
IV. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

N. RECREATION

INTRODUCTION

This section discusses the existing recreational resources in the vicinity of the project site and evaluates the potential impacts of the proposed project on recreational resources. This section evaluates impacts related to physical deterioration of recreational facilities and impacts from the need for construction or expansion of recreational facilities.

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The City's Parks Division will retain ownership, management, and maintenance responsibility for Bidwell Park, Creekside gateways, and City-owned preserves, while the Chico Area Recreation District ("CARD") will assume ownership and operation of the various other developed parks and recreation systems in the City, such as neighborhood and community parks. According to the General Plan, the total existing recreational facilities in the City includes 37 sites that are parks, natural areas, open space, recreational centers, or undeveloped park space, totaling 4,167 acres.

City of Chico

Table IV.N-1, below, includes the parks and recreational facilities for which the City of Chico maintains responsibility. This list does not include natural areas or undeveloped park space.

Table IV.N-1
City of Chico Parks and Recreational Facilities

Facility	Location	Size (acres)*	Type
Bidwell Park	Northeastern Chico	3,670 acres	Municipal
City Plaza	418 Main Street, Chico	1.90 acres	Plaza
Bidwell Bowl Amphitheater	400 West First Street, Chico	0.3 acres	Amphitheater
Depot Park	431 Cedar Street, Chico	1.5 acres	Neighborhood

Source: City of Chico website. Parks Division. Available at:
http://www.chico.ca.us/general_services_department/park_division/park_reservations.asp
California State University Chico. Caper Acres User Study: A Component of the Master Plan for Future Renovation.
http://www.chico.ca.us/document_library/documents/CaperAcresFinalReport4-18-14TOC.pdf
*Size (acres) estimated from Google Earth.

Chico Area Recreation District

Table IV.N-2, below, includes the parks and recreational facilities for which CARD maintains responsibility. This list does not include natural areas or undeveloped park space.

**Table IV.N-2
CARD Parks and Recreational Facilities**

Facility	Location	Size (acres)*	Type
Community Park	1900 Martin Luther King Jr. Pkwy, Chico	33.5 acres	Community
DeGarmo Park	199 Leora Court, Chico	18.0 acres	Community
Hooker Oak Park	1928 Manzanita Avenue, Chico	15.0 acres	Community
Wildwood Park	100 Wildwood Park Avenue, Chico	13.5 acres	Community
Oak Way Park	1510 W 8 th Avenue, Chico	11.5 acres	Neighborhood
Peterson Park	Denali Dr & Rollins Lake Dr, Chico	4.5 acres	Neighborhood
Rotary Park	199 W 16 th Street, Chico	0.4 acres	Neighborhood
Baroni Park	12 Baroni Drive, Chico	3.0 acres	Neighborhood
Hancock Park	Marigold Ave & Middletown Ave, Chico	4.0 acres	Neighborhood
Humboldt Ave. Skate Park	Humboldt Avenue, Chico	0.75 acres	Neighborhood
Pleasant Valley Recreation Center and Pool	2320 North Avenue, Chico	1.0 acre	Recreation Center & Pool
CARD Community Center	545 Vallombrosa Avenue, Chico	1.5 acres	Community Center
Dorothy F. Johnson Center	775 E. 16 th Street, Chico	3.0 acres	Community Center & Park
Lakeside Pavilion	2565 California Park Drive, Chico	1.0 acre	Community Center
Sycamore Field	South Park Drive, Chico	3.75 acres	Field(Bidwell Park)

Source: Chico Area Recreation District website. Available at: <http://www.chicorec.com/CARD-Parks--Facilities/index.html>
*Size (acres) estimated from Google Earth.

The only City Park located within ¼ mile of the project site is Baroni Park. The Mendocino National Forest Genetic Resource and Conservation Center is located on 209 acres in Chico for the purpose of plant breeding research. This Conservation Center is maintained by the United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service and is located within ¼ mile of the project site, directly south of Skyway.

REGULATORY SETTING

State Regulations

Quimby Act

The goal of the 1975 Quimby Act (California Government Code Section 66477) was to require developers to help mitigate the impacts of property improvements by requiring them to set aside land, donate conservation easements, or pay fees for park improvements. The Quimby Act gave authority for passage of land dedication ordinances only to cities and counties, thus requiring special districts to work with cities and/or counties to receive parkland dedication and/or in-lieu fees. The fees must be paid and land conveyed directly to the local public agencies that provide parks and recreation services community-wide. Revenues generated through the Quimby Act cannot be used for the operation and maintenance of park facilities (Westrup, 2002).

Originally, the Quimby Act was designed to ensure “adequate” open space acreage in jurisdictions adopting Quimby Act standards (e.g., 3 to 5 acres per 1,000 residents). In some California communities the acreage fee was very high where property values were high, and many local governments did not differentiate on their Quimby fees between infill projects and green belt developments. In 1982, the Quimby Act was substantially amended via AB 1600. The amendments further defined acceptable uses of or restrictions on Quimby funds, provided acreage/population standards and formulas for determining the exaction, and indicated that the exactions must be closely tied (nexus) to a project’s impacts as identified through traffic studies required by CEQA. In other words, AB 1600 requires agencies to clearly show a reasonable relationship between the public need for the recreation facility or parkland and the type of development project upon which the fee is imposed (Westrup, 2002). Cities or counties with a high ratio of parkland to inhabitants can set a standard of 5 acres per 1,000 residents for new development. Cities or counties with a lower ratio can only require the provision of up to 3 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents. The calculation of a city’s or county’s parkland-to-population ratio is based on a comparison of the population count of the last federal census to the amount of city- or county-owned parkland.

