

Agenda Report

TO: CITY COUNCIL

DATE: OCTOBER 6, 2003

FROM: CITY MANAGER

SUBJECT: POCKET PARKS INVENTORY

RECOMMENDATION:

This item is for information only.

RECREATION AND PARKS COMMISSION:

Staff presented the findings of the Pocket Parks Inventory to the Recreation and Parks Commission on September 2, 2003 for their information.

SUMMARY:

The purpose of the Pocket Parks Inventory is:

- To assist the City with identification of vacant parcels citywide that have the potential to add to the City's open space resources.
- To provide information regarding the vacant parcels corresponding to certain characteristics indicating suitability for park development: land use, access, biological resources, and recreation potential.
- To enable a thorough, comprehensive analysis and classification of the identified parcels by creating a Geographic Information System (GIS) database to present visual, numerical, and descriptive information for City use.
- To assist the City in preparing for the forthcoming update of the Open Space Element of the General Plan.

The Inventory has identified 29 sites, comprised of 46 properties, which have a 'high' potential for increasing both active and passive recreational opportunities. The inventory will not result in any change to current zoning, nor will it affect the development potential of any identified properties.

BACKGROUND:

In December 2001, the City Council directed staff to prepare a study of undeveloped and vacant properties within the City to identify potential opportunities for open space preservation and small parks. The 'Sensitive Lands Inventory' examined vacant properties to identify those that have unique characteristics, may also be susceptible to development pressure, and therefore could be considered for preservation. The 'Pocket Parks Inventory' analyzed vacant properties in order to gauge their potential for development as small parks.

The information gathered as a part of both the Sensitive Lands and Pocket Parks Inventories implements Objective 1 and Policy 105.0 of the Open Space Element of the City's General Plan that call for pursuing opportunities to provide adequate open space to meet current and future needs. The Pocket Parks Inventory also promotes Objective 17 and Policy 17.1 of the Land Use Element of the General Plan that call for providing recreational opportunities and facilities in the form of neighborhood parks in residential areas of Pasadena.

According to state law (Section 65560 of the California Government Code), the Open Space Element addresses the use of undeveloped lands for outdoor recreation. To this end, the Inventory provides necessary information to assist in this process.

Methodology

In order to identify properties for the Pocket Parks Inventory, data from the Los Angeles County Assessor was utilized, resulting in a list of 1,152 properties designated as 'vacant'. During this first phase of analysis (Tier 1), a variety of data sources, including Pasadena GIS parcel data, digital orthophotos, and Los Angeles County Assessor tax records, were consulted to build a database identifying each parcel. Site visits were also conducted at each of the identified properties. Characteristics such as vegetation, access, adjacent land use, and zoning were identified.

Staff utilized City Council approved criteria in the selection of properties worth further study in the second phase (Tier 2) of the Inventory. This screening process allowed for evaluation of each parcel according to vacancy, size, proximity to other parks, park development potential, and public access. This screening process is detailed in Table 1 below.

**Table 1
Tier 2 Property Selection Criteria**

| Variable | Criteria | Number of Parcels Meeting Criteria |
|-------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| Start: Vacant Tier 1 Parcels | Identify how many of the Tier 1 properties are vacant | 1,152 (Total) 500 (Vacant) |
| Step 1: Size | Identify properties greater than 4,000 sq. ft. (about 1/10 acre) and less than 217,800 sq. ft. (5 acres) | 414 |
| Step 2: Proximity to Other Parks | Identify properties that do not have an existing park within ¼ mile radius | 276 |
| Step 3: Park Development Potential | Identify properties with specific characteristics enabling park development | 78 |
| Step 4: Public Access | Identify publicly accessible properties | 78 |

The 'Tier 2 Property Selection Criteria' yielded 78 properties. The Tier 2 phase of analysis included additional site visits to further examine characteristics identified in Table 2 and prepare a brief written summary for each of the candidate properties.

Table 2
Tier 2 Site Analysis

| Variable Name | Variable Description |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Land Use | Describe general developments trends in areas near each study parcel. Specific improvements to the parcel, such as water sources, structures, and streets, were also noted. |
| Biological Resources | Describe the presence of vegetation and classify existing plants as native or non-native. |
| Recreation Potential | Describe the topography, current access, safety conditions (traffic levels/patterns, visibility), versatility of recreational uses (passive and active), and native and non-native vegetation for educational purposes. |

FINDINGS:

The analysis conducted in Tier 2 of the process, identified 23 properties with 'high recreation potential' in that their physical characteristics make them most capable of supporting small-scale active or passive park development. From the remaining 55 properties not ranking as 'high,' 23 can be assembled into six additional potential park sites. In these instances, a single property by itself cannot support a park, but when combined with other adjacent vacant properties, the assembled properties create a larger site that is more suitable for recreation.

