

# RIO DE LOS ANGELES STATE PARK

## General Plan and Final Environmental Impact Report Volume 1

SCH # 2004091126

Arnold Schwarzenegger  
Governor

Mike Chrisman  
Secretary for Resources

Ruth Coleman  
California State Parks

Department of Parks and Recreation  
PO Box 942896  
Sacramento, CA 94296-0001



May 2005

### **California State Parks Mission:**

*To provide for the health, inspiration and education of the people of California by helping to preserve the state's extraordinary biological diversity, protecting its most valued natural and cultural resources, and creating opportunities for high-quality outdoor recreation.*



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### S.1 INTRODUCTION

Rio de Los Angeles State Park is located in northeast Los Angeles, approximately 2.5 miles north of downtown. The park is located next to the former Union Pacific Rail Yard called the Taylor Yard complex, between the Elysian Park Hills on the southwest and the Repetto Hills to the northeast. On September, 11 1996 southern Pacific transportation Company merged with Union Pacific Railroad, who assumed ownership of the entire Taylor Yard Complex. It is physically bounded to the north by State Route 2 (SR 2), on the east by San Fernando Road, on the south by Interstate 5 (I-5), and on the west by the Los Angeles River. The Taylor Yard complex and park site is one of the largest undeveloped areas along the Los Angeles River.

The park and vicinity are part of the communities of Northeast Los Angeles. The neighborhoods surrounding the park include Cypress Park, Glassell Park, Elysian Valley, Atwater Village and Mount Washington.

The 247-acre Taylor Yard rail yard complex was historically divided into ten parcels, some of which were further subdivided for sale purposes, and two of which – Parcels D and G-1 – were purchased by the California State Parks for Rio de Los Angeles State Park. The 40-acre Parcel D, acquired in 2001, is located between an active rail line and San Fernando Road; and the 17-acre Parcel G-1, acquired in 2003, is juxtaposed between the river and an industrial development. The two parcels are not physically connected, and pedestrian access between the sites is currently not provided due to the active railway line along the western boundary of Parcel D and private property between the railroad and Parcel G-1. The lone remaining parcel still serving as an active component to the Union Pacific Railroad's operation is designated as Parcel G-2, consisting of approximately 42 acres, and abuts the Los Angeles River.

The park sits within an intensely urbanized setting that is characterized by a mix of land uses, from high-density residential districts to industrial factories and manufacturing. Several parcels at the complex have been developed with industrial uses, including a Federal Express (FedEx) shipping facility, Metrolink maintenance yard, business parks, and several warehouses. The Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) plans to construct a high school on Parcel F-1.

The potential to restore the natural resources of 57 acres on the Los Angeles River in the Glendale Narrows was one of the key considerations which prompted California State Parks to purchase the land at the Taylor Yard rail yard complex. The land is also one of the largest undeveloped contiguous parcels along the Los Angeles River. Public ownership will protect and allow the land

to reestablish and attract avian wildlife from throughout the region by providing protective cover, water, and forage for a variety of species, such as red-winged blackbird, northern rough-winged swallow, and mallard as they travel up and down the river valley within the Pacific Flyway. California State Parks was also committed to increasing wildlife habitat, open space, flood storage, and recreational space in one of the nation's most park-deficient urban regions – metropolitan Los Angeles. The area surrounding the park provides less than 1.3 acres of public open space per 1,000 people, well below the City of Los Angeles (City) objective to provide 4 acres per 1,000 people (City of Los Angeles 2001b), and significantly below the 6.25 to 10.5 acres per 1,000 people recommended by the National Recreation and Park Association (Wolch, Wilson, and Fehrenbach 2001). The park is viewed by many as key to the future Los Angeles River Greenway, a series of riverfront parks and trails extending from the San Fernando Valley to the Pacific Ocean along the river corridor. The park sits atop a unique feature along the Los Angeles River, where in spite of channelization, soft bottom riparian characteristics prevail in a very urban area. Native species and migratory birds Los Angeles basin thrive and rely on the valuable natural resources that occur in this section of the regional Los Angeles River natural open space network.

The Department has prepared this General Plan and Environmental Impact Report (EIR) to serve as a guide for future development, parkland acquisition, and connections to trails, parks, and other public facilities on the 20 acres of Parcel D being developed by the State and the 17-acre Parcel G-1. The General Plan is a conceptual/programmatic blueprint that will set forth a vision and guide to implement natural, recreational, and cultural activities for the surrounding communities and the citizens of California. The City, with the Department, has prepared its own CEQA and NEPA documentation to analyze the potential environmental impacts on the City-leased 20-acre portion of Parcel D, which is not a part of this General Plan.

## **S.2 THE GENERAL PLAN**

### **S.2.1 THE GENERAL PLAN PROCESS**

Existing conditions and preliminary issues analysis were presented at a public workshop held in October 2004 to inform the public about the general planning process and to explore different visions for the park's future. Two alternatives were developed for the General Plan, that were presented to the public and resource agencies in November 2004 for their review and feedback.

The Preferred Alternative reflects statewide interests, agencies' relevant rules and regulations, the park's purpose and vision, and environmental constraints and resources. Input from the local community and resource agencies were also important considerations during the alternative selection process. The Preferred Alternative has been refined into the goals and guidelines presented in this Final General Plan.

### **S.2.1 INTRODUCTION TO THE GENERAL PLAN**

To ensure a correct understanding of, and response to, those factors affecting the future of Rio de Los Angeles State Park, an iterative process of evaluation and analysis was completed to underpin the requirements of the General Plan. To establish the baseline conditions upon which the Plan was to be established, a thorough inventory of the existing condition of the natural and physical features of the park was undertaken. This was followed by an evaluation of pertinent issues affecting the park's development. The issues were compiled based on input from the public, analysis of the physical conditions and location constraints, and knowledge of the site's industrial past and setting. The General Plan is designed to convert the existing parcels to useable park space, as desired by the public.

### **S.2.2 INVENTORY OF EXISTING CONDITIONS**

A thorough analysis of existing conditions was undertaken as a part of the general planning process (Chapter 2). The Department, the City, and other interested agencies, along with individuals and nonprofit groups, provided input regarding the existing nature of the park parcels. Additional research and fieldwork was undertaken to determine the baseline conditions for physical and social parameters, such biological species, cultural significance, geology, demographics, and hazardous materials. Where feasible, this information was compiled spatially through a geographic information system (GIS), which was used to help make informed decisions regarding environmental constraints to development.

### **S.2.3 SURVEY OF KEY ISSUES**

Chapter 3 contains a survey of the key issues anticipated to affect the park's development. These issues include connectivity between the disjunctive park parcels, and the need to address the requirements of a diverse visitor base that spans language and age groups, differing accessibility levels, and various interests. Easy local and regional access to the park is critical to establishing the new park as a popular destination. The park enjoys a significant potential to enhance and celebrate the natural resources and diverse cultural heritage of the area, but needs to achieve this while balancing the effects of conservation and adjacent recreation activities. Opportunities for education and interpretive programs abound, but will need to be carefully developed and managed in an effective manner. Likewise, as a new park, operational facilities will be needed and issues related to public safety will need to be addressed. The park represents an excellent opportunity to provide critically-needed open space, but the diversity of stakeholder expectations regarding the nature of uses of park space will need to be carefully managed to ensure maximum utility of the site. Fiscal challenges associated with ongoing park operations and maintenance, as well as future acquisitions, are also discussed in this chapter.

## **S.2.4 DEVELOPMENT OF THE PARK PLAN**

Having established the baseline conditions and key issues affecting the park, Chapter 4 discusses the principles on which the future park will address these issues through the General Plan. The General Plan introduces principles for the park ranging from the overarching concept for the design and development of the park to the park's ongoing operation.

This chapter also introduces a set of elements which will govern the uses and facilities permitted in different areas of the park. Under the preferred alternative, these elements allow Transitional Open Space on Parcel D, a designation designed to buffer the active uses on the City's 20-acre portion of the Parcel from the Naturalized Open Space which encompasses the majority of Parcel D. Parcel G-1 would be zoned entirely as Naturalized Open Space. A Railroad Landscape Buffer would separate each parcel from the adjacent railroad uses, while the Interpretive Element and Multi-Use Trail Element allow flexibility for interpretive and trail features, respectively, as the park is developed. Precise facility and trail locations would be determined when each is evaluated at a project level. Implementation of any proposed project or facility development would also trigger managerial consideration of funding sources for the project and the corresponding personnel and equipment that may be needed.

The goals and guidelines section directly addresses the issues raised in Chapter 3, by discussing appropriate methods to enact the opportunities available at the park. These include the enhancement of natural resources to attract wildlife back to the Los Angeles River, use of environmental education and interpretation to inform citizens of the park's natural and cultural heritage, enhancement of aesthetic values, capture of recreational opportunities, and protection of natural and cultural resources. Additional issues of parcel connectivity, sustainable design, and management of visitor capacity to ensure the protection of park values are also addressed.

In order for the park to benefit the greatest number of people, partnerships with federal, state and local non-profit agencies will be needed. A number of such organizations have expressed a strong desire to work with the California State Parks, and, already having a local presence, have credibility within the community and established protocol for operations in the area. Public input and participation on the operation of the park is critical to its ability to meet the needs of park users. Furthermore, connectivity of the park with other local areas of open space is essential to the success of efforts to restore the Los Angeles River. This includes physical, conceptual, and organizational links with California State Parks' other new Los Angeles park, the nearby Los Angeles State Historic Park.

A number of additional plans and further work are needed to better understand and direct future management of the park. It is recommended that plans for environmental education/interpretation, natural resource preservation and re-vegetation, and invasive species plans be developed.

## **S.2.5 ANALYSIS OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS**

Environmental review of the General Plan, pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), is required for all Department actions. Consequently, this General Plan includes an Environmental Impact Report (Chapter 5), which analyzes the proposed Plan and evaluates its anticipated impacts, providing mitigation measures where needed. The CEQA process also provides opportunities for public review and comment on the *Preliminary General Plan/Draft EIR*.

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**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<u>Section</u>	<u>Page</u>
<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....</b>	<b>i</b>
<b>S.1 Introduction.....</b>	<b>i</b>
<b>S.2 The General Plan .....</b>	<b>ii</b>
S.2.1 The General Plan Process .....	ii
S.2.1 Introduction to The General Plan.....	iii
S.2.2 Inventory of Existing Conditions.....	iii
S.2.3 Survey of Key Issues .....	iii
S.2.4 Development of the Park Plan .....	iv
S.2.5 Analysis of Environmental Impacts.....	v
<b>SENSE OF PLACE .....</b>	<b>xiii</b>
<b>CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>1-1</b>
<b>1.1 Introduction.....</b>	<b>1-1</b>
1.1.1 Location.....	1-1
1.1.2 Purpose Acquired.....	1-2
1.1.3 History of the Park Site.....	1-8
1.1.4 Unit Classification .....	1-13
<b>1.2 Purpose of General Plans .....</b>	<b>1-14</b>
<b>CHAPTER 2 EXISTING CONDITIONS.....</b>	<b>2-1</b>
<b>2.1 Park Conditions and Resources.....</b>	<b>2-1</b>
2.1.1 Existing Land Uses .....	2-1
2.1.2 Regional Context .....	2-5
2.1.3 Significant Resource Values/Constraints.....	2-6
2.1.4 Utilities .....	2-40
<b>2.2 Planning Influences.....</b>	<b>2-42</b>
2.2.1 Systemwide Planning.....	2-42
2.2.2 Regional Planning Influences .....	2-43
2.2.3 Demographic Profile.....	2-46
2.2.4 Park Interest Groups .....	2-49
2.2.5 Expected Park Visitors .....	2-50
2.2.6 Public Concerns and Comments .....	2-50
<b>CHAPTER 3 ISSUES AND ANALYSIS .....</b>	<b>3-1</b>
<b>3.1 Park Connectivity .....</b>	<b>3-1</b>
3.1.1 Regional Connectivity of Public Open Space.....	3-1
3.1.2 Park Unit Connectivity & Cohesiveness.....	3-2
<b>3.2 Visitor Needs.....</b>	<b>3-3</b>
<b>3.3 Access and Transportation.....</b>	<b>3-3</b>
<b>3.4 Natural Resources .....</b>	<b>3-5</b>

<b>3.5</b>	<b>Cultural Diversity .....</b>	<b>3-6</b>
3.5.1	Diversity Over Time .....	3-6
3.5.2	Local Ethnic Diversity .....	3-7
<b>3.6</b>	<b>Recreation Activities and Open Space .....</b>	<b>3-7</b>
3.6.1	Protection of Open Space .....	3-7
3.6.2	Diversity of Recreation Opportunities .....	3-8
3.6.3	Local and Statewide Interests .....	3-8
<b>3.7</b>	<b>Education and Interpretive Programs and Facilities.....</b>	<b>3-9</b>
3.7.1	Establishing a River Community in an Urban Environment.....	3-9
<b>3.8</b>	<b>Operational Facilities and Public Safety .....</b>	<b>3-9</b>
3.8.1	Park Staff .....	3-9
3.8.2	Crime, Safety, and Design .....	3-10
3.8.3	Hazards Exposure .....	3-12
<b>3.9</b>	<b>Multiple Plans, Studies, Expectations, and Perceptions .....</b>	<b>3-12</b>
<b>3.10</b>	<b>Fiscal Challenges.....</b>	<b>3-12</b>
<b>CHAPTER 4 PARK PLAN.....</b>		<b>4-1</b>
<b>4.1</b>	<b>Unit Purpose and Vision.....</b>	<b>4-1</b>
4.1.1	Declaration of Purpose.....	4-1
4.1.2	Vision Statement.....	4-1
<b>4.2</b>	<b>Park Concept Principles.....</b>	<b>4-2</b>
4.2.1	Principle: Natural Resources Restoration and Stewardship .....	4-2
4.2.2	Principle: Environmental Education/Interpretation .....	4-2
4.2.3	Principle: Cohesive visitor experience.....	4-3
4.2.4	Principle: Connectivity / Access .....	4-3
4.2.5	Principle: Recreation Opportunities.....	4-3
4.2.6	Principle: Sustainable Design, Construction and Maintenance .....	4-3
<b>4.3</b>	<b>Park Development Concept.....</b>	<b>4-4</b>
4.3.1	Preferred Park Concept.....	4-4
4.3.2	Naturalized Open Space Element .....	4-5
4.3.3	Transitional Open Space Element.....	4-6
4.3.4	Interpretive element .....	4-9
4.3.5	Multi-Use Trail Element.....	4-10
4.3.6	Railroad Buffer Element.....	4-10
<b>4.4</b>	<b>Park Goals and Guidelines.....</b>	<b>4-11</b>
4.4.1	Introduction to Goals and Guidelines .....	4-11
4.4.2	Natural Resources .....	4-11
4.4.3	Education Interpretation .....	4-19
4.4.4	Cohesiveness / Connectivity .....	4-24
4.4.5	Recreation Opportunities .....	4-26
4.4.6	Sustainable Design, Construction, and Maintenance.....	4-27
4.4.7	Aesthetic Resources.....	4-28
4.4.8	Cultural Resources.....	4-31
4.4.9	Managing Visitor Capacity .....	4-32
4.4.10	Park Operations .....	4-35
4.4.11	Access and Transportation.....	4-46
<b>4.5</b>	<b>Partnerships, Interagency Collaboration and Community Involvement.....</b>	<b>4-47</b>
4.5.1	Partnerships and Outreach .....	4-47
4.5.2	Los Angeles State Historic Park Site .....	4-49
4.5.3	Acquisitions .....	4-49

