

INTRODUCTION

This section of the environmental impact report (EIR) addresses the availability of parks and recreational facilities in the project area, and the Proposed Project's anticipated impacts on these facilities. Where impacts are identified to be significant, mitigation measures are recommended to reduce them to acceptable levels. The following analysis is based on information contained in the Open Space, Conservation and Recreation Element of the City of Moorpark General Plan, Land Use Element of the City of Moorpark General Plan; and correspondence with the City of Moorpark Parks, Recreation, and Community Services Department.

3.14.1 EXISTING CONDITIONS

3.14.1.1 Citywide Parks and Recreation Facilities

The City of Moorpark Parks, Recreation, and Community Services Department offers a variety of park facilities and recreation activities to City residents. Services available in the City's neighborhood and community parks include ball fields, multipurpose fields, basketball courts, volleyball courts, picnic pavilions, barbeque, picnic tables, play equipment, meeting rooms, and tennis courts.

The City of Moorpark classifies park facilities into six categories. These categories, based on National Parks and Recreation Association criteria modified to serve the Moorpark region are as follows: Miniparks, Neighborhood Park, Community Park, Regional Park, Open Space, and School District Facilities. The City's primary focus is neighborhood, community, and regional parks. The following briefly describes the characteristics of each type of park, as indicated in the City's general plan.

Miniparks. Miniparks are very localized parks with a maximum size of 2.5 acres. They are intended to serve a population of 500 to 2,500 and consist of tot-lots, picnic tables, and landscaping. Because of the high cost to maintain these parks, they are developed in limited situations. The need for mini parks is often met by private homeowners' associations.

Neighborhood Parks. Neighborhood parks range from 2.5 to 16 acres. The optimum service area for neighborhood parks is approximately 0.5-mile radius, normally serving 2,500 to 5,000 persons. The minimum feature of a neighborhood park shall include a baseball diamond; open turf for soccer, touch football, or other field games; tot-lots; picnic facilities with barbecue features; open space for informal play; restrooms; and parking.

Community Park. A community park consists of 16 acres or more and serves a population of approximately 15,000. The service area will be no more than 3 miles in radius. A community park includes features to serve an entire family and adequate parking facilities to accommodate a high flow of vehicular traffic. Features of a community park include lighted and unlighted playfields for soccer, softball, and baseball; courts for basketball, tennis, volleyball, handball, and other court games; preschool apparatus; hopscotch courts; and play apparatus such as tetherball for older children. A community park should have a multipurpose recreational building, including a gymnasium for basketball and other indoor activities. Community parks include areas for individual picnics and groups, and open space for other passive leisure activities. Swimming facilities may also be included if deemed appropriate.

Regional Park. Regional parks generally exceed 50 acres in size and should be located within a 1-hour drive from the City of Moorpark. Typical facilities of regional parks include campgrounds, hiking trails and nature study areas, beaches, lakes, and golf courses. Although the City of Moorpark is not responsible for the acquisition, development, or maintenance of regional parks, the City will cooperate with Ventura County to ensure that the regional park needs of the City are met.

Special Use Areas. Special use areas are sites often occupied by a specialized recreation facility. Some uses that fall into this category include waterfront parks, boat ramps, botanical gardens, community gardens, single purpose sites used for a particular field sport, or sites occupied by recreation buildings.

Linear Parks. Linear parks are developed landscaped areas and other lands that follow linear corridors such as rivers, creeks, abandoned railroad rights-of-way, canals, powerlines, and other elongated features. This type of park usually contains trails, landscaped areas, viewpoints, and seating areas.

Natural Open Space. Natural open space is defined as undeveloped land primarily left in its natural form with recreation uses as a secondary objective. It is usually owned or managed by a governmental agency and may or may not have public access. This type of land may include wetlands, steep hillsides, or other similar spaces. In some cases, environmentally sensitive areas are considered open space and can include wildlife habitats, stream, and creek corridors, or unique and/or endangered plant species.

Undeveloped Land. This land is undeveloped and has not yet been designated for a specific park use.

