

3.16 RECREATION

This section of the Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) describes the recreation resources in the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) region, discusses the potential impacts of the proposed 2016 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (“2016 RTP/SCS,” “Plan,” or “Project”) on recreation, identifies mitigation measures for the impacts, and evaluates the residual impacts. Recreation was evaluated in accordance with Appendix G of the 2015 State California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines. Recreation within the SCAG region was evaluated at the programmatic level of detail, in relation to the general plans of the six counties and 191 cities within the SCAG region; the management plans for the four national forests in the SCAG region, Angeles National Forest, San Bernardino National Forest, Los Padres National Forest, and Cleveland National Forest; the California Recreational Trails Plan of 2002; a query of the California Protected Areas Database for local and regional parkland; a review of related literature germane to the SCAG region; as well as a review of SCAG’s 2012 RTP/SCS PEIR.¹

Publicly managed parks and recreation facilities are an important part of the California lifestyle and the high quality of life tied to a beautiful natural environment in communities built to encourage active healthy living.² According to a study conducted by California State Parks in 2005, two-thirds of Californians consider outdoor recreation important to their quality of life.³ In the most recent California State Parks survey (2012) on public opinions and attitudes on outdoor recreation in California, the park facilities and services that Californians thought were most important to them were wilderness-type areas where no vehicles or development are allowed; play areas for young children; areas for environmental and outdoor education programs; picnic sites for large groups; recreation facilities at lakes, rivers, and reservoirs; and single-use trails.⁴ The six-county SCAG region includes approximately 150 miles of California’s approximately 840-mile coastline, including wide sandy beaches such as San Buenaventura State Beach, Port Huenene State Beach Park, and Point Mugu State Park in Ventura County; Point Dume State Beach, Will Rogers Beach, Santa Monica State Beach Park, Venice Beach, Manhattan Beach, Cabrillo Beach Park, and Long Beach in Los Angeles County; and Seal Beach, Sunset County Beach, Huntington Beach, Newport Beach, Laguna Beach, and Doheny State Beach in Orange County.⁵ In addition to four national forests, the region contains two national parks—Joshua Tree National Park and the southern portion of Death Valley National Park—as well as several national wildlife refuges including Hopper National Wildlife Refuge in Ventura County; Seal Beach National Wildlife Refuge in Orange County; Havasu National Wildlife Refuge in San Bernardino County; Coachella Valley National Wildlife Refuge in Riverside County, and Sonny Bono Salton Sea National Wildlife Refuge

¹ Southern California Association of Governments. April 2012. Final Program Environmental Report: *2012-2035 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy*. Available at: <http://rtpscs.scag.ca.gov/Pages/Final-2012-PEIR.aspx>

² California State Parks. Accessed 14 September 2015. *The State Park System 2002*. Available at: <http://www.parks.ca.gov/pages/795/files/state%20park%20system%20plan%202002%20part%20i%20final%2020-07.pdf>

³ State of California Resources Agency, California State Parks. Accessed 14 September 2015. *The Health and Social Benefits of Recreation: An Element of the California Outdoor Recreation Planning Program*. Available at: http://www.parks.ca.gov/pages/795/files/health_benefits_081505.pdf

⁴ California State Parks. Accessed 14 September 2015. *Complete Findings for the Survey on Public Opinions and Attitudes on Outdoor Recreation in California 2012: An Element of the California Outdoor Recreation Planning Program*. Available at: <http://www.parks.ca.gov/pages/795/files/2012%20spoa.pdf>

⁵ GreenInfo Network. 2015. *California Protected Areas: Data Portal*. Available at: <http://www.calands.org/>

in Imperial County.^{6,7} There are 48 California state parks, 268 county parks, and over 3,300 city parks and open space areas in the SCAG region.^{8,9}

Definitions

Definitions of terms used in the regulatory framework, characterization of baseline conditions, and impact analysis for recreation are provided.

Level of Service (LOS): In the context of recreation of service, LOS refers to the amount of “service” each park, open land, trail, or other facility provides to its constituents.¹⁰ Conventional recreation and park LOS analysis—often called the “NRPA standards” method because it was published by the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA)—is based on capacity only. NRPA standards suggest providing a certain number of facilities or acres of parkland per 1,000 population. The County of Los Angeles General Plan and Orange County General Plan have established a standard for parklands of four acres of local parkland and six acres of regional parkland per 1,000 county residents in unincorporated areas; the Imperial County General Plan has established a standard of five net acres of overall parkland per 1,000 county residents in unincorporated areas; the San Bernardino County General Plan has established a standard of 14.5 acres of undeveloped lands and/or trails per 1,000 county residents and 2.5 acres of regional parkland per 1,000 county residents; and Ventura County has not established numeric parkland standards. As stated in SCAG’s 2008 Regional Comprehensive Plan, SCAG is encouraging communities to utilize a new paradigm such as composite-values LOS analysis with a ranking from “A” to “F” that takes into account existing open space plans and policies, community preference, accessibility by underrepresented groups and underserved populations, multimodal transportation access (within one-half mile), multifunction open spaces, multiagency initiatives to cover broad geographic areas, and Compass Blueprint areas instead of simply acres of parkland per 1,000 population.¹¹

⁶ U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service. Accessed 11 September 2015. *California Parks*. Available at: <http://www.nps.gov/state/ca/index.htm>

⁷ U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Accessed 11 September 2015. *NWRS – Refuge Locator Map – California*. Available at: <http://www.fws.gov/refuges/refugelocatormaps/california.html>

⁸ California Department of Parks and Recreation. Accessed 11 September 2015. *Find a Park by County*. Available at: <http://www.parks.ca.gov/parkindex>

⁹ GreenInfo Network. 2015. *California Protected Areas: Data Portal*. Available at: <http://www.calands.org/>

¹⁰ The American Planning Association’s Professional Institute, American Institute of Certified Planners. Accessed 11 May 2015. *Planning Essentials Symposium: Replacing Conventional Park Level of Service (LOS) Analysis with the ‘Composite Values’ Approach*. Available at: <https://www.planning.org/practicingplanner/print/2007/fall/values.htm?print=false>

¹¹ Southern California Association of Governments. Accessed 14 September 2015. *2008 Regional Comprehensive Plan, Open Space & Habitat Chapter*. Available at: http://www.scag.ca.gov/Documents/f2008RCP_OpenSpaceHabitat.pdf

Local Park: A park that is considered to serve the local community (within a two-mile service radius of the park) is generally 20 acres or less in size.^{12,13} For instance, the Los Angeles County General Plan has refined local parks into the following categories:¹⁴

Park Node: Plazas, rest areas, playgrounds, landmarks, public art installations, etc.

Size: One-quarter acre or less

Service Area: No service radius area

Pocket Park: Passive park amenities including picnic areas and seating areas; and active park amenities including children's play apparatus

Size: Less than three acres

Service Area: Up to one-quarter mile radius of the park

Neighborhood Park: Passive park amenities including informal open play areas, children's play apparatus, group picnic areas with overhead shelters, and barbecues; active park amenities including practice sports fields, basketball, tennis, and volleyball courts; and park facilities including public restrooms, and onsite parking and information kiosks

Size: Three to 10 acres

Service Area: One-half mile radius of the park

Community Park: Passive park amenities including informal open play areas, children's play apparatus, family and group picnic areas with overhead shelters, and barbecues; active sports activities including light sports fields, basketball courts and tennis courts, aquatics complexes, skate parks, soccer arenas, roller hockey, community gardens, and dog parks; and park facilities including public restrooms, concession buildings, community buildings, maintenance buildings, and on-site parking and information kiosks

Size: 10 to 20 acres

Service Area: 1 to 2-mile radius around the park

¹² Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning. Accessed 25 November 2014. *Los Angeles County General Plan Revised Draft: Chapter 10: Parks and Recreation Element*. Available online at:

http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/gp_2035_redlined-final-20141125.pdf

¹³ Orange County Public Works Development Services. Accessed 14 September 2015. *General Plan: Chapter VII. Recreation Element*. Available at: <http://ocplanning.net/civicax/filebank/blobdload.aspx?blobid=24960>

¹⁴ Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning. Accessed 25 November 2014. *Los Angeles County General Plan Revised Draft: Chapter 10: Parks and Recreation Element*. Available at: http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/gp_2035_redlined-final-20141125.pdf

Regional Park: A park greater than 20 acres in size is generally considered a regional park. A regional park may have a service radius of over 25 miles.^{15,16} For instance, the Los Angeles County General Plan has refined regional parks into the following categories:¹⁷

Community Regional Park: Passive park amenities including open play areas, children’s play apparatus, group picnic areas with overhead shelters, and barbecues; active sports activities including lighted sports fields, basketball courts, and tennis courts; additional amenities including multiple sports facilities, aquatics centers, fishing lakes, community buildings, gymnasiums, and scenic views and vistas; and park facilities including public restrooms, concession buildings, community buildings, maintenance buildings, and on-site parking and information kiosks

Size: 20 to 100 acres

Service Area: Up to 20-mile radius around the park

Regional Park: Passive park amenities including group picnic areas with overhead shelters and barbecues; and additional park amenities including lakes, wetlands, auditoriums, water bodies for swimming, fishing and boating, and sports fields

Size: Greater than 100 acres

Service Area: 25-mile or greater radius around the park

Single Use Facility: Passive features including wilderness parks, nature preserves, botanical gardens and nature centers; and active uses including performing arts, water parks, golf driving ranges, and golf courses

Size: No size criteria

Service Area: No assigned service radius area

Trails/Linear Parks: SCAG, Los Angeles County, and San Bernardino County define trails as linear parks that provide community access to increased health and fitness activities in the increasingly urbanized region.