4.6	<b>Future Studies .....</b>	<b>4-50</b>
<b>CHAPTER 5 ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS .....</b>		<b>5-1</b>
5.1	<b>Introduction to the Environmental Analysis .....</b>	<b>5-1</b>
5.1.1	Purpose of the EIR.....	5-1
5.1.2	Focus of the EIR .....	5-1
5.1.3	Subsequent Environmental Review Process .....	5-2
5.1.4	Contents of the EIR .....	5-2
5.1.5	Use of this General Plan and EIR .....	5-3
5.2	<b>EIR Summary.....</b>	<b>5-4</b>
5.2.1	Summary of Impacts and Mitigation .....	5-4
5.2.2	Summary of Alternatives Considered.....	5-5
5.2.3	Areas of Known Controversy .....	5-5
5.2.4	Issues to be Resolved.....	5-7
5.3	<b>Project Description .....</b>	<b>5-8</b>
5.4	<b>Environmental Setting.....</b>	<b>5-9</b>
5.5	<b>Environmental Effects Eliminated From Further Analysis .....</b>	<b>5-9</b>
5.5.1	Agricultural Resources .....	5-9
5.5.2	Energy and Mineral Resources .....	5-9
5.5.3	Land Use and Planning .....	5-10
5.5.4	Population, Employment, and Housing .....	5-10
5.5.5	Recreation .....	5-10
5.5.6	Aesthetics.....	5-10
5.6	<b>Environmental Impacts Evaluated in Detail.....</b>	<b>5-11</b>
5.6.1	Air Quality .....	5-11
5.6.2	Biological Resources .....	5-13
5.6.3	Cultural Resources.....	5-14
5.6.4	Geology and Soils.....	5-16
5.6.5	Hazards and Hazardous Materials .....	5-17
5.6.6	Hydrology and Water Quality.....	5-21
5.6.7	Noise.....	5-24
5.6.8	Transportation and Circulation .....	5-27
5.6.9	Public Services, Utilities, and Service Systems .....	5-29
5.7	<b>Other CEQA Considerations .....</b>	<b>5-31</b>
5.7.1	Unavoidable Significant Effects on the Environment.....	5-31
5.7.2	Significant Irreversible Environmental Effects.....	5-31
5.7.3	Growth Inducing Impacts .....	5-32
5.7.4	Cumulative Impacts .....	5-32
5.8	<b>Alternatives to the Proposed Project.....</b>	<b>5-33</b>
5.8.1	Factors in the Selection of Alternatives .....	5-33
5.8.2	Alternatives Eliminated from Further Evaluation.....	5-34
5.8.3	Alternatives Carried Forward for Detailed Evaluation .....	5-35
5.8.4	Environmentally Superior Alternative.....	5-37
5.9	<b>Public Coordination.....</b>	<b>5-37</b>
<b>CHAPTER 6 MAPS &amp; FIGURES SUMMARY .....</b>		<b>6-1</b>
<b>CHAPTER 7 REPORT CONTRIBUTORS.....</b>		<b>7-1</b>

**CHAPTER 8 REFERENCES ..... 8-1**

**CHAPTER 9 APPENDICES ..... 9-1**

**9.1 Acronyms ..... 9-1**

**9.2 Glossary of technical terms ..... 9-3**

**9.3 Existing Relevant Policies, Plans, and Ordinances ..... 9-4**

        Federal Regulatory Requirements ..... 9-4

        State Regulatory Requirements ..... 9-5

**9.4 Planning Influences ..... 9-5**

        System-Wide Planning Influences ..... 9-6

        Regional Planning Influences ..... 9-7

## FIGURES

<b><u>Figure</u></b>	<b><u>Page</u></b>
1 Regional Location Map .....	1-3
2 Regional Planning Influences .....	1-5
3 Vicinity Map .....	1-7
4 Historic Timeline.....	1-9
5 Interim Public Use Plan .....	1-17
6 Land Use Zoning Context .....	2-3
7 Access and Transportation Context.....	2-7
8 Parks in the Vicinity of Rio de Los Angeles State Park.....	2-11
9 Existing Conditions Plan.....	2-35
10 Existing Conditions Site Photos .....	2-37
11 Preferred Concept Alternative Plan.....	4-7

## TABLES

<b><u>Table</u></b>	<b><u>Page</u></b>
1 Parks and Recreation Areas near the Rio de Los Angeles State Park.....	2-9
2 Bus Routes in the Project Site Vicinity .....	2-39
3 Population in Vicinity of Park Unit as Compared to Los Angeles County.....	2-48
4 Percent (%) Ethnicity Distribution in Vicinity of Park Unit as Compared to Los Angeles County.....	2-48
5 Poverty Levels in Vicinity of Park Unit as Compared to Los Angeles County .....	2-49
6 SCAQMD Air Quality Impact Significance Thresholds .....	5-11
7 Typical Commercial Construction Noise Levels by Phase .....	5-25
8 Typical Commercial Construction Noise Levels by Equipment Type.....	5-26

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## SENSE OF PLACE

*"...through a pass between low hills, we entered a very spacious valley, well grown with cottonwoods and alders, among which ran a beautiful river from the north-northwest."*

... thus the beauty of the Los Angeles River was first captured in writing by Father Juan Crespi, a Spanish priest traveling with the 1769 Portolá expedition through Southern California. Written from the vantage point of the expedition's camp near Elysian Park, Crespi may have even been looking upstream at the future site of Rio de Los Angeles State Park when describing the bucolic setting of this meandering river.

The intervening history between this pastoral setting and its present park status is diverse and varied, and continues to be reflected within the local community and at the park itself. From about 1,500 years ago, the Tongva people thrived in the mild climate of Southern California, establishing villages and enjoying the rich natural resources available to them. The favorable reports resulting from European exploration of the area, and the subsequent settlement and growth of Los Angeles, are similar testimony to the attractive prospect of the region. Agricultural settlement, industry, and commerce rapidly transformed Los Angeles from a small pueblo to a huge metropolis of worldwide renown. Along with this prosperous human settlement comes a tale of environmental deterioration marked by rapid industrialization and development, radically transforming the landscape. A wild river that once flowed freely through the region across an expansive floodplain has been constricted from encroachment on adjacent urban lands by concrete-lined flood control channels. Its banks and the floodplain, once habitat for numerous natural species, have been lined with a succession of concrete, buildings, and roads. Industrial uses at the park have left their legacy in the form of soil and groundwater contamination, while locally, the rapid urban growth for which Los Angeles is famous has been offset by a severe lack of open space.

Such a bleak prospect is happily contrasted with present and future hopes. In the vicinity of the park, the River is soft-bottomed – not lined by concrete – and thus one of the few stretches of the river channel able to support abundant wildlife. Furthermore, soil contamination resulting from industrial processes has been remediated at the park parcels, so that future natural processes can be re-introduced and the restoration process continued. Such changes instill hope for the re-establishment of natural processes within the emerging Los Angeles River greenway, and establish Rio de Los Angeles State Park as an integral part of the regional open space network. The original inhabitants of this area – sycamore, alder, and cottonwood trees, migratory ducks and shore birds, and migrating steelhead trout – may once again call this location home.

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The park was born from a community-driven desire to prevent the expansion of industrial facilities in this already-densely urbanized and park-poor community. That same community has assisted in the park's planning from inception through to the present, and consequently the park will stand for generations as a tribute to those who had the foresight and determination to make this park a reality. Rio de Los Angeles State Park, along with the nearby Los Angeles State Historic Park, is a unique opportunity for California State Parks to serve an ethnically diverse population in the vicinity of its own neighborhood, providing a unique, State Parks experience to individuals residing and working in the heart of urban Los Angeles.

Abandoning the negative connotations of an industrial past, Rio de Los Angeles State Park represents a new era in the harmonious juxtaposition of nature and humanity. The park offers refuge for all forms of life, teeming with visitors and attracting wildlife that once fled the area during its industrial heyday. Rio de Los Angeles State Park is an important piece in the emerging network of green space along the Los Angeles River, reclaimed from industrial use and remediated for the future of a living and healthy regional open space system.

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

Nestled within the densely populated area of Northeast Los Angeles, the Rio de Los Angeles State Park is comprised of two parcels, referred to as Parcel D and Parcel G-1, acquired by California State Parks in 2001 and 2003, respectively. Formerly part of a 247-acre closed freight switching facility owned by the Union Pacific Railroad Company (UPRC), these and several other parcels in the facility were vacant for two decades once rail yard functions shifted offsite. The parcels are some of the last remaining undeveloped acreage along the channelized Los Angeles River (Figure 1). Parcel G-1 is adjacent to an area of the Los Angeles River which uniquely retains the soft-bottom character of a natural river, a "river community" with an array of aquatic life. For many, this glimpse of nature in one of the most densely populated areas of Los Angeles is inspirational and a pleasant respite from the traffic and city noises. The Los Angeles River has become a focal point for open space acquisition by many groups within the densely urbanized neighborhoods of northeast Los Angeles. Their ultimate vision lies in the restoration of the 52-mile river into its former meandering grandeur by the creation of a greenway from the San Gabriel Mountains to the Pacific Ocean. Parklands, open space, bikeways, and recreational opportunities constitute important investments in the ecological, social, and economic prosperity and longevity of the vision. The surrounding communities are integral in the future stewardship of the parklands and the connection to the interrelationship of the natural river environment to the complex urban environment.

Determined to address the imbalances in open space provision, communities banded together to resist a proposed industrial complex and instead offered a vision for the coexistence of habitat restoration and sports fields. This led to the development of a unique partnership between the California State Parks (Department), and the City of Los Angeles, Department of Recreation and Parks (RAP). Through this partnership, the State will be able to provide a combination of recreational opportunities not otherwise legal within California State Parks.

The land is located near the Los Angeles River, a relaxing, natural setting and a place of respite from the pace and density of urban life. For the surrounding park-deprived communities, the Park represents one of the most significant pieces of urban green space developed in the past decade. Restoration of the riparian and upland vegetation ecosystems that once flourished here will entice native wildlife, including birds, mammals, and amphibians to return to the site. The park's development will also entice local residents who have fought hard for years to ensure the transformation of a once derelict, contaminated, industrial wasteland into a park where visitors can experience the river community and environs.

### **1.1.1 LOCATION**

Rio de Los Angeles State Park is located approximately 2.5 miles north of downtown Los Angeles. This portion of the Los Angeles River and the City of Los Angeles are located in what is referred to as the “Narrows” – the area between the San Fernando Valley and the Los Angeles Basin. The Taylor Yard area (Taylor Yard complex) is located between the Elysian Park Hills on the southwest and the Repetto Hills to the northeast. It is physically bounded to the north by State Route 2 (SR 2), on the east by San Fernando Road, on the south by Interstate 5 (I-5), and on the west by the Los Angeles River. Situated within a portion of a former Southern Pacific rail yard, the project site is part of the largest undeveloped area along the Los Angeles River.

The Park and vicinity are part of the communities of Northeast Los Angeles. The neighborhoods surrounding the Park include Cypress Park, Glassell Park, Elysian Valley, Lincoln Heights, Atwater Village and Mount Washington (see Figure 2).

Southern Pacific Railroad divided their 247-acre site (formerly known as Taylor Yard) into ten parcels: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, and J for sale in the late 1980s. Parcel G was further subdivided into two parcels, G-1 and G-2. The Park consists of two parcels on the eastern bank of the Los Angeles River: the 40-acre Parcel D, acquired in 2001 and located between an active rail line and San Fernando Road; and the 17-acre Parcel G-1, acquired in 2003, juxtaposed between the river and an industrial development (Figure 3). The two parcels are not physically connected, and pedestrian access between the sites is currently not provided due to the active railway line along the western boundary of Parcel D and private property between the railroad and Parcel G-1.

Rio de Los Angeles State Park sits within an intensely urbanized setting that is characterized by a mix of land uses, from high-density residential districts to industrial factories and manufacturing. Several parcels at the complex have been developed with industrial uses, including a Federal Express (FedEx) shipping facility, Metrolink maintenance yard, business parks, and several warehouses. The Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) plans to construct a high school on Parcel F-1 (see Figure 3).