Attachment 1 has site photos for each of the 23 'high' ranking properties, and Attachment 2 has photos for the 23 properties that could be combined into six larger sites. Data regarding each property and its surroundings is also included. All of the data collected through the Tiers 1 and 2 has been compiled into a binder and is also available electronically in a database format.

Additional Potential Park Sites

The Pocket Parks Inventory examined sites for the development of long-term parks. Concurrent with the Inventory effort, City staff has been examining specific properties whose unique circumstances lend themselves to the development of short-term, or temporary, parks. The properties in the Caltrans and Southern California Edison right-of-ways are prime examples. In cases such as these where the future development timeline is indefinite or the use of the land is limited, the properties could be utilized in the interim. This temporary use would most likely be allowed through arrangements where the land would be leased for a specific time period.

Four sites in particular have been identified. These are properties owned by the City of Pasadena, Caltrans, Southern California Edison, and Metropolitan Water District.

First, a 10,000 square foot property on the south side of East Villa Street between Summit Avenue and Marengo Avenue has been recently acquired by the City's Water and Power Department. The land is intended for the expansion of the adjacent sub-station. While there is not a definite timetable for the expansion, the land could potentially be used as a small park in the interim.

Second, the California Department of Transportation owns a 2.5 acre property at the northwest corner of Arlington Drive and South Pasadena Avenue that is currently the subject of a 'community garden' proposal. Staff from the Parks and Natural Resources Division of Public Works has worked with a group of neighbors near the property and landscape architecture

students from California State Polytechnic University at Pomona to come up with several possible plans and has held one public meeting with nearby residents to discuss the proposals.

Third, City staff from the Planning and Development department has held discussions with Southern California Edison about the possible use of several properties under their power lines running south from Sierra Madre Blvd. along the Eaton Washington for open space or recreation.

Finally, the Metropolitan Water District owns approximately 30 acres of land adjacent to the Hahamonga Watershed Park and immediately south of the Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL). The property is located within the Hahamonga Watershed Park Master Plan area, and although no specific plans are in place for this area, the opportunity exists for passive recreation uses.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The Pocket Parks Inventory has no direct fiscal impact on the City.

Respectfully submitted,


Cynthia J. Kurtz
City Manager

Prepared by:


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Approved by:

JRP 
Richard J. Brackner, Director
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Attachments:

1. Site Photos for Properties with 'High' Recreation Potential
2. Site Photos for Assembled Sites
3. Pocket Parks Inventory Properties (map)

Pasadena Pocket Parks Inventory
Properties with 'High' Recreation Potential

Attachment 1

#1 565 South Sierra Bonita Avenue

Parcel Number: 5327-006-019
 Size: 15,000 sq. ft.
 Development Trend: Residential
 Population Within ¼ Mile: 558
 Within ¼ Mile of Multi-Family: Yes
 Native Vegetation: Yes
 Non-Native Vegetation: Yes
 Recreation Potential: High



#2 550 Lakeview Road

Parcel Number: 5715-017-029
 Size: 16,165 sq. ft.
 Development Trend: Residential
 Population Within ¼ Mile: 747
 Within ¼ Mile of Multi-Family: No
 Native Vegetation: No
 Non-Native Vegetation: No
 Recreation Potential: High



#3 95 Alessandro Place

Parcel Number: 5719-024-033
 Size: 12,000 sq. ft.
 Development Trend: Med./Lt. Indus.
 Population Within ¼ Mile: 976
 Within ¼ Mile of Multi-Family: Yes
 Native Vegetation: No
 Non-Native Vegetation: Yes
 Recreation Potential: High



#4 854 North Garfield Avenue

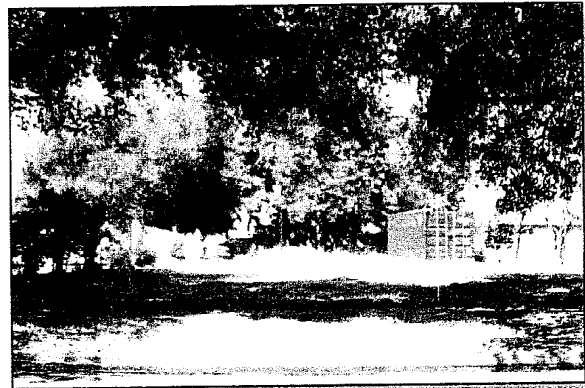
Parcel Number: 5725-025-006
 Size: 6,747sq. ft.
 Development Trend: Residential
 Population Within ¼ Mile: 2,865
 Within ¼ Mile of Multi-Family: Yes
 Native Vegetation: No
 Non-Native Vegetation: Yes
 Recreation Potential: High