3.16.1 REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

The federal government sets public recreation standards for protection of publicly owned recreation areas; scenic, historic, and recreational trails; national forests, and recreational fisheries from conversion to non-compatible land uses that may include transportation projects through the recreational resource. The state sets recreation standards for protection of public parkland and establishment of new parkland to meet the needs of a growing population as a result of development project. The provision of new parkland and recreational facilities is generally subject to local general plan policies.

¹⁵ Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning. Accessed 25 November 2014. *Los Angeles County General Plan Revised Draft: Chapter 10: Parks and Recreation Element*. Available online at: http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/gp_2035_redlined-final-20141125.pdf

¹⁶ Orange County Public Works Development Services. Accessed 25 November 2014. *General Plan: Chapter VII. Recreation Element*. Available at: <http://ocplanning.net/civicax/filebank/blobdload.aspx?blobid=24960> Main website: <http://ocplanning.net/planning/generalplan2005>

¹⁷ Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning. Accessed 25 November 2014. *Los Angeles County General Plan Revised Draft: Chapter 10: Parks and Recreation Element*. Available online at: http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/gp_2035_redlined-final-20141125.pdf

Federal

Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act of 1966 (U.S. DOT Act)

Section 4(f) of the U.S. DOT Act (Public Law 89-670) was enacted as a means of protecting publicly owned public parks, recreation areas, and wildlife/waterfowl refuges as well as historic sites of local, state, or national significance, from conversion to transportation uses.

The provision states that the Secretary of the U.S. DOT may approve a transportation project requiring the use of publicly owned land of a public park, recreation area, or wildlife and waterfowl refuge, or land from an historic site of national, state, or local significance (as determined by the federal, state, or local officials having jurisdiction over the park, recreation area, refuge or site) only if:¹⁸

- There is no feasible and prudent alternative to using that land, and
- The program or project includes all possible planning to minimize harm to the Section 4(f) property.
- or -
- The Section 4(f) use is *de minimis*.

National Trails System Act

The National Trails System Act (Public Law 90-543) was established by Congress in 1968 to establish a network of scenic, historic, and recreational trails. The act defined four categories of national trails: recreation trails, scenic trails, historic trails, and connecting or side trails. Trails within park, forest, and other recreation areas administered by the Secretary of the Interior or the Secretary of Agriculture or in other federally administered areas may be established and designated as “National Recreation Trails” by the appropriate Secretary. Since the National Trails System Act was enacted, the list of qualifying national scenic trails and national historic trails has grown from the initial two trails (the Appalachian National Scenic Trail and Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail) to the current list, which includes 11 national scenic trails and 19 historic trails. In addition, more than 1,000 national recreation trails have been designated nationwide, 91 of which are located in California.

National Forests Land Management Plans

Each of the four Southern California national forests (Cleveland National Forest, Los Angeles National Forest, San Bernardino National Forest, and Los Padres National Forest) is included in the Southern California National Forests Vision. The Southern California National Forests Vision (forest plans) has created individual land management plans for each of the four Southern California national forests. The land management plans include strategic programmatic direction for managing the land in each national forest and its resources for the next 10 to 15 years. The plans include sections on resource management, public use and enjoyment, facilities operation and maintenance, commodity and commercial uses, and fire management.

¹⁸ U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration. Accessed 11 May 2015. *Environmental Review Toolkit: Section 4(f) Program Overview*. Available at: <http://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/4f/>

Executive Order 12962—Recreational Fisheries

The objective of Executive Order 12962, dated June 7, 1995, is the conservation, restoration and enhancement of aquatic systems to provide for increased recreational fishing. Under the executive order, federal agencies shall improve the quantity function, sustainable productivity and distribution of U.S. aquatic resources for recreational fishing opportunities by:

- Developing and encouraging government-private sector partnerships
- Identifying recreational fishing opportunities
- Implementing sound aquatic conservation and restoration practices
- Providing access and promoting awareness
- Supporting outreach programs
- Implementing laws
- Establishing cost-share programs
- Evaluating the effects of federally funded, permitted, or authorized actions on aquatic resources and recreational fishing
- Assisting private landowners to conserve and enhance aquatic resources

State

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 California Public Park Preservation Act of 1971 (Public Resources Code Section 5400-5409) states that any public agency that acquires public parkland must either continue to operate the property as a public park, or, must pay compensation or land that is sufficient to acquire substantially equivalent substitute parkland and facilities or provide substitute parkland of comparable characteristics. The Act is the primary legislation for protecting and preserving public parkland.

California Recreational Trails Plan of 2002

The California Department of State Parks (California State Parks) is a trustee agency that owns and operates all state parks and participates in land use planning that affects state parklands. Pursuant to California Public Resources Code Section 5070, the California Recreational Trails Act, California State Parks has prepared the California Recreational Trails Plan in 1978, which was updated in 2002, with

reports highlighting progress on the plan that are submitted to the State Legislature every two years.¹⁹ The California Recreational Trails Plan establishes 12 designated trail corridors that pass through the SCAG region with the intent of forming a statewide trail system that links mountain, valley, and coastal communities to recreational, cultural, and natural resources throughout the state.²⁰

Regional

County and City General Plans

The most comprehensive land use planning, including that for recreational facilities, in the SCAG region is provided by county and city general plans, which local governments are required by state law to prepare as a guide for future development. The SCAG region spans six counties and 191 cities, all of which have general plans containing policies related to provision of recreational resources. Open space and recreation resources are normally addressed in two mandatory elements of the general plan: land use and open space. The land use element normally focuses on the distribution of recreation facilities and programs and an inventory of open space land, including those lands that provide opportunities for recreational activities. In contrast, the open space element focuses on open space for outdoor recreation including, but not limited to:

- Areas of outstanding scenic, historical, and cultural value
- Areas particularly suited for park and recreational purposes, including access to lakeshores, beaches, and rivers and streams
- Areas that serve as links between major recreational and open-space reservations, including utility easements, banks of rivers and streams, trails, and scenic highway corridors

The six county general plans address the majority of the regional open space, beyond that provided by the national forest, national parks, and wildlife refuges:

- **Imperial County:** Parks and Recreation Element²¹ and Conservation and Open Space Element²² of County General Plan and Open Space and Recreation Elements of City General Plans

¹⁹ California Department of Parks and Recreation. Accessed 25 June 2015. *Trails Plan – 2011 Progress Report*. Available at: http://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=25677

²⁰ California Department of Parks and Recreation. Accessed 25 June 2015. *California Recreational Trails Plan Trail Corridors*. Available at: http://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=25680

²¹ County of Imperial Planning & Development Services Department. Accessed 11 September 2015. *Imperial County General Plan: Parks and Recreation Element*. Available at: [http://www.icpds.com/CMS/Media/Parks-&-Recreation-Element-\(2008\).pdf](http://www.icpds.com/CMS/Media/Parks-&-Recreation-Element-(2008).pdf)

²² County of Imperial Planning & Development Services Department. Accessed 11 September 2015. *Imperial County General Plan: Conservation and Open Space Element*. Available at: <http://www.icpds.com/CMS/Media/Conservation-and-Open-Space-Element.pdf>

- **Los Angeles County:** Chapter 9: Conservation and Natural Resources Element²³ and Chapter 10: Parks and Recreation Element²⁴ of County General Plan and Open Space and Recreation Elements of City General Plans
- **Orange County:** Chapter VI. Resources Element²⁵ and Chapter VII. Recreation Element²⁶ of County General Plan and Open Space and Recreation Elements of City General Plans
- **Riverside County:** Chapter 5: Multipurpose Open Space Element and Chapter 10: Healthy Communities Element²⁷ of County General Plan and Open Space and Recreation Elements of City General Plans
- **San Bernardino County:** Chapter VI. Open Space Element²⁸ of County General Plan and Open Space and Recreation Elements of City General Plans
- **Ventura County:** Resources Appendix²⁹ and Public Services and Facilities Appendix³⁰ of County General Plan and Open Space and Recreation Elements of City General Plans

Each city in the SCAG region has its own respective general plan that helps provide guidance for the growth and development of the city and contains measures to maintain and/or enhance open space within each of the cities jurisdictions. Each city's general plan varies in level of detail and necessary measures to preserve open space. Although city general plans are not required to contain parks and recreation sections, cities often choose to include this section to provide measures to maintain and/or enhance city parks and recreation areas.

Additional plans and ordinances at the master plan level, city-level, and specific plan level may also apply within the SCAG region.