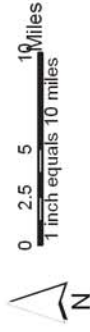
### **1.1.2 PURPOSE ACQUIRED**

The Department purchased two parcels that once were a part of the Southern Pacific Railroad Taylor Yard complex to restore the natural resources of 57 acres on the Los Angeles River in the Glendale Narrows and to provide much needed parkland in one of the nation’s most park-deficient urban regions – metropolitan Los Angeles. The area surrounding Rio de Los Angeles State Park provides less than 1.3 acres of public open space per 1,000 people, well below the City of Los Angeles (City)

# RIO DE LOS ANGELES STATE PARK

FIGURE 1  
REGIONAL LOCATION MAP

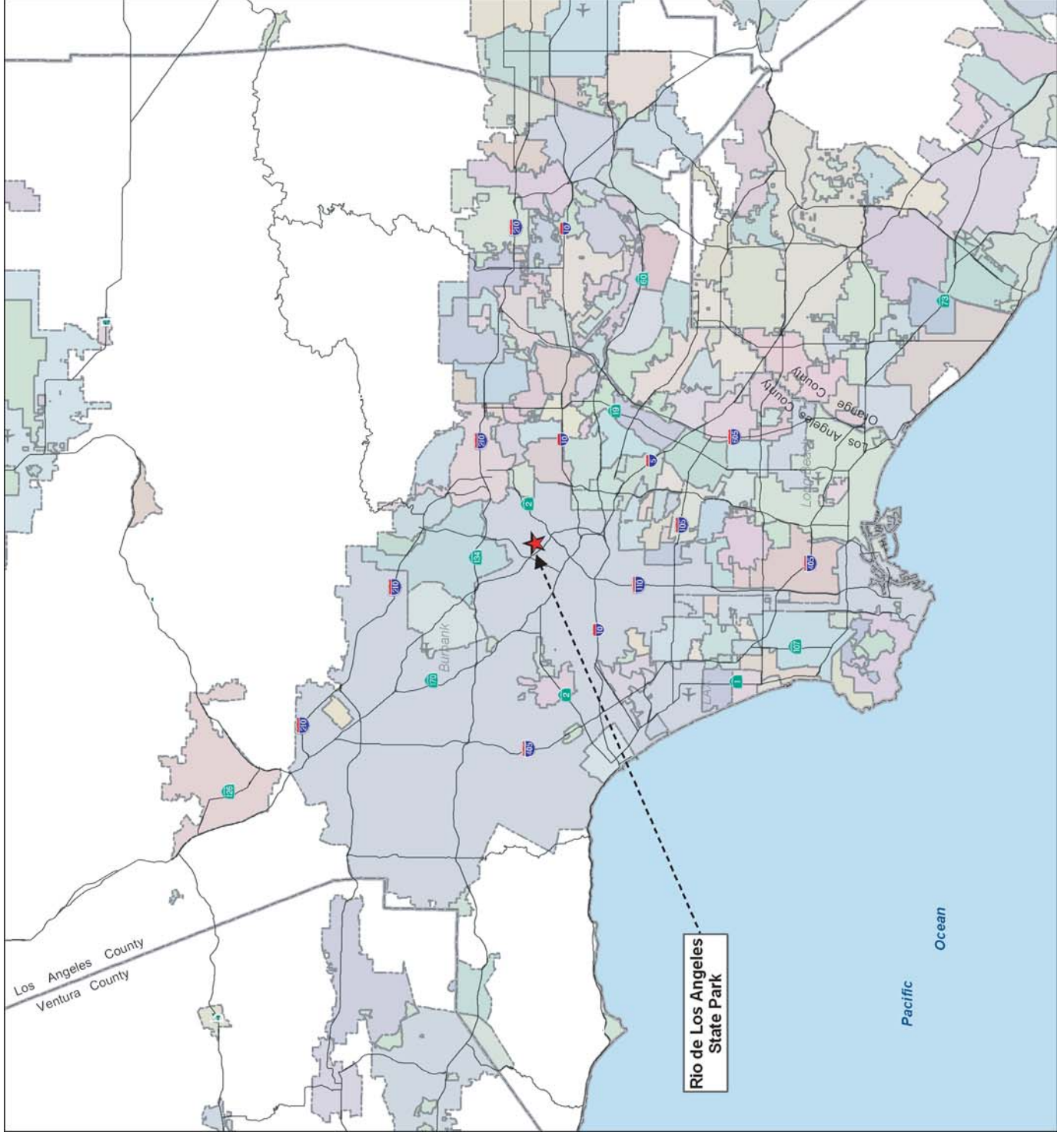
- Airports
- Major Roads
- City Boundary
- County Boundary



Data sourced from California Spatial Information Library.



EDAW  
February 24, 2005





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# RIO DE LOS ANGELES STATE PARK

FIGURE 2  
REGIONAL PLANNING  
INFLUENCES

Source Data: Map features digitized by EDAW, Inc., ESA, and North East Trees. Aerial base from Eagle Aerial; flown October 7, 2002.

**EDAW**  
March 10, 2005






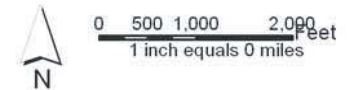


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# RIO DE LOS ANGELES STATE PARK

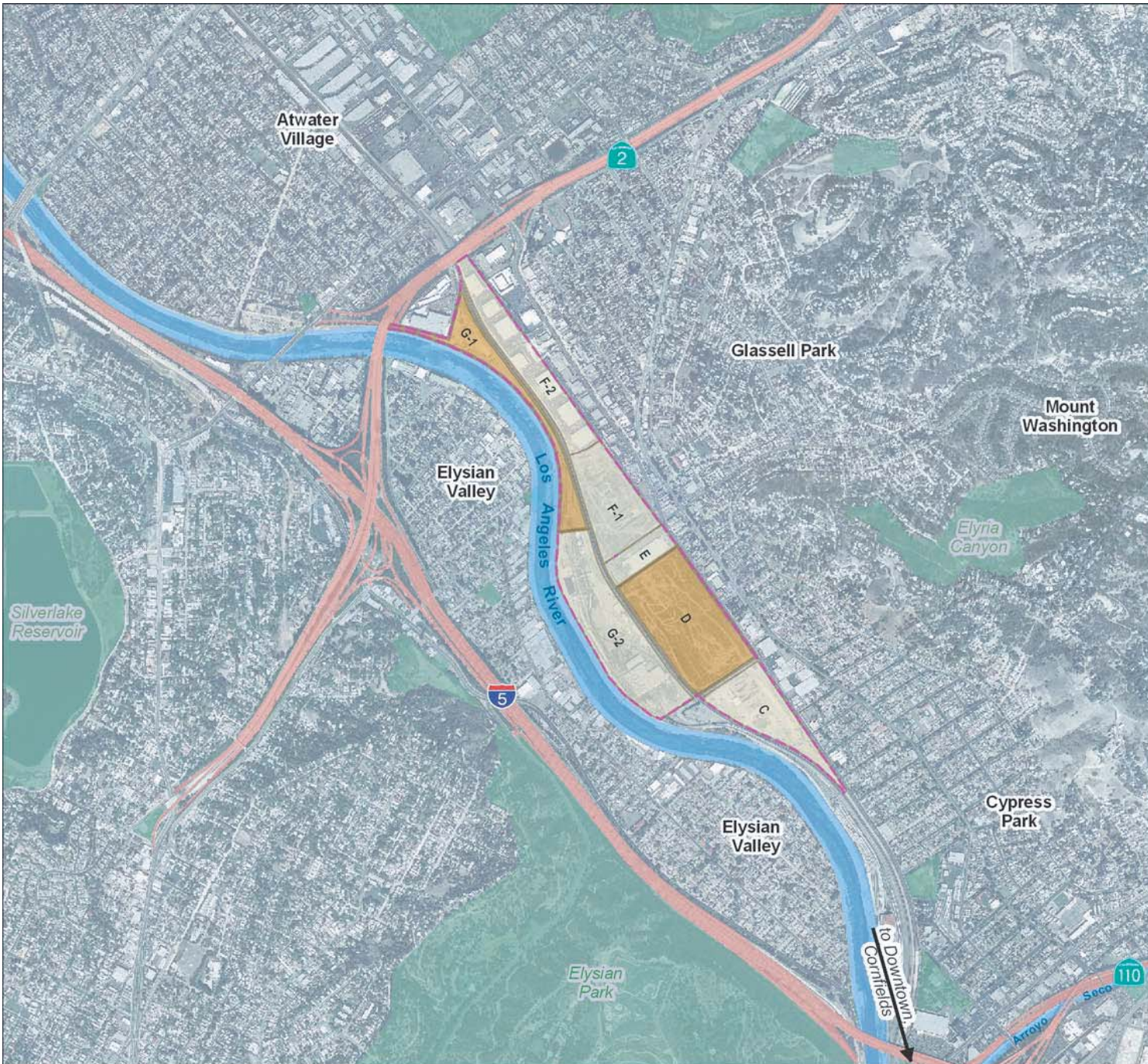
FIGURE 3  
VICINITY MAP

-  Taylor Yard Complex
-  State-owned Parcels
-  Other Parcels
-  River
-  Open Space
-  Freeway



Source Data: Map features digitized by EDAW, Inc., ESA, and North East Trees. Aerial base from Eagle Aerial; flown October 7, 2002.

**EDAW**  
March 10, 2005



objective to provide 4 acres per 1,000 people (City of Los Angeles 2001b), and significantly below the 6.25 to 10.5 acres per 1,000 people recommended by the National Recreation and Park Association (Wolch, Wilson, and Fehrenbach 2001). The Park is viewed by many as key to the future Los Angeles River Greenway, a series of riverfront parks and trails extending from the San Fernando Valley to the Pacific Ocean along the river corridor.

### **1.1.3 HISTORY OF THE PARK SITE**

#### **1.1.3.1 Historical Overview**

The history of the area surrounding the Park is as diverse as its current surroundings. The area has witnessed flourishing Native American communities, early Spanish expeditions, farming, stagecoach lines, railroad operations, and modern industrial and residential development. As with much of the region, the history of the site is intrinsically connected to the nearby Los Angeles River, which once flowed freely through the Glendale Narrows and across the Los Angeles Basin. A timeline describing the history of the Rio de Los Angeles State Park complex is shown in Figure 4 and described below.

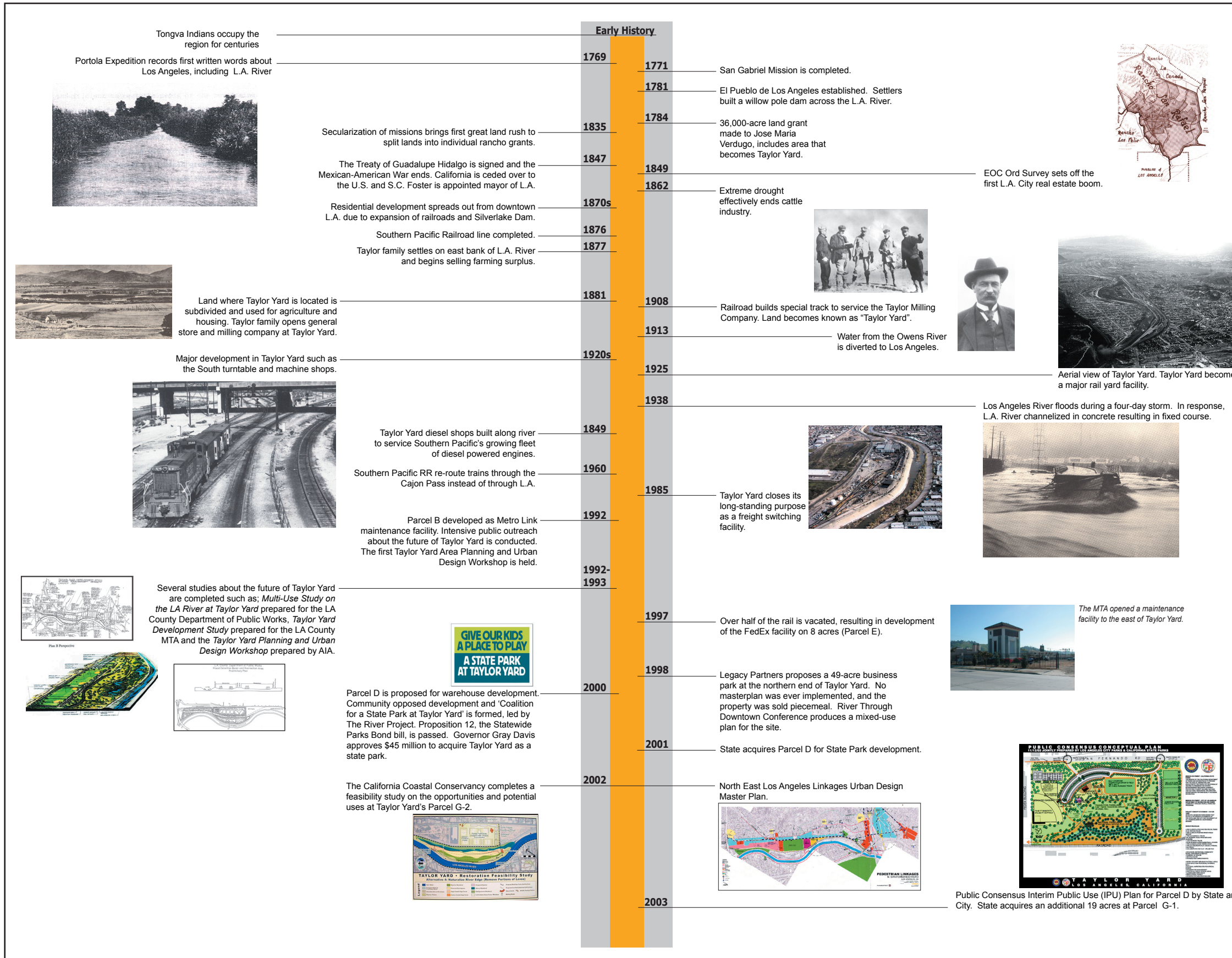
Native American Indians once occupied the river valley and hillsides surrounding the present-day Taylor Yard complex. Known as the Tongva, they lived in the area for centuries and flourished along the banks of the river. In 1796, the Portolá expedition passed through the region and provided the first known written description of the Los Angeles River (Gumprecht 2001). Following the expedition, the Spanish established small missions and communities in the region until colonial Spain became the Republic of Mexico. From 1821 to 1848, the Mexican government secularized missions and set up large ranches while ruling California, but in 1848, California became part of the United States with the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo and the end of the Mexican War.