#5

537 Cypress Avenue

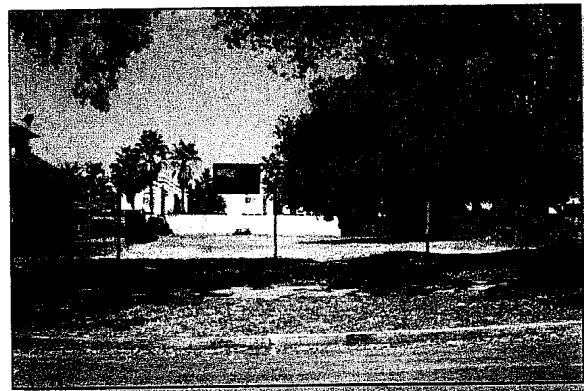
Parcel Number: 5726-012-037
Size: 10,260 sq. ft.
Development Trend: Residential
Population Within ¼ Mile: 1,326
Within ¼ Mile of Multi-Family: Yes
Native Vegetation: No
Non-Native Vegetation: Yes
Recreation Potential: High



#6

525 Cypress Ave.

Parcel Number: 5726-012-038
Size: 10,260 sq. ft.
Development Trend: Residential
Population Within ¼ Mile: 1,119
Within ¼ Mile of Multi-Family: Yes
Native Vegetation: Yes
Non-Native Vegetation: Yes
Recreation Potential: High



#7

550 Del Monte Street

Parcel Number: 5727-011-016
Size: 14,803 sq. ft.
Development Trend: Residential
Population Within ¼ Mile: 823
Within ¼ Mile of Multi-Family: Yes
Native Vegetation: No
Non-Native Vegetation: Yes
Recreation Potential: High



#8

1165 Summit Avenue

Parcel Number: 5728-002-018
Size: 15,200 sq. ft.
Development Trend: Residential
Population Within ¼ Mile: 2,865
Within ¼ Mile of Multi-Family: Yes
Native Vegetation: No
Non-Native Vegetation: Yes
Recreation Potential: High



#9

1036 East Villa Street

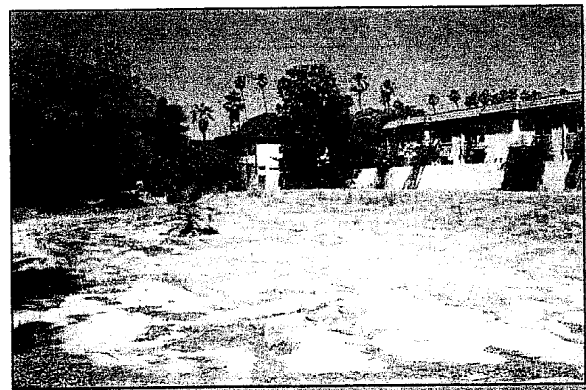
Parcel Number: 5732-019-032
Size: 15,000 sq. ft.
Development Trend: Residential
Population Within ¼ Mile: 2,469
Within ¼ Mile of Multi-Family: Yes
Native Vegetation: No
Non-Native Vegetation: Yes
Recreation Potential: High



#10

505 South Oak Knoll Avenue

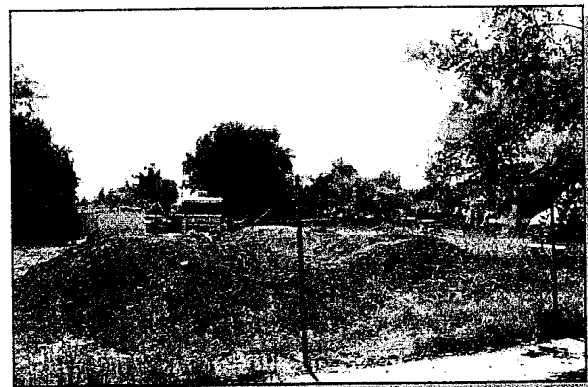
Parcel Number: 5734-020-021
Size: 28,349 sq. ft.
Development Trend: Residential
Population Within ¼ Mile: 1,562
Within ¼ Mile of Multi-Family: Yes
Native Vegetation: No
Non-Native Vegetation: Yes
Recreation Potential: High