3.14.1.2 Parkland Inventory

There are 19 parks with a total of approximately 150.57 acres of developed parklands in the City. The Land Use Element of the City's general plan indicates that total designated parkland within the City is 197 acres; of that, approximately 150.57 acres are neighborhood and community parklands. The locations,

acreage, and types of services of developed parks and recreation facilities within the City of Moorpark are presented in **Table 3.14-1**.

All 19 parks shown in **Table 3.14-1**, in addition to the school district facilities, are public facilities accessible to the proposed specific plan. In addition to the above listed community and regional parks, existing and proposed regional facilities in the City's surrounding areas contribute to community recreation opportunities. These include Happy Camp Canyon Regional Park and Oak Park, both of which are County regional parks.

3.14.1.3 City of Moorpark Parks and Recreation Standards

In the State of California, the primary avenue by which local jurisdictions set parkland and recreation standards and requirements for new development, or obtain funds for the development of parks and recreation, is via the Quimby Act. The Quimby Act was established by the California Legislature in 1965 in response to California's increased rate of urbanization and the need to preserve open space and parkland for growing communities. Prior to subdividing a parcel of land, the developer must dedicate a portion of land and/or pay a fee for the purpose of providing park and recreational facilities to serve future residents of the property being subdivided. According to the City of Moorpark Parks and Recreation Master plan, the adopted City standard for parks is 5-acres of parkland per 1,000 residents.¹

Table 3.14-1
Public Parks and Recreational Facilities Located in the City of Moorpark

| Name | Location | Facilities | Park Acreage |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|--|--------------|
| Arroyo Vista Community Park | Countrywood and Tierra Rejada | 8 soccer fields, 4 softball fields, football field, 8 tennis courts, 2 large pavilions, 2 playgrounds, restrooms, multi-use court, 2 snack bars. | 69 |
| Campus Canyon Park | Collins and Hearon Drive | 1 ball field, 1 multi-purpose field, basketball court, 1 picnic pavilion, picnic tables, BBQs, playground, restrooms. | 6.0 |
| Campus Park | Hartford and Harvard Street | 1 picnic pavilion, BBQs, playground, half-basketball court, restrooms | 2.5 |
| College View Park | Campus Park and College View | Multi-purpose field-, 1 picnic pavilion, picnic tables, BBQs, basketball court, playground, dog park, restrooms. | 5.0 |
| Community Center Park | 799 Moorpark Avenue | Picnic tables, BBQs, playground, | 0.5 |

¹ City of Moorpark Parks and Recreation Master Plan, approved by Moorpark City Council June 3, 2009. Included as Appendix 3.14 to this EIR.

| Name | Location | Facilities | Park Acreage |
|-------------------------|---|---|---------------|
| Country Trail Park | 12301 1/2 Mountain Trail Street | BBQs, play lot, tot lot, walking trail | 8.0 |
| Glenwood Park | Tierra Rejada and Harvester Street | Multi-purpose field-, 2 basketball courts, 1 picnic pavilion, picnic tables, BBQs, playground, restrooms. | 4.5 |
| Magnolia Park | 296 Charles Street | Playground, picnic tables, benches | 0.33 |
| Mammoth Highlands Park | 7000 Elk Run Loop | 1 picnic pavilion, BBQs, playground, 1 basketball court, 1 tennis court, multi-use field, restrooms, | 7.5 |
| Miller Park | 4530 Miller Parkway | 1 softball field, multi-use field, 2 tennis courts, BBQs, play lot, tot lot, 1 picnic pavilion, walking trail, restrooms. | 6.5 |
| Monte Vista Nature Park | 4201 Spring Road | Picnic tables, BBQs, walking trails. | 5.0 |
| Mountain Meadows Park | Mountain Meadow off Tierra Rejada Road. | 2 softball fields, multi-purpose field, 2 basketball courts, 1 picnic pavilion, picnic tables, BBQs, playground, restrooms. | 8.0 |
| Peach Hill Park | Peach Hill and Christian Barrett | 1 softball fields, multi-purpose field, 1 picnic pavilion, 1 basketball court, picnic tables, BBQs, playground, restrooms. | 10.0 |
| Poindexter Park | 500 Poindexter Avenue | 2 baseball fields, 2 playgrounds, rest rooms, 1 large picnic pavilion, picnic tables, BBQ's, horseshoe pits, 1 basketball court, skate park | 7.5 |
| Tierra Rejada Park | Mountain Trail and Tierra Rejada | Multi-purpose field, 1 basketball court-, 1 picnic pavilion, picnic tables, BBQs, playground, restrooms, 3 tennis courts. | 8.0 |
| Veteran's Memorial Park | Spring Road and Flinn Avenue | Passive, memorial plaque and fountain | 0.4 |
| Virginia Colony Park | 14507 Condor Drive | Picnic tables, BBQs, playground | 1.0 |
| Villa Campesina | 4704 ½ Leta Yancy Road | BBQs, play lot, half basketball court | 0.5 |
| Walnut Acres Park | 161 2 nd Street | Playground, grass area, picnic benches | 0.34 |
| Total Parkland | | | 150.57 |

