

# Community Resources

## Element

### Vision

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**M**anhattan Beach’s parks, beachfront, recreation programs, landscaping, cultural arts, and educational institutions allow our residents to enjoy diverse amenities not found in many Southern California urban environments. Our community resources result from the hard work of dedicated people and innovative programs that make our City unique. To continue this tradition of providing exceptional resources, we will work to preserve and protect resources already in place, and to capture new resources as they become available. We will enhance our recreational facilities and look for ways to expand parks throughout Manhattan Beach. Reusing, conserving, and protecting natural resources such as water and energy will be vital to sustaining our environment by reducing pollution and the consumption of nonrenewable resources. Protecting and creating new landscape resources – most particularly street trees – are an integral component of this plan. We will continue to promote and enhance our cultural arts and public art programs. And finally, we value the many services the City and school



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Manhattan Beach’s most recognizable icon as well as a community resource: the Manhattan Beach Pier.

district provide. Working together, the City and the district will continue to provide high-quality community program activities and services to all.

This element focuses on the long-term enhancement of resources that distinguish Manhattan Beach and create a high-quality community. This element addresses Parks and Recreation, Cultural Arts, Educational Institutions, Landscape Resources, Conservation, and Air Quality.

## Parks and Recreation

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Children enjoying the playground equipment at Polliwog Park.

In Manhattan Beach, parks, recreation services, the beach, and major sporting events keep residents busy year-round and attract many visitors. The parks and community centers create social meeting areas where community interaction takes place. The City’s parks meet the demands of a changing demographic by providing outdoor areas for active recreation and indoor facilities for games and passive recreation programs. To best serve residents, park facilities and recreation services must continue to adjust as needed to respond to the community’s different age groups and interests.

Neighborhood parks and the beach offer welcoming open space and places where people can picnic, play tennis or soccer, throw a Frisbee, or go jogging. The State Beach draws Southern Californians and visitors from around the world who enjoy sunbathing, swimming, beach volleyball, surfing, and bicycling, and who like to view major beach volleyball tournaments and surfing competitions. In 1960, the first Manhattan Beach Open Volleyball Tournament was held and dubbed the “Wimbledon” of beach volleyball. The City co-sponsors the Grand Prix bike race, the longest-running professional bike race in the country. Another City co-sponsored event, the Old Hometown Fair 10K run, celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary in 2002. The free Summer Concerts in the Park series in Polliwog Park has entertained residents and visitors since 1978, and the free annual Arts Festival has been providing families with interactive arts projects since the 1990s. The City is committed to providing exceptional park and recreation services to its residents, and to supporting facilities and events that attract visitors.

# Parks Classifications and Standards

The City park system consists of neighborhood parks, community parks, and school grounds for which the City and Manhattan Beach Unified School District maintain joint-use agreements. The City owns, operates, and maintains eleven parks primarily designed and used for active recreation. Joint-use agreements for use of school grounds and play areas provide residents with additional recreational facilities, particularly athletic fields. Table CR-1 lists recreation facilities in Manhattan Beach, with locations shown on Figure CR-1. Figure CR-1 also identifies areas of the City lacking local recreation resources.

The types of parks and recreation facilities in the City can be classified as follows:

**Pocket Park.** A pocket park is a small neighborhood-oriented facility used to address limited or isolated recreational needs. Such parks usually range in size from 2,500 square feet to under one acre. Pocket parks can be built on small, challenged properties and fill a localized park niche.

**Neighborhood Park.** Neighborhood parks, by definition, are specifically oriented toward residents living within a one-half mile radius of the park. These parks encompass one to ten acres, with some sports fields and facilities usually geared toward the recreation needs of children.

**Specialized Recreation Area.** Specialized recreation areas are facilities that provide limited recreational use. This includes the 1.7-mile Veterans Parkway with its multi-use trail.

**Community Park.** Community parks, as traditionally defined, vary from ten to sixty acres in size and serve residents within a three-mile radius. These parks usually serve a broader demographic and include a variety of recreational amenities.

