

OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION ELEMENT

6



WELCOME TO
ROLLING HILLS
ESTATES

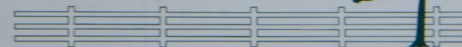
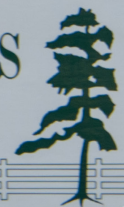


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Introduction



Introduction

The Open Space and Recreation Element considers open space and recreational facilities within the City’s jurisdiction, both of which help exemplify the unique Rolling Hills Estates rural character and way of life. This element serves as a management guide for preserving, maintaining, and expanding both open space and recreational facilities.

Purpose

The purpose of the Open Space and Recreation Element is to preserve open space areas within the City and provide adequate active and passive recreational areas and facilities to serve its residents and visitors. Open space areas must be preserved to protect the rural character of the City. Additionally, recreational uses are closely intertwined with public health and safety and must also be protected. Thus, the Open Space and Recreation Element plans to properly manage and expand open space areas and recreational facilities. Open space includes wildlife habitat, natural drainages, agricultural land, groundwater recharge areas, mineral deposits, trails, parks, and utility easements. Open space may also include hazard areas, such as earthquake fault zones, unstable soils, floodplains, and watersheds. Recreation space includes parks and trails.

This Open Space and Recreation Element satisfies the requirements of State planning law and is a mandated component of the General Plan. Government Code Section 65302(e) establishes the required components of an open space element, which includes the preservation of natural resources and outdoor recreation and open space maintained for public health and safety.

Relationship to Other General Plan Elements

The Open Space and Recreation Element policies are designed to protect and manage open space resources and recreational facilities. The Open Space and Recreation Element is most closely related to the Conservation Element, as there is a significant overlap between the provision of open space and recreational facilities and the provision of natural resources preservation and conservation. Areas designated as open space are often established due to identified natural resources that warrant preservation. However, a key consideration in the Open Space and Recreation Element is the provision of active and passive recreational space, including trail and bike facilities. In comparison, the Conservation Element focuses strictly on the preservation of natural resources (primarily biological and cultural).

Concurrently, the Land Use Element establishes a land use pattern that considers the need for open space and recreational facilities and designates parcels to fulfill this purpose. Goals and policies in the Land Use Element consider environmental conditions (such as natural resources that warrant preservation) and the open space/ recreational needs of residents. Adequate land use planning is required to ensure the provision of a sufficient ratio of open space and recreational facilities per City resident. Thus, the Land Use Element is closely related to the Open Space and Recreation Element.

The Open Space and Recreation Element includes goals and policies that relate to the existing and future trail and bikeway system. This topical area overlaps with the Mobility Element, as

trails and bikeways provide means of alternative transportation throughout the City. The Open Space and Recreation Element focuses on the use of trails and bikeways strictly for recreational purposes. In contrast, the Mobility Element includes goals and policies that cover transportation facility provision more comprehensively.

The policies in the Open Space and Recreation Element are related to the Safety Element. Some designated open space areas are also documented as earthquake fault zones, unstable soils or slope zones, floodplains, or watersheds. Development within these areas would be inconsistent with the goals and policies in the Safety Element.

Chapter Organization

This Open Space and Recreation Element chapter comprises four sections:

Introduction summarizes the general intent of the Open Space and Recreation Element as well as its relationship to other General Plan elements.

Existing Conditions describes existing parks and recreation facilities (including trails) and access to those facilities.

Proposed Facilities documents new park projects as well as the vision for increasing parks and recreational areas in the City.

Goals, Policies, and Implementation Measures identifies open space and recreational needs, maintenance, and mobility-related goals and policies.



Existing Conditions



Existing Conditions

This section of the Open Space and Recreation Element provides an inventory of existing parks, open space areas, trails, and recreational facilities. It also evaluates access to parks and recreation throughout the City.