Source: City of Moorpark, 2019.

3.14.2 REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

3.14.2.1 State Laws and Regulations

Quimby Act of 1965

The Quimby Act was established by the California State Legislature in 1965 and codified as California Government Code Section 66477. The Quimby Act allows the legislative body of a city or county, by ordinance, to require the dedication of land or impose a requirement of the payment of fees in lieu thereof, or a combination of both, for park or recreational purposes as a condition to the approval of a tentative tract map or parcel map. Under the Quimby Act, requirements for parkland dedications are not to exceed three acres of parkland per 1,000 persons residing within a subdivision, and in-lieu fee payments shall not exceed the proportionate amount necessary to provide three acres of parkland, unless the amount of existing neighborhood and community parkland exceeds that limit.

California Public Park Preservation Act of 1971

The primary instrument for protecting and preserving parkland is the State Public Park Preservation Act of 1971 (Pub. Resources Code, §§ 5400–5409). Under the Act, cities and counties may not acquire any real property that is in use as a public park for any non-park use unless compensation or land, or both, are provided to replace the parkland acquired. This provides no net loss of parkland and facilities.

State Open Space Standards

State planning law (Government Code Section 65560) provides a structure for the preservation of open space by requiring every city and county in the State to prepare, adopt, and submit to the Secretary of the Resources Agency a “local open-space plan for the comprehensive and long-range preservation and conservation of open space land within its jurisdiction.” The following open space categories are identified for preservation:

- **Open space for public health and safety**, including, but not limited to, areas that require special management or regulation due to hazardous or special conditions.
- **Open space for the preservation of natural resources**, including, but not limited to, natural vegetation, fish and wildlife, and water resources.
- **Open space for resource management and production**, including, but not limited to, agricultural and mineral resources, forests, rangeland, and areas required for the recharge of groundwater basins.

- **Open space for outdoor recreation**, including, but not limited to, parks and recreational facilities, areas that serve as links between major recreation and open space reservations (such as trails, easements, and scenic roadways), and areas of outstanding scenic and cultural value.
- **Open space for the protection of Native American sites**, including, but not limited to, places, features, and objects of historical, cultural, or sacred significance such as Native American sanctified cemeteries, places of worship, religious or ceremonial sites, or sacred shrines located on public property (further defined in California Public Resources Code Sections 5097.9 and 5097.993).

Mitigation Fee Act

The California Mitigation Fee Act, Government Code sections 66000, *et seq.*, allows cities to establish fees to be imposed on development projects for the purpose of mitigating the impact of development on a city's ability to provide specified public facilities. In order to comply with the Mitigation Fee Act a City must follow the following primary requirements: (1) Make certain determinations regarding the purpose and use of a fee and establish a nexus or connection between a development project or class of project and the public improvement being financed with the fee; (2) Segregate fee revenue from the General Fund in order to avoid commingling of capital facilities fees and general funds; (3) For fees that have been in the possession of a City for five years or more and for which the dollars have not been spent or committed to a project, the City must make findings each fiscal year.