**School Park.** School parks, or joint-use parks, combine the resources of a school facility and park. School parks are unique because they provide recreational needs in an efficient and cost-effective manner. Due to their size, school parks can offer broader amenities than a traditional neighborhood park, often more comparable to a community park, with baseball fields, basketball courts, tennis courts, and playgrounds.

Veterans Parkway, which separates Valley Drive and Ardmore Avenue, was converted into a multi-use trail from an abandoned railroad spur.



**The Beach.** The State Beach and the two-mile Strand provide tremendous recreational opportunities to residents of Manhattan Beach and people living throughout the southland. These resources define Manhattan Beach and contribute significantly to its attractive living environment. Amenities include volleyball courts, biking and walking paths, play areas, and public parking. The County of Los Angeles, Department of Beaches and Harbor manages these improvements. The pier is owned by the State of California and leased to the City of Manhattan Beach.

## Park Needs and Service Areas

Manhattan Beach has established a service standard of providing 5.0 acres of park and recreation facilities per 1,000 residents. The 2000 Census reported 33,852 people living in Manhattan Beach. With approximately 179 acres of park, beach, and school grounds within the City (as indicated in Table CR-1), residents enjoy a ratio of 5.3 acres of parkland for every 1,000 people. General Plan land use policy allows for up to 35,786 residents within the City. If the current park acreage remained constant, the ratio would reduce to 5.0 acres per 1,000 people, still achieving the City's target.

**Table CR-1  
Park and Recreation Facilities**

<b>Number</b>	<b>Park Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Amenities</b>	<b>Acres</b>
<b><i>Pocket Parks</i></b>				
1	Eighth Street Parquette	1700 block of Eighth St.	Picnic facilities, play area, barbeques, tot lot	0.4
2	Larsson Street Parquette	200 block of Larsson St.	Play area, tot lot, small basketball court, and picnic facilities	0.2
				<i>Subtotal 0.6</i>
<b><i>Neighborhood Parks</i></b>				
3	Live Oak Park	1901 Valley Dr.	Tot lots, play area, 6-lighted tennis courts, 2-lighted basketball courts, 2-lighted multi-purpose fields, 2 batting cages, picnic facilities, restrooms, Live Oak Recreation Center, ceramics studio, and Scout House	7.7
4	Manhattan Heights Park	1600 Manhattan Beach Blvd.	Lighted athletic field, community center, picnic facilities, restrooms, 2 tennis courts, 2 paddle tennis courts, basketball court, volleyball court, play area, climbing wall, horseshoe court, and play area	3.7
5	Manhattan Village Field	1300 Parkview Ave.	Soccer field, play area, picnic facilities, and restrooms	2.7
6	Marine Avenue Park	1625 Marine Ave.	Baseball field, 2 batting cages, soccer field, 2 basketball courts, exercise area, picnic tables, play area, restrooms, and recreational building	7.6
7	Parque Culiacan	Highland and 27 <sup>th</sup> St.	Half-size Basketball court, grassy knoll and benches	1.2
8	Sand Dune Park	33 <sup>rd</sup> and Bell Ave.	100-foot tall sand dune, play areas, sand volleyball court, picnic facilities, and restrooms	5.2
9	Marine Sports Park	1625 Marine Ave.	3 baseball fields and 2 soccer field	7.1
				<i>Subtotal 35.2</i>
<b><i>Specialized Recreation Area</i></b>				
10	Veterans Parkway	Along Valley Dr and Ardmore Ave.	1.7 mile jogging trail with par course , permanent art displays and Veterans Memorial Freedom Grove	21.8
				<i>Subtotal 21.8</i>
<b><i>Community Centers</i></b>				
11	Joslyn Community Center	1601 N. Valley Dr.	Community rooms, auditorium with stage, library, kitchen, and dance studio	0.8
12	Manhattan Heights Community Center	1600 Manhattan Beach Blvd.	Community rooms, classrooms, kitchen, Teen Center, Senior Center Club, and auditorium	3.2
13	Creative Arts Center	1560 Manhattan Beach Blvd.	Creative Arts Center, exhibits, patio, classrooms, kitchen	1.0
				<i>Subtotal 5.0</i>

