or play fields accessible to the public, or other comparable facilities. Of the 3 acre/1,000 population standard for active park land, develop 2 acres as community or specialty parks and 1 acre as neighborhood parks.

Policy PRT1.1.2: Ensure that park sites are located equitably, throughout the City, to maximize access to parks for all residents.

Policy PRT1.1.3: Provide a variety of parks throughout the City, including community and neighborhood parks, to meet the needs of all residents.

Policy PRT1.1.4: Adopt the park standards, described in Table PRT-1, which establish the type of parks and adopt the guidelines for the facilities to be developed in future parks.

Objective PRT1.2: Explore various means of acquiring parkland and seek creative and flexible techniques to accomplish City park goals.

Policy PRT1.2.1: Collect park fees and review this fee annually, to provide financing for improvement of parkland in Palmdale (**Policy PS5.4.4**).

Policy PRT1.2.2: Consider formation of a city-wide public financing district to provide funding for design, acquisition, construction and maintenance of parks throughout the City.

Policy PRT1.2.3: Continue to use the City's Capital Improvement Program as the mechanism for short-term planning for acquisition of park land and construction of park facilities.

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Policy PRT1.2.4: Where appropriate, remodel or recycle existing vacant buildings, such as large retail or industrial buildings, for recreation uses.

Policy PRT1.2.5: When reviewing reclamation plans for quarries, incorporate provisions which allow reclaimed quarries to be used for appropriate recreational purposes.

Policy PRT1.2.6: Consider the following criteria when evaluating future park sites for acquisition or dedication. In the event that a park site is proposed for dedication in lieu of payment of park fees, the proponent of the project shall provide information, to the satisfaction of the Director of Parks and Recreation and the Director of Planning, in order that the criteria listed below may be evaluated.

1. Physical Considerations. The physical aspects of a proposed park site shall be suitable for development as a park. Access, infrastructure and topography will be evaluated pursuant to the following criteria:
 - a. Street Access: Community parks should have access from major or secondary arterial roadways. Neighborhood parks should have access from secondary arterial or collector roadways. Mini-parks may be accessed from local streets or cul-de-sacs. Park sites shall also be located to provide maximum accessibility from the areas to be served, meaning that they shall not be inaccessible to adjacent neighborhoods by virtue of development patterns, street layouts, block walls or other obstructions to accessibility.
 - b. Availability of Infrastructure: Park sites should be located in proximity to utility connections and along existing dedicated roadways. Where infrastructure is not available, the cost of providing adequate infrastructure to the site shall be considered in evaluating the suitability of the site.
 - c. Size of the Proposed Site: The park site should be of adequate size to accommodate the facilities needed within the area to be served, including but not limited to active and passive play areas, picnic areas, parking areas, structures, and adequate setbacks or buffers from neighboring land uses.

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- d. Suitability of the Natural Terrain: The natural terrain of the proposed park site should be such that the site can be developed without requiring extensive grading or recontouring of the natural topography.
2. Land Use Considerations. Future park sites shall be compatible with surrounding land uses and shall be in conformance with adopted local and regional plans. Prior to acceptance or acquisition of future park sites, the sites will be evaluated to determine their appropriateness from a land use perspective, based on the following criteria:
- a. Compliance with applicable plans: Proposed park sites shall be in conformance with any adopted Master Facilities Plan for Parks, applicable Specific Plan City's General Plan, and any adopted regional or subregional plan.
 - b. Capacity to Serve Multiple Functions: Where feasible, the park site should be located and/or designed to accommodate other public services/facilities such as drainage basins, fire stations, maintenance yards, trail staging areas, etc.
 - c. Local Population Density: The location of future park sites should consider the surrounding population density. More park acreage is needed to serve recreation demand in areas of high density residential development. In areas with relatively low density development, fewer park sites are required.
 - d. Location of Other Parks, Availability of Other Recreational Amenities: Consideration shall be given to the proximity of school sites or other parks, including parks under the jurisdiction of other local agencies. The availability of other recreational amenities such as private facilities and recreational amenities within common open space in multi-family developments should also be considered in selecting or accepting a park site.
 - e. Neighborhood Acceptance: The proposed park site shall be compatible with the existing neighborhood in that it should provide recreational amenities which are suitable to and acceptable to a consensus of the neighborhood.

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- f. **Consideration of Alternative Sites:** Prior to acceptance or acquisition of a site, an alternatives analysis shall be performed by the proponent of the site to determine if there are other more suitable locations within the applicable Park Planning Area which are better suited to be developed as a park. In the event that the alternatives analysis demonstrates that there are better alternative locations for park land development, those locations will be disclosed by the Director of Parks and Recreation to the City Council, prior to any action on the site in question.
 - g. **Logical Progression of Development:** In the event that the proposed park site is to be acquired and held for a period of time prior to development (land banking), the site shall be evaluated to determine when, according to a logical progression of development, the demand will exist for development of the site.
3. **Cost Considerations.** The cost of acquisition and development of the site shall be determined. In addition, a reasonable assessment of the opportunities which will be foregone by committing to the proposed action shall be made.
- a. **Cost/Method of Acquisition:** The cost of any proposed park site, as well as the proposed method of acquisition, shall be evaluated to determine whether acquisition of a proposed site is fiscally sound. The cost for acquisition of park sites shall be based on fair market value as determined by a qualified appraiser.
 - b. **Proportion of Developed Parkland vs. Banked Land:** Prior to acquisition or acceptance of dedication of park land which will be banked to fill future recreation needs, an evaluation shall be made to determine the proportion of existing banked park acreage compared to existing developed park land. Where the proportion of banked land is higher than the proportion of developed land, that information shall be disclosed by the Director of Parks and Recreation to the City Council prior to acceptance of the site in question.
 - c. **Use of Undevelopable Property:** Where property which is constrained from development because of topography, geological hazards, flood hazards, excessive noise levels, or other similar environmental conditions is proposed as a park site, the purchase

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price of the property should be reflective of such development constraints. In-lieu dedication should be similarly adjusted.

- d. **Assessment of Other Parkland Development Opportunities:** The cost to the City of any loss of park fees shall be evaluated with respect to other opportunities to develop park land which will be lost or deferred if the proposed acquisition or dedication is made.

Objective PRT1.3: Wherever feasible, incorporate uses which increase the public benefit of park land, and are compatible with the goal of providing active recreation opportunities.

Policy PRT1.3.1: Where feasible, utilize parks for joint use as flood control facilities (**Policy PS5.4.7**)

Policy PRT1.3.2: Incorporate fire stations, maintenance yards, park-and-ride lots and other public facilities into parks, to share costs associated with land acquisition, provision of infrastructure and access and provision of shared parking, so long as the use does not conflict with providing active recreation opportunities.

Policy PRT1.3.3: Co-locate schools and parks, where possible, to provide extended opportunities to construct play areas, ball fields, basketball courts and other similar facilities which benefit both students and the general public.

Policy PRT1.3.4: Develop recreational facilities jointly with non-profit incorporated recreation organizations, such as Little League or AYSO, to assist in meeting City residents' demands for organized recreational opportunities.

Policy PRT1.3.5: Seek opportunities to develop regional parks or recreational facilities, which provide recreational benefits to a wide range of residents of the Antelope Valley, as a joint effort with the City of Lancaster.

Objective PRT1.4: Consider non-traditional types of parks to extend the range of recreational opportunities available within the City.

Policy PRT1.4.1: Create linear parks along drainage courses, utility easements or other such features. Linear parks can include pedestrian paths, bikeways or par courses (fitness courses).

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Policy PRT1.4.2: Where previous development patterns preclude acquisition of large sites, consider developing tot lots or pocket parks to provide neighborhood recreation amenities.

Policy PRT1.4.3: Where unique recreational demands exist, either within a neighborhood or city-wide, develop specialty parks, such as equestrian centers, sports complexes, amphitheater sites, arboretums or nature centers, to provide specific recreational opportunities.

Objective PRT1.5: Ensure that parks and recreation facilities are accessible to all citizens.

Policy PRT1.5.1: Incorporate all design features, required by the Americans With Disabilities Act, which improve access to parks and park facilities for handicapped citizens.

Policy PRT1.5.2: Where necessary, retrofit existing park facilities in order that they comply with the provisions of the Americans With Disabilities Act, affecting parking and access.

Policy PRT1.5.3: To the extent practical, provide playground equipment which provides recreational opportunities to handicapped children within City parks and provide features such as trails and signs for persons who are visually impaired and park structures which accommodate persons confined to wheelchairs.

Policy PRT1.5.4: Where appropriate, provide park facilities which meet the recreational needs of senior residents.

Policy PRT1.5.5: Ensure that parks are designed to promote the safety of all park users by incorporating features which discourage crime.

Objective PRT1.6: To the extent feasible, incorporate active parks in the City's open space network and trails plan.

Policy PRT1.6.1: Provide trail linkages through active park sites to connect nearby equestrian and multi-use trails, and bikeways.

Policy PRT1.6.2: On those park sites with steep slopes or other development constraints, leave natural areas for passive recreation pursuits.

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Objective PRT1.7: Seek public input on design of all new neighborhood and community parks in Palmdale (**Policy PS5.4.5**).

Policy PRT1.7.1: Prior to construction of new parks, provide opportunities for public input, including but not limited to, informal meetings with neighborhood groups, coordination with the community organizations and final approval by the City Council.

Policy PRT1.7.2: Consult with non-profit incorporated recreation organizations such as Little League, AYSO, Pony League, 4-H, Scouts and others to ensure that park designs incorporate, to the extent feasible, facilities which compliment the goals of these recreation providers.

Policy PRT1.7.3: Inform the Palmdale Chamber of Commerce of proposed park and recreation projects in order to apprise local business of city actions.

GOAL PRT2: Provide a broad range of recreational programs, including programs for all age and activity levels, educational programs and cultural events, to enrich the lives of Palmdale residents.

Objective PRT2.1: Provide a broad range of recreational activities for Palmdale youth.

Policy PRT2.1.1: Encourage organized youth sports programs; work with non-profit organizations to provide sufficient playfields and practice areas for activities such as soccer, baseball, T-ball, softball and football.

Policy PRT2.1.2: Develop more youth/recreation centers, like the existing Hammack Center, in locations throughout the City, to provide more locations for children and teen-agers to recreate.

Policy PRT2.1.3: Provide a range of activities, such as crafts classes, excursions, day camps, dance classes, karate/exercise classes, for children after-school or during off-track periods.

Policy PRT2.1.4: In addition to the activities offered at community parks, provide recreational opportunities at the other park sites throughout the City and at remote locations in neighborhoods not served by parks.