Parks, Recreation, Trails, and Open Space

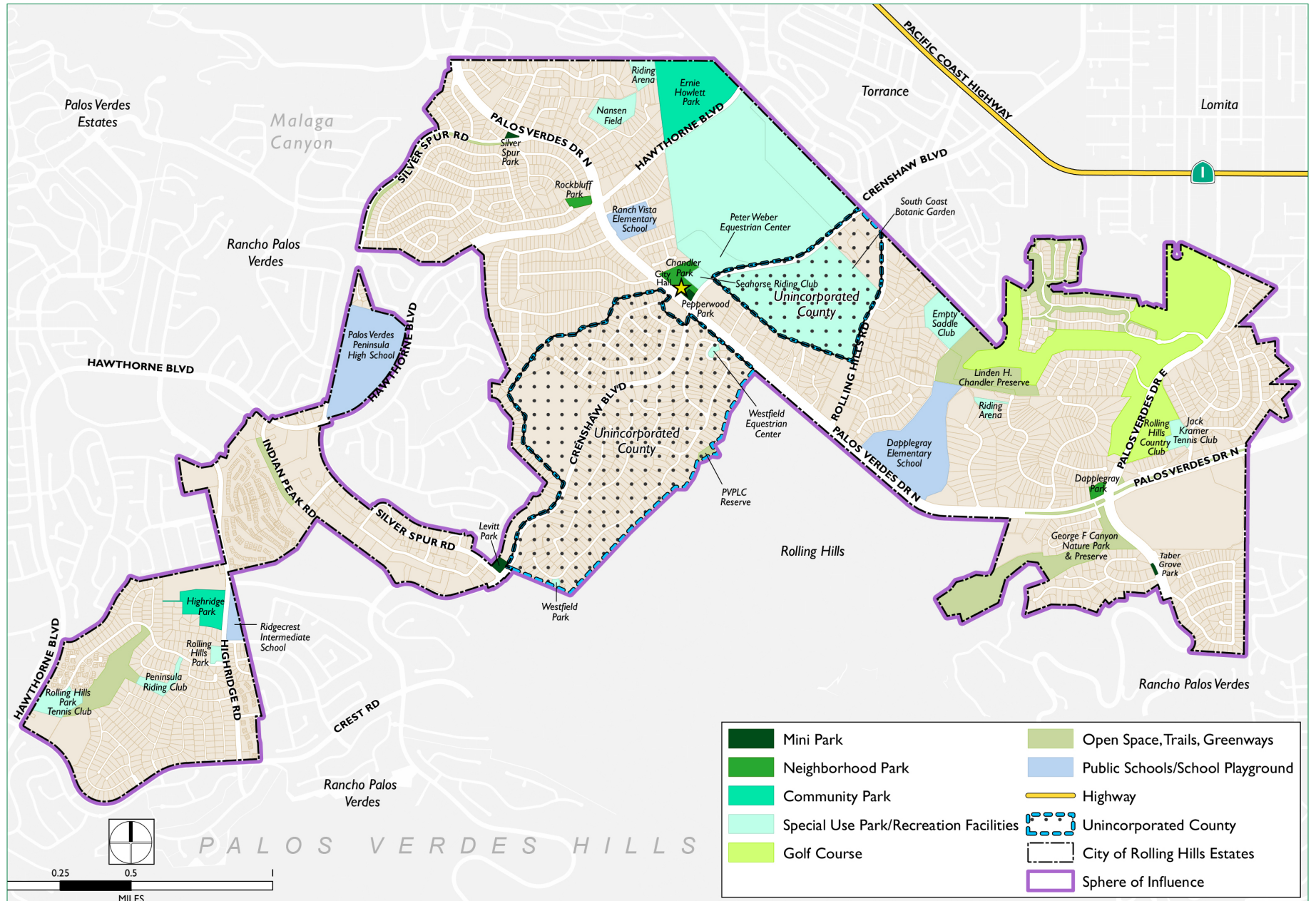
Currently, 20.5 percent of the City's land area is dedicated to open space, parks, and recreation. Five percent of the City's land is dedicated to parks and recreation. The City's parks and recreation facilities are shown in **Figure 6-1** and detailed in **Table 6-1**.

There are currently two public open spaces and eight parks in the City. The eight parks are broken down into three categories: mini, neighborhood, and community. These categories, described as follows, vary in size and provision of amenities:

- **Mini-parks** are typically located near high-density development and are less than an acre in size.
- **Neighborhood parks** range from one to five acres and provide passive and active uses.
- **Community parks** are greater than five acres in size and provide athletic fields and equestrian amenities.

The City has one mini-park, five neighborhood parks, and two community parks. Funded by a Los Angeles County Regional Park and Open Space Grant, Ernie Howlett Park was renovated in 2018 to add exercise stations and improve pathways. City parks, open spaces, trails, and recreational facilities are maintained by a combined effort of the City's Maintenance Division and contractual services, including landscaping, janitorial, and electric services.

Figure 6-1 Parks and Recreation Facilities



Source: City of Rolling Hills Estates, 2017; Los Angeles County GIS Data, 2017

Table 6-1 City of Rolling Hills Estates Parks, Open Space, and Recreational Facilities