3.14.2.2 Local

The goals and policies of the *City of Moorpark General Plan* that are applicable to the proposed Hitch Ranch Specific Plan project are listed below.

Land Use Element

Goal 12: Ensure that a full range of public facilities and services are provided to meet the needs of the community.

Policy 12.4: New residential development shall include adequate public and private open space and recreational uses to serve residential neighborhoods.

Policy 12.5: The City's current standard of five acres of parkland per 1,000 persons, or such higher maximum standard allowed by State law, shall be maintained consistent with the City's Open Space and Recreation Element to ensure that adequate passive/active parkland is provided in

conjunction with future infill, redevelopment, and new development projects.

Policy 12.8: Any proposed project shall be required to contribute its fair share of the cost of providing adequate public services and facilities.

Open Space, Conservation and Recreation Element

Goal 2: Acquire, provide, and maintain public parkland for both passive and active use that is equally accessible to the community on a neighborhood, community, and regional basis.

Policy 2.2 Encourage and ensure equal access to parklands for all residents, including the young, handicapped and elderly.

Policy 2.3 Encourage the development and provision of recreational activities that are both active and passive; e.g., hiking, biking, running, sightseeing, swimming.

Policy 2.5 Provide recreational/leisure parklands at the standards set in the Moorpark Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

Policy 2.6 Acquire and provide parklands in areas where existing demand is the greatest in proportion to population.

Policy 2.8 With funds received from in-lieu payments to the City, develop parklands and the trail system, consistent with the needs identified in the Park and Recreation Master Plan.

Goal 6: Maintain and enhance the open space and designated nongrowth areas for conservation, agriculture, ranching, recreation, leisure and aesthetic purposes.

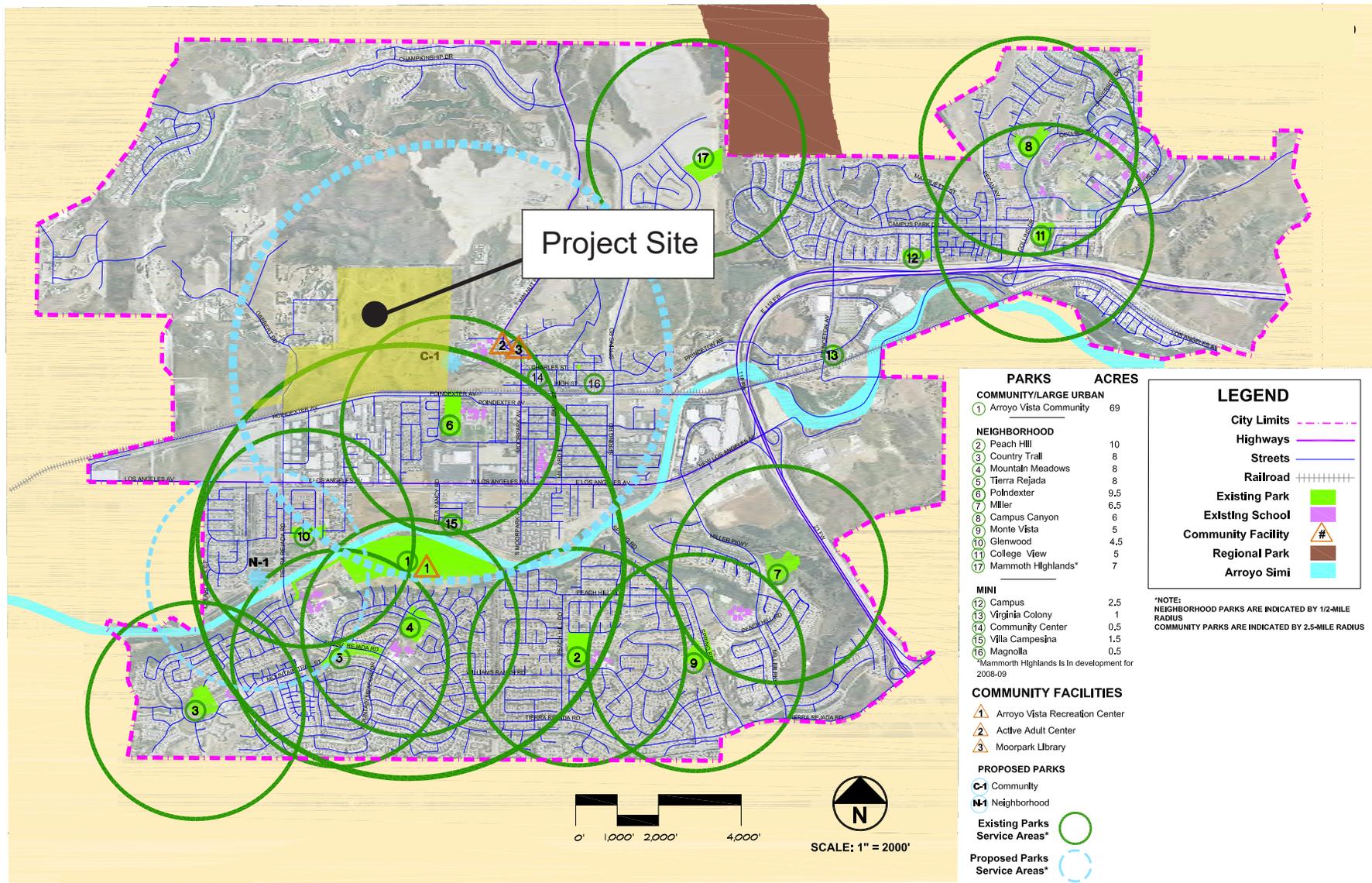
Policy 6.1 Encourage public advocacy in programs to locate and retain areas for use as open space through dedication or deed restriction.