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Objective PRT2.2: Provide a variety of recreation activities for adults.

Policy PRT2.2.1: Continue to provide organized adult sports, such as softball, basketball, and expand these programs as demand dictates.

Policy PRT2.2.2: Offer adult recreation programs at various times such as on weekends, or in the evening, to better accommodate schedules of the City's large population of commuting adults.

Policy PRT2.2.3: In addition to the organized sports activities continue to offer a variety of programs, classes and excursions for Palmdale adults.

Objective PRT2.3: Continue to provide a broad range of recreational and social activities for seniors.

Policy PRT2.3.1: Provide recreation and education programs, exercise classes and health services to Palmdale's senior citizens to enrich and enhance their quality of life.

Policy PRT2.3.2: In addition to the Senior Programs offered at the Palmdale Senior Center, consider offering programs at remote locations such as future senior housing projects and senior care facilities, in order to reach a broader senior population.

Policy PRT2.3.3: Continue to provide excursions tailored to the recreational desires of seniors.

Objective PRT2.4: Provide opportunities for cultural and artistic activities within the community. (Objective PS5.8)

Policy PRT2.4.1: Continue to promote activities such as the Fall Festival, and Concerts in the Park to provide residents with cultural and entertainment options.

Policy PRT2.4.2: Construct an amphitheater or bandstand to expand opportunities for local outdoor concerts and/or theater productions.

Policy PRT2.4.3: Consider sponsoring an annual cultural event such as a food festival, art show, film festival or Shakespeare festival.

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Policy PRT2.4.4: Cooperate with existing local theater groups to ensure that future facilities incorporate design components which can serve their needs.

Policy PRT2.4.5: In order to help bolster the downtown businesses, evaluate opportunities to bring festivals to downtown.

Policy PRT2.4.6: Consider development of a city arboretum or garden.

Objective PRT2.5: Continue to recognize and assist other public and private entities which provide recreation or cultural opportunities.

Policy PRT2.5.1: Expand the range of educational, cultural and recreational activities offered at the City Library.

Policy PRT2.5.2: Encourage local groups and organizations who provide cultural opportunities or sponsor cultural events in the city by continuing to provide locations and facilities for these types of events.

Policy PRT2.5.3: Investigate opportunities to jointly sponsor cultural and educational events with the local school districts for Palmdale youth.

Objective PRT2.6: Ensure that all residents have equal access to recreational and cultural programs and activities.

Policy PRT2.6.1: Ensure that all locations where recreational and cultural programs are offered allow physical access to all residents in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act requirements.

Policy PRT2.6.2: Consider offering recreation activities in remote locations where there are no recreational facilities to serve local residents (the remote programs could be provided in a fashion similar to the programs libraries offer through book-mobiles).

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GOAL PRT3: Provide a network of open space areas to provide for passive recreation opportunities, enhance the integrity of biological systems, and provide visual relief from the developed portions of the City.

Objective PRT3.1: Encourage the use of open space areas for passive recreation.

Policy PRT3.1.1: Encourage the placement of multi-use trails or Class I bikeways adjacent to or within open space corridors, except that the placement of these trails should not compromise the preservation of any sensitive environmental resources which may be present in the open space area.

Policy PRT3.1.2: Provide for access points into open space areas to encourage passive recreation activities such as hiking and nature study. These access points should be located at sites which can best tolerate human presence and not directly impact sensitive locations such as springs and archaeological sites.

Policy PRT3.1.3: Provide interpretive information in some locations to enhance the educational aspects of passive recreation; however, most open space should be left in as natural a state as possible.

Policy PRT3.1.4: Provide passive landscaped areas, where appropriate, to provide informal play areas which complement the play areas located in developed parks, and to provide green spaces for other passive recreational pursuits.

Objective PRT3.2: Develop an open space network through preservation of corridors along fault zones, natural drainage courses and in hillside areas to connect with the large areas of open space designated on the General Plan Land Use Map.

Policy PRT3.2.1: Adopt the Local Open Space Plan, attached as Appendix A, to ensure that development within the City's Planning Area maximizes the potential to preserve open space corridors.

Policy PRT3.2.2: Where appropriate, require the preservation of open space areas or open space corridors in areas which are master planned for development.

GOAL PRT4: Develop a system of multi-use trails which provide connections to the County trails system and the City of Lancaster trails system.

Objective PRT4.1: Provide multi-use trails, for use by pedestrians, bicyclists and equestrians, connecting to existing or currently planned multi-use trails.

Policy PRT4.1.1: Adopt the Multi-use Trails Plan, shown in Exhibit PRT-2, which shall delineate the multi-use trails system for the City of Palmdale. The trails plan shall include all trails shown within the Planning Area, including those trails designated by Los Angeles County. Examine the feasibility of extending the multi-use trail system along the Southern Pacific Railroad, the Palmdale Ditch, and Amargosa and Ana Verde Creeks.

Policy PRT 4.1.2: Prepare a trail alignment study to establish specific trail alignments and construction phasing for the trails depicted on the Multi-use Trails Plan. The trail alignment study should consider the impact of trail users on sites along the trail which may contain potentially sensitive environmental resources.

Policy PRT4.1.3: Where feasible, provide trail connections from the backbone trail system shown in Exhibit PRT-2 to such features as schools, parks, and open space areas to provide off-street access.

Policy PRT4.1.4: Adopt the trail design standards, described in Table PRT-2 and Appendix A, which set forth the standards for trail easements, including minimum trail widths and clearances, maximum grades and road crossing details, and lists acceptable construction materials.

Policy PRT4.1.5: Provide trail support facilities, such as benches, trash cans and trail heads/staging areas, as needed throughout the multi-use trails network.

Policy PRT4.1.6: To enhance educational opportunities, place interpretive signage along multi-use trails at appropriate locations to describe important local natural history and sites of historic interest.

Policy PRT4.1.7: On certain trail segments which lead to interesting locations or view points, provide a paved path adjacent to the trail grade to improve access for wheelchairs or persons with mobility impairments, and provide signage for visually-impaired persons.

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Objective PRT4.2: Explore various means of acquiring trail easements or rights-of-way and pursue all available funding sources to provide trail acquisition and construction.

Policy PRT4.2.1: Require dedication of trail easements and/or construction of trail improvements as a condition of approval of development, to the extent allowed by law.

Policy PRT4.2.2: Consider the use of a public financing district to provide funding for design, acquisition, construction and maintenance of trails throughout the City.

Policy PRT4.2.3: To the extent feasible, use grant funding and private donations to finance trail construction.

Policy PRT4.2.4: Use the City's Capital Improvement Program to provide short-term planning for acquisition and construction of trail segments.

Policy PRT4.2.5: Where appropriate, construct trails through linear parks, along drainage courses, utility easements or other such features, to maximize the public benefit of these types of facilities.

Policy PRT4.2.6: Within developments proposed in areas designated for low density residential development, require feeder trails to connect to the main trail network.

Policy PRT4.2.7: Coordinate with the California Department of Water Resources to prepare a plan to reopen the trail adjacent to the California Aqueduct for public use.

Policy PRT4.2.8: Utilize volunteers as much as possible to assist with trail construction and maintenance; seek contributions of time and materials for trail construction; and encourage local groups and businesses to sponsor trail maintenance.

Objective PRT4.3: To the extent feasible, ensure that trails are accessible to all residents.

Policy PRT4.3.1: Incorporate design features, including suitable trail tread materials, which provide access to trails by handicapped citizens.

Policy PRT4.3.2: To the extent feasible, design trails to maximize the safety of trail users by incorporating features which provide visibility and discourage crime.

GOAL PRT5: Promote bicycling as an important mode of transportation and recreation in the City of Palmdale.

Objective PRT5.1: Encourage bicycle use by developing a comprehensive bikeway network for the City.

Policy PRT5.1.1: Establish Class I, II and III bikeways throughout the planning area. Backbone Class I and II bikeways are shown on Exhibit PRT-2.

Policy PRT5.1.2: Focus additional planning efforts towards establishing local bikeway networks which connect with the city-wide backbone system.

Policy PRT5.1.3: Reserve right-of-way, require dedication when appropriate, and ensure construction of bikeways through the development review process and Capital Improvement Program.

Policy PRT5.1.4: Require residential subdivisions designs to accommodate convenient pedestrian and bicycle access, both on and off site, through measures which may include the following (Policy C3.1.4):

1. Side-on cul-de-sacs, as opposed to standard cul-de-sacs, should be encouraged adjacent to major and secondary highways or pedestrian trails, to provide for pedestrian access through cul-de-sac ends.
2. Subdivision design should consider bicycle and pedestrian access to non-residential uses. These areas are best accessed through perimeter (single-loaded) streets. In addition, a logical travel path should be provided between these facilities and nearby arterials.

Policy PRT5.1.5: Explore all available funding methods to implement the bikeway plan, including grant programs and special transportation funds.

Policy PRT5.1.6: Provide for linkage of bikeways to the multi-use trails network within the Planning Area.

Policy PRT5.1.7: Provide for the designation and improvement of bicycle support facilities, including staging areas, parking facilities and bike lockers, at

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appropriate locations along the bikeway network, through the development review process and Capital Improvement Program.

Objective PRT5.2: Provide bikeways which suit the access needs of all bicyclists in the City of Palmdale.

Policy PRT5.2.1: Utilize the following criteria in designating bikeways:

1. The bikeway network should be designed to suit the needs of all types of bike riding, including recreational, commuter, utilitarian and long-distance cycling.
2. The bikeway system should form a continuous network, with dead-end spurs minimized.
3. The bikeway network should interconnect public facilities, schools, parks, recreational areas, commuter facilities and major community, industrial, recreational, institutional, employment and commercial centers.
4. Utilize open space easements, public land, flood control facilities, the California Aqueduct right-of-way and utility easements, where appropriate, to facilitate the objectives of the Bikeway Network and establish safe and continuous off-street bikeways.
5. Where feasible, the bikeway system should be coordinated with bike routes in adjacent jurisdictions.
6. The bikeway network should maximize opportunities for diverse recreational and scenic experiences.
7. Bikeways should be located and designed to permit the cyclist to reach destination points with a minimum expenditure of time and energy.
8. Off-street bikeways (Class I) shall be designed to accommodate pedestrian use, where appropriate.

Policy PRT5.2.2: Adopt the design standards, described in the State of California Highway Design Manual, Chapter 1000, which set forth minimum bikeway widths and clearances, maximum grades and road crossing details, among other things.

Objective PRT5.3: Increase the level of public safety for all bicyclists.

Policy PRT5.3.1: Bikeway safety shall be a primary consideration in the City's planning and design of the bikeway plan.

Policy PRT5.3.2: Require utilization of Class I bike paths in all master planned developments.