Name	Category	Amenities	Acres
Parks			
Ernie Howlett Park	Community	Four handball courts, athletic fields, basketball court, sand volleyball court, picnic tables, barbecue pits, playground equipment, running track, bicycle path, tennis court, equestrian center	34.4
Highridge Park	Community	Two regulation-sized soccer fields, youth softball/baseball field, barbecue pits, restrooms, picnic tables, playground equipment, running track, multi-use trail	10.7
Chandler Park	Neighborhood	Equestrian ring, open space	3.5
Dapplegray Park	Neighborhood	Riding ring, lunging ring, dressage area	1.5
Rockbluff Park	Neighborhood	Playground equipment	1.7
Levitt Park	Neighborhood	Open field	1.1
Silver Spur Park	Neighborhood	Open grass field	1.0
Pepperwood Park	Mini	Lunging ring, trails, landscaped area	0.5
Taber Grove Park	Mini	Open field	0.4
Subtotal			54.8
Open Space, Trails and Greenway			
Linden H. Chandler Preserve	Open Space, Trails, and Greenways	Open space trails for horseback riding and hiking	26.6
George F. Canyon Nature Center and Stein/Hale Nature Trail	Open Space, Trails, and Greenways	Open space, nature center, trails	33.3
Other open space and greenways throughout the City	Open Space, Trails, and Greenways	Open space, undevelopable land, greenways, trails	43.6
Subtotal			103.5
Recreation Facilities			
Peter Weber Equestrian Center	Special Use Park/ Recreation Facilities	150 horse boarding units, offices, three riding arenas, two lunging rings, training courses, petting zoo	171.8

Source: LA County GIS Data, 2019; City of Rolling Hills Estates, 2021

The City has two designated public open spaces and various other open spaces and greenways throughout the City, also listed in **Table 6-1**. Open space refers to unimproved land or water set aside to preserve natural resources, public health, and safety concerns. Uses in open spaces in the City include hiking trails, equestrian trails, and greenways. In addition, the City owns the Peter Weber Equestrian Center that offers access to trails, horse boarding facilities, arenas and features a petting zoo. The center also offers summer camps and other training activities. The City also has a joint-use agreement with the Palos Verdes Peninsula Unified School District, allowing City residents to use the Palos Verdes Peninsula High School swimming pool during the summer.

The Los Angeles Countywide Comprehensive Park & Recreation Needs Assessment in 2017 evaluated the amenity quality and condition of six City parks: Chandler Park and City Hall, Dapplegray Park, Ernie Howlett Park, George F. Canyon Nature Center, Highridge Park, and Rockbluff Park. The parks and amenities were ranked on a scale of “good,” “fair,” or “poor” based on their conditions. All amenities in all six parks were classified as “good” in the analysis.^[1]

The City of Rolling Hills Estates has over 25 miles of bridle trails, most of which are approximately 10 feet wide and lined with three-railed fences. This trail network is displayed in **Figure 6-2**. The existing equestrian trail network provides access to most of the parks in the community and links together riding clubs, parks, and private residences.

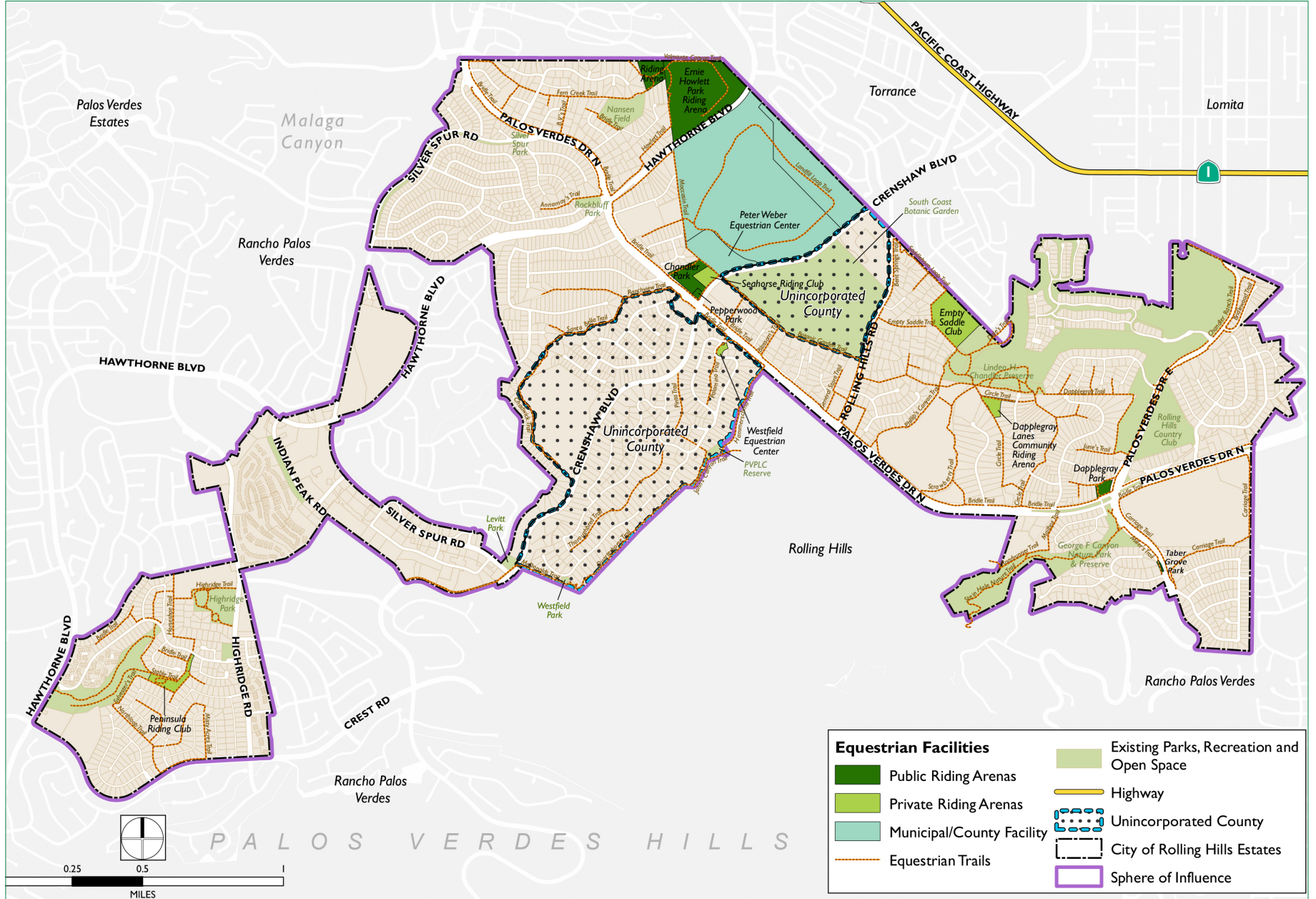
In addition to public facilities, there are also several private and Los Angeles County-owned parks and open spaces in the City