Local Regulations

CARD Park and Recreation Master Plan (PRMP)

The PRMP, adopted in 2008, provides a comprehensive evaluation of existing parks and recreational resources; identifies and describes resource types and facilities; identified current deficiencies and demands; and establishes park standards.

Goal 1 – Provide a wide range of recreation and leisure opportunities for all residents of the Chico Area Recreation and Park District.

Provide 1.5 acres of neighborhood parklands and 2.5 acres of community parklands for every 1,000 residents.

Future Needs

To accommodate the population buildout projects from the 2030 General Plan, there will be a need for one or two additional community parks, and seven to 14 additional neighborhood parks.

City of Chico General Plan

The proposed project is subject to relevant goals, policies, and actions listed in the City of Chico 2030 General Plan. Goals, policies, and actions related to recreational facilities are included below. For discussion of project consistency with additional applicable land use policies please refer to Section IV.J Land Use and Planning of this Draft EIR.

Park Standards

The 2030 General Plan directs use of CARD's PRMP parkland standards for future neighborhood and community parks. In addition, the City's existing standard of 2.5 acres of greenways per 1,000 residents is being maintained.

Policy PPFS-1.1 (Parks and Recreation Facilities) – Partner with CARD and local providers to provide parks and recreation facilities that offer recreation opportunities for the community.

Policy PPFS-2.1 (Use of Creeks and Greenways) – Utilize the City's creeks, greenways, and other open space for public access, habitat protection, and to enhance community connectivity.

Policy OS-2.1 (Planning and Managing Open Space) – Continue acquisition and management of open space to protect habitat and promote public access.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Thresholds of Significance

Based on the Appendix G of the State *CEQA Guidelines*, a project could have a significant impact on recreational resources if it would cause any of the following conditions to occur:

- a) 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 accelerate; or
- b) include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment.

Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Impact REC-1: Impacts to Existing Parks and Recreational Facilities

Based on the preferred parkland to population ratio established in the PRMP of 1.5 acres of neighborhood parks and 2.5 acres of community parks per every 1,000 residents, the anticipated 1,734 new residents¹ of the proposed project would generate a demand for 2.9 acres of new neighborhood parkland and 4.8 acres of community parkland. The proposed project includes the creation of 3.3 acres of neighborhood parkland to be provided for new residents, fulfilling level of service goals for neighborhood-serving parks.

With regard to community parks, the Chico General Plan acknowledges that the City is currently underserved in terms of meeting the standard contained in the PRMP, and notes that one or two additional community parks will be needed to accommodate the anticipated service area population by the year 2030. The General Plan identifies a large “Special Planning Area” located immediately east of the Stonegate project site and states that future planning for that Special Planning Area will include a community park. There have also been past discussions about developing a new community park (possibly including an aquatic center) on City-owned property located at the southwest corner of Humboldt Road and Notre Dame Boulevard, approximately one mile northwesterly of the Stonegate site. In either case, future development of a community park in the Southeast Chico area would be funded with development impact fees for parks that the City collects in conjunction with building permits for new residential units. Impact fees assessed for parks are based on estimates of future development of park sites, including the associated environmental review. The development impact fee program is currently (early 2018) being addressed by the Chico City Council and updated to ensure that adequate fees amounts are collected for these future community-serving projects.

¹ *United States Census Bureau. Average Persons Per Household for the City of Chico: 2.47 persons. Available at: <http://www.census.gov/quickfacts/table/PST045215/00>.
2.47 persons per unit x 702 units = 1,734 persons.*

Payment of development impact fees, including park fees, will be required in conjunction with building permits for new development within the Stonegate project. The park fees collected will subsequently be used for the development of new community parks.

Until such time that another community park is developed in the Southeast Chico area, community-level recreational opportunities exist at the Mendocino National Forest Genetic Resource and Conservation Center, a non-city park resource, and within Bidwell Park, a 4,167-acre regional park located within City limits.

Therefore, the proposed project would add to an existing need for development of a community park in the area, and would be required to pay its fair share as development occurs toward the anticipated costs of acquisition and development of the new park.

Since the project includes sufficient neighborhood parkland to serve its future residents and will pay its fair share toward development of additional community parkland, this impact is **less than significant**.

Impact REC-2: Impacts Resulting from Construction or Expansion of Parks and Recreational Facilities

The requirements of the Quimby Act are met through the incorporation of Bidwell Park. Utilizing the total 4,167 acreage of recreational facilities within the City and the population projections used in this analysis (see Section IV.L Population and Housing) of 92,464 people, there is currently 45 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents. This amount of parkland far exceeds the requirements of the Quimby Act. Therefore, no parkland would be required to be constructed or expanded for compliance with the Quimby Act.

As stated above the General Plan identifies the City as currently deficient with respect to community parks. The project would be required to pay development impact fees for park facilities to the city to fund the acquisition and development of a new community park. Therefore, this impact is **less than significant**.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

All project impacts related to recreation are ***less-than-significant***. No mitigation is required.