Policy PRT5.3.3: Establish maintenance levels and schedules for bicycle facilities, and implement on-going maintenance.

Policy PRT5.3.4: Locate and design bikeway facilities to promote safety through the avoidance of visually obstructive elements and the requirement of lighting, where appropriate.

Policy PRT5.3.5: Where feasible, bikeways should be physically separated from traffic lanes by landscaped areas, grade changes, or physical barriers to enhance bicyclist safety.

SECTION 3: IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES

The following section contains specific implementation measures for the City to follow in order to achieve the goals and objectives related to land use as established in this Element.

A. Funding Sources

Implementation of many of the goals, objectives and policies described in Section 2 will require funding for acquisition of land, construction of facilities, maintenance of facilities or administration of programs. Funding can come from a variety of sources: the City's General Fund, park land in-lieu fees, other impact fees, public financing districts, and grants. Several of these funding mechanisms are described below.

1. **Review of the Park Land In-lieu Fee:** The City has in place a requirement that new development contribute to providing park land for its residents (Ordinance 505). To meet this requirement, developers may either dedicate park land or pay an in-lieu fee to the City for acquisition or construction of park sites. At the present time, this fee is \$1,019 per bedroom for single family residences, \$1,115 per bedroom for duplex or triplex units and \$1,052 per bedroom for apartments. At the present time, the fee amount can be adjusted on an annual basis according to change in the Consumer Price Index.

State law requires that impact fees assessed against new development must show a "nexus," or a connection, between the actual impact of the development and the remedy for that impact. In this case, the impact of new development is to cause the need for new parks in the amount of not less than 3 acres of active park land per 1,000 residents, according to Policy PRT1.1.1. The remedy for this impact is to dedicate and improve 3 acres of park land per each 1,000 residents who will reside in the development or to pay a fee which will result in the provision of 3 acres of park land per each 1,000 new residents. The existing park land in-lieu fee should be reviewed to ensure that it adequately reflects this standard. If appropriate, adjustments to the fee should be made to ensure that it represents the nexus, as required by law, between the impact of new development and the remedy of that impact.

2. **Use of Grants:** Another method of acquiring funding for development of recreational amenities is the use of grant monies. There are a variety of grant programs, enabled through legislation such as the Interstate

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Transportation Enhancement Act (ISTEA) and the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act. These programs specifically set aside money to acquire and/or develop open space areas, trails or bikeways. The City should actively seek out these grant programs and submit appropriate projects for funding consideration. Although competition for these dollars can be high, the use of grants may be the only mechanism available to fund certain projects where the priority for funding through other sources is low.

3. **Use of Public Financing Mechanisms:** Public financing districts, such as assessment districts and Mello-Roos districts, can be a source of revenue for acquisition and construction of parks, recreation facilities, trails and open space. These districts place a special tax or assessment on properties which benefit from these facilities. The tax or assessment is paid by the property owner over a number of years until the bonds which were used to finance the improvements are paid. In 2002, Palmdale voters approved a citywide assessment to finance construction of two parks, one 31-acre park near 40th Street East and Avenue S, and the other a 40-acre expansion of Marie Kerr Park at 30th Street West and Rancho Vista Boulevard. A public financing district is proposed on the Ritter Ranch Specific Plan site to fund a range of infrastructure improvements including parks and trails.
4. **Use of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Funds:** Community Development Block Grants are issued under a federal grant program administered by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). These grants can be used to provide infrastructure improvements such as streets and sidewalks, assistance to local business and service organizations, or a variety of other projects which provide direct benefits to low income residents within eligible census tracts, as determined by HUD. Accordingly, CDBG funds can be used to construct parks or provide recreation programs in certain portions of the City. The City qualifies as an "entitlement" city under HUD regulations, which provides more control over the local expenditure of CDBG funds. In the future, these funds may be an important source of revenue for parks and/or park programs.

B. Implementation of the Park Acquisition and Improvement Plan, the Trails Plan, the Bikeway Plan and the Open Space Plan:

1. **Park Acquisition and Improvement Plan:** Exhibit PRT-1 shows how the residentially designated areas within the City have been delineated into

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Park Planning Areas. The boundaries of the Park Planning Areas were determined by factors such as physical barriers, development demand and differences in land use intensity. The delineation of park planning areas will assist in determining priorities for development of active park lands. The Park Planning Areas will form the basis for implementing the Park Acquisition and Improvement Plan as it relates to location of park land throughout the City. Determination of the type of park and the degree of improvements on a specific site should be based on the park standards shown on Table PRT-1.

2. Multi-use Trails Plan: Exhibit PRT-2 depicts the Multi-use Trails Plan for the City. This Plan will be the basis for constructing a trail system throughout the City which links to existing and currently planned trails in unincorporated portions of Los Angeles County and the City of Lancaster. Exhibit PRT-2 shows general trail alignments; specific locations of easements will need to be determined through subsequent planning efforts. The trails plan includes trails within the Planning Area which have been esignated by Los Angeles County, trails planned for the Ritter Ranch and City Ranch Specific Plan areas, and trails proposed by the City. All trails shown in the Planning Area, including those designated by Los Angeles County, are subject to the goals, objectives and policies contained in Section 2.
3. Bikeway Plan: The City's backbone bikeway network is also shown on Exhibit PRT-2. This network is linked to the City's Multi-use Trails System and bikeways from Lancaster. In addition, local bikeway network planning areas have been identified on Exhibit PRT-2. In these areas, local bikeway networks can be established, connecting neighborhood parks, schools and shopping areas. Local bikeway networks can be delineated through comprehensive development plans or specific planning efforts such as the case of the Ritter Ranch and City Ranch Specific Plan areas. By planning bikeways on a local scale, more attention can be paid to constraints such as existing development patterns, roadways with rights-of-way widths which are insufficient to allow the safe passage of bicycles, and any physical barriers which would restrict safe access.

Adopted bikeway standards will be those recommended in the State of California Highway Design Manual, Chapter 1000.

4. Local Open Space Plan: The Local Open Space Plan, attached as Appendix A, provides a compilation of existing General Plan policies

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which direct development in areas where opportunities to preserve open space may exist. For example, hillside areas, the rift zone and flood hazard areas contain development constraints which could translate into open space corridors. The Local Open Space Plan will serve as a comprehensive reference guide for City staff, developers and members of the community when assessing development projects proposed throughout the City. This plan will help coordinate efforts to provide open space and recreation opportunities to residents, as well as preserving sensitive habitats and species, where present. Open space opportunities exist in the Ritter Ridge, Portal Ridge, Little Rock Wash, Big Rock Wash and Alpine Butte areas and along the San Andreas Rift Zone and hillside areas. All available regional, state and federal funding will be solicited in order to acquire targeted significant ecological areas. Additionally, the City may require dedication of open space, when appropriate, as a part of the development review process.

C. Reservation of Land for Park Sites, Trails and Open Space

1. **Development Review Process:** Prior to approval of any land use entitlement application, City staff reviews the application for compliance with existing city regulations, standards and policies. During this process, the City can apply conditions of approval which act to implement the City's regulations, standards and policies, including the policies contained herein. Through a development's conditions of approval, the City can ensure that adequate easements are reserved for trails, that sufficient land is set aside for parks (or that sufficient in-lieu fees are paid to provide for off-site parks), and that development is configured in such a way as to maintain areas which should be left as open space. To the extent permissible by State law and City regulation or policy, the development review process serves as an essential tool in implementation of this element.
2. **CEQA:** The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Division 13 of the Public Resources Code) was passed in 1970 to protect the quality of the environment. The City will continue to implement CEQA as it is amended from time to time, through adoption of City CEQA guidelines and procedures. As part of the City's CEQA procedure, site-specific special reports may be required prior to approval of development applications to determine areas of sensitive environmental resources where acquisition of open space may be warranted. The City requires biological assessments and reports for projects in known or suspected

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natural habitat areas prior to project approval. These reports will be used to establish significant natural habitat areas and ecologically sensitive zones in order to prevent disturbance and degradation of these areas. Recommended mitigation measures as identified in the reports will be required to be implemented as development occurs.

In addition, the CEQA process assesses the impacts of proposed projects on parks and recreational facilities, and conformance of projects with approved plans, such as the Multi-use Trails and Bikeways Plans. Therefore, the CEQA process can act to trigger dedication of parkland or reservation of trail easements.

3. **Hillside Ordinance:** The City has developed a Hillside Ordinance to protect the hillsides from insensitive development. The ordinance contains standards which will apply to areas with a natural slope of 10 percent or more. In addition to safety benefits, these standards will help to preserve open space, natural grades, scenic views and visually prominent landforms, and prevent landslide and erosion hazards. The ordinance also encourages density clustering to allow contiguous open space areas to remain undisturbed.
4. **Circulation Element:** Bikeways located adjacent to public streets can be shown on the right-of-way cross-sections established in the Circulation Element for arterial roadways. Once shown on the Circulation Element cross-section, acquisition or dedication of adequate right-of-way for construction of bikeways will be facilitated. However, modification of these roadway cross-sections will require a General Plan amendment.

D. Other Implementation Methods

1. **Memoranda of Understanding with Local School Districts:** Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) provide a formal basis for shared use of recreational facilities between the City and the various school districts. This formal arrangement provides a mechanism for obligating funding for joint use facilities in exchange for agreements providing access to those facilities to either the general public, in the case where the City provides facilities on school sites, or for district students, should school districts construct recreational facilities on adjacent park sites, or provide school property for development as a park. Use of MOUs can ensure that the City and the school districts achieve their recreation goals at a reduced cost to both parties.

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2. **Encourage Implementation by Volunteers:** The bulk of the goals, objectives and policies contained in this element can be implemented through volunteer efforts of the City's residents. Volunteers can, among other things, supervise recreation programs, construct and maintain trails, direct organized youth and adult sports programs, and raise funds for acquisition and/or construction of a variety of recreational facilities. Although volunteers currently play an important role in the City in providing recreation programs, that role can be greatly expanded to affect a wide range of other recreationally-related programs and needs. The City must make a conscious effort to more fully utilize its most valuable resource, the energy and ability of its residents, in order to implement this element in a timely manner.

3. **Implementation of Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) Requirements:** The ADA, adopted in 1991 by Congress, requires that all public facilities be accessible to all members of society, including those people with physical handicaps. The public facilities, including parks, which are administered by the City of Palmdale fall within the requirements of this legislation. Therefore, the City is in the process of determining which facilities must be retrofitted to be in compliance with ADA requirements. With regard to parks, most existing facilities require some modifications to the parking area, and in some cases, replacement of playground equipment is necessary. The priority and timing of these modifications has not yet been established. To a certain degree, the priorities will be established through the goals, objectives and policies contained in this element.