and the sphere of influence, amounting to a total of 303.1 acres. These are displayed in **Table 6-2**. Private recreation opportunities complement the publicly owned facilities for some segments of the population. The private recreation areas in the City include six equestrian facilities, two tennis clubs, one golf course and one community center. There is an additional private equestrian facility and tennis court within the City’s sphere of influence. In addition, there is one Los Angeles County-owned park in the City and one in its sphere of influence, South Coast Park and South Coast Botanic Garden, respectively.



¹ https://lacountyparkneeds.org/FinalReportAppendixA/StudyArea_086.pdf

Figure 6-2 Equestrian Trails and Facilities



Source: City of Rolling Hills Estates, 2017; Los Angeles County GIS Data, 2017

Table 6-2 Other Parks and Recreational Facilities in the Planning Area

Name	Amenities	Agency	Acres
Rolling Hills Estates			
Dapplegray Lane Property Owners Riding Area	Equestrian	Private	2.3
Empty Saddle Club	Equestrian	Private	12.2
Peninsula Riding Club	Equestrian	Private	3.9
Riding Area west of Ernie Howlett Park	Equestrian	Private	4.6
Seahorse Riding Club	Equestrian	Private	2.4
South Coast Park (former landfill)	Open Space, Equestrian	Los Angeles County	172.1
Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy Reserve	Open Space	Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy	1.2
Rolling Hills Park	Open Field, Sports Field	Private	1.4
Nansen Field	Park, Community Center	Private	8.6
Jack Kramer Tennis Club	Tennis Courts	Private	4.0
Rolling Hills Park Tennis Club	Tennis Courts	Private	7.4
Subtotal			220.1
Sphere of Influence			
South Coast Botanic Garden	Botanic Garden	Los Angeles County	81.8
Westfield Equestrian Center	Equestrian	Private	0.7
Westfield Park	Tennis Court	Private	0.5
Subtotal			83
Total			303.1

Source: LA County GIS Data, 2019; City of Rolling Hills Estates, 2021

Access to Parks and Recreation

Analyzing a community's access to parks and recreation can help understand existing conditions and identify areas of the City that are underserved by existing parks and recreation facilities. The City has 53 acres of park space for its population of approximately 8,000, giving it a ratio of 6.63 park acres per 1,000 residents. In comparison, according to the 2017 LA Countywide Comprehensive Park & Recreation Needs Assessment, Los Angeles County provides 3.3 park acres per 1,000 residents on average.^[2] However, according to the National Recreation and Park Association's 2021 Agency Performance review, a typical park and recreation agency in the U.S. serving fewer than 20,000 residents has 12.4 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents.^[3]

One metric utilized to evaluate access to parks and recreation is examining how many residents have access to parks within a 10-minute walk of the park or facility. **Figure 6-3** displays access to parks and recreation facilities in the City using a 10-minute walkshed. **Figure 6-4** shows two parks outside of the City boundaries, Hesse Park and Vista Del Norte Reserve, and their 10-minute walksheds. While not in the City itself, these two parks still provide recreation opportunities to City residents and help meet the needs of nearby residents.

The nonprofit Trust for Public Land provides data on park access for each jurisdiction throughout the nation, with the goal of ensuring there is a park within a 10-minute walk of every household. The Trust for Public Land creates a 10-minute walk service area using a national walkable road network dataset and identifying physical barriers such as highways, train tracks, rivers, and bridges to ensure routes are walkable. According to the Park Score provided by The Trust for Public Land,^[4] 68 percent of Rolling Hills Estates residents live within a 10-minute walk of a park. This is slightly higher than the national average of 55 percent.