²³ Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning. Accessed 11 September 2015. *Public Review Draft March 2015 Text-Only Version: Los Angeles County General Plan*. Available at: http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/gp_draft-march2015.pdf

²⁴ Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning. Accessed 11 September 2015. *Public Review Draft March 2015 Text-Only Version: Los Angeles County General Plan*. Available at: http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/gp_draft-march2015.pdf

²⁵ Orange County Public Works Development Services. Accessed 24 November 2014. *General Plan: Chapter VI. Resources Element*. Available at: <http://ocplanning.net/civicax/filebank/blobdload.aspx?blobid=24960>

²⁶ Orange County Public Works Development Services. Accessed 24 November 2014. *General Plan: Chapter VII. Recreation Element*. Available at: <http://ocplanning.net/civicax/filebank/blobdload.aspx?blobid=24960> Main website: <http://ocplanning.net/planning/generalplan2005>

²⁷ Riverside County Planning Department. Accessed 9 December 2014. *Riverside County General Plan – Current*. Available at: <http://planning.rctlma.org/ZoningInformation/GeneralPlan.aspx>

²⁸ County of San Bernardino Land Use Service Division. Amended 24 April 2014. *County of San Bernardino 2007 General Plan*. Available at: <http://www.sbcounty.gov/Uploads/lus/GeneralPlan/FINALGP.pdf>

²⁹ County of Ventura Resource Management Agency, Planning Division. Accessed 11 September 2015. *Ventura County General Plan: Resources Appendix*. Available at: <http://www.ventura.org/rma/planning/pdf/plans/General-Plan-Resources-Appendix-6-28-11.pdf>

³⁰ County of Ventura Resource Management Agency, Planning Division. Accessed 14 September 2015. *Ventura County General Plan: Public Facilities & Services Appendix*. Available at: http://www.ventura.org/rma/planning/pdf/plans/GENERAL_PLAN_Public_Facilities_and_Services_Appendix_May_8_%202007_edition.pdf

Zoning

City and county zoning codes provide the set of detailed requirements that implement general plan policies at the level of the individual parcel. Zoning codes present standards for different uses and identifies which uses are allowed in the various zoning districts of the jurisdiction. Since 1971, state law has required the city or county zoning code to be consistent with the jurisdiction's general plan.

3.16.2 EXISTING CONDITIONS

This section provides the environmental setting for the discussion of recreation in the SCAG region, which encompasses an area of more than 38,000 square miles within the counties of Los Angeles, Orange, San Bernardino, Riverside, Ventura, and Imperial. This vast area includes millions of acres of open space and recreational land and a population close to 19 million people.³¹ This section includes information on the following baseline conditions of the existing regional recreation parks and open space and community, neighborhood and local parks in the SCAG region.

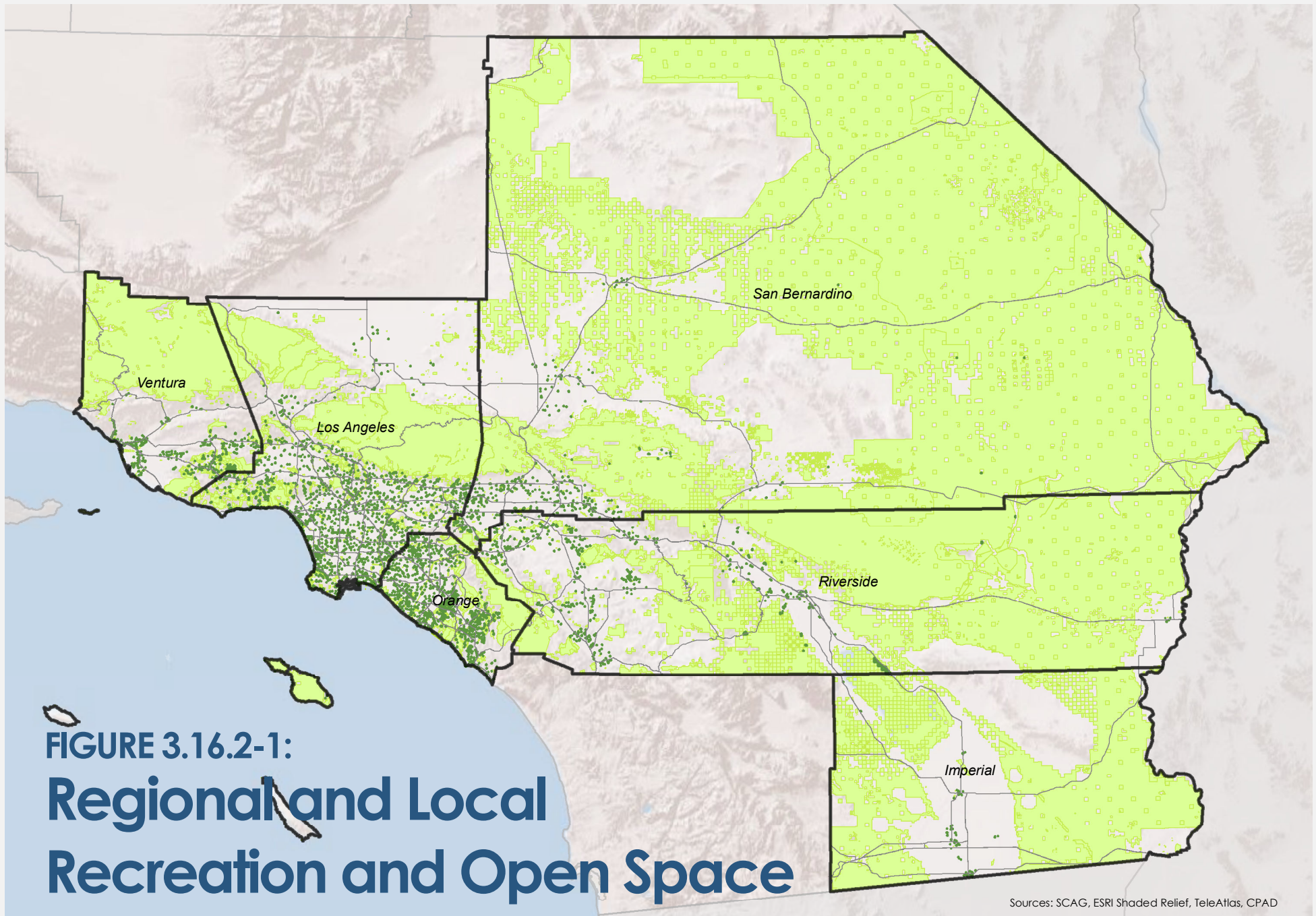
Regional and Local Parks and Recreation Facilities

Community open space includes all forms of open space in or serving the needs of people in the region's communities. Community open space traditionally has meant parks and other recreation areas that are located in or near enough to serve local communities. In today's region, community open space includes community gardens, dedicated natural lands, urban forests, greenbelts, trail systems, and bikeways. This new mix of community open spaces is the product of interrelated planning decisions on a local and regional level and a reflection of new and old needs of the region's communities.

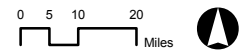
There are over 1.4 million acres of land of existing protected open space areas, regional parks, recreation facilities, and local parks in the SCAG region (**Table 3.16.2-1, *Recreational Areas and Protected Open Space by County in Acres***; and **Figure 3.16.2-1, *Regional and Local Recreation and Open Space***). The SCAG region is home to the Angeles National Forest, the first national forest in California and the second in the nation, hosting in excess of 4 million visitors per year, making it one of the most visited national forests in the nation. The SCAG region is also home to Griffith Park, one of the nation's most popular urban parks, with more than 12 million users annually.³²

³¹ SCAG projections for 2020 indicate a population total of 19,390,870.

³² Raya, Richard, and Victor Rubin. Accessed 14 September 2015. *Safety, Growth, and Equity: Parks and Open Space*. Available at: http://www.policylink.org/sites/default/files/SafetyGrowthEquity-ParksOpenSpace_final.pdf



- Local Parks, Recreational Facilities, and Open Space Areas
- Regional Parks, Recreational Facilities, and Open Space Areas



**TABLE 3.16.2-1
RECREATIONAL AREAS AND PROTECTED OPEN SPACE BY COUNTY IN ACRES**

County	Regional Parkland and Protected Open Space (Over 20 Acres)	Local Parkland and Protected Open Space (20 Acres or Less)	Total Acres
Imperial County	1,538,331.9	278.4	1,538,610.3
Los Angeles County	870,804.5	8,182.2	878,986.7
Orange County	132,867.1	4,868.5	137,735.6
Riverside County	2,827,375.8	4,908.5	1,832,284.3
San Bernardino County	8,374,699.7	2,277.6	2,376,977.3
Ventura County	638,095.0	2,009.2	640,104.2
Total	14,382,173.9	22,524.2	14,404,698.1

NOTE:

CPAD data contains open lands owned in fee, from small parks to large wilderness areas. “No Public Access” areas were excluded from the dataset; this data shows publicly accessible recreational areas and protected open space.

SOURCE:

GreenInfo Network. 2015. *CPAD: California Protected Areas: Data Portal*. Available at: <http://www.calands.org/>

A vast amount of the SCAG region is covered by open space, including four national forests and several thousand acres of undeveloped local and regional parks, all of which are used for passive recreation in the region. Each of the six counties in the SCAG region has a recreation element and/or an open space element within its general plan that emphasizes the importance of passive and active recreation and its benefits to the communities within each county. Federal, state, and county recreation facilities are used to promote community health. Examples of these programs include the Policies for Livable, Active Communities and Environments (PLACE) Program in Los Angeles County, which promotes the development of healthy, safe, and active environments for Los Angeles County residents;³³ and the Partnership for a Healthy Ventura County, which is a collaboration between the Ventura County Department of Public Health and the Ventura County Parks and Recreation Department and the community members served by the departments.³⁴ Programs similar to these exist throughout the SCAG region and some of the additional 191 cities in the SCAG region have parallel programs utilizing recreation facilities to promote healthy activities.