E. Standards for Park Development

The standards and guidelines contained in Table PRT-1 should be considered for acquisition of park sites and construction of park improvements. These standards should be reviewed by staff and local decision-makers periodically (every three to five years), to ensure that the standards are in line with current community needs.

**TABLE PRT-1
PARK STANDARDS**

<u>PARK TYPE</u>	<u>TYPICAL SIZE</u>	<u>TYPICAL FEATURES</u>
Mini-park	0-3 acres	tot lots, play areas and picnic areas.
Neighborhood Park	3-7 acres	ballfields, picnic areas, tot lots, restrooms, playgrounds, basketball courts, tennis courts, volleyball courts, trails
Community Park, including linear parks, specialty parks, and nature parks.	5-50+ acres	includes features found in neighborhood parks plus pools, gymnasiums, amphitheaters, equestrian facilities, sports complexes, and other similar facilities.

RECREATION FACILITY GUIDELINES:

(Guidelines include all available facilities city-wide, including those facilities provided on school sites or by private recreation providers)

<u>FACILITY</u>	<u>GUIDELINE</u>
Tot lots:	1 per park
Picnic areas:	1 per acre, which should be shaded by trees or a structure
Ballfields:	
softball, baseball,	1 field/5,000 population
little league:	1 field/5,000 population
soccer/football:	1 field/5,000 population
Courts:	
basketball courts:	1 court/5,000 population
tennis courts:	1 court/5,000 population
volleyball courts:	1 court/5,000 population
Swimming pools:	1 pool/20,000 population
Gymnasium:	1 gymnasium/20,000 population
Stage/bandstand:	1 stage or bandstand/50,000 population
Amphitheater:	1 amphitheater/100,000 population
Equestrian center:	1 equestrian center/150,000 population
Sports complex:	1 sports complex/150,000 population

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and Trails**

**TABLE PRT-2
TRAIL STANDARDS**

Easements:		Typical Width: 12 to 20 feet, unless adjacent to a bikeway. Easements for feeder trails can be as narrow as 8 feet.
Trail Tread:		Minimum Width: 10 feet for backbone trails, 6 feet for feeder trails. Minimum Clearance from Grade: 12 feet
Vertical Grade:	0% to 5% 6% to 10% 11% to 15% 16% to 20% 21% and above	Optimum vertical grade Maximum grade for distanced over 500 feet Permitted vertical grade, limited to distances of 500 feet or less Vertical grade permitted only in extreme cases and for distances less than 100 feet Not permitted
Cross Section Slopes:	1% to 2% 3% 4% 5% and above	Optimum cross section slope Permitted cross section slope Maximum cross section slope, and only as approved by the City Engineer Not permitted
Side Slope Cuts and Fills:		2:1 grade maximum permitted
Tread Surfacing		Decomposed granite or cinder (or other materials approved by the City), minimum depth of 6" after 90% compaction. At trail entrances, tread surface may be asphalt or other surface which facilitates wheel chair access.
Fencing:		Fencing is not required within areas designated as open space. Fencing is required on all other trail segments. Fencing may consist of lodge pole pine, PVC or equivalent.

Standards for Trail Entrances, Fencing, Off-road Vehicle Barriers, Signs and Street and Driveway Crossings are shown in Appendix A.

F. Prioritization Criteria

The Park, Recreation and Trails Element's Goals, objectives and policies call for the construction of a wide range of facilities throughout the community. Since funding levels will probably not allow construction of the entire bikeway networks or all proposed parks at any one time, these facilities will be constructed in phases. Therefore, since

phasing of recreational facilities will be required, criteria for prioritizing construction of the various facilities are described below. These criteria are in addition to any criteria contained in the policies listed in Section 2 of this element.

Multi-use Trails

1. The alignment of the multi-use trail segment is in jeopardy of being eliminated due to pending development;
2. The multi-use trail segment will connect existing discontinuous multi-use trail segments;
3. There are existing resources, such as road crossings, rights-of-way or a historic trail bed along the alignment of the propose trail segment;
4. The multi-use trail segment will fulfill a significant recreational demand; and
5. The multi-use trail segment will connect the multi-use trails network to feeder trails or the bikeway network.

Bikeways

1. The bikeway segment will remedy an existing hazardous condition for bicyclists and/or motorists, or will enhance safety;
2. The alignment of the bikeway segment is in jeopardy of being eliminated due to pending development;
3. The bikeway segment will function to reduce vehicle trips or vehicle miles travelled on local roadways;
4. The bikeway segment is a linkage between existing constructed bikeways; and
5. The bikeway segment will serve an identified recreational need.

Open Space Acquisition

1. The open space area includes sensitive biological or archaeological resources or provides a scenic backdrop to the city;

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2. The open space area will provide a linkage between existing dedicated open space areas; and
3. The open space area provides passive recreation benefits to local residents.

Parks/Recreation Facilities

1. Based on input from the community, there is a significant demand for the park or recreational facility;
2. The proposed park or facility utilizes existing resources, such as existing city property, or existing constructed buildings; and
3. Development of the proposed park or recreation facility is a cooperative effort of the community, including non-profit organized sports groups, or schools.

SECTION 4: ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

A. Existing Conditions

This section contains a discussion of existing parks, recreational facilities and programs, trails, and open space within and adjacent to the City of Palmdale. This assessment of existing conditions supports the goals, objectives and policies contained in Section 2 of this Element.

1. Parks

At the present time, there are ten developed parks in the City of Palmdale, providing 193 acres of developed park land. A description of each park is provided below. Exhibit PRT-1 shows the location of each developed and undeveloped park, as well as other recreational facilities throughout the City.

William J. McAdam Park is located on the west side of 30th Street East between Palmdale Boulevard and Avenue R. Built in 1972, the park covers 20 acres and includes the following facilities: a swimming pool and pool building, four lighted tennis courts, two lighted softball fields, a four-acre playing field, a play lot, picnic shelters, a lighted volleyball court, and three horseshoe pits. McAdam Park is used for sports activities such as softball and soccer. McAdam pool is available for adult lap swimming, swimming lessons and aquatic play. The historic Leona Valley School house was relocated to McAdam Park. The City's annual Fall Festival is held there. Domenic Massari Lilac Garden is located at the south side of the park.

Melville J. Courson Park, the City's first park, was built in 1963 and is located at the northeast corner of 10th Street East and Avenue Q-12. The area developed for park uses covers 7.5 acres and facilities include: a swimming pool and pool building, two lighted basketball courts, a lighted sand volleyball court, two play lots, a spray pool, a fieldhouse with restrooms and equipment checkout, a gazebo and picnic areas. In addition, the Parks and Recreation office building and a multi-purpose activity building are located next to the park. The Palmdale Senior Center is located across the street, at the southeast corner of Avenue Q-12 and 10th Street East. The park uses include children's day camps and swimming activities, including lap swimming, swimming lessons and aquatic play, during the summer.

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Manzanita Heights Park is located at the northeast corner of 5th Street West and Mesa Verde Avenue. This 5-acre park, built in 1988 includes a picnic area, two play lots, a 2.5-acre playing field and a fieldhouse with restrooms.

Desert Sands Park was built in 1992 and covers a 20-acre site situated at the southwest corner of Avenue P-8 and 3rd Street East. Facilities in this park consist of two lighted tennis courts, two lighted softball fields, two lighted volleyball courts, a lighted regulation soccer field, play lots, a group picnic area, an activity building, and a concession stand. Future expansion on 11 acres south of and adjacent to Desert Sands Park is planned to include three lighted turf play fields suitable for football and soccer practices and games, parking, restrooms, a storage building and conversion of the existing soccer field into a football stadium.

Joshua Hills Park is located next to Joshua Hills Elementary School at the southwest corner of Fairfield Avenue and Via Del Rio. This park site, built in 1989, covers 3.64 acres and includes a picnic area, a play lot and playing field.

Domenic Massari Park, built in 1995, is located at the southeast corner of 55th Street East and Avenue R and consists of 40 acres. Park facilities include two Little League baseball fields, two softball fields, a play field, and a park building with restrooms, concession stand and office/meeting room for use by Palmdale Little League. A 12,000 square foot skate track is planned to be constructed at this park in FY 2003-04. Los Angeles County currently uses one acre of the park for a fire station.

Marie Kerr Park, located on the northeast corner of 30th Street West and Avenue P, was built in 1994. This park includes a play area, a tot lot, a ¾-mile walking/jogging rail, two lighted tennis courts, two lighted basketball courts, a lighted softball field, soccer field, a volleyball court, and 8,500 square foot skate track and a 1,200 foot activity building. The City-sponsored concerts in the park are held at the park each summer. In addition, the park design will serve as a stormwater detention basin, providing flood control for portions of west Palmdale.

The building was constructed to serve as an emergency operations center. In 2002, Palmdale voters approved a bond measure to expand this park by 40 acres for a total of 57 acres to include development of an amphitheater, recreation center, 7-field softball complex and swimming pool.

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Palmdale Park, located on the west side of 29th Street East, north of Avenue R-10, will be developed as a 2.5 acre park. The proposed date of development has not yet been determined.

Tejon Equestrian Park when fully developed will cover an 18.6-acre site located east of Sierra Highway and south of the alignment of Barrel Springs Road. The schedule for development of this park is expected to begin in FY 2003-2004 with equestrian-related facilities including a house show arena and grandstands. One acre of this site was developed in 1996 with parking and staging areas as a part of a grant from the Los Angeles County Regional Park and Open Space District for construction of the Barrel Springs Trail.

Pelona Vista is located at the southeast corner of Tierra Subida and Rayburn Road. This 73-acre park was constructed in two phases beginning in 1997 and completed in 1999. It consists of ten lighted fields, a 1-1/2+-mile walking/jogging trail with a pedestrian bridge and picnic areas. Future phases will include play equipment, picnic areas, and improvements to the pedestrian bridge.

Hillside Park consists of ten total acres located near the southwest corner of 50th Street West and Avenue N. 2.5 acres were developed in 1995 as a turf play field. The remaining 7.5 acres are anticipated to be development by 2006.

Poncitlan Square, built in 1998, is located adjacent to the civic center and consists of two acres with gazebo, fountain, sidewalks and benches.

Sam Yellen Community Park is currently planned at 52nd Street East and Avenue S consisting of 25 acres for development of a soccer field, two softball fields, a playground and two tennis courts.

Rancho Vista Neighborhood Park is a 4-acre park located on the north side of the intersection of Bolz Ranch Road and Town Center Drive adjacent to the 10-acre Esperanza Elementary School. One acre of this park site will be developed with a fire station. The park is anticipated to be complete in FY2005-2006.