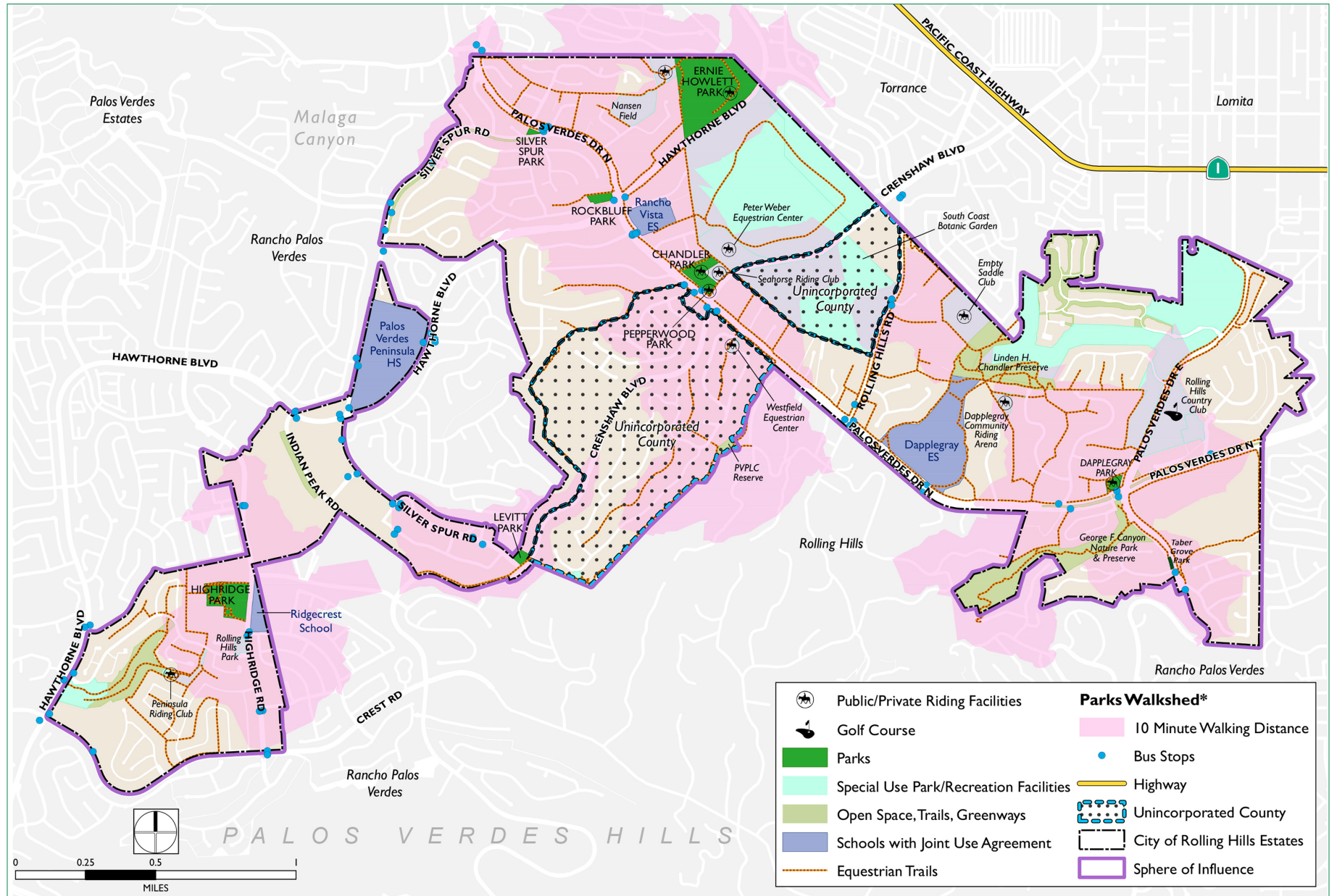


² https://lacountyparkneeds.org/FinalReportAppendixA/StudyArea_086.pdf

³ https://www.nrpa.org/siteassets/2021-agency-performance-review_final.pdf

⁴ <https://www.tpl.org/city/rolling-hills-estates-california>

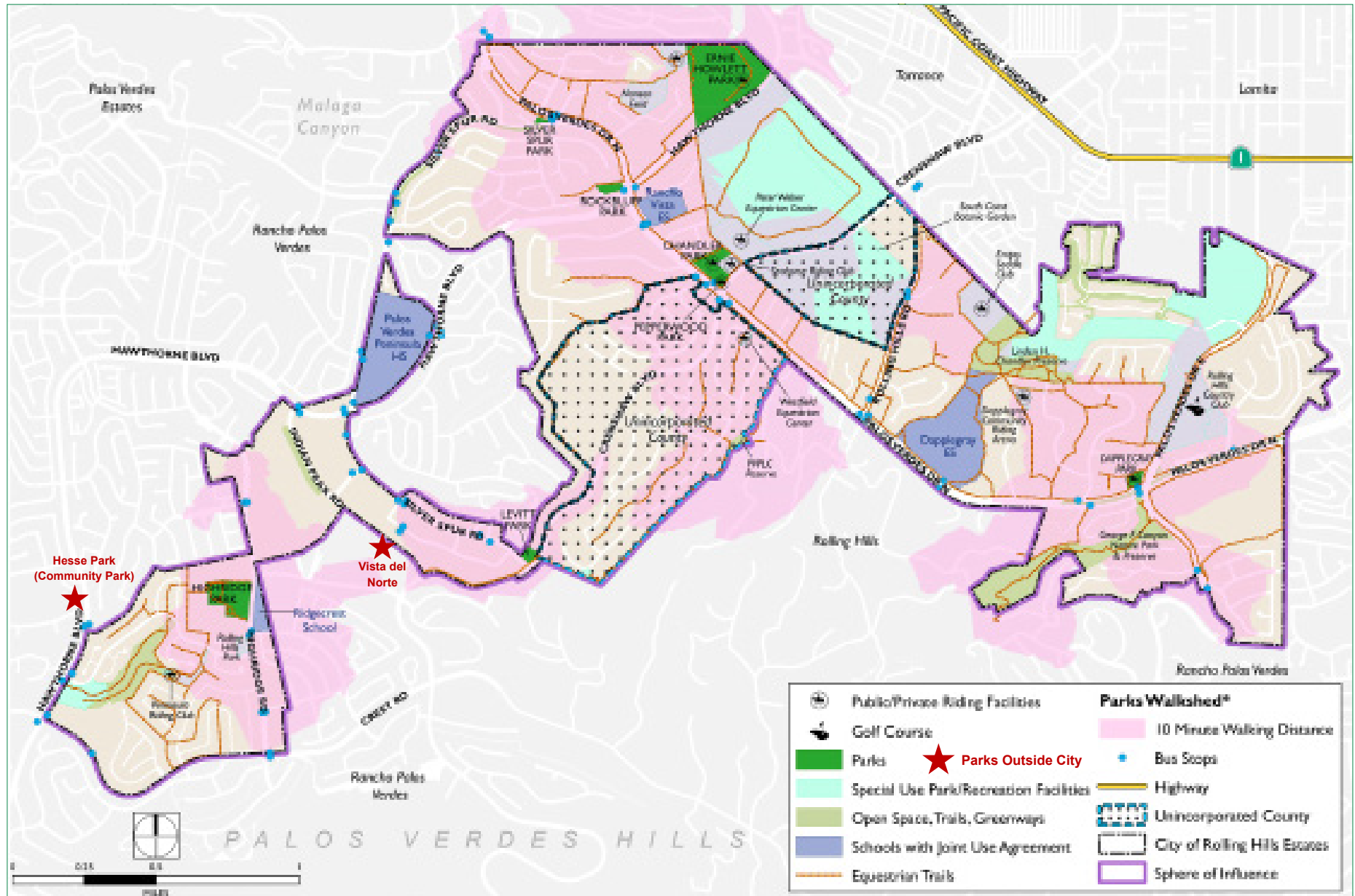
Figure 6-3 Access to Parks, Recreation and Transit



Source: City of Rolling Hills Estates, 2017; Los Angeles County GIS Data, 2017

*Note: Walksheds are calculated for mini, neighborhood and community parks, George F. Canyon Nature Park & Preserve, Linden H. Chandler Preserve, and PVPLC Reserve. For special use parks and other recreational facilities, the service is citywide.

Figure 6-4 Selected Parks Outside City



Source: City of Rolling Hills Estates, 2017; Los Angeles County GIS Data, 2017

*Note: Walksheds are calculated for mini, neighborhood and community parks, George F. Canyon Nature Park & Preserve, Linden H. Chandler Preserve, and PVPLC Reserve. For special use parks and other recreational facilities, this service is citywide.





Proposed Facilities



Proposed Facilities

Generally, the City Planning Area is well served by parks and recreation facilities; however, there are several areas that are not currently served by City parks. To address this, the City has planned two new mini-parks for development, shown in **Figure 6-5**. These facilities will help satisfy the need for new park facilities within a 10-minute walkshed. These two proposed quarter-acre pocket parks will be located at:

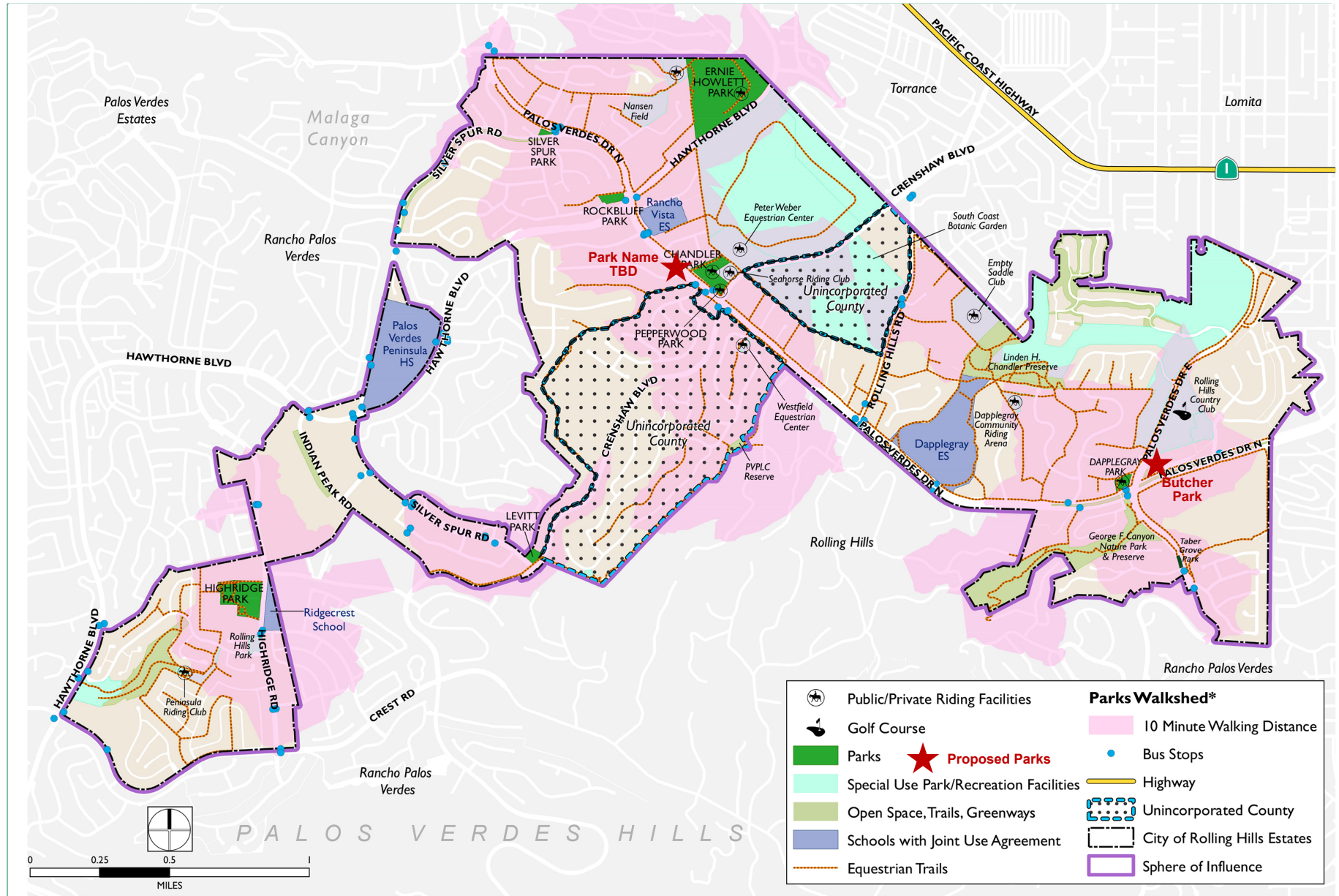
Name	Location	Amenities	Status
Butcher Park	Northeast corner of Palos Verdes Drive North and Palos Verdes Drive East	Passive park with benches, climbing features, and swings	To be constructed by the summer of 2023
Name - to be decided	Southside of Palos Verdes Drive North just east of Ranchview Road	Passive park with no structures	To be constructed by the end of 2023

Source: City of Rolling Hills Estates, 2021

In addition, the Commercial District Vision Plan, as described in the Land Use Element, envisions plaza spaces/gathering areas within a five-minute walking distance. The Brick Walk property along Deep Valley Drive is also envisioned to be developed with significant green space due to development limitations posed as a result of the geological configuration of this property.



Figure 6-5 Proposed New Parks



Source: City of Rolling Hills Estates, 2017; Los Angeles County GIS Data, 2017

Note: *Walksheds are calculated for mini, neighborhood and community parks, George F. Canyon Nature Park & Preserve, Linden H. Chandler Preserve, and PVPLC Reserve. For special use parks and other recreational facilities, the service is citywide.