There are four national forests, two national parks, and 48 California State Parks in the SCAG region, ranging from 24 state parks in Los Angeles County to two state parks in Imperial County.³⁵ There are 268 county parks in the SCAG region, with 14 in Imperial County,³⁶ 177 in Los Angeles County,³⁷ 36 in Orange County,³⁸ eight in Riverside County,³⁹ 10 in San Bernardino County,⁴⁰ and 23 in Ventura County.⁴¹ The

³³ County of Los Angeles Department of Public Health. Accessed 14 September 2015. *PLACE Program: Policies for Livable, Active Communities and Environments*. Available at: <http://www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/place/index.htm>

³⁴ The Partnership for a Healthy Ventura County. Accessed 14 September 2015. Website. Available at: <http://healthyventuracounty.org/>

³⁵ California Department of Parks and Recreation. Accessed 11 September 2015. *Find a Park by County*. Available at: <http://www.parks.ca.gov/parkindex>

³⁶ Imperial County Planning & Development Services. Accessed 11 September 2015. *County Parks*. Available at: <http://www.icpds.com/?pid=1058>

³⁷ County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation. Accessed 11 September 2015. *Parks*. Available at: <http://parks.lacounty.gov/wps/portal/dpr/Parks/>

³⁸ OCparks. Accessed 11 September 2015. *OCparks*. Available at: <http://ocparks.com/>

³⁹ Riverside County Regional Park and Open Space District. Accessed 11 September 2015. *Riverside County Parks: Parks*. Available at: <http://www.rivcoparks.org/parks/>

multitude of Specimen Gardens and Arboreta in the region include the Cal State University Northridge Botanic Garden, Chavez Ravine Arboretum, Descanso Gardens, Huntington Botanical Gardens, Los Angeles County Arboretum and Botanic Garden, Meldred E. Mathias Botanical Garden, Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden, John R. Rodman Arboretum, South Coast Botanic Garden, and Wrigley Botanical Gardens in Los Angeles County; the Fullerton Arboretum and Sherman Library and Gardens in Orange County; the College of the Desert Arboretum, Living Desert Zoo and Gardens, Moorten Botanical Garden and Cactarium, and University of California Riverside Botanic Gardens in Riverside County; and Conejo Valley Botanical Garden in Ventura County.⁴²

As established by the Parks and Recreation Element of the Los Angeles County General Plan 2035 Update and the Recreation Element of the Orange County General Plan, the standard for parklands is four acres of local parkland and six acres of regional parkland per 1,000 county residences in unincorporated areas of the Los Angeles and Orange Counties;^{43,44} the Parks and Recreation Element of the Imperial County General Plan has established a standard of five net acres of overall parkland per 1,000 county residents in unincorporated areas;⁴⁵ the Open Space Element of the San Bernardino County General Plan has established a standard of 14.5 acres of undeveloped lands and/or trails per 1,000 county residents and 2.5 acres of regional parkland per 1,000 county residents;⁴⁶ and Riverside and Ventura Counties have not established numeric parkland standards.^{47,48} Los Angeles County is home to over half of the population in the SCAG region. Despite the over 14 million acres designated for open space and park and recreation uses, there remains a deficiency of such lands in large areas of the SCAG region. Based on the *Complete Findings for the Survey on Public Opinions and Attitudes on Outdoor Recreation in California 2012*, the California State Parks determined that the Southern California region has a high demand for picnicking, unpaved trails, and pool and beach facilities and activities, demonstrating a future need for trails and swimming facilities.⁴⁹

⁴⁰ San Bernardino County. Accessed 11 September 2015. *Regional Parks*. Available at: <http://cms.sbcounty.gov/parks/Parks.aspx>

⁴¹ County of Ventura. Accessed 11 September 2015. *County of Ventura Regional Recreation System Map*. Available at: <http://www.ventura.org/parks-department/parks-system-map>

⁴² GreenInfo Network. Accessed 14 September 2015. *California Protected Areas: Data Portal*. Available at: <http://www.calands.org/>

⁴³ Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning. Accessed 14 September 2015. *Public Review Draft March 2015 Text-Only Version: Los Angeles County General Plan*. Available at: http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/gp_draft-march2015.pdf

⁴⁴ Orange County Public Works Development Services. Accessed 14 September 2015. *General Plan: Chapter VII. Recreation Element*. Available at: <http://ocplanning.net/civicax/filebank/blobdload.aspx?blobid=24960>

⁴⁵ County of Imperial Planning & Development Services Department. Accessed 11 September 2015. *Imperial County General Plan: Parks and Recreation Element*. Available at: [http://www.icpds.com/CMS/Media/Parks-&-Recreation-Element-\(2008\).pdf](http://www.icpds.com/CMS/Media/Parks-&-Recreation-Element-(2008).pdf)

⁴⁶ County of San Bernardino Land Use Service Division. Accessed 14 September 2015. *County of San Bernardino 2007 General Plan*. Available at: <http://www.sbcounty.gov/Uploads/lus/GeneralPlan/FINALGP.pdf>

⁴⁷ Riverside County Planning Department. Accessed 14 September 2015. *Riverside County General Plan – Current*. Available at: <http://planning.rctlma.org/ZoningInformation/GeneralPlan.aspx>

⁴⁸ County of Ventura Resource Management Agency, Planning Division. Accessed 14 September 2015. *Ventura County General Plan: Public Facilities & Services Appendix*. Available at: http://www.ventura.org/rma/planning/pdf/plans/GENERAL_PLAN_Public_Facilities_and_Services_Appendix_May_8_%202007_edition.pdf

⁴⁹ California State Parks. Accessed 14 September 2015. *Complete Findings for the Survey on Public Opinions and Attitudes on Outdoor Recreation in California 2012: An Element of the California Outdoor Recreation Planning Program*. Available at: <http://www.parks.ca.gov/pages/795/files/2012%20spoa.pdf>

All 191 cities in the SCAG region have general plans that contain an open space element. Within these open space elements are measures for the protection and enhancement of existing open space in each respective city. In addition to the open space elements, several cities have elements within their general plans that address local parks and recreation. These elements contain measures and policies for the protection and enhancement of city parks and facilities.

Based on the acres of recreational areas and publicly accessible protected open space (shown in **Table 3.16.2-1**), local parkland standards established within county and city general plans, and the 2014 population in each county, there is a deficiency in local parkland in the two counties of the SCAG region that have local parkland standards (Los Angeles and Orange Counties), a surplus in regional parkland and publicly accessible protected open space in the three counties of the SCAG region that have regional parkland standards (Los Angeles, Orange, and San Bernardino Counties), and a surplus in Imperial County, which has a combined local and regional parkland standards (**Table 3.16.2-2, Recreation and Open Space Surpluses and Deficiencies by County**).

Public parks and open space serve all residents in the SCAG region. Different types of parks are found throughout the SCAG region including regional parks, community arboretums, designated open spaces, national parks, and local parks. However, the existing parks are not located in an equal distribution throughout the SCAG region. Some areas in the SCAG region have more open space and higher densities of city parks than others. The integration of an effective regional transportation system as proposed in the SCAG 2016 RTP/SCS would allow residents from any area within the SCAG region to have improved access to the many parks available to visit in the region. Improvements to the regional transportation system would improve public access to parks and open space, which, alongside reductions in greenhouse gases and improvements in air quality would contribute to the overall health and well-being of the residents in the SCAG region.

**TABLE 3.16.2-2
RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE SURPLUSES AND DEFICIENCIES BY COUNTY**

	Imperial County ²	Los Angeles County ³	Orange County ⁴	Riverside County ⁵	San Bernardino County ⁶	Ventura County ⁷
2014 population ¹	180,672	10,041,797	3,113,991	2,279,967	2,085,669	842,967
Local parkland standard (acres per 1,000 population)	n/a	4	4	n/a	n/a	n/a
Acres local parkland/open space per 1,000 population	1.5	0.8	1.6	2.2	1.1	2.4
Local parkland surplus/deficiency	n/a	3.2 deficiency	2.4 deficiency	n/a	n/a	n/a
Regional parkland standard (acres per 1,000 population)	n/a	6	6	n/a	2.5	n/a
Acres regional parkland/ open space per 1,000 population	8,514.5	86.7	42.7	1,240.1	4,015.4	757.0
Regional parkland surplus/deficiency	n/a	2.8 surplus	36.7 surplus	n/a	4,012.9 surplus	n/a
Local and regional parkland combination standard (acres per 1,000 population)	5	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Acres local and regional parkland/open space per 1,000 population	8,516.0	87.5	44.2	803.6	1,139.7	759.3
Local and regional parkland surplus/deficiency	8,516.0 surplus	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

SOURCE:

¹ Southern California Association of Governments. Accessed 11 September 2015. *Profiles of Imperial County, Los Angeles County, Orange County, Riverside County, San Bernardino County, and Ventura County*. Available at:

<http://www.scag.ca.gov/DataAndTools/Pages/LocalProfiles.aspx>

² Imperial County Planning & Development Services Department. Accessed 11 September 2015. *Imperial County General Plan: Parks and Recreation Element*. Available at: [http://www.icpds.com/CMS/Media/Parks-&-Recreation-Element-\(2008\).pdf](http://www.icpds.com/CMS/Media/Parks-&-Recreation-Element-(2008).pdf)

³ Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning. March 2015. *Public Review Draft March 2015 Text-Only Version: Los Angeles County General Plan*. Available at: http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/gp_draft-march2015.pdf

⁴ Orange County Public Works Development Services. July 2014. *General Plan: Chapter VII. Recreation Element*. Available at: <http://ocplanning.net/civicax/filebank/blobdownload.aspx?blobid=24960>.