Policy 6.2 Maintain open space lands that are well suited to their intended uses and that will result in the most efficient use of land. All such lands should be designed and managed for the convenience, health, safety and pleasure

of intended users and should represent positive examples of open space planning and energy conservation.

City of Moorpark Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Adopted in 2009, the City's Parks and Recreation Master Plan (PRMP) outlines the needs, goals, and current state of the approximately 150.57 acres of parkland throughout the City. The PRMP identifies the City standard for parks as 5-acres per 1,000 residents and the necessity to add 77.5 additional acres by 2025 to meet this goal. The PRMP includes measures for development and guidelines and policies for successful operation of these additional parks and recreational facilities. The PRMP also discusses coordination with the Moorpark Unified School District, Moorpark College, and private developers to share the costs of design, construction, operations and maintenance.



SOURCE: City of Moorpark, March 2008.

FIGURE 3.14-1

City of Moorpark Parks and Recreation Master Plan Proposed Parks and Facilities

The PRMP identified a site on the Hitch Ranch Specific Plan site as a proposed location for an approximately 20-acre community park (refer to **Figure 3.14-1, City of Moorpark Parks and Recreation Master Plan Proposed Parks and Facilities**). The Hitch Ranch Specific Plan project does not include the PRMP 20-acre community park. The project proposes to develop approximately 14-acres of active and passive public parkland along the High Street frontage of the site, provide approximately 5.6-acres of Hitch Ranch Homeowners Association (HOA) maintained private recreational facilities, develop over 5.5 miles of multi-use trails, connecting to offsite regional trails, and the provision of funding for additional sports fields at the City of Moorpark Arroyo Vista Community Park. A more detailed description of the Proposed Project recreational amenities is provided below in Section 3.14.4, Project Impacts.

As previously discussed, the characteristics of a community park generally consist of a site of 16-acres or more and includes a broad array of features to serve a variety of user groups, while providing adequate parking. Features should include lighted and unlighted playfields and sports courts; preschool apparatus (tot-lots); and play apparatus such as tetherball for older children. A community park should have a multipurpose recreational building, including a gymnasium for basketball and other indoor activities. Community parks should include areas for individual picnics and groups, and open space for other passive leisure activities. Swimming facilities may also be included if deemed appropriate.