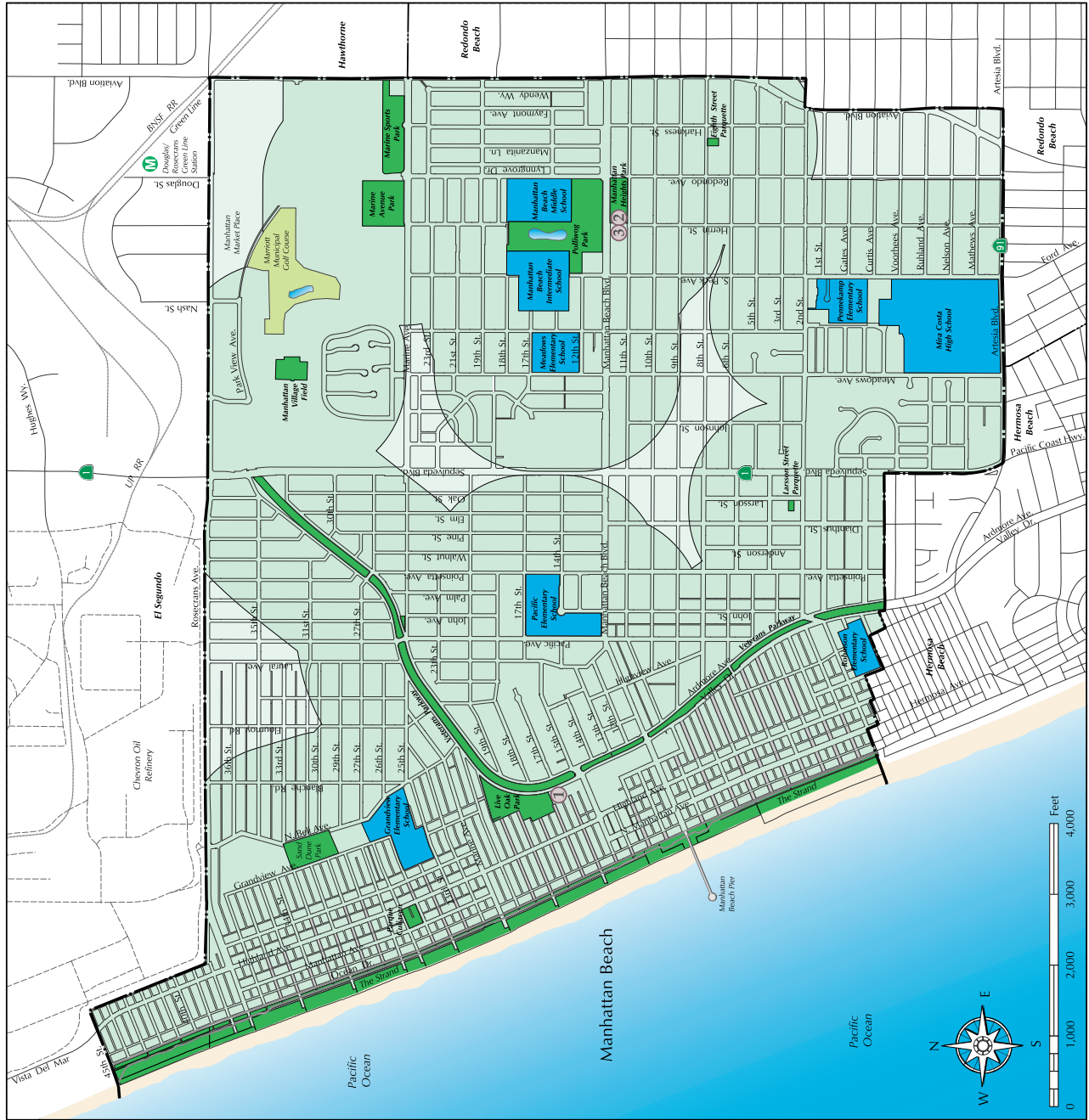
<b>Community Park</b>				
14	Polliwog Park (e)	Corner of Redondo Ave. and Manhattan Beach Blvd.	Large pond, natural wildlife refuge, gazebo, amphitheater, Rose Garden, 2 play areas, 2-lighted athletic fields, baseball field, batting cage, picnic facilities, swimming pool, restrooms, exercise course, barbeques, historical museum, and botanical gardens	18.0
				<i>Subtotal 18.0</i>