⁵ Riverside County Planning Department. 9 December 2014. *Riverside County General Plan – Current*. Available at: <http://planning.rctlma.org/ZoningInformation/GeneralPlan.aspx>

⁶ County of San Bernardino Land Use Service Division. Amended 24 April 2014. *County of San Bernardino 2007 General Plan*. Available at: <http://www.sbcounty.gov/Uploads/lus/GeneralPlan/FINALGP.pdf>

⁷ County of Ventura Resource Management Agency, Planning Division. Amended 8 May 2007. *Ventura County General Plan: Public Facilities & Services Appendix*. Available at: http://www.ventura.org/rma/planning/pdf/plans/GENERAL_PLAN_Public_Facilities_and_Services_Appendix_May_8_%202007_edition.pdf

Linear facilities (such as trails and greenbelts) and large regional recreational areas may serve several neighborhoods but are also a unique amenity for the entire area.⁵⁰ Approximately 85 percent of Californians live within 10 miles of the 27 designated Trail Corridors of the California Recreational Trails

⁵⁰ Governor’s Office of Planning and Research. Accessed 14 September 2015. *State of California General Plan Guidelines 2003*. Available at: http://opr.ca.gov/docs/General_Plan_Guidelines_2003.pdf

Plan, which provide both regional and local recreation opportunities.⁵¹ The California Recreational Trails Plan establishes the following designated Trail Corridors that pass through the SCAG region with the intent of forming a statewide trail system that links mountain, valley, and coastal communities to recreational, cultural, and natural resources throughout the state:⁵²

- **Backbone Trail Corridor** (from Pacific Coast Highway at Thornhill Broome Beach in Ventura County through the Santa Monica Mountains to Pacific Coast Highway at Will Rogers State Historic Park in Los Angeles County)⁵³
- **California Coastal Trail Corridor** (from the California-Mexico border northwest along the California coastline through Orange, Los Angeles, and Ventura Counties to the California-Oregon border)
- **California Desert Trail Corridor** (from the California-Mexico border through Imperial, Riverside, and San Bernardino Counties into Nevada)
- **Condor Trail Corridor** (from the Los Angeles–Ventura County line at the Santa Clarita River west through Ventura County into Santa Barbara County)
- **Cuesta to Sespe Trail Corridor** (through the southern section of the Los Padres National Forest from the Cuesta Grade north of San Luis Obispo southeast through Ventura County to the end of the Sespe River outside of Filmore at Highway 126)
- **Juan Bautista de Anza (National Historic) Trail Corridor** (from the San Francisco Bay Area southeast through Ventura, Los Angeles, San Bernardino, Riverside, San Diego, and Imperial Counties to the California-Mexico border)
- **Los Angeles River Trail Corridor** (from Long Beach harbor in Los Angeles County north along the Los Angeles River corridor to Pacific Crest Trail in the Angeles National Forest)
- **Pacific Crest (National Scenic) Trail Corridor** (from Canada south through Washington State, Oregon, into California, through Los Angeles, San Bernardino, Riverside, and San Diego Counties into Mexico)
- **Rim of the Valley Trail Corridor** (a loop corridor from the foothills of the San Gabriel Mountains in Los Angeles County through the Santa Susana Mountains into Ventura County south to the Santa Monica Mountains in Los Angeles County and east near Mulholland Parkway to downtown Los Angeles, then north through Pasadena back into the foothills in La Canada Flintridge)
- **San Gabriel River Trail Corridor** (from Alamitos Bay in Los Angeles County northeast along the San Gabriel River corridor to Pacific Crest Trail in the Angeles National Forest)
- **Santa Ana River Trail Corridor** (from Balboa in Orange County northeast along the Santa Ana River corridor through Riverside and San Bernardino counties to the Pacific Crest Trail in the San Bernardino National Forest)
- **Santa Clara River Trail/Parkway** (from the South Forks Trail in Ventura County east along the Santa Clara River to the community of Newhall in Los Angeles County)

⁵¹ California Department of Parks and Recreation. Accessed 14 September 2015. *California Recreational Trails Plan & Progress Report*. Available at: http://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=23443

⁵² California Department of Parks and Recreation. Accessed 25 June 2015. *California Recreational Trails Plan Trail Corridors*. Available at: http://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=25680

⁵³ National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. Accessed 14 September 2015. *Santa Monica Mountains: Backbone Trail System*. Available at: <http://www.nps.gov/samo/planyourvisit/loader.cfm?csModule=security/getfile&pageID=23898>

Other local trails that are maintained by cities and counties include Schabarum-Skyline Trail (Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation),⁵⁴ Bayview Trail, Upper Newport Bay Nature Preserve (Orange County Parks),⁵⁵ Victoria Avenue Bike Trail (City of Riverside, Riverside County),⁵⁶ Orange Blossom Bike Trail (City of Redlands, San Bernardino County),⁵⁷ and Ojai Valley Trail (Ventura County Parks Department).⁵⁸ There are at least 365 county-maintained trails⁵⁹ and several city-maintained trails in Los Angeles County, but no existing local maintained trails in Imperial County, where trails within the County are located within state and federal parks.

3.16.3 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

The potential for the 2016 RTP/SCS to result in significant impacts related to recreation was analyzed in relation to the two questions contained in Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines. The Plan would be considered to have the potential for significant impacts if 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.
- Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment.

Methodology

The 2016 RTP/SCS lists transportation projects and includes strategies for integrating land use development patterns with transportation investments that emphasize system preservation and enhancement, active transportation, mode choices, accessibility, and mobility. These land use distribution patterns are designed to accommodate the region's growth projections. The Regional Travel Demand Model (RTDM) used for this analysis captures pass-through traffic that does not have an origin or destination in the region, but does impact the region, so that too is included in the project analysis. Although population growth and development are anticipated to occur even without the 2016 RTP/SCS, this Plan includes regional land use growth policies and strategies that would likely influence growth, including distribution patterns, throughout the region. To address this, the analysis in this PEIR covers overall region-wide impacts of major transportation projects listed in the Plan and land development strategies described in the 2016 RTP/SCS.⁶⁰

⁵⁴ County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation. Accessed 10 July 2015. *Trails: Schabarum-Skyline Trail*. Available at: <http://trails.lacounty.gov/Trail/53/Schabarum-Skyline-Trail>

⁵⁵ Orange County Parks. Accessed 10 July 2015. *Interactive Parks Map*. Available at: <http://ocparks.com/gov/occr/ocparks/map.asp?afilter=on> PDF Map available at: <http://ocparks.com/civicax/filebank/blobdload.aspx?BlobID=8223>

⁵⁶ City of Riverside. Accessed 10 July 2015. *Parks, Recreation, & Community Services: Biking Trails Along Victoria Avenue*. Available at: http://www.riversideca.gov/park_rec/trails-victoria.asp

⁵⁷ City of Redlands. Accessed 10 July 2015. *Redlands Existing Bike Trails*. Available at: <http://www.cityofredlands.org/gis/ExistingBikeTrails>

⁵⁸ County of Ventura. Accessed 10 July 2015. *Ojai Valley Trail, Ventura/Ojai*. Available at: <http://www.ventura.org/trails/ojai-valley-trail-ventura/ojai>

⁵⁹ County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation. Accessed 10 July 2015. *Trails: List of Trails*. Available at: <http://trails.lacounty.gov/Trail/List>

⁶⁰ Major Transportation Projects include but are not limited to projects that involve ground disturbing activities and projects outside of existing rights-of-way such as projects that require new rights-of-way, adding traffic lanes, and grade separation.

The methodology for determining the significance of recreation impacts compares the existing conditions to future (2040) conditions, as required in CEQA Section 15126.2(a). This analysis evaluates the potential for significant impacts of the 2016 RTP/SCS to recreation in accordance with Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines and guidelines established by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM); California Department of Parks and Recreation; and Ventura, Los Angeles, Orange, San Bernardino, Riverside, and Imperial Counties.