3.14.3 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

According to Appendix G of the *State CEQA Guidelines* (Environmental Checklist Form), a project could have a significant impact when it would:

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

The City of Moorpark has established specific, quantitative criteria for determining a project's impact on the environment based on the Quimby Act requirements discussed above. This criteria requires the provision of 5-acres of parkland for every 1,000 residents. The proposed Specific Plan would have a significant impact on the environment if (1) the project fails to meet the overall persons to parkland ratio of 5-acres per 1,000 residents for the Specific Plan Area; and (2) the proposed project conflicts with any of the goals, policies, or objectives of the City pertaining to the development of parks and recreation.

3.14.4 PROJECT IMPACTS

Impact REC-1 **Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?**

Impact REC-2 **Would the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?**

Less than Significant

Buildout of the Specific Plan, as proposed, would create up to 755 dwelling units. Based on an estimated 3.3 persons per household in the City of Moorpark, buildout of the Specific Plan would result in the addition of approximately 2,492 persons to the City’s population. In accordance with City standards and parkland requirement of 5-acres per 1,000 population, the Specific Plan would require the dedication of approximately 12.5 acres or payment of fees in lieu of the approximately 12.5 acres, or some combination of the two, over the course of buildout.

As part of the Proposed Project, approximately 19.60 acres would be used for recreational purposes. Three private recreation areas are included as part of the Specific Plan. Planning Area 1 would include an approximately 3.12-acre private recreation facility, maintained by the Hitch Ranch HOA, which will include a clubhouse, and swimming pool. Within Planning Area 2, approximately 1.55 acres of passive recreation area is planned. Planning Area 3 would have a passive recreation area of approximately 0.93 acres. An approximately 6.77-acre public park is proposed south of Planning Area 2, along the southern edge of the Specific Plan area, along the High Street frontage. An additional approximately 7.23 acre passive public park area as part of Basin 3 is included within the offsite/City Donation Parcel. Additionally, the Specific Plan would provide over 5.5 miles of multi-use and equestrian trails in Hitch Ranch that would connect to local and regional trails.

“Natural Open Space” is defined as undeveloped areas within the Project site which would remain in their existing condition as a part of this project. A 200-foot fuel modification zone would occur between the natural area and on-site structures. A total of approximately 55.11 acres of natural open space is proposed by the project—the largest area (approximately 28.78 acres) being situated in the Open Space west of Gabbert Road. The Open Space is not proposed for development as part of this project, and therefore would be considered natural open space. Other natural open space areas are located in Planning Area 1 (approximately 17.33 acres), Planning Area 2 (approximately 7.40 acres) and Planning Area 3 (approximately 1.60 acres).

The Specific Plan will provide approximately 19.60 acres of developed recreation space, exceeding by approximately 7.10 acres the City requirement of approximately 12.5 acres based on of 5-acres of parkland for every 1,000 residents, impacts on parks and recreation would be reduced to levels considered less than significant.

3.14.5 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Buildout of the City's general plan would result in a total population of approximately 41,415. The amount of parkland needed, based on the City's standard of 5-acres per 1,000 persons, would be 207.08 acres. The location of future public parks would be determined by the City as funding is available. The exact location and size of future parks is not known at this time. With the implementation of appropriate mitigation measures such as Quimby Act fees and parkland dedication for each project, cumulative impacts are considered less than significant.

3.14.6 MITIGATION PROGRAMS

3.14.6.1 Standard Conditions and Requirements

Prior to issuance of Zoning Clearance for a building permit, the applicant shall submit to the Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department all private and public park development plans in accordance with Moorpark Municipal Code, and to the satisfaction of the City Parks, Recreation and Community Services Director.

3.14.6.2 Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

3.14.7 LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

Project-specific and cumulative residual impacts would be less than significant.