40th St. East south of Avenue S. In 2002, Palmdale voters approved a bond measure for development of this new 30-acre park that will consist of a recreation center, family aquatic center and swimming pool.

A.C. Warnack Nature Park is located east of Godde Hill Road and south of the aqueduct and consists of 131 acres of natural open space along Ritter Ridge. Improved access and parking for the park will be from Godde Hill Road adjacent

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to the California Aqueduct within Department of Water Resources (DWR) property.

Specific Plan Areas Park sites are depicted in the City Ranch and Ritter Ranch Specific Plans, which have been adopted by the City Council. Development of these parks will occur during buildout of the specific plan areas, based on the park phasing and improvement plans contained within each document. Park construction costs in City Ranch and Ritter Ranch Specific Plans will be borne by the developers of these projects. Table PRT-3 illustrates the park facilities and the park phasing schedules included in the development agreements for the Ritter Ranch and City Ranch Specific Plan developments.

2. Recreation Facilities

In addition to its parks, the City provides recreational facilities and programs to the residents of Palmdale. The existing recreational facilities operated by the City are described below, along with a description of recreation programs.

Richard B. Hammack Center is a 30,000 square-foot indoor recreation facility of which 19,000 square feet are developed and contain a gymnasium area to accommodate sports activities, a lounge area, a food court area and a table game area. The facilities contain two outdoor roller hockey rings totaling 52,000 square feet. In addition, the Boys and Girls Club of America has developed an additional 4,000 square feet of this facility, leased to it by the City. The Hammack Center is located at 815 East Avenue Q-6.

TABLE PRT-3

**PARK CONSTRUCTION AND PHASING
RITTER RANCH SPECIFIC PLAN AND CITY RANCH SPECIFIC PLAN**

Park Site	Size (Ac)	Type	Typical Facilities*	Date of Commencement
RITTER RANCH PARK SITES:				
2B	23	Community	2 basketball courts 2 soccer fields 2 tennis courts 2 volleyball courts 1 playground 1 tot lot 1 covered group picnic area 10 individual picnic area 1 activity/pool building 1 outdoor olympic size pool	Concurrent with the issuance of a building permit for the 900 th residential unit in Planning Area 1.
4C	15	Community	2 basketball courts 4 lighted softball fields or 2 lighted softball fields and 1 soccer field 2 tennis courts 2 volleyball courts 1 playground 1 tot lot 1 covered group picnic area 5 individual picnic areas 1 activity building	Concurrent with the issuance of a building permit for the 400 th residential unit in Planning Area 4.
5F	5	Neighborhood	1 soccer field 2 tennis courts 1 tot lot 3 individual picnic sites	Concurrent with the issuance of a building permit for the 250 th residential unit in the aggregate within Planning Units 5D, 5V, and 5W.

*Typical Facilities for park sites within the Ritter Ranch Specific Plan are those which may be constructed according to the Specific Plan. All facilities will be reviewed and approved by the Director of Parks and Recreation. Typical Facilities for park sites within the City Ranch Specific Plan are those described in the Development Agreement between the City and Kaufman and Broad.

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TABLE PRT-3 (continued)

Park Site	Size (Ac)	Type	Typical Facilities*	Date of Commencement
5H	6.5	Neighborhood	1 tot lot 3 individual picnic sites	Concurrent with the issuance of a building permit for the 250 th residential unit in the aggregate within Planning Units 5J and 5K.
5T	15	Community	2 basketball courts 4 lighted softball fields 2 tennis courts 2 volleyball courts 1 tot lot 1 covered group picnic area 5 individual picnic areas 1 gymnasium	Concurrent with the issuance of a building permit for the 1,000 th residential unit in Planning Area 5.
5U	5	Neighborhood	1 tot lot 3 individual picnic sites	Concurrent with the issuance of a building permit for the 250 th residential unit in Planning Unit 5X.
6H	10	Neighborhood	1 tot lot 1 soccer field 3 individual picnic sites library facility site	Concurrent with the issuance of a building permit for the 600 th residential unit in the aggregate within Planning Units 6B and 6F.
6L	5.5	Neighborhood	1 tot lot 3 individual picnic sites	Concurrent with the issuance of a building permit for the 200 th residential unit in Planning Unit 6K.

*Typical Facilities for park sites within the Ritter Ranch Specific Plan are those which may be constructed according to the Specific Plan. All facilities will be reviewed and approved by the Director of Parks and Recreation. Typical Facilities for park sites within the City Ranch Specific Plan are those described in the Development Agreement between the City and Kaufman and Broad.

TABLE PRT-3 (continued)

Park Site	Size (Ac)	Type	Typical Facilities*	Date of Commencement
6N	5.5	Neighborhood	1 tot lot 3 individual picnic sites	Concurrent with the issuance of a building permit for the 300 th residential unit in the aggregate within Planning Units 6A, 6C, and 6D.
6V	5	Neighborhood	1 tot lot 3 individual picnic sites	Concurrent with the issuance of a building permit for the 200 th residential unit in the aggregate within Planning Units 6J, 6Q, and 6S.
CITY RANCH PARK SITES:				
18A	5	Neighborhood	2 multi-use ball fields 4 picnic sites basketball half court play area	Concurrent with construction of the adjacent elementary school or upon issuance of the certificate of occupancy for the 350 th home in aggregate within Planning Areas 16, 17, or 19A, whichever occurs first.
22	10	Neighborhood	Multi-use ball fields 1 sand volleyball court play area basketball half court 4 picnic sites	Concurrent with the issuance of the certificate of occupancy for the 500 th home in the aggregate within Planning Areas 21, 23, or 24.

*Typical Facilities for park sites within the Ritter Ranch Specific Plan are those which may be constructed according to the Specific Plan. All facilities will be reviewed and approved by the Director of Parks and Recreation. Typical Facilities for park sites within the City Ranch Specific Plan are those described in the Development Agreement between the City and Kaufman and Broad.

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TABLE PRT-3 (continued)

Park Site	Size (Ac)	Type	Typical Facilities*	Date of Commencement
28B	5	Neighborhood	Play area 4 picnic sites Multi-use ball fields Basketball half court	Concurrent with construction of the adjacent elementary school or upon issuance of the certificate of occupancy for the 350 th home in aggregate within Planning Areas 28A, 30A, or 31, whichever occurs first.
35	3.8	Neighborhood	2 picnic areas	Concurrent With The Construction Of The Elementary School In Planning Area 11.
1, 9, and 10	119	Community	18 picnic sites Amphitheater Par course Gymnasium Lighted tennis courts Equestrian trail Lighted ball fields Play areas Sand volleyball court Basketball courts Olympic sized pool Pool building Soccer fields	Park construction will be phased. Phase I will commence construction with the issuance of the first building permit in either Planning Area 15 or Planning Area 20. The final phase (Phase 5) will be completed by the issuance of the 3,500 th certificate of occupancy.

*Typical Facilities for park sites within the Ritter Ranch Specific Plan are those which may be constructed according to the Specific Plan. All facilities will be reviewed and approved by the Director of Parks and Recreation. Typical Facilities for park sites within the City Ranch Specific Plan are those described in the Development Agreement between the City and Kaufman and Broad.

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Larry Chimbole Cultural Center is located at 704 E. Palmdale Boulevard. This 19,000 square-foot facility is available for use by the public. The Cultural Center contains an auditorium with a stage and kitchen, and three meeting rooms.

The Palmdale Senior Center is located at 1002 E. Avenue Q-12. The Senior Center includes a kitchen, multi-use hall, a meeting room and a lounge. The facility is used primarily for senior citizen activities, but is also available for use by the public.

Dr. Robert C. St. Clair Parkway is a linear park consisting of 8 acres of passive open space including a bikeway trail, landscaping, park benches, tables, pedestrian pathways and lighting located along the west side of Sierra Highway between Avenue Q and Avenue R. The initial phase located north of Palmdale Boulevard was completed in 1998, followed by the second phase in 2002.

Palmdale Heritage Airpark consists of 20 acres for display of aircraft for public viewing located on the north side of Rancho Vista Boulevard at approximately 25th Street East.

3. Recreation Programs

The City Parks and Recreation Department currently offers a broad range of recreational programs for Palmdale residents. Programs for children, youths, teens, adults and seniors are offered on a regular basis. The range of programs is as broad as budget and staffing allow, and typically include the following:

Children: Day camp, swimming lessons, recreational swimming, dance classes, cooking classes, craft classes, basketball clinics, junior golf, soccer and t-ball, tiny tot programs, special events and supervised park and after school programs.

Youth/Teens: Excursions to various events, novice swim team, karate, volleyball, basketball and flag football, cheerleading clinic, help with homework, teen twilight tournaments, and job fair. The Youth Council was established by the City Council to advise on matters regarding programs and facilities for youth and teens.

Adult: Adult swim lessons, lap swimming, karate, dog obedience, oil painting, country/western dance, excursions, adult exercise, standard first aid and CPR, softball, basketball, soccer and volleyball leagues.

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Seniors: Senior Citizen swimming, cards, exercise, dancing, lunch program, various senior services and excursions.

The City Parks and Recreation Department also coordinates a Fourth of July celebration, Fall Festival, softball tournaments, 5/10k run, Starlight Concert series, Children's Springfest and Thursday Night on the Square events.

4. Other Public Recreational Facilities

In addition to the recreational opportunities provided by the City, there are other public facilities and public lands which provide recreational benefits to Palmdale residents, as described below and depicted on Exhibit PRT-1.

Schools: Currently there are twenty-four public schools in the City of Palmdale: seventeen elementary schools, five middle schools, and two high schools. These schools, as well as the schools located in Lancaster and unincorporated portions of the County, offer areas for active recreation for school students. However, access to some schools and/or school recreation facilities is limited during hours when schools are closed, and restricted to enrolled students during school hours. The City maintains agreements with the High School District and the Westside Union School District for joint use of school and park facilities. Although no formal agreement exists with the Palmdale School District, the City and the District do cooperate to provide joint use of facilities.

AVUHSD owns the seven-acre Palmdale Youth Pony League Field located on 20th Street East, south of Palmdale Boulevard. The League and the City are co-lessees. The City maintains the turf and assists with general upkeep and repair of the facility.

County Parks: Los Angeles County maintains a number of neighborhood and community parks in the incorporated portions of the Antelope Valley. These parks are designed to serve the communities surrounding the City; however, City residents can enjoy these facilities as well. At the present time, several of these parks are facing reductions in services or closure due to County budget constraints.

George Lane Park is located at 5520 West Avenue L-8 in Quartz Hill and covers 15 acres. The facility includes a recreation building, game courts, a picnic area, a play lot and a swimming pool.