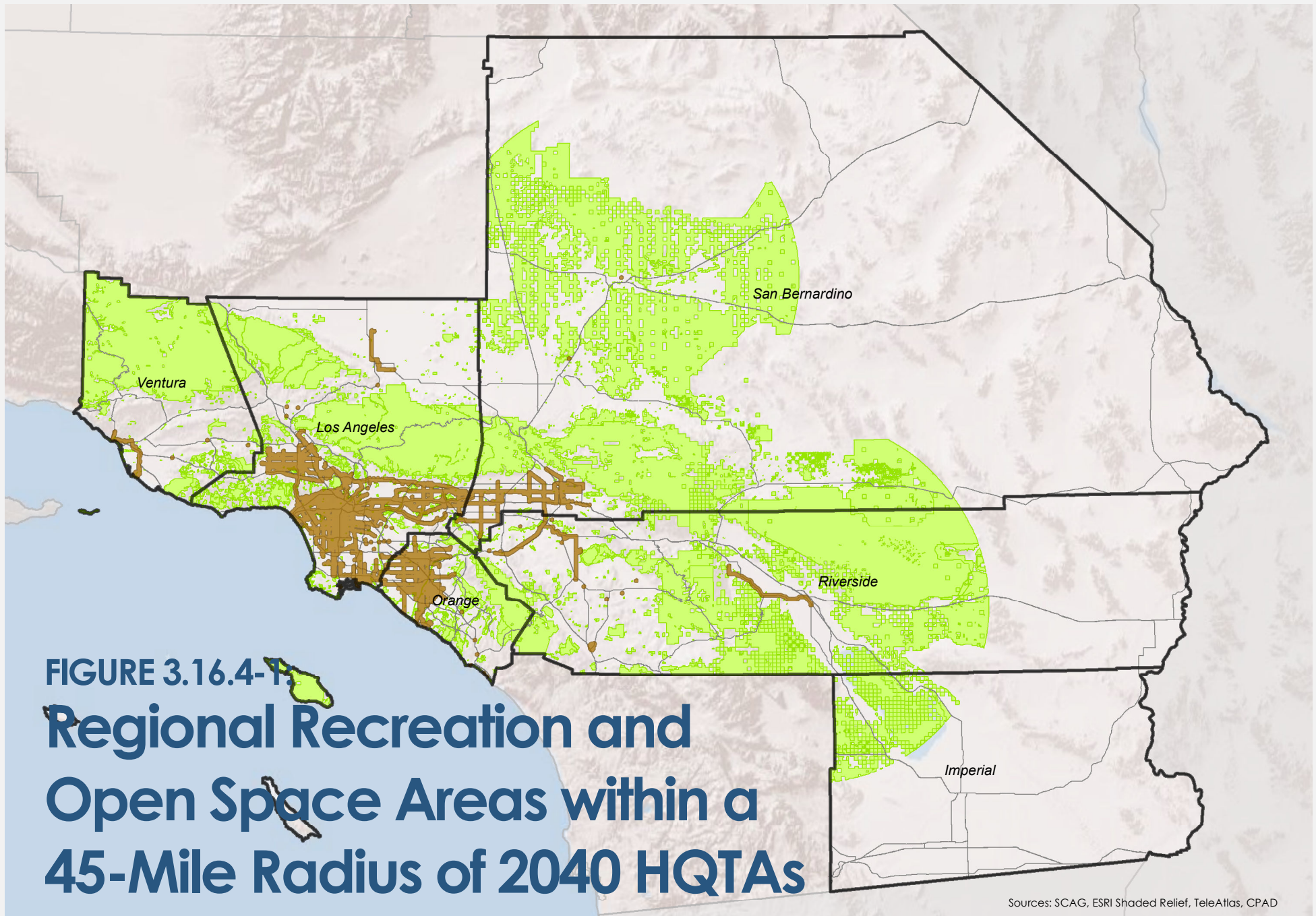
To assess potential impacts to recreation within the SCAG region, a geographic information system (GIS) was used to analyze whether major highway, transit, and freight rail projects documented in the 2016 RTP/SCS would directly impact existing recreation resources. Baseline conditions were established for the acreage of local and regional parkland per 1,000 population in each county to determine existing park level of service, and the 2040 anticipated population growth forecast was used to calculate the quantity of parkland needed to meet future recreation needs. The results of the GIS analysis determine whether major transportation projects included in the Plan could directly affect existing local and regional parkland in the SCAG region. Indirect impacts were evaluated based on the land development patterns after a review of the Plan's land use strategies, as well as the assumptions that protected recreation areas (such as national forests) would remain protected and new development would be discouraged in natural habitat areas and be redirected away from high value habitat areas to be concentrated in existing urbanized areas such as high-quality transit areas (HQTAs) (near transit projects) and urban opportunity areas, as well as existing suburban town centers.

3.16.4 IMPACT ANALYSIS

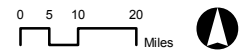
IMPACT REC-1. Potential to increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated.

Significant Impact

Implementation of the transportation projects and land use patterns anticipated by the strategies in the 2016 RTP/SCS would have the potential to increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facilities would occur or be accelerated, constituting a potentially significant impact. The 2016 RTP/SCS provides transportation improvements to accommodate the anticipated population increase of approximately 3.8 million persons from 2014 to 2040, over the 25-year planning horizon. The 2016 RTP/SCS would encourage new growth in urbanized areas such as HQTAs and other livable corridors and neighborhood mobility areas sometimes within the HQTAs above their existing planned density levels; therefore, it would be expected to result in increased use of existing neighborhood parks and other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration facilities may be anticipated. Regional parks have a service area of a 1-hour driving distance; therefore, the distribution of density would likely remain within the service area, and these parks would not experience an accelerated rate of deterioration of facilities. Based on the assumption that a 1-hour drive would provide access to regional parks within a 45-mile radius around HQTAs, most of the SCAG region is adequately served (**Figure 3.16.4-1, *Regional Recreation and Open Space Areas within a 45-Mile Radius of 2040 HQTAs***, and **Table 3.16.4-1, *Acres of Regional Recreation and Open Space Areas within a 45-Mile Radius of HQTAs in 2040***).



- 2040 HQTA
- Regional Recreation and Open Space (within 45-Miles)



**TABLE 3.16.4-1
ACRES OF REGIONAL RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE AREAS
WITHIN A 45-MILE RADIUS OF HQTAs IN 2040**

	Imperial County ¹	Los Angeles County ²	Orange County ³	Riverside County ⁴	San Bernardino County ⁵	Ventura County ⁶
Regional parkland standard (acres per 1,000 population)	n/a	6	6	n/a	2.5	n/a
2040 population ⁷	282,000	11,514,000	3,461,000	3,168,000	2,731,000	966,000
Acres of Regional parkland/open space within 45-mile radius of 2040 HQTAs ⁸	285,926.7	889,975.4	131,058.9	1,630,611.2	2,389,479.9	636,732.3
Acres regional parkland/ open space per 1,000 population within 45-mile radius of 2040 HQTAs	1,013.9	77.3	37.9	514.7	874.9	659.1
Regional parkland surplus/deficiency within 45-mile radius of 2040 HQTAs	n/a	71.3 acre surplus	31.9 acre surplus	n/a	872.5 acre surplus	n/a

SOURCE:

¹Imperial County Planning & Development Services Department. Accessed 11 September 2015. *Imperial County General Plan: Parks and Recreation Element*. Available at: [http://www.icpds.com/CMS/Media/Parks-&-Recreation-Element-\(2008\).pdf](http://www.icpds.com/CMS/Media/Parks-&-Recreation-Element-(2008).pdf)

²Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning. March 2015. *Public Review Draft March 2015 Text-Only Version: Los Angeles County General Plan*. Available at: http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/gp_draft-march2015.pdf

³Orange County Public Works Development Services. July 2014. *General Plan: Chapter VII. Recreation Element*. Available at: <http://ocplanning.net/civicax/filebank/blobdload.aspx?blobid=24960>.

⁴Riverside County Planning Department. 9 December 2014. *Riverside County General Plan – Current*. Available at: <http://planning.rctlma.org/ZoningInformation/GeneralPlan.aspx>