#11

244 North Michigan Avenue

Parcel Number: 5738-015-904
Size: 15,458 sq. ft.
Development Trend: Residential
Population Within ¼ Mile: 1,841
Within ¼ Mile of Multi-Family: Yes
Native Vegetation: No
Non-Native Vegetation: Yes
Recreation Potential: High



#12

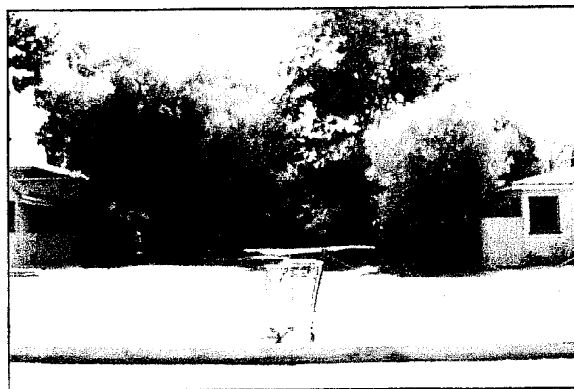
1354 Locust Street

Parcel Number: 5738-016-039
Size: 8,400 sq. ft.
Development Trend: Residential
Population Within ¼ Mile: 1,578
Within ¼ Mile of Multi-Family: Yes
Native Vegetation: No
Non-Native Vegetation: No
Recreation Potential: High



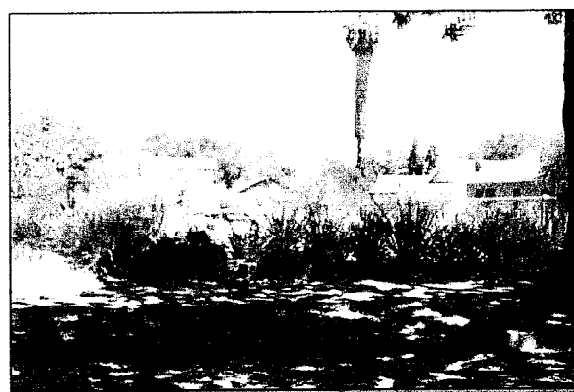
#13 170 North Michigan Avenue

Parcel Number: 5738-019-007
Size: 7,600 sq. ft.
Development Trend: Residential
Population Within ¼ Mile: 2,053
Within ¼ Mile of Multi-Family: Yes
Native Vegetation: No
Non-Native Vegetation: Yes
Recreation Potential: High



#14 422 Linda Rosa Avenue

Parcel Number: 5745-009-039
Size: 7,500 sq. ft.
Development Trend: Residential
Population Within ¼ Mile: 1,171
Within ¼ Mile of Multi-Family: Yes
Native Vegetation: No
Non-Native Vegetation: Yes
Recreation Potential: High



#15 78 North Grand Oaks Avenue

Parcel Number: 5746-007-054
Size: 10,398 sq. ft.
Development Trend: Residential
Population Within ¼ Mile: 1,279
Within ¼ Mile of Multi-Family: Yes
Native Vegetation: Yes
Non-Native Vegetation: Yes
Recreation Potential: High



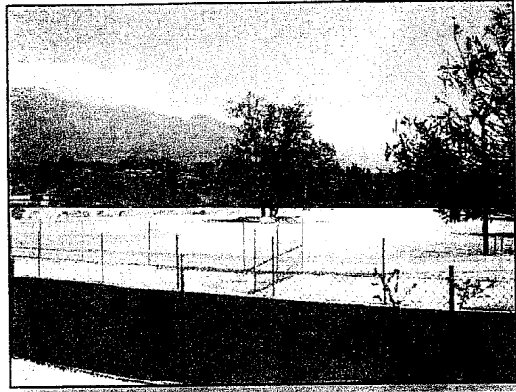
#16 175 South Craig Avenue

Parcel Number: 5747-011-034
Size: 7,505 sq. ft.
Development Trend: Residential
Population Within ¼ Mile: 1,123
Within ¼ Mile of Multi-Family: Yes
Native Vegetation: No
Non-Native Vegetation: Yes
Recreation Potential: High



#17 NEC Washington Bl./Sierra Madre Bl.