The population of Los Angeles grew exponentially in the years following California statehood. Small developments formed in the communities surrounding the Park site, but few houses were built in the vicinity until the 1920s, when the urban sprawl, characteristic of the present-day city of Los Angeles, commenced. In the 1920s and 1930s, industrial development occurred at the site. During this period, several destructive floods also occurred along the Los Angeles River, which resulted in a series of flood control measures to protect the developing region. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACOE) spearheaded this effort and, in 1938, began to channelize the Los Angeles River. The channelized river provided flood protection, irrigation conveyance, and groundwater storage, permitting development to expand without the threat of flood damage, and thus facilitating the urbanization of the Los Angeles Basin. Completion of the channelized river adjacent to the Rio de Los Angeles State Park complex occurred during the 1950s, and by 1960, 51 miles of the river were channelized. Only three portions of the river remain unpaved today: through the Sepulveda Flood Control Basin in the San Fernando Valley, through Elysian Valley near Griffith Park, and at



# RIO DE LOS ANGELES STATE PARK

## FIGURE 4 HISTORICAL TIMELINE



Source Data: Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area (SMMNRA), 2002; National Elevation Dataset (NED) Shaded Relief Imagery from United States Geological Survey (USGS), 2003.



March 10, 2005





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the estuary in Long Beach where the Los Angeles River flows into the Pacific Ocean (LACDPW 2002).

While the river was undergoing channelization, urbanization and industrialization rapidly engulfed the surrounding area. Shortly after World War I, the Southern Pacific Railroad outgrew its Midway Yard facility and moved to what is now the Rio de Los Angeles State Park site. Throughout the 1920s and 1930s, the property was a rail yard and an industrial site, used primarily as a freight-switching facility, and storage space and maintenance and repair facility for rail cars and locomotive engines. In addition, several utility shops were on the property, which provided electrical, plumbing, and mechanical support services (SCC 2002). Operations at the rail yard complex began to cease in the 1960s and 1970s, when rail facilities opened elsewhere. By 1985, use of the complex as a freight-switching facility ceased; however, the site continued to be used for storage and maintenance.

### 1.1.3.2 Impetus for a Park

As questions over the fate of the Taylor Yard rail yard complex arose in the early 1990s, the community voiced strong sentiment for its conversion to public open space. Numerous public workshops were held and studies completed to determine potential uses. In 1992, the first Taylor Yard Area Planning and Urban Design Workshop, sponsored by the American Institute of Architects Los Angeles Chapter, was held in response to requests from local government officials and environmental groups to address feasible land use concepts. The following year, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) sponsored a *Taylor Yard Transit Development Study* to look at developing their vacant 23-acre lot as well as the other 94 acres potentially for sale by Southern Pacific Transportation Company (SPTC). This study was later summarized by a team of planners, architects, and other professionals and converted into a set of master plan designs. A *Land Use Analysis Workbook* was also developed in 1993 in an effort to solicit more community input and feedback.

In June 1996, the *Los Angeles River Master Plan (LARMP)* was prepared by the County of Los Angeles, identifying a vision for the future of the Los Angeles River. Also in 1996, the Union Pacific Railroad Company (UPRC) bought a portion of the land at the Taylor Yard complex for railroad operating and maintenance facilities. In 1998, the State Coastal Conservancy (SCC) authorized Proposition 204 funds to study the feasibility of implementing a project with multiple objectives along the Los Angeles River at the Taylor Yard rail yard complex. The resulting *Taylor Yard Multiple Objectives Feasibility Study*, completed by SCC in June 2002, focused on habitat restoration, flood storage, and recreational opportunities at Parcel G. Four alternatives were identified in this study, addressing various levels of flood storage, restoration, and recreational potential. The *Taylor Yard Multiple Objectives Feasibility Study* also provided a thorough description of existing conditions on and around Parcel G (since split into parcels G-1 and G-2). The City of Los Angeles also commissioned the greenbelt corridor feasibility study (City 1990) and the USACE Watercourse Improvement Study (USACE 1993) to identify the potential value for habitat restoration and recreational facility creation

in addition to flood storage improvement (Multi-Use Study) for the Friends of the Los Angeles River (FoLAR) and Los Angeles County Department of Public Works (RBF, 1993).

Several academic projects have likewise focused on the Taylor Yard complex. The University of California Los Angeles (UCLA) Extension's Landscape Architecture Program analyzed the Taylor Yard rail yard complex as a class project and produced *Bridging Brownfields to Greenfields – the Rio de Los Angeles State Park at Taylor Yard* in 2001. Other Los Angeles River-related projects have been completed by California Polytechnic Institute, Pomona and Harvard University.

The former rail yard was designated as a Brownfield site by the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC), which undertook an extensive analysis of the contaminated soils and developed an action plan for remediation of those parcels (A, B, C, D, E, and F) that were for sale. Parcel D has been given partial site closure and is cleared for residential or unrestricted use (DTSC 2003b). Approximately a third of Parcel G-1, the southerly portion of the once active rail yard, has not yet been cleared for closure or partial closure of the soil issues. State Parks is required to get DTSC clearance from an industrial soil standard to a residential/park standard prior to recreational use (DTSC 2003a). The estimated cost for soil remediation is \$500,000. During the late 1990s, a private land developer attempted to build a commercial development on Parcel D. The development plans were halted by a legal challenge in 2000, paving the way for the Department's purchase of Parcel D using \$45 million in Proposition 12 funds in 2001, and of Parcel G-1 in late 2003.

### **1.1.3.3 Planning the Park**

Upon purchase of the site, the Department and the City initiated a public planning process for Parcel D. During 2003, joint public meetings and design charettes were conducted for Parcel D to solicit input into the future park's facilities, layout, and design and to seamlessly integrate the active and passive components of Parcel D as one park. Four public meetings were held for local residents and community groups on September 4 and 17, and November 5 and 18, 2003. Between 100 and 200 individuals were in attendance at each of these meetings, where conceptual park designs were presented, followed by opportunities for public feedback. By the final public meeting, the park design had been refined to include a wide range of recreational uses, integrating the wide range of facilities while avoiding disjunctive management boundaries (See Figure 5). The park plan shown in Figure 5 constitutes a final plan for park facilities on the City's 20-acre portion, and a temporary, or Interim Public Use (IPU) plan on the State's 20-acre portion. This IPU allows the Department to provide a limited range of non-permanent facilities to allow public access and use of the site until the full General Plan and Environmental Impact Report (EIR) process has been completed. The Department's portion of the IPU will be developed as a traditional park with picnic areas, riparian and wetland, habitat restoration, an informal outdoor amphitheatre, and hiking and nature trails. These uses will be integrated with the City's plans for recreation, restrooms, and maintenance

facilities. A number of facilities, including parking lots, lighting, and comfort facilities, will be jointly developed and/or managed.

As the City's 20 acres of Parcel D are not included in the General Plan and EIR process, the Department and the City prepared a separate Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) in 2003 (SCH #2004021121) to evaluate the 20-acre Park. The MND also evaluated the IPU for the Department's 20 acres of Parcel D, which have been graded as part of the City's park development project. In 2004, the City prepared an Environmental Assessment pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (24 CFR 58.36, revised 1/99) for the Park and associated streetscape improvements. Parcel G-1 is unimproved.

Concurrent with development of the integrated park plan, the Department initiated a 25-year lease so the City could develop and manage recreation on 20 acres of Parcel D. The California Legislature passed legislation in September 2003 to authorize this lease. Because the City proceeded immediately with park development plans for recreational uses, the 20-acre lease area was not included in the Department's General Plan process.

Following completion of the IPU plan, planning for a permanent park on the State's 20-acre portion commenced via initiation of the General Plan process. Furthermore, Parcel G-1 was purchased by the Department in late 2003, adding 17 acres of open space land to the park. The future of parcels D and G-1 has been planned through this General Plan and EIR process, which entailed two further public meetings. The first public meeting for the General Plan was the California Environment Quality Act (CEQA) scoping meeting, which was held on September 27, 2004 at Glassell Park Elementary School. Following a presentation about the CEQA and General Plan processes, comments from the public regarding the future park were accepted. These ideas were synthesized into alternative park plans. A second public meeting was held on October 12, 2004, to present the preferred Park plan. In addition, this meeting also provided opportunity for public input on the naming the park, with the following alternatives suggested: La Reina del Rio State Park; Tongva Portola State Park; Taylor State Park; The Northeast State Park; and Tongva Portola Taylor State Park.

#### **1.1.4 UNIT CLASSIFICATION**

The Park is classified as a "State Recreation Area" as defined in Section 5019.53 of the PRC, which states:

*State recreation areas, consisting of areas selected and developed to provide multiple recreational opportunities to meet other than purely local needs. The areas shall be selected for their having terrain capable of withstanding extensive human impact and for their proximity to large population centers, major routes of travel, or proven recreational resources*

*such as manmade or natural bodies of water. Areas containing ecological, geological, scenic, or cultural resources of significant value shall be preserved within state wildernesses, state reserves, state parks, or natural or cultural preserves, or, for those areas situated seaward of the mean high tide line, shall be designated state marine reserves, state marine parks, state marine conservation areas, or state marine cultural preservation areas.*

*Improvements may be undertaken to provide for recreational activities, including, but not limited to, camping, picnicking, swimming, hiking, bicycling, horseback riding, boating, waterskiing, diving, winter sports, fishing, and hunting.*

*Improvements to provide for urban or indoor formalized recreational activities shall not be undertaken within state recreation areas.*

## **1.2 PURPOSE OF GENERAL PLANS**

General Plans for the Department are broad policy documents that set the direction for future park management and development. State Park General Plans are mandated under Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 5002.2 (a), which states:

*Following classification or reclassification of a unit by the State Park and Recreation Commission, and prior to the development of any new facilities in any previously classified unit, the department shall prepare a general plan or revise any existing plan, as the case may be, for the unit. The general plan shall consist of elements that will evaluate and define the proposed land uses, facilities, concessions, operation of the unit, any environmental impacts, and the management of resources, and shall serve as a guide for the future development, management, and operation of the unit.*

General Plans are designed to provide guidance for a broad, long-range strategic time frame. The General Planning process does not attempt to identify specific steps for meeting its identified goals. The specifics of implementation will be addressed in follow-up management plans (operational, interpretative, landscape, recreation, natural resource protection, etc.), which will include the necessary detailed planning objectives to be achieved for individual park areas, resources, or programs.

Future planning efforts will invite public comments to address visitor needs and community interests. In addition, management plans and subsequent development projects are subject to additional environmental review to address issues unforeseen during the General Plan process.

This Draft EIR has been developed to assess the potential environmental impacts of the planned development and management strategies in the General Plan, pursuant to the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Stakeholders and public and other governmental agencies have received notification for comment on the scope of the Draft EIR and the sufficiency

of the document in identifying and analyzing the potential environmental impacts of the General Plan.

Upon completion of the Draft EIR review period, a Final EIR will be completed. The Department will review the EIR for adequacy and consider the document for certification. Both the Final EIR and the Final Draft of the Park's General Plan will be considered separately for approval or denial by the California State Park and Recreation Commission.

The General Plan does not attempt to identify specific objectives for meeting its identified goals; rather it sets broad goals to direct those steps. The specifics of implementation will be addressed in subsequent management plans, which will include the necessary detailed planning documents. These documents will require additional public and government agency review to ensure adherence to the goals established within this General Plan. Some management plans, such as those required for resource protection, are based on legislation or other directives. Future planning efforts will invite public comments to address visitor needs and community interests. In addition, management plans and subsequent development projects are subject to further environmental review.

General planning is most effective when aligned with other regional and local objectives, plans, and policies. This General Plan is consistent with relevant plans and policies listed below. Refer to Section 2.2 for a detailed discussion of relevant plans and policies.

- California State Parks Mission Statement
- California State Parks Planning Handbook
- California State Parks Statewide Trails Plan
- California State Parks Access to Parks Guidelines
- California Public Resources Code Section 5019.50-5019.80
- Southern California Association of Governments 2001 Regional Transportation Plan
- Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board Programs
- Los Angeles River Master Plan
- City of Los Angeles General Plan
- Northeast Los Angeles Community Plan

This is the first State Park General Plan for the Rio de Los Angeles State Park unit. The State Park unit has not yet been opened for public recreational use, but the city and DPR expect to have public facilities available in the Fall of 2006.. This General Plan establishes a framework to build, restore, and maintain the State Park unit's natural resources and provide for recreational activities at the Park.