Goals, Policies, & Implementation Measures



Goals, Policies, & Implementation Measures

This section establishes the goals, policies, and implementation measures for the Open Space and Recreation Element of the General Plan for Rolling Hills Estates. Goals, policies, and implementation measures are defined as:

- **Goals:** Topical statements of broad direction and philosophy
- **Policies:** Reinforcing statements of the overarching goals of the General Plan
- **Implementation Measures (IM):** Action-oriented statements to help Rolling Hills Estates actualize their goals and policies



Community Recreational Needs



Goal 6.1	The City will provide for the recreational needs of residents of the community.
Policy 6.1.1	Explore opportunities to develop additional parks and recreational amenities to meet community needs.
IM 6.1.1.1	Identify new sites for the development of mini-parks and neighborhood parks, especially in the underserved areas of the community.
IM 6.1.1.2	Develop a parks and recreation master plan for the community to identify land, programming, funding, and maintenance of existing and future facilities.
IM 6.1.1.3	Prioritize the development of a playground, skate park, dog park, and community gardens by incorporating these in existing park facilities or future parks.
Policy 6.1.2	Provide open space and recreational facilities that cater to a variety of ages and abilities as well as increasing accessibility into the park system.
IM 6.1.2.1	Develop recreation facilities that have multi-use capabilities when possible.
IM 6.1.2.2	Review and update the Municipal Code to incorporate universal design guidelines in the development of trails, parks, and public open spaces.

Policy 6.1.3	Explore opportunities in commercial areas to create public open spaces that foster placemaking.
IM 6.1.3.1	Review proposed subdivisions or larger development projects and streetscape projects to incorporate plazas, pocket parks, and parklets.
IM 6.1.3.2	Co-locate park and recreation facilities with other community-oriented spaces to the extent possible (such as the public library and other publicly accessible commercial areas) so that they may function as the “heart” of a community.
Policy 6.1.4	Seek federal, state, or regional grants, and work with agencies, organizations, or individuals to acquire additionally identified parkland.
IM 6.1.4.1	Identify a staff person or consultant who can evaluate the feasibility of obtaining grants and funding from public and private sources to develop new parks and recreational facilities.
IM 6.1.4.2	Develop a program to encourage property owners to work with the Pepper Tree Foundation and other similar organizations to donate or sell land to preserve or develop parks and recreational amenities.
IM 6.1.4.3	Develop plans for financing the acquisition of open space areas should they be placed on the market by current property owners.

Existing Facilities



Goal 6.2 **The City will maintain existing natural open spaces, parks, and recreational facilities.**



Policy 6.2.1 **Preserve natural open space areas to protect the local natural environment for present and future generations.**

IM 6.2.1.1 Implement the General Plan Land Use plan that depicts areas for preservation.

IM 6.2.1.2 Develop design guidelines for recreational facilities to respect and preserve the local natural environment as part of the park's master plan.

IM 6.2.1.3 Prioritize City parkland and City fields to use reclaimed/recycled water if and when it becomes available.

IM 6.2.1.4 Identify all recorded easements and examine the status of the easements.

Policy 6.2.2 **Strive to maintain or increase the current ratio of 6.7 acres of parkland for every 1,000 residents.**

IM 6.2.2.1 Ensure that any land set aside or dedicated for open space (public or private) has deed restrictions to certify that land is reserved for open space.

IM 6.2.2.2 Preserve and maintain the Peter Weber Equestrian Center at the current location.

Promote Trails



Goal 6.3

The City will promote the use of trails for pedestrian, bicycle, and equestrian mobility.



Policy 6.3.1	Strive to create contiguous open space and multi-trail networks.
IM 6.3.1.1	Review proposed subdivision developments, new construction, and additions to identify potential connections to the trail system.
Policy 6.3.2	Preserve and promote the use of and access to equestrian trails in the City of Rolling Hills Estates.
IM 6.3.2.1	Incorporate, to the extent feasible, equestrian access to places of interest such as parks, recreational areas, schools, and commercial areas as a part of a street project or future mobility plan.
IM 6.3.2.2	Include hitching posts for horses in new parks and explore opportunities to include hitching posts in existing parks that are connected with existing and proposed equestrian trails.
Policy 6.3.3	Strive to keep the existing multi-use and equestrian trails well maintained for community use.
IM 6.3.3.1	Work with property owners and community organizations to identify and rectify roadblocks in trail maintenance.
IM 6.3.3.2	Develop an education and resource packet for property owners and community organizations to enable them to maintain trails.

Coordination with Neighbors



Goal 6.4	The City will work closely with neighboring jurisdictions and organizations to provide for the recreational needs of the community.
Policy 6.4.1	Promote a cooperative, neighborly, and cultural community by encouraging recreational programs that stimulate, educate, and enrich the lives of residents.
IM 6.4.1.1	Continue to work with arts organizations to establish and promote arts and cultural activities in the City.
Policy 6.4.2	Cooperate in sharing a Peninsula-wide system of parks and recreational facilities.
IM 6.4.2.1	Work with neighboring jurisdictions to share the Peninsula-wide system of parks and recreation facilities.
IM 6.4.2.2	Work with neighboring jurisdictions to identify programs where joint use and cooperative agreements are possible.
Policy 6.4.3	Encourage local citizen groups to participate in the planning, development, and maintenance of recreational facilities.
IM 6.4.3.1	Establish an “Adopt-a-Park” program as a means for residents to provide equipment for existing and future facilities.