Parcel Number: 5751-018-903
Size: 879,471sq. ft.
Development Trend: Residential
Population Within ¼ Mile: 457
Within ¼ Mile of Multi-Family: Yes
Native Vegetation: No
Non-Native Vegetation: Yes
Recreation Potential: High



#18 1780 Navarro Avenue

Parcel Number: 5836-011-001
Size: 17,600 sq. ft.
Development Trend: Residential
Population Within ¼ Mile: 1,503
Within ¼ Mile of Multi-Family: Yes
Native Vegetation: No
Non-Native Vegetation: Yes
Recreation Potential: High



#19 1895 North Fair Oaks Avenue

Parcel Number: 5836-020-014
Size: 7,597 sq. ft.
Development Trend: Res./Health Services
Population Within ¼ Mile: 2,309
Within ¼ Mile of Multi-Family: Yes
Native Vegetation: Yes
Non-Native Vegetation: Yes
Recreation Potential: High



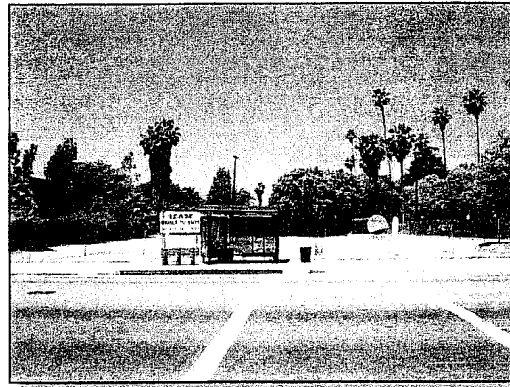
#20 25 West Tremont Street

Parcel Number: 5836-020-015
Size: 6,077 sq. ft.
Development Trend: Res./Health Services
Population Within ¼ Mile: 2,309
Within ¼ Mile of Multi-Family: Yes
Native Vegetation: Yes
Non-Native Vegetation: Yes
Recreation Potential: High



#21 1591 North Lake Avenue

Parcel Number: 5848-019-011
Size: 17,489 sq. ft.
Development Trend: Res./Cmrcl.
Population Within ¼ Mile: 1,198
Within ¼ Mile of Multi-Family: Yes
Native Vegetation: No
Non-Native Vegetation: Yes
Recreation Potential: High



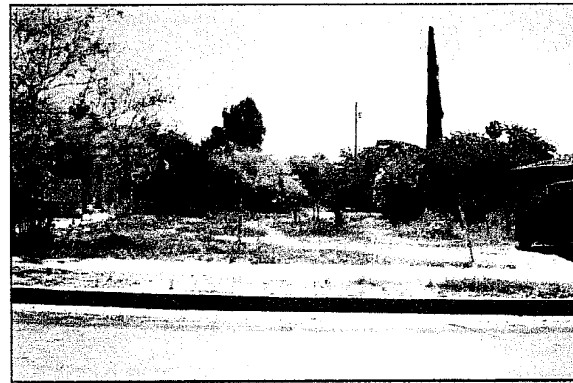
#22 1569 Wesley Avenue

Parcel Number: 5850-018-020
Size: 7,500 sq. ft.
Development Trend: Residential
Population Within ¼ Mile: 1,353
Within ¼ Mile of Multi-Family: Yes
Native Vegetation: Yes
Non-Native Vegetation: Yes
Recreation Potential: High



#23 1688½ North Sierra Bonita Avenue

Parcel Number: 5851-005-002
Size: 9,653 sq. ft.
Development Trend: Res./University
Population Within ¼ Mile: 2,073
Within ¼ Mile of Multi-Family: Yes
Native Vegetation: Yes
Non-Native Vegetation: Yes
Recreation Potential: High



Site #1

#24 810 North Marengo Avenue

Parcel Number: 5725-021-024
Size: 14,040 sq. ft.
Development Trend: Residential
Population Within ¼ Mile: 5,191
Within ¼ Mile of Multi-Family: Yes
Native Vegetation: Yes
Non-Native Vegetation: Yes
Recreation Potential: Moderate/High



#25 818 North Marengo Avenue

Parcel Number: 5725-021-025
Size: 14,061 sq. ft.
Development Trend: Residential
Population Within ¼ Mile: 4,265
Within ¼ Mile of Multi-Family: Yes
Native Vegetation: No
Non-Native Vegetation: Yes
Recreation Potential: Moderate/High



Site #2

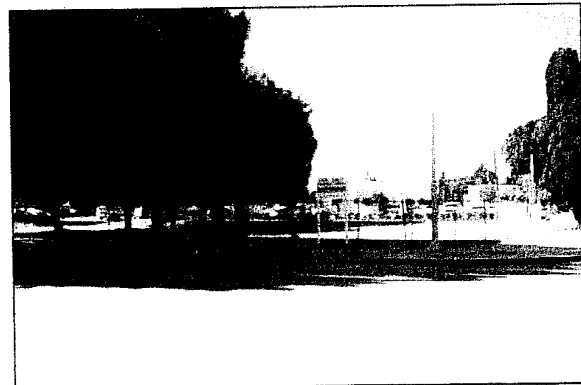
#26 47 Holliston Avenue

Parcel Number: 5735-001-020
Size: 6,016 sq. ft.
Development Trend: Commercial
Population Within ¼ Mile: 1,429
Within ¼ Mile of Multi-Family: Yes
Native Vegetation: No
Non-Native Vegetation: Yes
Recreation Potential: Low/High