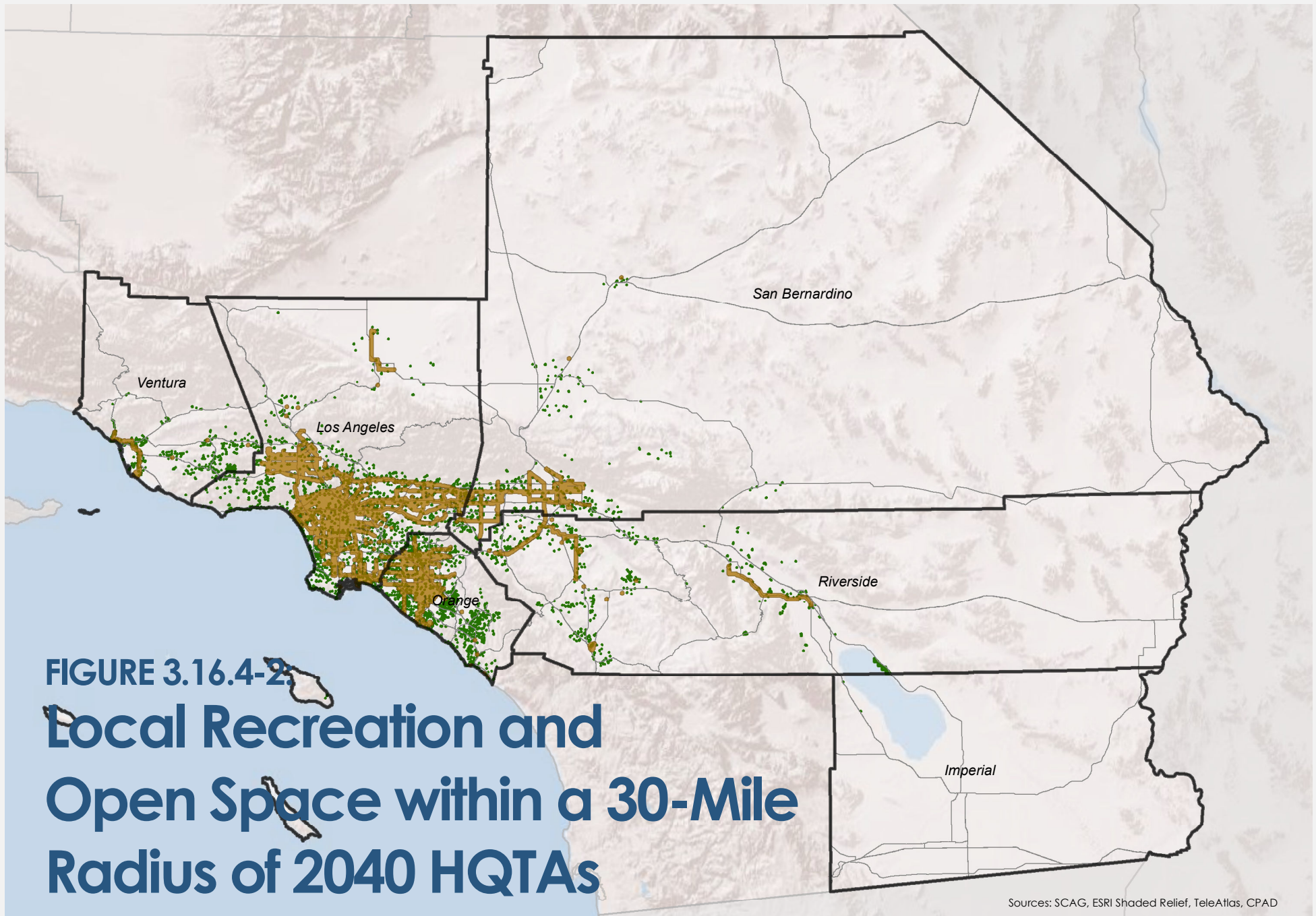
⁵County of San Bernardino Land Use Service Division. Amended 24 April 2014. *County of San Bernardino 2007 General Plan*. Available at: <http://www.sbcounty.gov/Uploads/lus/GeneralPlan/FINALGP.pdf>

⁶County of Ventura Resource Management Agency, Planning Division. Amended 8 May 2007. *Ventura County General Plan: Public Facilities & Services Appendix*. Available at: http://www.ventura.org/rma/planning/pdf/plans/GENERAL_PLAN_Public_Facilities_and_Services_Appendix_May_8_%202007_edition.pdf

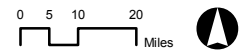
⁷SCAG locally reviewed policy forecast model (as of October 5, 2015)

⁸GreenInfo Network. Accessed 16 November 2015. *California Protected Areas Data Portal*. Available at: <http://www.calands.org/>

Park accessibility is defined in the 2016 RTP/SCS as the percentage of park acreage reachable within a 45-minute travel time via (1) automobile, (2) local bus, and (3) all travel options. Los Angeles County and Orange County have identified an existing deficiency in local parkland per 1,000 persons that would have the potential to be directly exacerbated by the increased use of designated local parks and recreational facilities in HQTAs, based on the assumption that a 45-minute drive would provide access to regional parks within a 30-mile radius around HQTAs, most of the SCAG region is adequately served by regional parks (**Figure 3.16.4-2, Local Recreation and Open Space within a 30-Mile Radius of 2040 HQTAs**, and **Table 3.16.4-2, Acres of Local Recreation and Open Space Areas within a 30-Mile Radius of HQTAs in 2040**).



- 2040 HQTA
- Local Recreation and Open Space (within 30-Miles)



**TABLE 3.16.4-2
ACRES OF LOCAL RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE AREAS
WITHIN A 30-MILE RADIUS OF HQTAs IN 2040**

	Imperial County ¹	Los Angeles County ²	Orange County ³	Riverside County ⁴	San Bernardino County ⁵	Ventura County ⁶
Local parkland standard (acres per 1,000 population)	n/a	4	4	n/a	n/a	n/a
2040 population ⁷	282,000	11,514,000	3,461,000	3,168,000	2,731,000	966,000
Acres of Local parkland/open space within 30-mile radius of 2040 HQTAs ⁸	23.3	8,123.7	4,845.6	4,843.1	2,198.4	1,998.6
Acres local parkland/ open space per 1,000 population within 30-mile radius of 2040 HQTAs	0.1	0.7	1.4	1.5	0.8	2.1
Local parkland surplus/deficiency within 30-mile radius of 2040 HQTAs	n/a	3.3 acre deficiency	2.6 acre deficiency	n/a	n/a	n/a

SOURCE:

¹Imperial County Planning & Development Services Department. Accessed 11 September 2015. *Imperial County General Plan: Parks and Recreation Element*. Available at: [http://www.icpds.com/CMS/Media/Parks-&-Recreation-Element-\(2008\).pdf](http://www.icpds.com/CMS/Media/Parks-&-Recreation-Element-(2008).pdf)

²Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning. March 2015. *Public Review Draft March 2015 Text-Only Version: Los Angeles County General Plan*. Available at: http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/gp_draft-march2015.pdf

³Orange County Public Works Development Services. July 2014. *General Plan: Chapter VII. Recreation Element*. Available at: <http://ocplanning.net/civicax/filebank/blobdload.aspx?blobid=24960>.

⁴Riverside County Planning Department. 9 December 2014. *Riverside County General Plan – Current*. Available at: <http://planning.rctlma.org/ZoningInformation/GeneralPlan.aspx>

⁵County of San Bernardino Land Use Service Division. Amended 24 April 2014. *County of San Bernardino 2007 General Plan*. Available at: <http://www.sbcounty.gov/Uploads/lus/GeneralPlan/FINALGP.pdf>

⁶County of Ventura Resource Management Agency, Planning Division. Amended 8 May 2007. *Ventura County General Plan: Public Facilities & Services Appendix*. Available at: http://www.ventura.org/rma/planning/pdf/plans/GENERAL_PLAN_Public_Facilities_and_Services_Appendix_May_8_%202007_edition.pdf

⁷SCAG locally reviewed policy forecast model (as of October 5, 2015).

⁸GreenInfo Network. Accessed 16 November 2015. *California Protected Areas Data Portal*. Available at: <http://www.calands.org/>

Accessibility to parks is a public health concern and is addressed under Environmental Justice in the 2016 RTP/SCS.⁶¹ Urbanized areas, such as the communities of Westlake and Southeast Los Angeles in the City of Los Angeles, are significantly park poor, with less than half an acre of park space per 1,000 residents, many of which are also low-income areas.⁶² Construction of transportation projects as well as development in underutilized urban (opportunity) areas and edges of the existing urbanized areas that would be anticipated as a result of land use strategies of the Plan would have a potential to impact open spaces and recreational lands (and possibly recreational facilities), through the acquisition of land and development of transportation projects and urban uses. These activities would have the potential to further increase the use at remaining facilities and reduce the ratio of parks-to-people in these areas.

⁶¹ This Draft PEIR does not analyze environmental justice. However, environmental justice is an important subject to the region and is analyzed in the Draft Plan (2016 RTP/SCS) and the associated Environmental Justice Appendix.

⁶² Los Angeles Department of City Planning. March 2015. *Plan for a Healthy Los Angeles: A Health and Wellness Element of the General Plan*. Available at: <http://planning.lacity.org/cwd/gnlpln/PlanforHealthyLA.pdf>

Except for the High Speed Rail (HSL) projects, which would impact open space in Los Angeles County, potentially including underground portions of the Angeles National Forest, the majority of transit and roadway improvements included in the 2016 RTP/SCS are generally located in urbanized areas, and therefore, are not likely to result in direct significant impacts to vacant/undisturbed lands or large tracts of land designated as open space. Additionally, transportation projects included in the Plan that could result in potentially significant impacts to recreational facilities would include closures to gaps in the highway network through areas that currently serve as open space lands, closures to gaps in the high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lane network and the addition of freeway-to-freeway direct HOV connectors, and a connected network of express/high-occupancy toll (HOT) lanes.

Section 2.0, Project Description, of this PEIR also describes land use strategies. These strategies would target growth in urbanized areas such as HQTAs that provide walkable, bikeable, and/or transit-oriented land patterns. Under the 2016 RTP/SCS, although HQTAs account for only 3 percent of total land areas, they would and are projected to accommodate 46 percent of the region's future household growth and 50 percent of the future employment growth,⁶³ with the remainder of the new growth located outside the HQTAs, possibly on previously vacant/undeveloped urban land, open space and recreational lands, or farmland. Many of the urbanized areas in the SCAG region are currently deficient in local park space.^{64,65} Although land use strategies included in the Plan encourage additional parks and other regional and local biking and walking amenities, many of the areas where density would be expected to increase would be areas without sufficient park space, resulting in increased use and deterioration of existing neighborhood and regional parks.

However, this analysis should be read together with the Plan's strategies for active transportation, including expansion of regional greenway network, regional and local bikeway network, and short-trip strategies to improve sidewalk quality and use complete street to roadway improvements. These strategies that are integrated with land use pattern such as HQTAs, livable corridors, neighborhood mobility areas, as well as with innovative technologies such as neighborhood electric vehicles. While the 2016 RTP/SCS has the potential to result in a significant impact on existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities, it includes strategies to create new neighborhood and regional recreational facilities and opportunities.