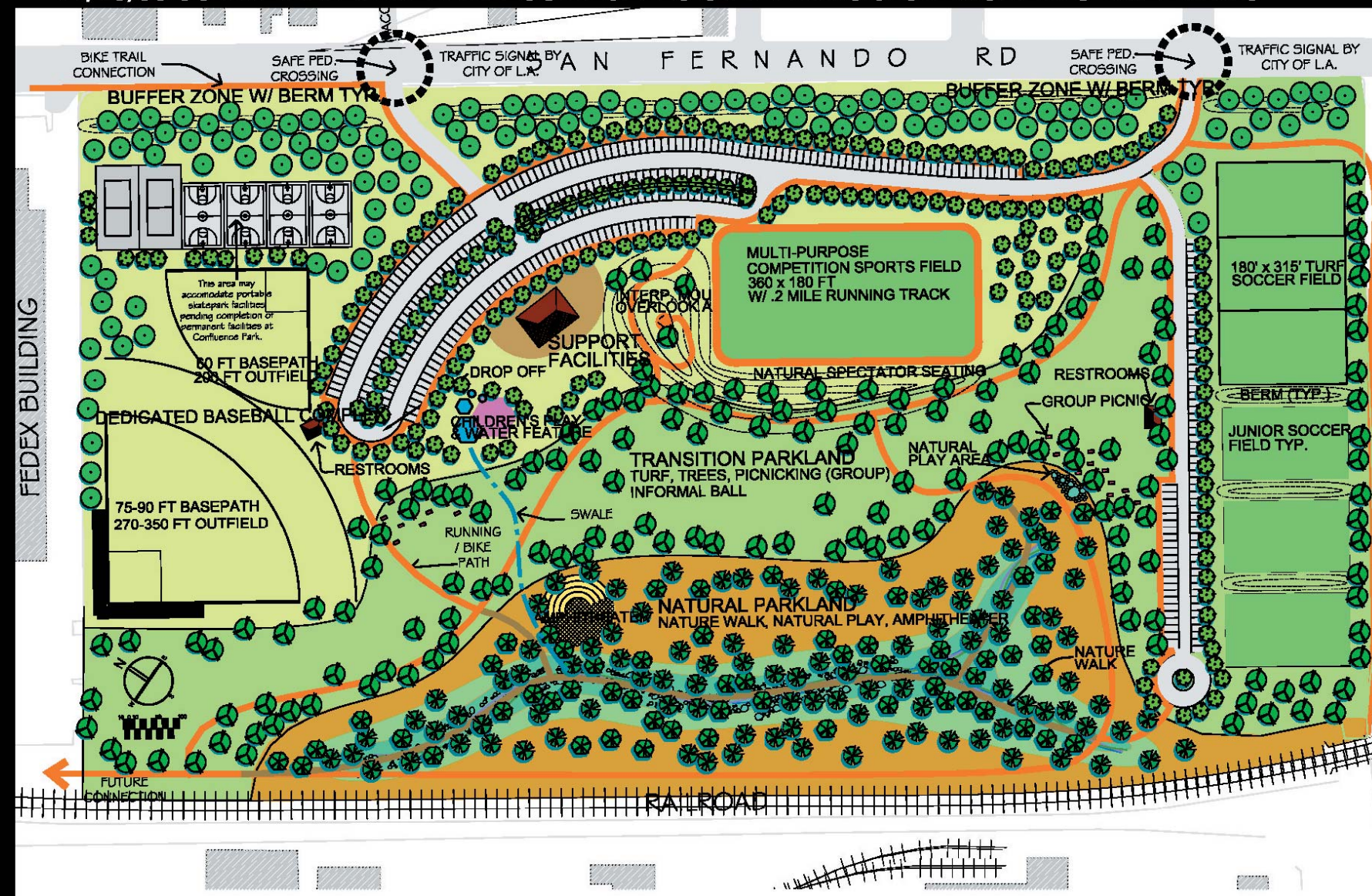
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**PUBLIC CONSENSUS CONCEPTUAL PLAN**  
**11/13/03 JOINTLY PREPARED BY LOS ANGELES CITY PARKS & CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS**

**RIO DE LOS ANGELES STATE PARK**

**FIGURE 5**  
**INTERIM PUBLIC USE PLAN**



**MISSION STATEMENT - CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS**  
 THE MISSION OF THE CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION IS TO PROVIDE FOR THE HEALTH, INSPIRATION, AND EDUCATION OF THE PEOPLE OF CALIFORNIA BY HELPING TO PRESERVE THE STATE'S EXTRAORDINARY BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY PROTECTING ITS MOST VALUABLE NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES, AND CREATING OPPORTUNITIES FOR HIGH-QUALITY OUTDOOR RECREATION.

**MISSION STATEMENT - CITY OF LOS ANGELES DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION AND PARKS**  
 COMMUNITY THROUGH PEOPLE, PARKS AND PROGRAMS

**PROJECT CONCEPT STATEMENT - TAYLOR YARD**  
 DEVELOP A SEAMLESS PARK DESIGN THAT FULFILLS THE MISSION STATEMENTS OF THE STATE AND THE CITY FOR THE BENEFIT OF ALL STAKEHOLDERS IN A SUSTAINABLE MANNER.

- DESIGN PROGRAM:**
- ONE (1) REGULATION SOCCER FIELDS, THREE (3) JR. SOCCER FIELDS
  - ONE (1) MULTI-PURPOSE SPORTS FIELD 360X180'
  - TWO (2) BASEBALL FIELDS
  - XC RUNNING TRAIL WITH DISTANCE MARKERS
  - 2 MI. RUNNING TRACK
  - FOUR (4) REGULATION BASKETBALL COURTS
  - TWO (2) REGULATION TENNIS COURT
  - TWO (2) CHILDREN'S PLAY AREAS (1 FORMAL 1 NATURAL)
  - CHILDREN'S WATER PLAY - SPLASH PAD
  - BUILDINGS: RESTROOMS, COMMUNITY ROOM, CONCESSION & SERVICE
  - PARKING: 361 SPACES
  - BICYCLE PATHS
  - INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS
  - RIVER "OX-BOW" (RIPARIAN NATURAL AREA)
  - OPEN SPACE FOR PICNICKING, INFORMAL BALL
  - NATURAL AMPHITHEATER FOR SPECIAL EVENTS
  - STORMWATER MANAGEMENT
  - INDIVIDUAL GROUP PICNICK AREAS
  - LANDSCAPED OPEN SPACE
  - EDUCATIONAL PANELS
  - INTERPRETIVE MOUND/OVERLOOK

FEDEX BUILDING



**TAYLOR YARD**  
**LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA**

Source Data: Map features digitized by EDAW, Inc., ESA, and North East Trees. Aerial base from Eagle Aerial; flown October 7, 2002.

**EDAW**  
 March 10, 2005

P:\2002\2107 Taylor Yard\GENERAL PLAN\_SCREENCHECK DRAFT\Draft TY-GP Figures\Figure 5



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## CHAPTER 2

### EXISTING CONDITIONS

This chapter summarizes the surrounding context and existing conditions at the Park. Local planning influences and the roles of various agencies and local nonprofit organizations are characterized, as are significant cultural and aesthetic resources, existing land uses, recreational facilities, and approaches to interpretation at the Park. The information provides the baseline data for the General Plan goals and guidelines (Chapter 4) and serves as the setting for environmental review (Chapter 5). A geographic information systems (GIS) data file of existing resources has been created in conjunction with this General Plan. Existing conditions maps included in this chapter were generated from the GIS database.

#### 2.1 PARK CONDITIONS AND RESOURCES

The Park is located approximately 2.5 miles north of downtown Los Angeles, northeast of the Los Angeles River. The Park consists of two vacant parcels within the 247-acre former UPRC rail yard: the 40-acre Parcel D, adjacent to San Fernando Road, and the 17-acre riverfront Parcel G-1 (Figure 2). At the time that this General Plan is being prepared, the IPU is under construction on Parcel D while Parcel G-1 is unimproved.

##### 2.1.1 EXISTING LAND USES

###### **State Park Unit**

Parcel D is a 40-acre rectangular piece of land located west of San Fernando Road and north of Kerr Road, the private road between Parcel D and the MTA property (Parcel C). This parcel is zoned by the City as Heavy Manufacturing. This parcel consists of the IPU (Figure 5), including a natural parkland, informal amphitheater, trails, transitional parkland, and picnic facilities.<sup>1</sup> Vegetation, refuse, and debris, which characterized the site between its acquisition and commencement of construction on Parcel D, have been removed. Historically, this site was part of the Taylor Yard freight switching facility. An active rail line runs along the western border of the parcel. The parcel is fenced, with the main entrance via a gate off Kerr Road. Upon completion of construction of the City's 20-acre plan, the main entrance to this parcel will be moved to San Fernando Road.

Parcel G-1 is a 17-acre riverfront strip of land on the east bank of the Los Angeles River near the Glendale Freeway (SR 2). Due to its shape, this parcel is typically referred to as the "bow-tie." Parcel G-1 is also undeveloped but has not been graded. The terrain is generally flat and only limited vegetation is present. As with Parcel D, this area was once part of the freight switching facility at Taylor Yard. A gate limits access to the parcel from Casitas Avenue. Although not contiguous, Parcels D and G-1 make up the 57-acre Park.

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<sup>1</sup> CEQA analysis of this action is provided in the Taylor Yard Park Development Project MND (SCH# 2004021121). Improvements to the site associated with the IPU were considered in the Taylor Yards Temporary Information Site IPU Notice of Exemption (SCH #2002058613).

## **Surrounding Land Uses**

Parcels G-1 and D are in the vicinity and are part of the Northeast Los Angeles community. The neighborhoods surrounding the Park include Cypress Park, Glassell Park, and Elysian Valley (Figure 2). These neighborhoods are characterized by a mix of residential and industrial uses, with many homes dating to the early 20th century. A generalized land use map is shown in Figure 6.

Much of the former rail yard complex has been converted to industrial and commercial uses (Figure 3). Within the Taylor Yard complex, Parcel A is an embankment and railroad line used by Metrolink, Amtrak, and Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR), which runs through the center of the complex. Parcel C is owned by the MTA and is used as a maintenance facility. FedEx leases a “tilt-up” building on Parcel E; Legacy Development developed Parcel F-1 for light industrial uses; and Parcel G-2 is owned and operated by UPRC. Parcel F-2 is currently being developed by LAUSD as Central High School #13. Parcels H and J are zoned and developed with industrial uses. The Los Angeles River and its bank are zoned as open space (City of Los Angeles 1999).

## **Los Angeles River Greenway Parks Currently Under Development**

### City of Los Angeles' 20 Acre Park on Parcel D

The City of Los Angeles has leased 20 acres from California State Parks for park uses. The objective of the project is to develop a seamless park design that fulfills the missions of both California State Parks and the City Los Angeles for substantial benefit to all stakeholders. The various components of the park include, soccer fields, multipurpose sports fields, baseball fields, basketball courts, tennis courts, running/bike path, children’s play areas, children’s water play area, restrooms and support facilities and park office (Figure 5). The proposed park components will also include streetscape improvements along adjacent San Fernando Road, parking lot construction, lighting, and landscaping.

### Los Angeles State Historic Park

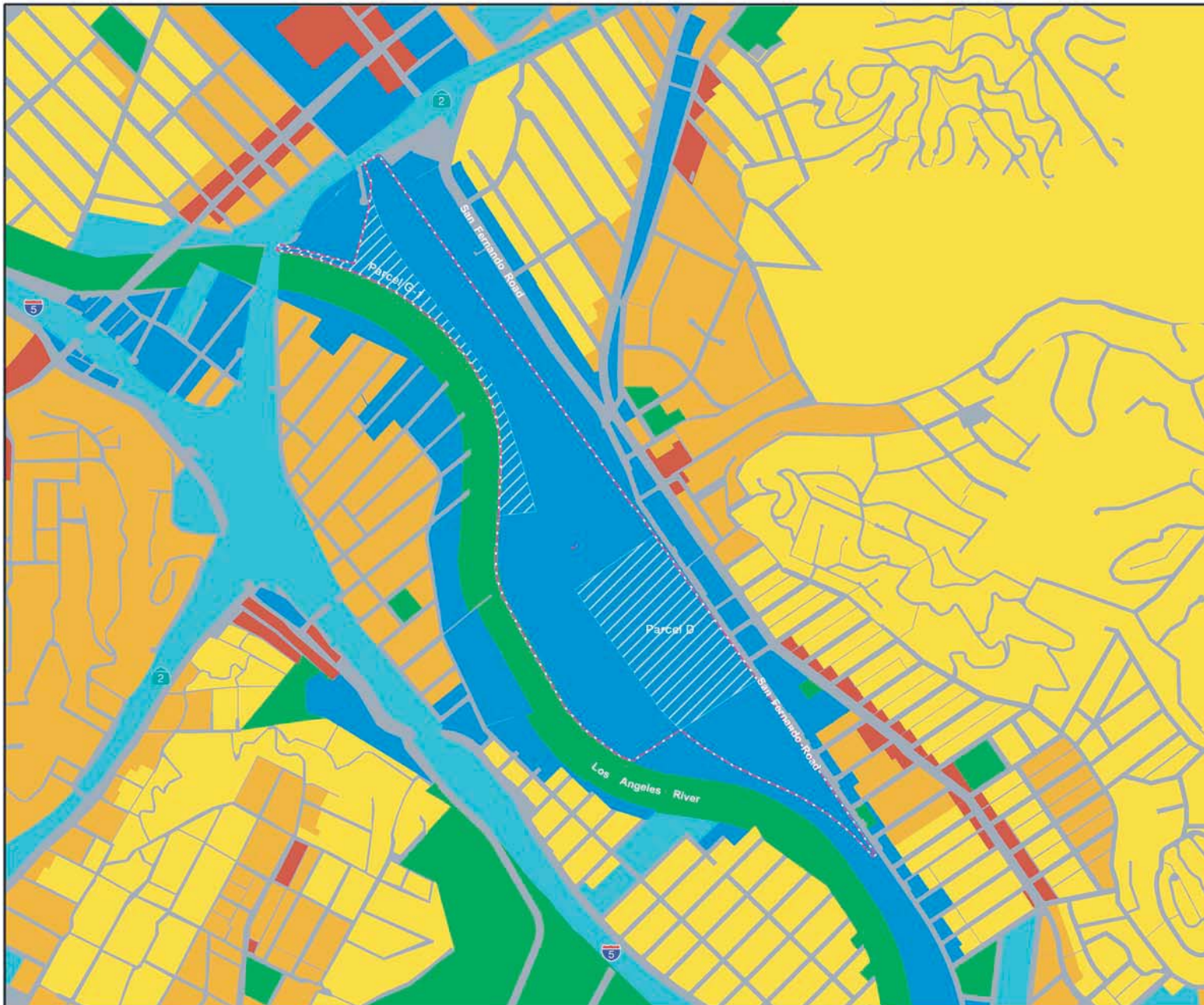
The Los Angeles State Historic Park, located approximately 1.8 miles downstream from Rio de Los Angeles State Park, is being transformed into a verdant place in the heart of the city, an extraordinary cultural and ecological asset where visitors from all socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds can discover and celebrate the rich historical connection to Los Angeles. The park will act as a critical building block in an urban renaissance of the historic heart of the city.

### Confluence Park

The Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy has secured over seven million dollars in funding to develop a park near the confluence of the Los Angeles River and Arroyo Secco, 1.2 miles southeast of Rio de Los Angeles State Park. The Park will complement a series of park connections to Los Angeles State Historic Park, Elysian Park, and El Pueblo State Historic Park. Future parks components include landscaping, walking paths, community access, restrooms, a visitor center, a bicycle station, educational displays and interpretive exhibits that tell the story of the expansion of Los Angeles into its original suburbs as they related to transportation, nature and culture in the area.