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Jackie Robinson Park, located at 8773 East Avenue R in Littlerock, covers a 9.2 acre site. The park provides a community building, picnic area, and game courts.

Everett Martin Park provides a swimming pool and pool building on a 6.7 acre site located at 35548 North 92nd Street East, in Littlerock.

Pearblossom Park is located at 33922 121st Street East. The 7.8 acre park site provides a recreation building, game courts, picnic areas, play lots and an outdoor stage.

Regional Parks: Nearby County regional parks include Vasquez Rocks County Regional Park and Devil's Punchbowl County Regional Park. These facilities provide passive recreation opportunities such as hiking and nature study. Apollo Park in Lancaster provides picnicking and fishing. However, like the County parks described above, reduced hours, reduced services or possible closure threaten these County regional parks because of cutbacks to the County's budget.

State Parks: Antelope Valley Indian Museum State Park, Saddleback Butte State Park and the California Poppy Preserve are three state facilities located near Palmdale. These parks allow passive recreation opportunities, including hiking, wildflower viewing, and picnicking. The Antelope Valley Indian Museum offers interpretive displays of the valley's prehistoric culture and natural history.

Forest Service Open Space: Angeles National Forest covers over 600,000 acres of public lands in the Transverse Range, including portions of the San Gabriel and Sierra Pelona Mountains, located south of Palmdale. Recreational opportunities on Forest Service lands includes camping, hiking, boating and swimming, picnicking, skiing, and target shooting. According to the Angeles National Forest Land and Resources Management Plan, 5 million visitors annually use the forest for recreational pursuits.

Alpine Butte Wildlife Preserve: This 180-acre site is owned by Los Angeles County. The site is presently undeveloped, and access is limited. Hiking and nature study are the primary recreational opportunities at this site.

California Aqueduct: The California Aqueduct traverses the southern portion of the Palmdale Planning Area. The Aqueduct is open at certain locations for fishing. However, at the present time, the bikeway along the portion of the Aqueduct within the Antelope Valley is closed to public access. Since portions of

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this bikeway are being opened elsewhere for bicycling, this facility may eventually be available to local residents for recreational use.

Other Public Agencies: Palmdale Water District owns a five-acre site located on Technology Drive between the Antelope Valley Freeway and Desert Sands Park. The League and the City are co-lessees. The City maintains the turf and assists with general upkeep and repair of the facility.

5. Private Recreational Facilities

In addition to the public recreation facilities described above, there are a number of private recreation options in and around Palmdale. These private recreational facilities, shown on Exhibit PRT-1, include the following:

Desert Aire Golf Course is a 45-acre, nine-hole regulation golf course located at 3620 East Avenue P, and is privately operated by means of a lease agreement with the City of Los Angeles Department of Airports. The golf course includes a pro-shop, restaurant and bar, a lighted driving range and golf cart rentals. This golf course was formerly operated as a City recreational facility between 1982 and 1998.

The Antelope Valley Country Club is located at 39800 Country Club Drive. This private facility includes an 18-hole golf course, swimming, and tennis. Access is restricted to country club members and guests.

The Rancho Vista Golf Course is located within the Rancho Vista Specific Plan near the intersection of 30th Street West and Avenue N-8. This is an 18-hole golf course with clubhouse and restaurant.

Lake Palmdale is a 300-acre water reservoir owned by Palmdale Water District. This lake, which provides recreational boating and fishing, is controlled by the Fin and Feather Club and is available for use by members only.

Los Angeles County Raceway is located south of Avenue T, between 65th and 70th Street East. Raceway events, such as drag racing and motorcycle events, usually occur during summer months.

Palmdale also supports the following types of private business: batting cages, stables, gyms/health clubs, video arcades, bowling alley, movie theaters, miniature golf, bumper boards, indoor soccer and billiards. Several of the local service organizations sponsor bingo games, either on a regular basis or from

time to time as a fund raising activity. Also, the YMCA of the Antelope Valley, located on Avenue J-8 in Lancaster, offers a variety of recreational programs. Palmdale youth participate in various organized sports programs such as Little League baseball, AYSO, and youth football, among others.

Additional planned facilities in Palmdale include golf courses within the College Park, Palmdale Business Park, and Ritter Ranch Specific Plan areas. These courses, once developed, may be private or semi-private. The Ritter Ranch Specific Plan also proposes to develop an equestrian center and swim club.

6. Trails

During the 1990's, the City of Palmdale received grants for the construction of two multi-purpose trails. The first was the 1.3-mile Barrel Springs Trail located along the existing adopted alignment of Barrel Springs Road South between Tejon Park and the Daniel A. Mahoney Trailhead at 25th Street East near Pearblossom Highway. In 1998, the 3.2 mile Joshua Ranch Trail was developed which extends west from Avenue P-12 and the California Aqueduct through the planned Joshua Ranch development connecting with trails within the City's Warnack Nature Park east of Godde Hill Road. The City's multi-use trails link with an extensive trail system planned by L.A. County and the City of Lancaster. Existing and planned trails in Palmdale are shown on Exhibit PRT-2 and are described below.

Bike Paths: At the present time, approximately 24.2 miles of on- and –off street (Class 1 and II) bike paths have been developed throughout the City. This represents approximately 18.7% of the 129 miles of bike paths that are currently designated in the General Plan.

Trails Proposed in Approved Specific Plans: Extensive trails systems have been proposed throughout the Ritter Ranch and City Ranch Specific Plans. Bikeways, pedestrian paths and equestrian trails will provide for access throughout these planned communities. Construction of these trails will be phased with development of these specific plan areas.

Trails from Lancaster: The City of Lancaster General Plan contains a Master Trails Plan showing numerous trail connections at the Lancaster/Palmdale boundary. These proposed trails include L.A. County North County Trail System segments, bikeways, urban trails and rural trails. The Lancaster General Plan also gives cross-sections for the various trail types. These cross-sections will be an important consideration in trail design at the interface between Palmdale and Lancaster.

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North Los Angeles County Trails System: Los Angeles County has designated an extensive system of multi-use trails throughout the North County area. Many of the proposed trail alignments connect to existing trails in the Angeles National Forest. Once it is fully constructed, this system of trails will provide an extensive network for recreational opportunities.

Trails Proposed by the Antelope Valley Trails, Recreation, and Environmental Council (AVTREC): AVTREC has worked diligently with Los Angeles County, and the Cities of Palmdale and Lancaster, to ensure the development of a cohesive multi-use trails network throughout the Antelope Valley. This group has identified a number of gaps within the existing trails plans and has suggested possible trail alignments to improve the connectivity of the proposed regional system. Several of these linkages traverse the City of Palmdale, connecting proposed County trails to trails in Lancaster or to destinations in Palmdale.

7. Implementation of Park Programs

Park acquisition and development costs are partially offset by payment of park impact fees by new development. Currently, park impact fees are: single family dwelling units, \$1,019 per bedroom; duplex or triplex dwelling units, \$1,115 per bedroom; and apartment dwelling units, \$1,052 per bedroom. These fees are adjusted annually according to the Consumer Price Index. The Director of Parks and Recreation has estimated that in the past these fees provide approximately 50% of the funds needed to develop new park facilities in the City. The remaining funds for park acquisition and construction came from the City's General Fund, grants and drainage and impact fees. These funds are allocated through the City's Capital Improvement Program.

More recently, the City was successful in establishing a citywide assessment district for the construction of two additional parks, as discussed below. On average, Palmdale property owners will pay an assessment of \$36 per year over a 30-year time period to pay for these improvements. Additionally, large-scale residential developments, such as City Ranch and Ritter Ranch, will be required to construct on-site parks, trails and other recreational facilities to serve their residents under the terms of development agreements with the City. In addition to construction and acquisition of park lands, the City is also responsible for maintenance of existing parks and funding recreational programs.

Costs for City-sponsored recreation programs are partially recovered by charging nominal fees for the use of facilities, or for enrollment in programs. According to the

City's fee schedule, the Director of Parks and Recreation is authorized to charge a reasonable fee for recreation programs while all other fees, i.e., rental of facilities, are included in the City's fee resolution. Sponsorships also subsidize City recreational programs.

B. OPPORTUNITIES/CONSTRAINTS

1. Existing Opportunities

Vacant Land/Land Constrained From Development: Presently, much of Palmdale's Planning Area consists of vacant land. This presents a tremendous opportunity to reserve land for parks, and/or open space. The majority of this land is either owned by the City of Los Angeles for possible future airport and/or industrial development, or it is included within the adopted Ritter Ranch and City Ranch Specific Plans. Some of this vacant land is constrained from future development by seismic hazards, flooding, or steep topography. The San Andreas rift zone and flood zones associated with Little Rock and Big Rock Wash provide corridors through which trails and an open space networks can be established.

Potential Funding Sources:

Public Financing Districts: There are several types of public financing districts available for use by the City to fund improvement of parks, trails and recreational facilities. To create a public financing district, the City would identify an area which would benefit from construction of an improvement such as a park. This area would form the district. The property owners within the district would then pay for infrastructure improvements such as parks. To pay for these improvements, the City would issue bonds which would be repaid by liens placed on the property included in the financing district. The bonds, and hence the cost of the improvements, are paid off over a period of years by the landowners within the district.

Assessment Districts are one form of public financing. In an assessment district, a fixed amount is placed as a lien against each parcel of land within the district. The amount of the lien is determined by the degree that parcel would benefit from the proposed improvements. In July 2002, Palmdale property owners approved a per parcel assessment to fund the major portion of the \$45 million amount for construction of two parks. The facilities to be developed are: Eastside (40th Street East and Avenue S),

Park, Recreation, and Trails

swimming pool, recreation center, family aquatic park and event/playfields; Westside (30th Street West and Rancho Vista Boulevard), swimming pool, recreation center, amphitheater and softball fields.

Community Facilities Districts (CFD) are a second form of public financing. In a CFD, a special tax called a Mello-Roos tax is used to pay for public improvements, including parks. Mello-Roos taxes can also finance the maintenance costs of parks, parkways and open space, as opposed to Assessment District's which can only be used to finance acquisition and construction of improvements. The City has not used CFD's for park construction. However, it is likely that the parks within the Ritter Ranch project will be constructed using this financing mechanism.

Financing Allowed by the Quimby Act: The Quimby Act (Section 66477 of the Government Code) was adopted by the State Legislature in 1965 to expressly authorize cities to require dedication of land for parks as a condition of approval for residential development. The act is one of several provisions of state law that empower cities to acquire park land through dedication or payment of in lieu fees. In summary, the Quimby Act allows cities to collect fees or require dedication of land up to 3 acres per 1,000 population from new residential development for parks and recreation purposes. These provisions are similar to the Ordinance 505, the Park Land Dedication Ordinance, currently in place in Palmdale.