<b>Schools - Acreage only includes usable play area and not entire school site (a)</b>				
15	Meadows School (b)	1200 N. Meadows Ave.	Playing field	4.9
16	Pennekamp School (b)	110 S. Rowell Ave.	Multipurpose field	6.2
17	Pacific School (b)	1431 15 <sup>th</sup> St.	Multipurpose field	4.5
18	Center Field	1300 Pacific Ave.	Multipurpose field	2.0
19	Manhattan Beach Transition School Site - Begg (b)	1435 15 <sup>th</sup> St.	Lighted multipurpose field, 9 basketball/volleyball courts; Foster A. Begg Pool – 150 person capacity pool, dressing rooms, showers, grassy sitting area	9.7
20	Robinson School (b)	80 S. Morningside Dr.	Multipurpose field	4.4
21	Grand View School (b)	455 24 <sup>th</sup> St.	Multipurpose field	1.5
22	Mira Costa High School (b)	701 S. Peck Ave.	10 lighted tennis courts, 4 softball and athletic fields, gymnasium, track	12.3
23	Manhattan Beach Middle School (b)	1501 N. Redondo Ave.	3 multipurpose fields	7.5
				<i>Subtotal 53.0</i>

<b>Other Recreation</b>				
24	Marriott Municipal Golf Course (c)	1400 Parkview Avenue	9-hole 3 par public golf course, putting green	19.8
25	Beach (d)	Strand and west of Strand (f)	Pacific Ocean, swimming, surfing, 150 volleyball courts, play areas, biking and walking paths, pier and Round House with marine education center, restrooms, showers and lifeguard towers	58.2 acres/ 2.1 miles
				<i>Subtotal 78.0</i>
<i>(not including community centers) <b>Grand Total 206.6 (g)</b></i>				

**Source:** City of Manhattan Beach Parks and Recreation Department

- Notes:**
- (a) All schools are owned by the Manhattan Beach Unified School District (MBUSD) and have joint-use agreements with the City.
  - (b) Joint-use agreement with the MBUSD, where as City maintains and schedules playing fields. Acreage only includes usable play area and not entire school site.
  - (c) Owned by the City of Manhattan Beach and leased to the Marriott Corporation.
  - (d) The Beach is owned by Los Angeles County and operated by the Los Angeles County Department of Beaches and Harbors, east of mean high tide line. The Pier is owned by the State and leased to the City.
  - (e) Owned by MBUSD and leased to the City of Manhattan Beach.
  - (f) Most of The Strand is owned by the City of Manhattan Beach; portions are owned by the State of California and the County of Los Angeles.
  - (g) To equal the General Plan Parks and Open Space acreage total from Table LU-2, subtract the Grand Total acreage by the Schools Subtotal acreage, and round. Grand Total does not include community centers as they are either already included in the acreage of the park that they are located within, or they are designated as separate public facilities.



**Parks and Recreational Facilities**

- Parks and Open Space
- Schools
- Golf Course

**Community Centers**

1. Joslyn Center
2. Manhattan Heights Community Center
3. Manhattan Heights Annex-Creative Arts Center

**Parks and Recreation Service Areas\***

Manhattan Beach Parks and Manhattan Beach Schools  
 1/4 mile (5-minute walk) and 1/2 mile (10-minute walk) radii



\*Note: Pocket/mini park radius is 1/4 mile.

- City Boundary
- Walk Streets



Figure CR-1

**Parks and Recreation Facilities**  
 MANHATTAN • BEACH • GENERAL PLAN

Source: City of Manhattan Beach Parks and Recreation; Cotton/Indiges/Associates, 2002

While providing park acreage at or above the established community standard is important, the City must also ensure that all neighborhoods are well served by park locations and that park facilities match residents’ needs. Ideally, all residents of Manhattan Beach should have access to a park within a reasonable walking distance of their homes. This walking distance is referred to as the *park service area*. The service area standards recommended by the National Recreation and Parks Association indicate that a park typically should cover a 1/2- to 1/4-mile service area radius, depending on the size of the park. One-quarter mile is an approximate five-minute walking distance. Smaller parks such as pocket parks typically have a smaller service area, matching park needs to the immediate neighborhoods.