Implementation of the transportation projects and land use patterns anticipated by the strategies in the 2016 RTP/SCS would have the potential to increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facilities would occur or be accelerated, constituting a potentially significant impact requiring the consideration of mitigation measures.

⁶³ Southern California Association of Governments. 5 November 2015. *Item No. 1 Staff Report: Draft 2016-2040 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (2016 RTP/SCS) – Proposed Major Components*. Available at: <http://www.scag.ca.gov/committees/CommitteeDocLibrary/jointRCPC110515fullagn.pdf>

⁶⁴ In 2015, The Trust for Public Land's survey of parks within the 100 most populous U.S. cities calculated that the percent of population with walkable park access was only 45.2 percent in the City of Riverside, 54.1 percent in the City of Los Angeles, 59.7 percent in the City of Anaheim, 69.6 percent in the City of Santa Ana, and 79.5 percent in the City of Long Beach.

⁶⁵ The Trust for Public Land. Accessed 16 November 2015. *2015 City Park Facts*. Available at: https://www.tpl.org/sites/default/files/files_upload/2015-City-Park-Facts-Report.pdf

IMPACT REC-2. Potential to include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment.

Significant Impact

Implementation of the transportation projects and land use patterns anticipated by the strategies in the 2016 RTP/SCS would have the potential to include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment, constituting a potentially significant impact. The 2016 RTP/SCS includes linear recreation facilities, such as a regional greenway network, a regional bikeway network, and local bikeway networks, the construction of which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment.

However, the Plan encourages increased residential and commercial development in HQTAs that may necessitate the construction or expansion of recreation facilities within or in nearby accessible locations to the HQTAs, which are typically urban areas. Development of recreation facilities in urban areas normally converts underutilized or blighted property to the benefit of the community and would not be expected to have an adverse physical effect on the environment.⁶⁶

As discussed in **Section 3.14, Population, Housing, and Employment**, the total population in the SCAG region is expected to increase by approximately 3.6 million persons from 2014 to 2040, independent of the projects considered in the 2016 RTP/SCS. However, the land use development pattern of the 2016 RTP/SCS assumes a significant increase in small-lot, single- and multi-family housing that is expected to mainly occur in infill locations near transit infrastructure (HQTAs and transit priority areas [TPAs]), which are typically urban areas. Park development and expansion in urban areas is normally beneficial, although there may be limited instances where impacts will occur during construction of the park. As there is a potential for the linear recreational facilities considered in the Plan to result in adverse physical effects on the environment, impacts in regard to the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment would be significant, and consideration of mitigation measures is required.

3.16.5 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

IMPACT REC-1. Potential to 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.

Significant Cumulative Impact

Implementation of the 2016 RTP/SCS would have the potential to contribute cumulative impacts in regard to the increased use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facilities would occur or be accelerated. Overall, the impacts to recreation facilities and open space as a result of the transportation projects and anticipated

⁶⁶ National Trails Training Partnership. Accessed 26 October 2015. *Impacts of Trails and Trail Use*. Available at: <http://www.americantrails.org/resources/adjacent/sumadjacent.html>

development potentially influenced by the 2016 RTP/SCS would increase the need for local parkland within HQTAs and would be expected to incrementally contribute to indirect cumulative impacts to recreation facilities in regard to the accelerated substantial deterioration of existing facilities and, in combination with other projects in the SCAG region.

IMPACT REC-2. Potential to include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment.

Significant Cumulative Impact

Implementation of the 2016 RTP/SCS would also have the potential to require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities, constituting a potentially significant cumulative impact. In combination with other projects in the SCAG region, implementation of the 2016 RTP/SCS would indirectly contribute (through population growth in areas with insufficient park access) to a deficiency in local/neighborhood parkland that would require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which may have an adverse physical effect on the environment, requiring the consideration of mitigation measures.

3.16.6 MITIGATION MEASURES

Mitigation measures as they pertain to each CEQA question related to recreation are described below. Mitigation measures are categorized into two categories: SCAG mitigation and project-level mitigation measures. SCAG mitigation measures shall be implemented by SCAG over the lifetime of the 2016 RTP/SCS. Project-level mitigation measures can and should be implemented by the Lead Agency for transportation and development projects, as applicable and feasible.

IMPACT REC-1. Potential to 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.

SCAG Mitigation Measures

MM-REC-1(a)(1): SCAG shall facilitate reducing future impacts as a result of increased use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other facilities from population growth through cooperation with member agencies, information sharing, and program development in order to ensure consistency with planning for expansion of and new neighborhood parks within or in nearby accessible locations to HQTAs in funding opportunities and programs administered by SCAG. Lead Agencies, such as county and city planning departments, shall be consulted during this process.

MM-REC-1(a)(2): SCAG shall work with local jurisdictions to facilitate planning freeway caps, which are decks built over freeway trenches to create new public spaces, by continuing to provide technical assistance and planning support through its Sustainability Program for freeway cap planning projects and other adaptive urban park planning activities. SCAG shall make past documentation on freeway cap

plans available on SCAG's Sustainability Program website to serve as examples for future freeway cap planning projects and activities.

Project-Level Mitigation Measures

MM-REC-1(b): Consistent with the provisions of Section 15091 of the State CEQA Guidelines, SCAG has identified mitigation measures capable of avoiding or reducing the significant effects on the integrity of recreation facilities, particularly neighborhood parks in the vicinity of HQTAs, that are within the jurisdiction and responsibility of other public agencies and/or Lead Agencies. Where the Lead Agency has identified that a project has the potential for significant effects, the Lead Agency can and should consider mitigation measures capable of avoiding or reducing significant impacts on the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities to ensure compliance with county and city general plans and the Quimby Act, as applicable and feasible. Such measures may include the following, or other comparable measures identified by the Lead Agency:

- Prior to the issuance of permits, where projects require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities or the payment of equivalent Quimby fees, consider increasing the accessibility to natural areas and lands for outdoor recreation from the proposed project area, in coordination with local and regional open space planning and/or responsible management agencies.
- Prior to the issuance of permits, where projects require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities or the payment of equivalent Quimby fees, encourage patterns of urban development and land use which reduce costs on infrastructure and make better use of existing facilities, using strategies such as:
 - Increasing the accessibility to natural areas for outdoor recreation
 - Promoting infill development and redevelopment to revitalize existing communities
 - Utilizing "green" development techniques
 - Promoting water-efficient land use and development
 - Encouraging multiple uses
 - Including trail systems and trail segments in General Plan recreation standards
- Prior to the issuance of permits, where construction and operation of projects would require the acquisition or development of protected open space or recreation lands, demonstrate that existing neighborhood parks should be expanded or new neighborhood parks developed such that there is no net decrease in acres of neighborhood park area available per capita in the HQTA.
- Where construction or expansion of recreational facilities is included in the project or required to meet public park service ratios, require implementation of Mitigation Measures MM-AES-1(b), MM-AES-3(b), MM-AES-4(b), MM-AF-1(b), MM-AF-2(b), MM-BIO-1(b), MM-BIO-2(b), MM-BIO-3(b), MM-CUL-1(b), MM-CUL-2(b), MM-CUL-3(b), MM-CUL-4(b), MM-GEO-1(b), MM-GEO-1(b), MM-HYD-1(b), MM-USS-3(b), MM-USS-4(b), and MM-USS-6(b) to avoid or reduce significant environmental impacts associated with the construction or expansion of such facilities, through the imposition of conditions required to be followed to avoid or reduce impacts associated with air quality, noise, traffic, biological resources, greenhouse gas emissions, hydrology and water quality, and others that apply to specific construction or expansion of new or expanded public service facilities.

IMPACT REC-2. Potential to include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment.

SCAG Mitigation Measures

MM-REC-2(a): SCAG shall facilitate reducing future impacts as a result of the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment through cooperation with member agencies, information sharing, and program development in order to ensure consistency with planning for construction and expansion of parks to minimize adverse physical effects on the environment in funding opportunities and programs administered by SCAG. Lead Agencies, such as county and city planning departments, shall be consulted during this update process.

Project-Level Mitigation Measures

See **MM-REC-1(b)**.

3.16.7 LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

IMPACT REC-1. Potential to 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.

The implementation of mitigation measures **MM-REC-1(a)(1)**, **MM-REC-1(a)(2)**, **MM-REC-1(a)(3)**, **MM-REC-1(a)(4)**, and **MM-REC-1(b)** would reduce impacts related to the increased use of existing neighborhood parks and recreational facilities in the HQTAs where almost half of the new growth that is forecasted to occur in the region in the next 25 years under the regional land use strategies included in the 2016 RTP/SCS. However, because only two of the six counties in the SCAG region have established local parkland standards, and due to the large volume of transportation projects in the Plan that could occur over time and in large geographic areas and anticipated more compact development in the region, it is possible that impacts to recreational lands would not be mitigated in every instance, and the direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts would remain significant and unavoidable.

IMPACT REC-2. Potential to include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment.

The implementation of mitigation measures **MM-REC-2(a)** and **MM-REC-1(b)** would reduce impacts related to the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment. However, because approval of projects is at the discretion of the Lead Agency, who can provide a variance that allows for overriding considerations, it is possible that impacts to recreational lands would not be mitigated in every instance, and the direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts would remain significant and unavoidable.