Vendor Agreements: The City currently contracts with over 70 vendors for a variety of services in support of its recreation programs. These contracts range from food and beverage vending machines or cart operators to newspaper and radio advertisements.

Joint Use of Facilities: Marie Kerr Park, located at 30th Street West and Avenue P, is the first park facility in the City to be used both for active recreational uses and as a storm water detention basin. This type of joint use allows the City to spread the cost of the land over several programs, which in turn allows the construction of more public facilities, city-wide. For instance, instead of purchasing land for a park, and purchasing additional land for a detention basin, the City purchases a single site which provides both public services. This type of joint use of facilities may facilitate acquisition of park land in other locations of the City as well. Joint use of other recreational facilities is an option which should be explored. Other joint use combinations include joint use of schools and

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parks, locating fire stations in parks, and using utility corridors for drainage facilities and trails.

Community Support: At the present time, community support for parks, trails, open space and recreational programs appears to be on the rise. Continued support from the community for recreational amenities will ensure that provision of these services continues to be one of the City's priorities.

Land Use Interface: There are locations around the City where adjacent land use designations may create future land use interface conflicts. These conditions exist where land use designations allow certain uses which may not be compatible. For example, on the City's east side along Little Rock Wash, the General Plan allows sand and gravel quarries; however, adjacent to this use, single family residential development will be allowed. Where this situation occurs, it may be advisable to provide a setback or buffer to reduce the noise and dust which could result from a quarry. In these buffers, certain recreational amenities may be constructed, such as green belts, trails and par courses.

Acquisition of Public Lands Not Owned by the City: Located throughout the City are vacant parcels owned by various public agencies. These sites include undeveloped school sites, parcels owned by Los Angeles County for a variety of purposes, and a few acres of public lands under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Bureau of Land Management. There may be opportunities for the City to acquire some of these parcels for use as park sites. On occasion, a public agency will determine that the need to develop a site for a particular purpose no longer exists and the site is deemed as surplus. Should this occur, the City could then negotiate with that agency for acquisition of the surplus parcel for use as a park.

2. Existing Constraints

Cost to Acquire Park Land and Build Parks: The costs to acquire and build parks is the single most serious constraint to expanding the recreational opportunities offered by the City. Presently, park impact fees provide only 50% of the funds needed to acquire and build parks. The remaining funding must come from the City's General Fund, grants or assessment districts. The City has been very successful in obtaining and developing parks over the past ten years. According to the standard set in Objective PRT1.1, and reiterated in the Public Services Element, of three acres per thousand population, the City currently

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needs 381 acres of active park land, of which 193 acres are developed at this time. When the expansion of Marie Kerr Park and construction of the east side park is completed, the deficit will have been reduced by 71 acres. As shown on Exhibit PRT-1, the City currently owns 101.5 acres of undeveloped park land in addition to recreational facilities planned within the Ritter Ranch and City Ranch Specific Plan. However, it should be noted that as the City's population increases, so will the need for active park acreage.

Cost to Maintain Parks: Once parks are acquired and constructed, the City is responsible for park maintenance. Park maintenance represents a significant expense to the City in terms of both manpower and hard costs. As park acreage increases, maintenance expenses will increase as well. There is currently no funding mechanism, outside of the City's General fund, to cover park maintenance costs. Other funding alternatives, such as user fees, may need to be explored in the future.

Land Use Interface: While land use interface issues often represent opportunities to develop greenbelts or park sites, they can sometimes represent constraints as well. Large, regional park facilities could include uses such as amphitheaters or lighted fields which could generate noise, light and traffic which could impact quiet residential neighborhoods. Therefore, adjacent land uses are a consideration when establishing locations and facilities for parks.

PARKS, RECREATION AND TRAILS ELEMENT

APPENDIX A

In addition to the standards listed in Table PRT-2, the following standards shall be applied to construction of multi-use trails:

Trail Entrances: Trail entrances shall be designed to provide for equestrian, bicycle and pedestrian uses, and shall discourage motor vehicle and motorcycle access. Trails shall be provided with a means of access for service vehicles only where no other service vehicle access is available (see Figure 1).

Trails Fencing Construction Specifications: Fences shall be designed with two horizontal rails, made of PVC material, lodge pole pine or a substitute material accepted by the Director of Planning, and shall be placed on both sides of the trail, set at four feet above final trail tread grade. Fences shall follow the grade of the trail tread, and all posts shall be leveled and in line with one another. All fencing shall be located to provide a minimum of one foot of clearance from vegetation or other features adjacent to the trails (see Figure 2).

Off Road Vehicle Barriers: Off road vehicle (ORV) barriers shall be placed where there is a break in the fence line that would allow vehicle access (see Figure 3).

Signs: Trail identification signs shall be placed at trail entrance and exit points, at street crossings, and at locations determined necessary for the designation of the trail. Hazard signs shall be placed wherever there is a potentially significant safety hazard to trail users.

Street Crossings: Crossings shall be at grade with appropriate street striping and transverse signage for trail users. The roadway shall be similarly provided with appropriate signage, transverse to the roadway, to identify the trail. To prevent slipping, raked finish concrete may be placed across the roadway, equal in width to the trail tread. ORV barriers shall be recessed 65 feet from the street entrance.

APPENDIX B

LOCAL OPEN SPACE PLAN

LOCAL OPEN SPACE PLAN

In order to assist in preserving areas of open space and open space corridors, staff has compiled the following General Plan objectives and policies to serve as the City's Local Open Space Plan. These objectives and policies directly apply to open space and development in areas where open space can be preserved. They represent only a portion of the goals, objectives, and policies contained in the General Plan, and they are provided in this format only for convenience. The General Plan also contains other goals, objectives, and policies which peripherally apply or may be relevant to the topics listed below; therefore, the General Plan should be consulted for a complete listing of all goals, objectives, and policies which affect open space.

A. *GROWTH SHAPING, HAZARDS, SAFETY*

1. **Shaping Urban Growth**

Policy L6.1.1: On the Land Use Map, designate land for public uses to meet community needs for schools, parks, community facilities, open space, utilities, and infrastructure. The following land use designations have been established on the land use map to meet these needs.

- a. **Open Space:** The Open Space (OS) designation is intended to identify and reserve land for both natural and active open space uses, including City parks. The designation identifies existing and acquired but not yet built park sites within the community, as well as lands dedicated to the City of open space purposes. The designation is appropriate to protect sites with physical limitations such as flood plains, very steep terrain (slopes steeper than 50 percent), or significant natural resources. Typical uses permitted within the open space designation include recreational uses, horticulture, agriculture, animal grazing, or similar uses.

Policy ER1.1.4: Develop appropriate standards for development clustering and density transfer, in order to maintain areas of scenic open space throughout the Planning Area.

Policy ER1.1.5: Utilize the City's discretionary land use approval process to locate and retain areas for use as open space through dedication or other legal means. Develop criteria and guidelines to identify areas that should be so protected.

Policy ER3.1.4: Encourage density transfers where appropriate, in order to facilitate development in more suitable locations while retaining significant natural slopes and areas of environmental sensitivity as natural open space.

Policy ER6.1.3: Require adequate buffering measures between land uses within the MRE designation and incompatible uses outside of, and adjacent to the MRE areas.

Policy L1.3.1: On the Land Use Map, designate land uses in consideration of topography, environmental constraints, availability of infrastructure, and intensity of adjacent uses.

Policy L1.3.2: Adopt standards for transition areas between potentially incompatible uses.

Policy L.6.2.2: Provide a 1,000 foot buffer between the Antelope Valley landfill and future residential developments.

Policy L4.2.9: Avoid designating land for commercial uses simply because residential uses appear inappropriate. Consider other alternatives, including but not limited to the following:

- b. Considering alternative uses such as industrial, open space, public facilities, or commercial office.

Policy PRT3.2.1: Adopt the open space approval guidelines, attached as Appendix A, to ensure that development maximizes the potential to preserve open space and open space corridors.

Policy PRT3.2.2: Where appropriate, require the preservation of open space areas or open space corridors in areas which are master planned for development.

Discussion: Development projects in portions of the City may be required to contribute to establishing open space corridors by setting aside land which may be unsuitable for development due to faults, flood hazard, or extreme topography. Specific Plans in hillside areas will be required to include more detailed objectives and programs to provide open space corridors and/or areas.

2. Hazards and Safety

Policy ER1.1.6: Integrate natural hazard areas, such as floodways, seismic fault zones, and unstable soils, into the open space network in order to ensure public health, safety, and welfare while preserving open space.

Objective L1.4: Adopt land use policies which minimize exposure of residents to natural hazards, protect natural resources, and utilize land with limited development potential for open space and recreational uses where feasible.

Policy S1.3.3: Provide fire-resistant landscaped buffer zones between high risk fire hazard areas and urban development, and restrict access from development into the open space areas during periods of high fire risk.

Policy L1.4.2: Establish the following standards in and adjacent to Alquist-Priolo Special Studies zones and active fault zones, in order to protect residents, property, and infrastructure systems from damage by seismic activity:

- a. Restrict development of habitable structures in these zones in accordance with requirements of State law.

Objective PRT3.2: Develop an open space network through preservation of corridors along fault zones, natural drainage courses, and in hillside areas to connect with the large areas of open space designated on the General Plan Land Use Map.

Discussion: The General Plan identifies those portions of the Planning Area which are subject to natural hazards such as wildfires and seismic hazards. Exhibit S- of the General Plan denotes areas susceptible to wildfire risk. In general, these areas are the slopes and hillsides located on the southside of the Planning Area. The presence of the San Andreas Rift Zone in the City's Planning area means that significant seismic hazards exist. Setbacks from fault traces can be used for open Space corridors or trails.

B. RECREATION AND TRAILS

1. Recreation Open Space

Objective PRT3.1: Encourage the use of open space areas for passive recreation.

Policy PRT3.1.1: Encourage the placement of multi-use trails or Class I bikeways adjacent to or within open space corridors, except that the placement of these trails

should not compromise the preservation of any sensitive environmental resources which may be present in the open space area.

Policy PRT3.1.2: Provide for access points into open space areas to encourage passive recreation activities such as hiking and nature study. These access points should be located at sites which can best tolerate human presence and not directly impact sensitive locations such as springs and archaeological sites.

Policy PRT3.1.3: Provide interpretive information in some locations to enhance the educational aspects of passive recreation; however, most open space should be left in as natural a state as possible.