Based on this standard, Manhattan Beach neighborhoods are well served by local parks (Figure CR-1). For those neighborhoods in the southeast portion of the community, school athletic fields provide a local park function. However, both residents of these neighborhoods and City staff have identified very localized needs for pocket parks and small passive open space areas.




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Manhattan Beach provides residents, as well as many Southern Californians, expansive open space of sandy beaches and ocean waves.

In the North End and El Porto, while no local parks exist, the neighborhood has immediate access to the beach. To address needs in these two areas, the City will examine opportunities for public park space when such opportunities are available.

Manhattan Beach is a relatively young city, with families attracted to the community by the high quality of living and excellent public schools. Children and youth benefit from organized recreation programs, which require sports fields that can occupy significant acreage. The City also has a growing senior resident population whose recreation needs are quite different. Even with these diverse needs, the City is committed to providing park and



recreation facilities for all.

Although Manhattan Beach is well served by parks, overuse of these recreational facilities has been an increasing issue for residents who live adjacent to the parks. Noise, parking, traffic problems, and safety concerns are just some of the issues identified at Sand Dune Park and Polliwog Park. Sand Dune Park has received numerous complaints from surrounding residents specifically because of park usage and attraction of people to the park beyond the immediate neighborhood due to the unique sand dune features of the park. The City has taken measures to address these concerns. The City will continue to take proactive measures and incorporate unique solutions to reduce the impacts of park use on surrounding residential properties.

## Recreation Services

The Manhattan Beach Parks and Recreation Department takes great pride in providing a wide range of recreational programs for youth, adults, teens, and seniors. Their vision statement is, “We Create Community and Quality of Life Through People, Parks, and Programs.” Recreation facilities available for programs include the Joslyn Community Center, Manhattan Heights

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The Parks and Recreation Department offers a variety of sports classes and tournaments for youth, including the Jr. Manhattan Open Volleyball Tournament, basketball camps and leagues, baseball camps, surfing camps, beach volleyball classes, in-line skating, ice skating, gymnastics and tumbling, karate, tennis, tennis camps, volleyball, and snowboard and ski trips.



Community Center, Manhattan Heights Annex-Creative Arts Center, Live Oak Park, Marine Avenue Park, and Sand Dune Park. Recreation programs are also held at non-City facilities, as well as on the beach. Recreation Services Program staff oversees specialty classes; manages facilities reservations and operations; stages community youth and family events; coordinates senior and Teen Center services; and supports citywide department activities.

U.S. Census data indicate that between 1990 and 2000, the City experienced a significant percentage increase in the number of children under the age of 18, as well as people over 55. This trend is anticipated to continue as more families move to Manhattan Beach and older residents elect to remain. Both demographic trends and the voice of residents highlight the need to develop additional programs for children, youth, and Manhattan Beach’s older residents.

## Goals and Policies: Parks and Recreation

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**Goal CR-1: Maintain a park, recreation, and open space system that provides a variety of recreational opportunities accessible to all residents and meets the needs of all residents.**

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Policy CR-1.1: Promote the acquisition of properties for the purpose of conversion to parks and open space areas to meet the needs of City residents.

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Policy CR-1.2: Encourage the development of quality commercial recreation facilities on both privately held and City-owned land under long-term lease or concession agreements.

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Policy CR-1.3: Acquire properties that are subject to flooding during heavy storms for the purpose of converting them to open space and park facilities, when feasible to do so.

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Policy CR-1.4: Convert a portion of the water tower property into a passive open space area.

A grassy portion of the water tower property, along Meadows Avenue and 8<sup>th</sup> Street, contains a fenced area that is in the process of being partially converted into a passive area for neighborhood residents to enjoy. Large trees also cover the site, making it very comfortable and inviting.




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Policy CR-1.5: Accept and actively seek out the donation of private residential properties for the development of strategically located pocket parks and similar open space.