# RIO DE LOS ANGELES STATE PARK

**FIGURE 6  
LAND USE ZONING CONTEXT**



### Legend

#### Taylor Yard Complex

Complex Boundary

#### Parcels D & G-1

Area of Parcels

#### Zoning Designations

Industrial

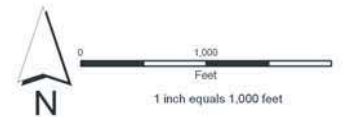
Low/Medium Residential

Minimum Residential

Neighborhood Commercial

Open Space

Public Facility



Source Data: Zoning information digitized from ZIMAS, City of Los Angeles. Aerial base from Eagle Aerial, flown October 7, 2002.

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March 10, 2005



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## **Park Access**

The Park is easily accessible via a number of freeways and major arterials (Figure 7). Three freeways are located within 2 miles of the site, including I-5, SR 2, and the Pasadena Freeway (SR 110). The primary roadways providing access to the Park include San Fernando Road, Eagle Rock Boulevard, Figueroa Street, and Fletcher Drive. Buses service the area from downtown Los Angeles, the San Fernando Valley, and the San Gabriel Valley. A bus stop is located at the intersection of San Fernando Road and Fletcher Avenue forming the hub of a number of routes connecting downtown Los Angeles, Glendale, Sylmar, and El Monte. The Metro Gold Line also provides light rail service to the project area. The nearest light rail stations are located at Avenue 26 (Avenue 26 Station), approximately 1.3 miles south of the site, and at French Avenue just off of Figueroa Street (French Station), approximately 1.3 miles southeast.

Parcel D is accessible directly from San Fernando Road. By vehicle, Parcel G-1 is accessible only from Casitas Avenue. There are currently no bridges over the Los Angeles River between those at Figueroa Street and SR 2. As such, residential areas west of the river, particularly Elysian Valley, must use Fletcher Drive or Figueroa Street to access the Park.

The surrounding transportation network is discussed in greater detail in the Existing Facilities section under Circulation.

### **2.1.2 REGIONAL CONTEXT**

#### **Population Trends**

The Park is located in Los Angeles, the largest city by population and area in Los Angeles County. The population of Los Angeles County is approximately 9.8 million, making it the most populous and diverse county in the nation. The most recent Census in 2000 determined that the population of the City of Los Angeles totaled 3.7 million. Between 1990 and 2000, the City of Los Angeles experienced the most rapid growth of all cities in Los Angeles County, growing at 6 percent (SCAG 2001).

Approximately 28,200 people reside within a 1-mile radius of the park unit, an average of 14.0 persons per acre. According to the 2000 Census, this is high compared to the City average of 12.2 persons per acre, particularly given that much of the 1-mile radius is characterized by freeway, industrial, aquatic, and other non-habitable uses. Demographic information from the latest Census indicates that within 5 miles of the site, 56 percent of the population is Latino, 17 percent is Asian, 20 percent is non-Hispanic white, and 4 percent is black. The median income is \$32,863: 27 percent of the residents live in poverty while 69 percent meet considered median income levels for California (CLIP 2002). Unemployment is approximately 8.7 percent, a rate that is significantly higher than that of the county as a whole (8.2 percent), the state of California (6.9 percent), or the U.S. average (5.7 percent) (Census 2000). Nearby elementary and middle schools are eligible for Title 1 funding. Up to 90 percent of students at nearby schools are participating in the Free and Reduced Price Lunch program, compared to an average of 26.3 percent for the entire LAUSD (LAUSD 2003).

Recreation demand and use, over time, are affected by the changing demographic patterns of the areas to be served. A number of key factors will affect the future use patterns and facilities within the

Park. The growing and ethnically diverse communities of Cypress Park, Elysian Valley, Mt. Washington, and Atwater Village are within walking distance of the Park, while further afield lie the equally park-poor communities of Lincoln Heights and Downtown Los Angeles. Urban populations in Los Angeles have a high demand for open space and recreation sites. The community is also building more housing and less industry. This shift in zoning will increase the need for improved interpretation and classroom activities and demand for open space.

### **Open Space/Parkland Availability**

There is a limited amount of open space and parkland in urban Los Angeles. At about 4 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents, the City of Los Angeles falls well below the recommended national standards of 6.25 to 10.5 acres per 1,000 population (Wolch et al. 2001). As the region continues to grow, appropriate open space provisions need to be made to ensure this substandard situation is not exacerbated.

There are a number of parks in the vicinity of the Park; however, few are of substantial size and most do not offer a range of recreation opportunities. Most local parks are not located along or associated with the Los Angeles River. Within a 2-mile radius of the Park, there are approximately 732.8 acres of parkland; the majority is located in Elysian Park (604.5 acres), the second largest city park in Los Angeles. Although a sizeable area of open space, Elysian Park access is difficult for many because of the steep terrain, physical separation from the Park site by the Los Angeles River, several freeways, and incompatible land uses, and convenient or available transportation to this park. An inventory of parks and recreation areas near the unit is shown in Figure 8 and described in Table 1 below.

## **2.1.3 SIGNIFICANT RESOURCE VALUES/CONSTRAINTS**

### **Physical Resources**

#### Meteorology

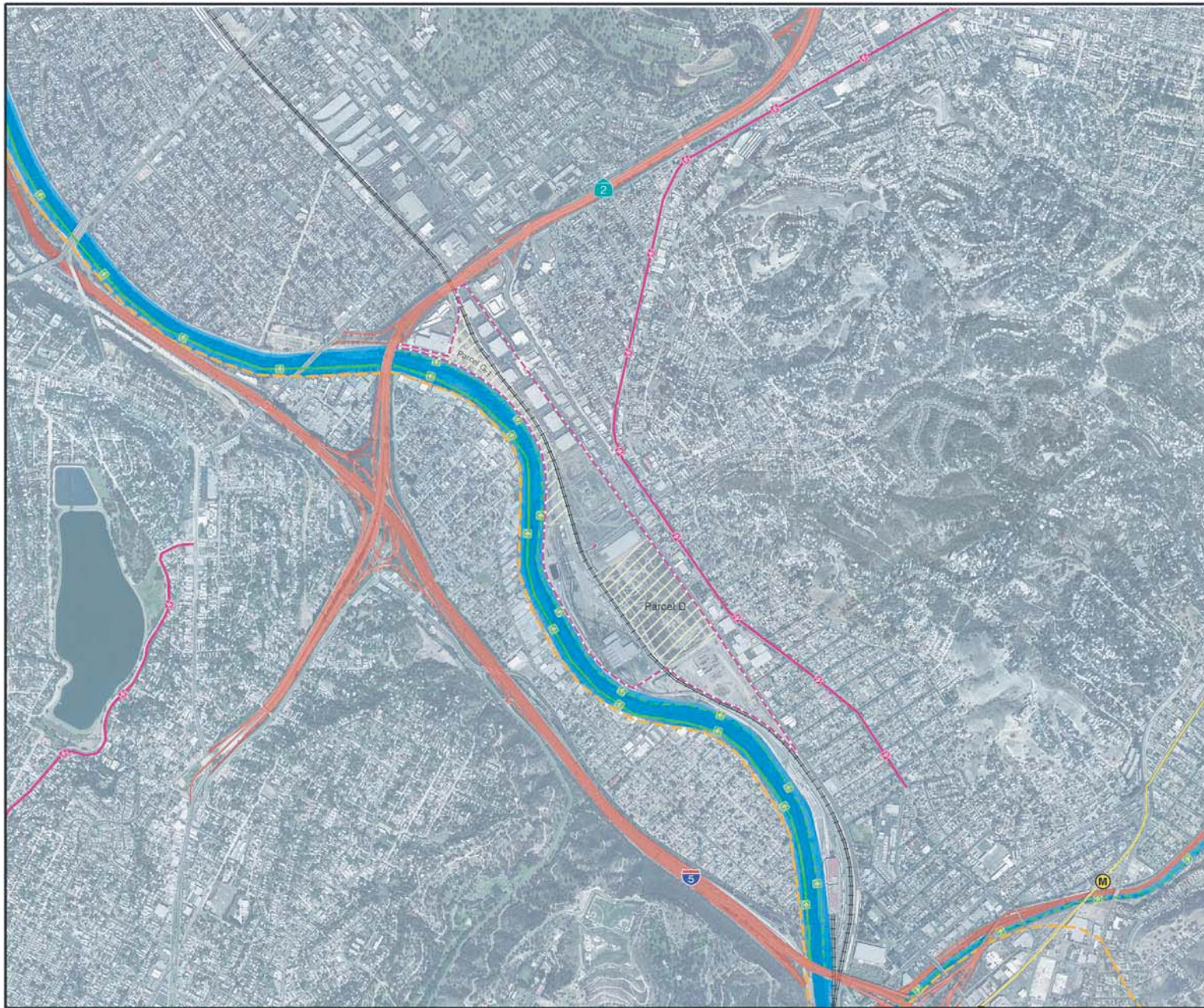
Coastal southern California is characterized by a Mediterranean climate, with warm, dry summers, and mild winters with occasional rain. Along the coast, the ocean buffers temperatures, preventing the extreme temperatures found inland by converting the sun's heat into water vapor and producing cloud cover. Surrounded by hills and only 10 miles inland from the Pacific Ocean, the Los Angeles Basin avoids the extreme temperatures found in the inland desert.

Annual precipitation in the Los Angeles Basin averages approximately 15 inches, with most falling between November and April. During the warmer months, a temperature inversion persists, trapping moist marine air below 1,300 feet and creating the haze layer for which Los Angeles is well known. The summer months from the end of April through October average less than an inch of rain per month. It is not uncommon for the weather to remain dry, with no precipitation until November.



# RIO DE LOS ANGELES STATE PARK

## FIGURE 7 ACCESS AND TRANSPORTATION LINKS IN THE VICINITY OF TAYLOR YARD



### Legend

Taylor Yard Complex

### Base Layers

Freeways

Parcels D & G-1

Rivers

### Trails & Bike Paths

Bike Lane

Bike Path

Future Bike Path

De Anza Trail

Future De Anza Trail

### Public Transportation

Metro Stations

Metro Gold Line

Metrolink & Freight Lines



0 1,000  
Feet  
1 inch equals 1,500 feet

Source Data: Map features digitized by EDAW, Inc., ESA, and North East Trees. Aerial base from Eagle Aerial; flown October 7, 2002.

**EDAW**

March 10, 2005





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**Table 1. Parks and Recreation Areas near the Rio de Los Angeles State Park**

Name	Park Area (acre)	Distance from RLASP (miles)
Elysian Valley Recreation Center	1.3	0.5
Elysian Park	605	0.5
Elyria Canyon Park	48.1	0.6
Steelhead Park	0.06	0.8
Oso Park	0.1	0.8
Cypress Park	4.3	0.9
Egret Park	0.3	0.9
Los Angeles River and Garden Center	7.6	1.1
Glassell Park	11.8	1.2
Glassell Park Community Center	9.2	1.2
Glenhurst Park	1.1	1.2
Confluence Park	7.0	1.3
Park on North Figueroa and Marmion Way	0.7	1.4
Tommy Lasorda Recreation Center	1.8	1.4
Welsh Street Park	2.8	1.5
Ernest E. Debs Regional Park	331	1.6
Heritage Square	6.6	1.6
Los Angeles State Historic Park		1.7
Lummis Park	2.0	1.7
Sycamore Grove Park	15.1	1.8
Silverlake Recreation Center	1.4	1.8
Downey Playground	7.5	2.0
Los Angeles River Walk	1.9	2.4
El Pueblo State Historic Park	n/a	2.7

### Hydrology

The Park is located in the Los Angeles River watershed. As it passes the Taylor Yard complex, the Los Angeles River flows through the Glendale Narrows, a narrow valley that separates the San Fernando Valley and the Los Angeles Coastal Plain. This portion of the river has an unlined channel bottom due to the high groundwater table. This soft-bottom reach includes riparian vegetation, open water, and sand bars, which are supported by year-round flows.

The Los Angeles River drains a watershed that covers 834 square miles from the Santa Susana/San Gabriel Mountains to San Pedro. In the early 1900s, after a series of devastating Los Angeles basin floods, the Army Corps of Engineers channelized the river to prevent destruction of property and human life. The section of the Los Angeles River by the Park continues to flow year-round, fed by groundwater forced up by relatively shallow, impermeable geologic strata negating any attempt for the Army Corps to cement the bottom (Gumprecht, 1999). This segment of the river has a soft bottom and hosts riparian vegetation with sandbars that slow down flow attracting an array of wildlife. In 1996, *The Los Angeles River Master Plan* was completed by Los Angeles County, which calls for creation of a greenway along the River, cutting a swath from the mountains, through the heart of Los Angeles, and out to sea.

Two wastewater treatment plants contribute to dry season flows: the Tillman and Glendale Sewage Treatment Plants. These treatment plants are located approximately 16 and 4 miles upstream of Van Nuys and Glendale, respectively. In the wet season, the amount of storm water runoff in the river depends on the magnitude of the storm events. Large-scale storm events can result in heavy river flows that convey a swift stream down the channel. Extreme storm events could cause the water levels to exceed the capacity of the channel in some areas along the river. In the dry season, minimal precipitation occurs, with the occasional summer storm depositing water and runoff into the channel.

Local runoff from the surrounding communities of Cypress Park, Glassell Park, Elysian Valley, and Atwater Village is conveyed to storm drains that run under the Taylor Yard complex and empty into the Los Angeles River through culverts on the northeast levee. No storm drains are located under Parcel D whereas several lines traverse Parcel G-1.

The Park is located in the San Fernando Valley Groundwater Basin (SFVGB), in the Upper Los Angeles River Area (ULARA). The SFVGB includes the entire Verdugo Basin and the eastern portion of the San Fernando Valley, providing enough water to serve approximately 800,000 people. Groundwater flows underneath the Taylor Yard complex occur under unconfined conditions, such that levels vary with the season. Groundwater levels are relatively high during the wet season and low during the dry season. Based on data collected in 1999 and 2000, the general groundwater flow direction beneath the Taylor Yard complex is to the south-southeast with an average hydraulic gradient across the site of 0.0021 foot per foot (SCC 2002). The site depth to groundwater on Parcel G ranges from 20 feet below ground surface (bgs) to 35 feet bgs. Groundwater underneath Parcel D is at similar or greater depths.