Discussion: Recreation is an important component of open space areas. Typically, the term open space includes both passive landscaped areas which do not contain the “developed” components of parks and natural areas where existing landforms and vegetation are maintained. The policies described above refer primarily to undeveloped, nature-oriented recreation such as hiking, mountain biking, and nature study.

2. Trails

Objective PRT4.1: Provide multi-use trails, for use by pedestrians, bicyclists, and equestrians, connecting to existing or currently planned multi-use trails.

Policy PRT4.1.1: Adopt the Multi-use Trails Plan, shown in Exhibit PRT-2, which shall delineate the multi-use trails systems for the City of Palmdale. The trails plan shall include all trails shown within the Planning Area, including those trails designated by Los Angeles County. Examine the feasibility of extending the multi-use trail system along the Southern Pacific Railroad, the Palmdale Ditch, and Amargosa and Ana Verde Creeks.

Policy PRT4.1.3: Where feasible, provide trail connections from the backbone trail system shown on Exhibit PRT-2 to such features as schools, parks, and open space areas to provide off-street access.

Policy PRT4.1.5: Provide trail support facilities, such as trail heads/staging areas, as needed throughout the multi-use trails network.

Policy PRT4.1.6: To enhance educational opportunities, place interpretive signage along multi-use trails at appropriate locations to describe important local natural history and site of historic interest.

Policy PRT4.2.5: Where appropriate, construct trails through linear parks, along drainage courses, utility easements or other such features, to maximize the public benefit of these types of facilities.

Objective PRT4.3: To the extent feasible, ensure that trails are accessible to all residents.

Policy PRT4.3.2: To the extent feasible, design trails to maximize the safety of trail users by incorporating features which provide visibility and discourage crime.

Discussion: Multi-use trails will provide access into open space areas for hikers, mountain bikers, and equestrians. However, the locations of the trails should not affect sensitive biological or cultural resources which may be present in the open space area.

C. NATIVE DESERT VEGETATION

Policy L3.5.5: Require that development is designed to be sensitive to the preservation and protection of the desert environment and that building orientation and design consider and complement the natural characteristics of the desert environment.

Objective ER2.1: Identify and preserve to the greatest extent feasible significant ecological areas.

Policy ER2.1.1: The following broadly defined areas, shown on the Overlay Map and Exhibit ER-5, will be designated as a Significant Ecological Area (SEA) overlay on the General Plan Land Use Map: Big Rock Wash, Little Rock Wash, Ritter Ridge, Portal Ridge, and Alpine Butte. Biological surveys should be performed to determine the nature and extent of their ecological significance prior to any approval of new developments within the overlay area. Any development permitted in these areas must consider significant environmental resources and preserve environmental resources to the extent feasible.

Policy ER2.1.2: Promote only compatible, and where appropriate, passive recreational uses in natural areas determined to be ecologically significant, consistent with the particular needs and characteristics of each SEA, as determined by approved field observation reports.

Policy ER2.1.3: Solicit and utilize all available sources of local, regional, state, and federal funds to acquire significant wetland areas, in order to minimize the disturbance

and prevent damage from erosion, turbidity, siltation, a loss of wildlife and vegetation, or the destruction of the natural habitat.

Policy ER2.1.4: Preserve natural drainage courses and riparian areas where significant concentrations of ecological resources exist.

Policy ER2.1.5: Preserve and maintain significant Joshua tree woodlands and other significant habitat areas. Early in the review of development projects, the feasibility of preserving any significant vegetation present on-site should be examined.

Discussion: Native desert vegetation is an integral component of open space and preservation of viable biological systems should be a primary consideration in delineating open space and open space corridors. Corridors which link larger open space areas, provide for increased exchange of genetic data between biological systems which are separated by development. Therefore, corridors are a necessary component to any successful open space network.

D. SCENIC VISTAS, HILLSIDES, AND RIDGELINES

Policy ER1.1.1: Utilize a variety of features, including entry points to the City, landscaped arterial roadways, bikeways, equestrian paths, hiking trails, and park sites, to create an open space network.

Policy L1.4.3: Establish the following standards for development in hillside areas:

- a. Development in hillside areas should minimize grading, conform to natural topography, preserve ridgelines, and exhibit sensitivity to natural landforms.
- b. Development should be restricted on natural slopes of fifty percent and greater.
- c. Visually prominent ridges and hillsides should be retained in a natural condition.

Objective L3.4: Consider underlying topography, existing parcelization, existing land uses, infrastructure availability, and relationship between uses in designating and developing residential land uses.

Policy L3.4.1: Encourage flexible siting and design techniques and density transfers in hillside or physically constrained areas to preserve steep slopes or unique physical features.

Policy L3.4.4: Encourage subdivision design techniques that reflects underlying physical topography. Density and intensity of development should decrease as slope steepness increases.

Discussion: The prominent natural ridgelines which form the City's southern backdrop provide a distinctive visual setting for the City. The preservation of this area, in a largely open condition, will ensure that the visual amenities which residents currently enjoy are preserved for future residents.

E. FLOODPLAINS

Policy S1.2.9: Preserve and restore the natural and beneficial values served by floodplains to the extent feasible, consistent with public health, safety, and welfare.

Policy S.1.2.10: Promote open space and recreational uses in designated flood zones, unless mitigation of the hazard can allow other types of development.

Policy L.7.1.1: Ensure that development within the area between Lake Palmdale and the Antelope Valley Freeway is complimentary to the lake viewshed and consistent with sound water quality management practices by following the development criteria listed below:

- b. Require a minimum 100 foot setback from the historical high water mark of Lake Palmdale.

Discussion: Floodplains associated with both Little Rock Wash and Big Rock Wash provide opportunities for open space areas or corridors. These floodplains also support unique vegetation communities which serve as transition zones between the mountains and the desert. The required setback around Lake Palmdale offers opportunities for trails or open space corridors.

G. CRITERIA FOR ACCEPTANCE OF OPEN SPACE AREAS

Objective PS7.1: Ensure that any land proposed to be acquired, dedicated, or maintained by the City will contribute benefits to the general public, and that short- and long-term impacts of accepting responsibility for such land are adequately evaluated by the City.

Policy L6.2.1: Consider acceptance of natural open space dedications to the City if such dedication is consistent with City plans for an open space/greenbelt network. Lands proposed for dedication which lack potential for linkage with an overall system or lack valuable resources may not be suitable for acceptance by the City.

Policy PS7.1.1: Evaluate proposed dedications of land or easements to the City for various purposes based on the following criteria:

- a. Natural Open Space/Trails/Parkland: The proposed dedication of land or easements for the purpose of natural open space, trails, or parkland to the City should be evaluated based on the following criteria:
 1. The open space, trails, and/or parkland dedication should serve the open space/recreational needs of the City, rather than the more localized benefit of a single neighborhood.
 2. Other responsible agencies or land trusts should be considered as an alternative to outright dedication of open space to the City. In these instances, the City should determine whether a blanket easement to the City for open space and passive recreation is desirable.
 3. The open space area or trails should be reviewed to determine if they are adjacent to other publicly held open space and whether they are an integral element in the ultimate development of local or regional trails or a local/regional greenbelt. Trails should be reviewed to determine consistency with proposed alignments contained in the City's Parks, Recreation and Trail Element, North County Plan, or any other recognized plan.
 4. An evaluation should be made to ascertain whether the proposed area contains biotic, historic, or cultural resources of local or regional significance or whether the site represents a natural and scenic resource to the City.

5. An evaluation of any adjacent proposed development should ascertain the impacts of such development on the natural resources and aesthetic qualities of the site.
6. For natural areas which are in a degraded condition due to human activity or natural events such as fire or flood, an evaluation should be made of the costs to restore such sites to their natural or a useable condition.
7. Open space and trails should be accessible to the general public and provide general benefit; remnant areas within developments which are undevelopable may not be appropriate for acceptance in all cases, and may be more suitably maintained by a homeowners' association.
8. The short- and long-term fiscal impacts of accepting, improving, and maintaining open space or trails should be evaluated. Such evaluation should include an assessment of existing and potential fire hazards in wildland areas, geologic conditions, hazardous materials assessments, or other site conditions which may require significant City expenditure for mitigation.
9. Any proposed parkland should be evaluated to determine whether there is: a) an identified need for additional parkland within the area; b) whether the site is of adequate size and shape to accommodate park development; c) whether the site is proposed to incorporate additional facilities such as drainage basins; d) whether the site is compatible with existing and proposed adjacent land uses; e) whether the site is accessible to the general public; and f) whether the proposed dedication would provide greater benefit than would the collection of fees to be used for development of existing dedicated park sites.

Discussion: The criteria listed above will assist the City in setting priorities for open space acquisition. In most instances, acceptance of small landlocked undevelopable parcels will not contribute visually, recreationally or biologically to the City's open space network. In these cases, another maintenance entity/owner should be identified for the parcel, other than the City.

H. ACQUISITION OF OPEN SPACE AREAS

Policy ER1.1.7: Identify and utilize all available funding sources for acquisition and maintenance of open space areas for public benefit.

Policy ER1.1.8: Cooperate with private and public entities whose goals are to preserve natural and man-made open space. Develop criteria and guidelines to identify how to establish land trust open space locations.

Objective PRT4.2: Explore various means of acquiring trail easements or rights-of-way and pursue all available funding sources to provide trail acquisition and construction.

Policy PRT 4.2.1: Require dedication of trail easements and/or construction of trail improvements as a condition of approval of development, to the extent allowed by law.

Policy PRT 4.2.2: Consider the use of a public financing district to provide funding for design, acquisition, construction, and maintenance of trails throughout the City.

Policy PRT 4.2.3: To the extent feasible, use grant funding and private donations to finance trail construction.

Policy PRT 4.2.4: Use the City's Capital Improvement Program to provide short-term planning for acquisition and construction of trail segments.

Discussion: The criteria listed above will assist the City in identifying sources of funding for open space acquisition. There may be circumstances where, in order to connect open space areas or acquire areas with especially unique resources, the City will have to negotiate with property owners for open space easements or land. Sources of funding for this acquisition needs to be determined beforehand so that acquisition can be quickly accomplished.

1. Vincent Hills Area

Policy L7.1.6: Ensure that future development within the Vincent Hills Special Development area retains significant natural features on the site, provides for the proper integration of commercial and residential land uses, provides comprehensive circulation planning between various individually owned parcels within the area, and establishes reasonably sited commercially designated areas in accordance with the following criteria:

- a Steeper hills and larger drainage courses shall be retained in a natural state.

Discussion: The areas described above have been identified as having additional planning needs to establish appropriate land uses and provide sufficient infrastructure. Through comprehensive planning effort, opportunities for open space dedication can be determined and incorporated into future plans.