#27 1317 East Green Street

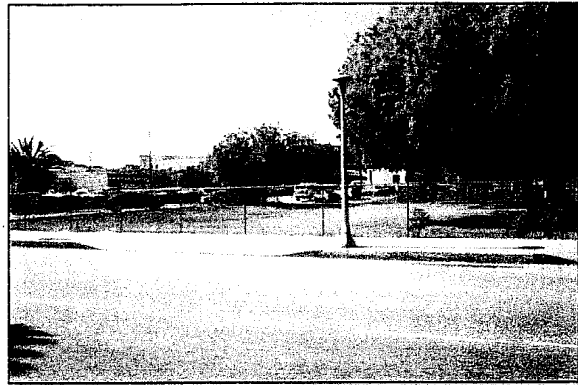
Parcel Number: 5735-001-021
Size: 7,174 sq. ft.
Development Trend: Commercial
Population Within ¼ Mile: 1,429
Within ¼ Mile of Multi-Family: Yes
Native Vegetation: No
Non-Native Vegetation: Yes
Recreation Potential: Moderate/High



Site #2

#28 **1299 East Green Street**

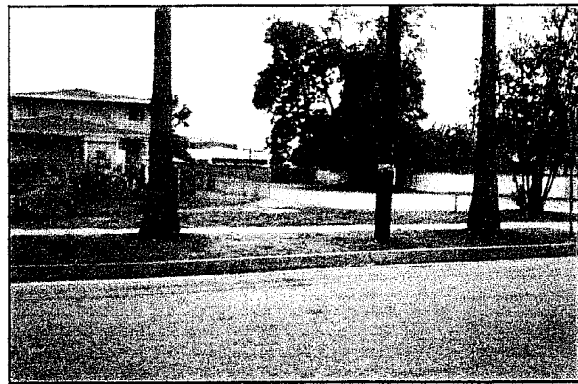
Parcel Number: 5735-001-022
Size: 12,419 sq. ft.
Development Trend: Commercial
Population Within ¼ Mile: 1,292
Within ¼ Mile of Multi-Family: Yes
Native Vegetation: No
Non-Native Vegetation: Yes
Recreation Potential: Moderate/High



Site #3

#29 **149 Harkness Avenue**

Parcel Number: 5737-002-007
Size: 6,647 sq. ft.
Development Trend: Residential
Population Within ¼ Mile: 792
Within ¼ Mile of Multi-Family: Yes
Native Vegetation: No
Non-Native Vegetation: Yes
Recreation Potential: Low/High



#30 **155 Harkness Avenue**

Parcel Number: 5737-002-008
Size: 7,832 sq. ft.
Development Trend: Residential
Population Within ¼ Mile: 1,017
Within ¼ Mile of Multi-Family: Yes
Native Vegetation: No
Non-Native Vegetation: Yes
Recreation Potential: Low/High



Site #4

#31 **277 Mar Vista Avenue**

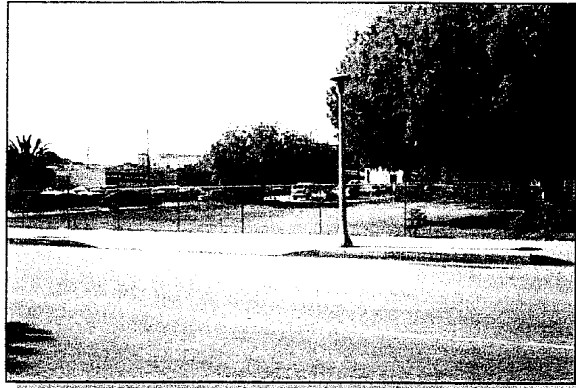
Parcel Number: 5738-010-031
Size: 7,026 sq. ft.
Development Trend: Residential
Population Within ¼ Mile: 2,560
Within ¼ Mile of Multi-Family: Yes
Native Vegetation: No
Non-Native Vegetation: Yes
Recreation Potential: None/High