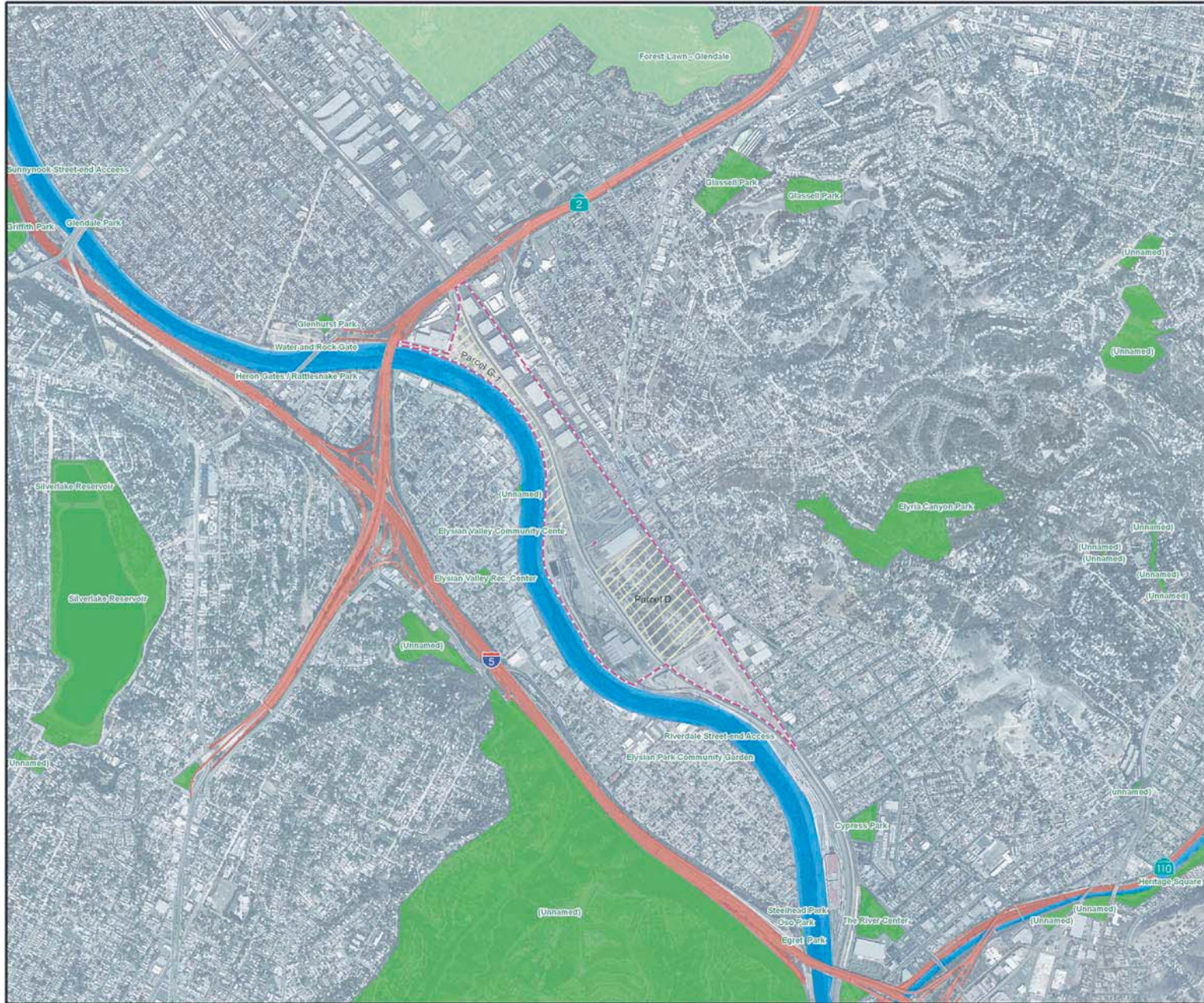
## Water Quality

### *Surface Water*

The Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (LARWQCB) has identified several beneficial uses for the surface water in the Los Angeles River near the Park, including Existing Water Contact Recreation (REC-1), Existing Non-Contact Water Recreation (REC-2), Existing Warm Freshwater Habitat (WARM), Existing Wildlife Habitat (WILD), Existing Wetland Habitat (WET), Existing Groundwater Recharge (GWR), Municipal and Domestic Supply (MUN), and Industrial Service (IND). The *Taylor Yard Multi-Objectives Feasibility Study* identified a number of wet and dry season contaminants of potential concern that may impair these beneficial uses. These contaminants include bacteria, aluminum, ammonium, chloride, cadmium, cyanide, sulfate, nitrates, copper, lead, and zinc.

A preliminary estimate of off-site pollutant loading to the Park was made using the Los Angeles County Department of Public Works (LACDPW) watershed land use-based monitoring data (LACDPW 2000) that characterize the mass emissions of constituents from specific land uses (SCC 2002). This model indicates that the constituents in the storm water from areas surrounding the complex could be at moderate levels compared to typical urban sites monitored by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The only constituent that was estimated to potentially occur above the normal range was Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD).









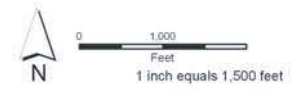


# RIO DE LOS ANGELES STATE PARK

**FIGURE 8  
OPEN SPACE IN THE VICINITY  
OF TAYLOR YARD**

**Legend**

-  Taylor Yard Complex
- Base Layers**
-  Freeways
-  Rivers
-  LARSP
- Open Space**
-  Private
-  Public



Source Data: Map features digitized by EDAW, Inc., ESA, and North East Trees. Aerial base from Eagle Aerial; flown October 7, 2002.

**EDAW**  
March 10, 2005



27/0002/07 Taylor Yard Complex\_CSC\_CAD/03/05/05.dwg

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### *Groundwater*

Three municipal water supply wells are located upgradient from the Park sites. Groundwater monitoring at these sites have shown groundwater contamination with volatile organic compounds (VOCs) at levels exceeding state drinking water standards or Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCLs) (MBE 2001; ERM 2000). The EPA SFVGB includes four National Priority List (NPL)<sup>2</sup> sites: Area 1 North Hollywood, Area 2 Crystal Springs, Area 3 Verdugo, and Area 4 Pollock. The Park is located in Area 4 (EPA ID# CAD 980894976), a 5,860-acre contaminated groundwater area near the Pollock Well Field. The groundwater chlorinated VOC contamination is historically linked to industrial waste generated in the San Fernando Valley as early as the 1940s. The SFVGB sites were officially listed by the EPA in 1986. Currently, Area 4 is being addressed through the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) Pollock Wells Treatment Plant. The treatment plant restores the use of two Pollock wells by treating the groundwater with Liquid-Phase Granular Activated Carbon (GAC). This process removes VOCs from the groundwater, which is then chlorinated and blended with imported water to reduce nitrate concentrations (SCC 2002). This process is intended to prevent contaminated groundwater from entering the Los Angeles River. The cleanup efforts at the Park sites have not completely treated the contaminated soils and groundwater. The treatment and eventual total site cleanup is an ongoing process that will take decades to complete.

The exact extent of groundwater contamination beneath Parcel D is still under evaluation. Recent soil borings taken on Parcel D to depths of up to 30 feet below existing ground surface did not encounter groundwater. The elevation of the bottom of the soil borings ranged from 326 feet above mean sea level (msl) to 333 feet above msl. Historical data suggest that groundwater under the site ranges from 20 to 65 feet bgs. Given that the lowest elevation of the Parcel D component of the Park is approximately 345 feet above msl, the probability of encountering groundwater during construction of the Park is low. For the same reason, the risk of encountering contaminated groundwater at the surface of the Park after the project is built is also low. Further discussion regarding soil contamination, the source of the groundwater contamination, is provided below in the Hazards and Hazardous Materials section.

### Flood Protection

During the rainy season (November to May) the Los Angeles River conveys heavy flows and occasional floods. Historically, flooding resulted in significant loss of life and destruction of property across the river's broad floodplain. From the early 1930s, the County and City of Los Angeles commenced several measures to control the floods, including 6 large dams in Los Angeles, 14 smaller dams in mountain areas, and a concrete channel along the entire river, built to contain the river's peak flood flow. The segment of the flood control channel near the Park site was completed in 1956. The slanted levee of the trapezoidal channel is approximately 23 feet above the bottom of the river channel, which has a base width of approximately 220 feet. In the Glendale Narrows section of the river, the bottom is soft and filled with vegetation, which reduces the capacity of the flood control system. The channel in the Park area is designed to convey approximately 83,700 cubic feet per second (cfs) upstream near the Arroyo Seco confluence, and 104,000 cfs downstream (USACOE 1938).

<sup>2</sup> The NPL is a list published by the EPA of hazardous waste sites in the United States that are eligible for cleanup under the Superfund program, a trust fund mandated by the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA).



### Topography

Rio de Los Angeles State Park was historically used for industrial purposes. All of the land has been graded and developed multiple times throughout the complex's history; therefore, the land remains relatively uniform and does not exhibit a high degree of slope on any part of the property. The highest elevation within the Park is approximately 350 feet, compared to the 700-foot Elysian Hills to the Park's southeast. Due to recent grading activities, Parcel D is somewhat regular in topography, with gradual slopes and depressions. Parcel G-1 is relatively flat and consists of hardened dirt and slabs of concrete due to its previous use as a freight switching facility and recent remediation efforts.

### Geology

The Los Angeles River floodplain, on which the Park is located, has been created through centuries of alluvial deposition over Tertiary-age bedrock. Two fault systems transect the Los Angeles region: the east to northeast-trending faults of the Santa Monica Fault System, and the northwest-trending faults that may be a continuation of the Whittier Fault System. There are two active faults within the immediate vicinity of the site. The Raymond Fault lies approximately 0.75 mile to the northwest, while the Elysian Park Fault lies to the southwest. The Newport-Inglewood Fault lies approximately 12 miles southwest, while the Sierra Madre Fault Zone is located approximately 12 miles northeast. The Park is not located within an Alquist-Priolo Special Studies Zone.

### *Liquefaction*

Liquefaction occurs when water-saturated sediments are subjected to extended periods of shaking. Pressure increases in the soil pores temporarily alter the soil state from solid to liquid. Liquefied sediments lose strength, in turn destabilizing adjacent infrastructure and causing the failure of bridges and buildings. Whether a soil will resist liquefaction depends on a number of factors, including grain size, compaction and cementation, saturation and drainage, characteristics of the vibration, and the occurrence of past liquefaction. Granular, unconsolidated, saturated sediments are the most likely to liquefy, while dry, dense, or cohesive soils tend to resist liquefaction. Liquefaction is generally considered to be a hazard where the groundwater is within 40 to 30 feet of the surface. Where soil drainage is good, the pore pressure, which builds up when ground motion shakes unconsolidated soil, will be more easily dissipated; thus, soils with good drainage are less likely to liquefy.

According to the California Division of Mines and Geology (CDMG) *Official Map of Seismic Hazard Zones Map, Los Angeles Quadrangle* (released March 25, 1999), the Taylor Yard complex, including the Park parcels, is located in an area of liquefaction potential. This is due to the high water table and soils conditions under the site.

### *Soils*

The Glendale Narrows is an alluvium-filled valley, where soils primarily consist of highly permeable silt, sand, and gravel to a maximum thickness of 160 feet. Much of the Taylor Yard complex, including the Park parcels, is covered with a layer of fill material to a depth of approximately 7 feet. Underneath this material lie sands, silty sands, and discontinuous clayey sands from 7 feet bgs to 35 feet bgs. Below 35 feet bgs sediments transition from coarse sand to cobble, with some clay and silt zones of less than 5 feet thickness between 60 feet bgs and 70 feet bgs (SCC 2002).

From the 1890s onwards, the Taylor Yard complex operated as a rail yard, which resulted in the release of a number of wastes and toxins including oil, grease, and diesel from fueling areas, as well as solvents used for cleanup. Today, the soil across much of the site is contaminated with some level of petroleum hydrocarbons, VOCs, semivolatile organic compounds (SVOCs), and metals. In many areas, the level of contamination exceeds screening criteria levels and requires cleanup measures. Soil contamination at Parcels D and G-1 is further discussed in the Hazards and Hazardous Materials section below.

### Hazards and Hazardous Materials

Past industrial activities at the Taylor Yard complex, in conjunction with off-site groundwater contamination, have resulted in groundwater and soil contamination under much of the former rail yard. Studies have been conducted by the EPA, DTSC, California Water Resources Control Board (WRCB), Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (LARWQCB), and other agencies to determine the appropriate remediation levels and target cleanup levels for the site.

Before Parcels G-1 and D were purchased, the Taylor Yard complex was designated by DTSC as a Brownfields site after analysis of soil samples, groundwater samples, and monitoring well results indicated that soils were contaminated. As a result, DTSC undertook an extensive analysis of the contaminated soils and developed an action plan for remediation, the Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study (RI/FS). DTSC supervised the toxic cleanup on the Sale Parcels (Parcels A, B, C, D, E, F) in 1997. A number of remediation techniques were used, including soil-vapor extraction and chemical fixation, to treat the contaminated soil (SCC 2002).

An RI/FS for both Parcel G (Active Yard) and Parcel D (Sale Parcel) was conducted to determine the risk associated with human exposure to soil and groundwater contamination in residential, commercial, or industrial land use; however, the RI/FS did not account for habitat restoration and the potential effects on wildlife in such habitat. In 2001, a screening-level ecological risk assessment (SCLERA) was conducted. The SCLERA indicates that wildlife may be at risk if exposed to the contaminated soils and that further evaluation is necessary to determine the level of impact to birds, soil invertebrates, microorganisms, and aquatic organisms (SCC 2002).