Site #4

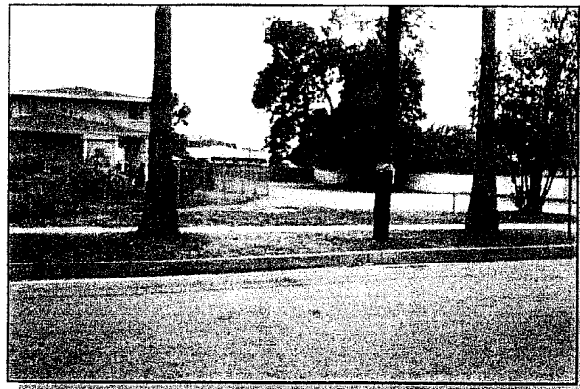
#32 273 Mar Vista Avenue

Parcel Number: 5738-010-032
Size: 8,850 sq. ft.
Development Trend: Residential
Population Within ¼ Mile: 2,560
Within ¼ Mile of Multi-Family: Yes
Native Vegetation: No
Non-Native Vegetation: Yes
Recreation Potential: Low/High



#33 290 North Wilson Avenue

Parcel Number: 5738-010-051
Size: 9,017 sq. ft.
Development Trend: Residential
Population Within ¼ Mile: 2,469
Within ¼ Mile of Multi-Family: Yes
Native Vegetation: No
Non-Native Vegetation: Yes
Recreation Potential: Low/High



#34 295 Mar Vista Avenue

Parcel Number: 5738-010-052
Size: 19,362 sq. ft.
Development Trend: Residential
Population Within ¼ Mile: 2,560
Within ¼ Mile of Multi-Family: Yes
Native Vegetation: No
Non-Native Vegetation: Yes
Recreation Potential: Moderate/High



#35 285 Mar Vista Avenue

Parcel Number: 5738-010-055
Size: 17,324 sq. ft.
Development Trend: Residential
Population Within ¼ Mile: 2,826
Within ¼ Mile of Multi-Family: Yes
Native Vegetation: No
Non-Native Vegetation: Yes
Recreation Potential: Moderate High



Site #5

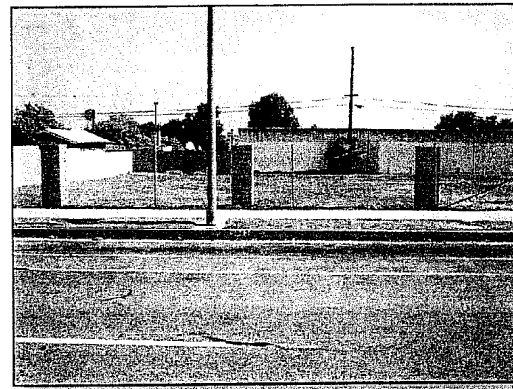
#36 1930 East Corson Street

Parcel Number: 5746-004-076
Size: 8,375 sq. ft.
Development Trend: Residential
Population Within ¼ Mile: 447
Within ¼ Mile of Multi-Family: Yes
Native Vegetation: No
Non-Native Vegetation: Yes
Recreation Potential: Low/High



#37 1940 East Corson Street

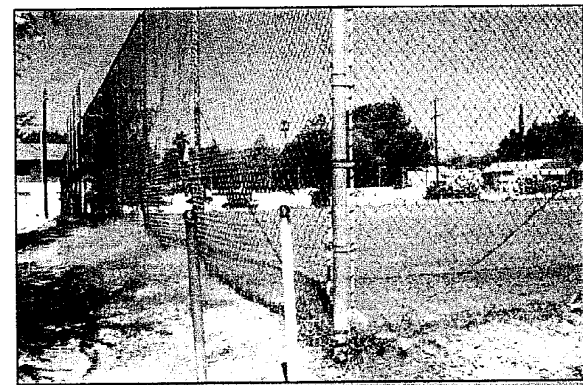
Parcel Number: 5746-004-077
Size: 7,776 sq. ft.
Development Trend: Res./Cmrd.
Population Within ¼ Mile: 447
Within ¼ Mile of Multi-Family: Yes
Native Vegetation: No
Non-Native Vegetation: Yes
Recreation Potential: Low/High



Site #6

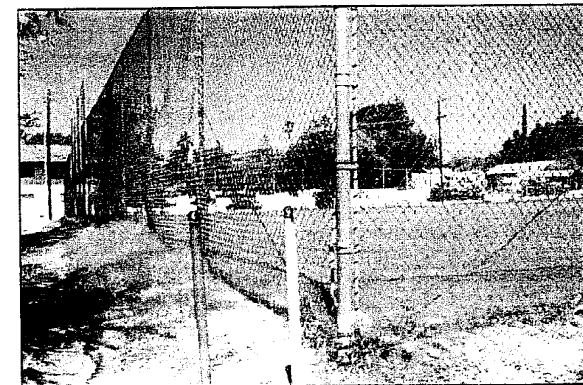
#38 1638 University Drive

Parcel Number: 5851-006-005
Size: 4,265 sq. ft.
Development Trend: Residential
Population Within ¼ Mile: 1,924
Within ¼ Mile of Multi-Family: Yes
Native Vegetation: No
Non-Native Vegetation: None/High



#39 1637 Oxford Avenue

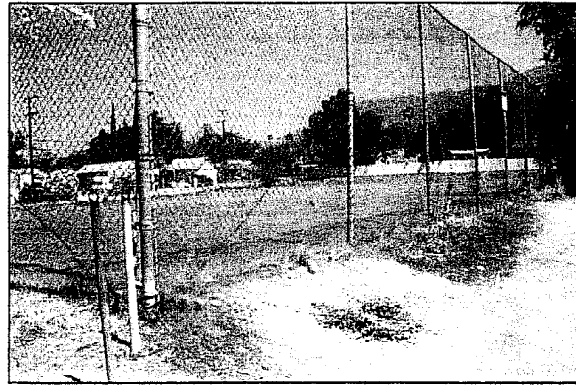
Parcel Number: 5851-006-006
Size: 4,378 sq. ft.
Development Trend: Residential
Population Within ¼ Mile: 1,646
Within ¼ Mile of Multi-Family: Yes
Native Vegetation: No
Non-Native Vegetation: Yes
Recreation Potential: None /High



#40

1646 University Drive

Parcel Number: 5851-006-007
Size: 5,092 sq. ft.
Development Trend: Residential
Population Within ¼ Mile: 1,924
Within ¼ Mile of Multi-Family: Yes
Native Vegetation: No
Non-Native Vegetation: Yes
Recreation Potential: Low/High



#41

1645 Oxford Avenue

Parcel Number: 5851-006-008
Size: 3,999 sq. ft.
Development Trend: Residential
Population Within ¼ Mile: 1,828
Within ¼ Mile of Multi-Family: Yes
Native Vegetation: No
Non-Native Vegetation: Yes
Recreation Potential: Low/High



#42

1655 Oxford Avenue

Parcel Number: 5851-006-010
Size: 5,767 sq. ft.
Development Trend: Residential
Population Within ¼ Mile: 2,200
Within ¼ Mile of Multi-Family: Yes
Native Vegetation: No
Non-Native Vegetation: Low/High



#43

1655 Oxford Avenue

Parcel Number: 5851-006-011
Size: 8,647 sq. ft.
Development Trend: Residential
Population Within ¼ Mile: 2,200
Within ¼ Mile of Multi-Family: Yes
Native Vegetation: No
Non-Native Vegetation: Yes
Recreation Potential: Moderate/High



Site #6

#44

1671 Oxford Avenue

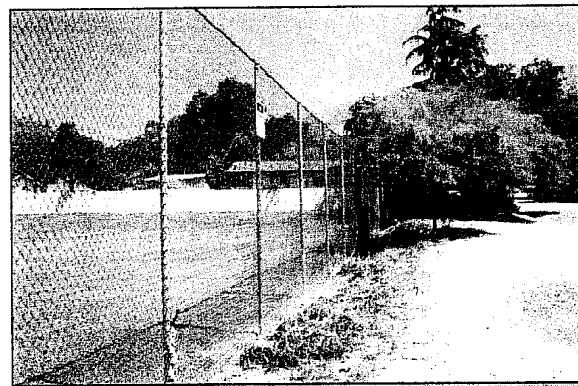
Parcel Number: 5851-006-012
Size: 8,647 sq. ft.
Development Trend: Residential
Population Within ¼ Mile: 2,200
Within ¼ Mile of Multi-Family: Yes
Native Vegetation: No
Non-Native Vegetation: Yes
Recreation Potential: Moderate/High



#45

1677 Oxford Avenue

Parcel Number: 5851-006-013
Size: 7,505 sq. ft.
Development Trend: Residential
Population Within ¼ Mile: 2,109
Within ¼ Mile of Multi-Family: Yes
Native Vegetation: No
Non-Native Vegetation: Yes
Recreation Potential: Moderate/High



#46

1683 Oxford Avenue

Parcel Number: 5851-006-015
Size: 4,887 sq. ft.
Development Trend: Residential
Population Within ¼ Mile: 2,109
Within ¼ Mile of Multi-Family: Yes
Native Vegetation: No
Non-Native Vegetation: Moderate/High