In 2003, a hazardous materials database search was conducted for the Park site (Appendix A). This database search, conducted to American Society of Testing Materials (ASTM) standards, reviewed available environmental records of hazardous or toxic sites at or within a 1-mile radius of the Park. The database findings from the search include, but are not limited to:

- National Priorities List (NPL) - 1 site
- Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Information System (CERCLIS) - 2 sites
- Leaking Underground Storage Tank (LUST) - 27 sites
- Underground Storage Tank (UST) - 15 sites



- Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) Large Quantity Generator (LQG) - 10 sites
- RCRA Small Quantity Generator (SQG) - 44 sites
- California Hazardous Material Incident Report System (CHMIRS) - 17 sites
- Cortese<sup>3</sup> - 43 sites

A number of hazardous materials generators and underground storage tanks (USTs) are identified in the immediate vicinity of the Parcels D and G-1; however, none of the sites identified in the database were located on these parcels, with the exception of the NPL site. Sites listed on the NPL, or Superfund, are critical and priority cleanup areas, designated by the EPA. As noted in the Groundwater section above, the Park is underlain by a contaminated groundwater site known as Area 4 (Pollock) of the EPA's SFVGB. A more detailed description of the hazardous materials on and near the Taylor Yard complex can be found in Appendix A.

#### *Parcel D*

Following the DTSC site remediation, approval was given for partial site closure while deed restrictions were under negotiation (DTSC 2003b). Environmental Resources Management (ERM) prepared a LEADSPREAD model to evaluate the risk of lead exposure from the soil on Parcel D. On September 16, 1998, DTSC granted partial closure for soil at Parcel D (ERM 2003). Based on the evaluation, DTSC prepared the *Explanation of Significant Differences for Union Pacific Railroad Company Taylor Yard – Sale Parcel Site, Hump Yard Area* [Parcel D], dated January 30, 1998. This report concluded that Parcel D has been cleared to be developed for residential/park standards or unrestricted use.

#### *Parcel G-1*

Parcel G also underwent the RI/FS process; however, during the process Parcel G was subdivided into G-1 and G-1 to expedite the closure or partial closure of soil issues on G-1 for the site's future to the Department. In February 2003, a DTSC draft work plan for Parcel G-1 was prepared by ERM. When State Parks purchased Parcel G-1 from UPRC, the site was zoned industrial. Therefore, UPRC was required to remediate only to industrial development standards. Before the Park can be developed, State Parks is required by law to remediate the land to residential/park standards.

### **Biotic Resources**

Biological resources within Parcel D were compiled based on multiple sites visits through 2004 and 2005 prior to grading, consultation with Department employees, and a review of existing environmental documentation for the region. Information reviewed included the California Natural Diversity Data Base (CNDDDB) (CDFG 2003a), as well as *The Biota of the Los Angeles River* (Garrett *et*

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<sup>3</sup> A Cortese site is defined as one of the following: public drinking water wells with detectable levels of contamination; hazardous substance sites selected for remedial action, sites with known toxic material identified through the abandoned site assessment program; sites with USTs having a reportable release; and all solid waste disposal facilities from which there is known migration.

al. 1993), *Taylor Yard Multiple Objective Feasibility Study*, and R.F. Holland's *Preliminary Descriptions of the Terrestrial Natural Communities of California*. The following section evaluates vegetation in this as described according to Holland (1986) and *A Manual of California Vegetation* (Sawyer Keeler-Wolf 1999). The biological conditions described in this section, reflect the conditions of Parcels D and G-1 prior to implementation of the IPU<sup>4</sup>.

The site survey covered the entire site and documented the existing vegetation and all observed wildlife. Native and non-native vegetation associations were mapped in the field by hand on a map of the site, with vegetation boundaries compiled using a geographic information system (GIS).

The survey was limited to take account of seasonal and diurnal bias. General surveys were conducted during the daytime to improve the detection of plant and most wildlife. A focused Spadefoot toad (*Scaphiophus hammondi*) survey was conducted in the spring 2004 during nighttime hours. A wetland boundary determination was performed in the Spring 2004 along and within the freshwater marsh.

### Vegetation

Due to past grading and railroad operations within Parcels D and G-1, much of the vegetation is considered disturbed habitat or ruderal habitat. These vegetation communities develop as a result of repeated past disturbances in an area, which alter, and in some cases, eliminate, native plant species. Although most of the site was characterized by disturbance specialist species that are not native to the region, isolated patches of mulefat scrub, disturbed riparian woodland, freshwater marsh, and disturbed coastal sage scrub have been identified on Parcel D. The naturally vegetated portion of the Los Angeles River is located directly adjacent to Parcel G-1, acting as the seed source for many of the native plant species currently found at the Park. Trash and debris piles occur throughout the site, as do exotic species such as tree tobacco (*Nicotiana glauca*), pampas grass (*Cortaderia sellonana*), fountain grass (*Pennisetum setaceum*), and fennel (*Foeniculum vulgare*).

As discussed above, patches of Mulefat scrub are scattered throughout Parcel D. Mulefat is a facultative wetland plant species that is adapted to disturbance in mesic habitats. Mulefat can occur in upland habitats that have low evapo-transpirative stress. Because of the moisture retaining properties of the alkaline soils within this project site, mulefat is able to persist in this highly disturbed habitat.

The stretch of the Los Angeles River adjacent to the Park is unlined and supports riparian vegetation and open water year round. A freshwater marsh was identified on the western side of parcel D, which supported cattails (*Typha* sp.), rushes (*Juncus* spp.), tules (*Scirpus* spp.), arroyo willow (*Salix lasiolepis*), red willow (*Salix laevigata*), black willow (*Salix gooddingii*), and knotweed (*Polygonum* sp.). This area was estimated at covering approximately 50 meters by 30 meters. This freshwater marsh area supports the greatest diversity of wildlife observed during the biological surveys on Parcel D.

<sup>4</sup> As discussed in Section 1.1.3.3, an IPU has been approved by the Department for the development of interim park facilities on the States 20-acre portion of Parcel D. Under the IPU project, the entire Parcel D site will be graded. The environmental impacts associated with the IPU project were evaluated in the *Taylor Yard Park Development Mitigated Negative Declaration* (MND), which was approved by the Department in May 2004. It is anticipated that the IPU grading activities will be implemented prior to the completion of this General Plan and all vegetation will be cleared from the site.

Due to the isolation of the mesic areas from the Los Angeles River, or from urban drainages that flow into the river, the riparian woodland areas on Parcel D are not considered federal and state jurisdictional wetlands, and thus not protected by the CDFG and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) wetland regulations.

### Wildlife

#### Birds

Despite the disturbed condition of Parcel D, several bird species were observed during surveys and site visits. Both native and non-native birds were observed foraging, nesting, and making general use of the site. The greatest diversity was located in the freshwater marsh and in the southern willow scrub/disturbed riparian woodland in the northern portion of the site. Several species of wading and shorebirds were observed foraging in the water. Species observed included a flock of black-necked stilts (*Himantopus mexicanus*), coots (*Fulica americana*), a sora (*Porzana carolina*), pintails (*Anas acuta*), cinnamon teals (*Anas cyanoptera*) and mallards (*Anas platyrhynchos*). In addition, native bird species have been observed using the disturbed coastal sage scrub and raptors were observed flying over during site visits.

#### Reptiles and Amphibians

One reptile was observed on the site during recent surveys, the side-blotched lizard (*Uta stansburiana*). Side-blotched lizards were observed as adults and juveniles. The only amphibian observed was the Pacific tree frog. It was observed using the freshwater marsh for shelter, breeding and foraging. A large population of the Pacific tree frog was observed within the freshwater marsh. Nearly all life forms of the Pacific tree frog were observed – tadpoles in the water and juveniles and adults in all color morphs. Adults were heard calling during nighttime surveys.

The freshwater marsh was also found to support dragonfly and damselfly adults and larvae and various aquatic invertebrates.

#### Mammals

Based on burrow evidence Botta's pocket gopher (*Thomomys bottae*) is likely to occur on site. During site visits tracks were observed from the striped skunk (*Mephitis mephitis*), Beecheys' ground squirrel (*Spermophilus beecheyi*), and coyote (*Canis latrans*). Additional urban species likely to occur on site include but not limited to the black rat (*Rattus rattus*), house mouse (*Mus musculus*). Trapping events were not conducted during site visits. The above list of mammal species is based on scat evidence, tracks, and common species known to occur in urban areas.

### Sensitive Plant Species

Sensitive plant species are those that are candidates, proposed, or listed as threatened or endangered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) or the California department of Fish and Game (CDFG), and those plants that are considered sensitive species by the California Native Plant Society (CNPS). There are several plant species known for the area around Taylor Yard that are considered to be sensitive; however, all are thought to be locally extirpated due to extensive development in the region. No sensitive plants have previously been detected within the park site, and none were observed during the recent reconnaissance surveys.

### Sensitive Wildlife Species

Sensitive wildlife are those animal species, which are candidates, proposed, or listed as threatened or endangered by the USFWS or the CDFG, and those animals that are considered species of concern or are listed as protected or fully protected by the state. Additionally, raptors protected under the federal Bald Eagle Protection Act are also considered sensitive species. Although no sensitive species have been documented on site, there is one sensitive reptile species, and ten sensitive bird species known to occur along the lower Los Angeles River (CCC 2002). Based on the relatively disturbed and isolated nature of the Taylor Yard area, these species are not expected to occur on-site.

### Wildlife Corridors/Habitat Connections

A habitat corridor can be defined as a linear landscape feature of sufficient width and buffer to allow animal movement between two patches of comparatively undisturbed habitat, or between a patch of habitat and some other vital resources. Regional corridors are defined as those linking two or more large areas of natural open space, while local corridors are those allowing resident animals to access critical resources (food, cover, and water) in a smaller area that might otherwise be isolated by urban development.

Parcel D is relatively small and isolated from large areas of native open space with poor habitat qualities at present; therefore, it currently does not serve as a functioning wildlife habitat linkage. In its current biologically degraded state, the unit adds minimal value to the Los Angeles River wildlife movement corridor. However, due to the proximity of Parcels D and G-1 to the Los Angeles River, the Park may evolve to synergistically establish and attract avian wildlife from throughout the region by providing protective cover, water, and forage for a variety of species, such as red-winged blackbird, northern rough-winged swallow, and mallard as they travel up and down the river valley. Regionally, the parcels may ultimately provide intermediate open space refuge for migratory species. The Park is centrally located between Griffith Park, located 3.8 miles to the northwest; Silver Lake Reservoir, 2.5 miles west; Elysian Park, 0.75 mile south; Elyria Canyon Park, 0.75 mile east; and Ernest E. Debs Park, 3.8 miles east.

### Paleontology

Given the extent of disturbance at the Park over the past 100 years, no paleontological resources are expected to occur in the immediate project area.

## **Cultural Resources**

### Prehistoric Overview

The earliest evidence of occupation in the Los Angeles area dates to at least 9,000 years before present (B.P.) and is associated with a period known as the Millingstone Cultural Horizon (Wallace 1955; Warren 1968). Departing from the subsistence strategies of their nomadic big-game hunting predecessors, Millingstone populations established more permanent settlements. The settlements were located primarily on the coast and in the vicinity of estuaries, lagoons, lakes, streams, and marshes where a variety of resources including seeds, fish, shellfish, small mammals, and birds were exploited. Early Millingstone occupations are typically identified by the presence of handstones

(manos) and millingstones (metates), while those Millingstone occupations dating later than 5000 B.P. contain a mortar and pestle complex as well, signifying the exploitation of acorns in the region. Currently no known Millingstone sites have been found directly attributable to the Tongva. It is unclear at the present time, which California Indian group has cultural affiliations from this early time period in Los Angeles and in Orange County.

Although many aspects of Millingstone culture persisted, by 3500 B.P., a number of socioeconomic changes occurred (Erlandson 1994; Wallace 1955; Warren 1968). These changes are associated with the period known as the Intermediate Horizon (Wallace 1955). Increased populations in the Santa Barbara Channel region necessitated the intensification of existing terrestrial and marine resources (Erlandson 1994). This was accomplished in part through the use of the circular shell fishhooks on the coast and more abundant and diverse hunting equipment. Evidence of shifts in settlement patterns has been noted at a variety of locations at this time and is seen by many researchers as reflecting increasingly territorial and sedentary populations. Similar changes probably occurred to Tongva settlements and culture as well. The Intermediate Horizon marks a period in which specialization in labor emerged, trading networks became an increasingly important means by which both utilitarian and nonutilitarian materials were acquired, and travel routes were extended. Archaeological evidence suggests that the margins of numerous rivers, marshes, and swamps within the Los Angeles River drainage area served as ideal locations for prehistoric settlement during this period. These well-watered areas contained a rich collection of resources and are likely to have been among the more heavily traveled routes.

The Late Prehistoric period, spanning from approximately 1500 B.P. to the mission era, is the period associated with the florescence of the contemporary Native American group known as the Gabrielino (Wallace 1955). Coming ashore near San Pedro in October of 1542, as well as landing at San Clemente and Catalina Islands, Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo was the first European to make contact with the Gabrielino Indians or Tongva. Occupying the southern Channel Islands and adjacent mainland areas of Los Angeles and Orange counties, the Gabrielino are reported to have been second only to their Chumash neighbors in terms of population size, regional influence, and degree of sedentism (Bean and Smith 1978). The Gabrielino are estimated to have numbered around 5,000 in the pre-contact period for the mainland (Kroeber 1925) with possibly an additional 2,000-5,000 for the Islands, at least late in prehistoric times (McCawley 1996:79-85). Maps produced by early explorers indicate that at least 26 Gabrielino villages were within proximity to known Los Angeles River courses, while an additional 18 villages were within reasonable proximity to the river (Gumprecht 1995).

These large village sites were occupied permanently in Late Prehistoric times and they were the community center for each area. Village inhabitants would then seasonally move to specialized camps to harvest shellfish, collect acorns, fish, or hunt. These camps would be abandoned at other seasons and often the early explorers mentioned seeing these places abandoned and sometimes burned (Brown 2001). Each village was overseen by a chief, also known as the *tomyaar* (McCawley 1996:90-93). He would manage the economy, social structure, and food stores within the village as well as coordinating exchanges for food or other resources to other villages or tribes. The *tomyaar* was the final authority in disputes.

Subsistence consisted of hunting, fishing, and gathering. Small terrestrial game were hunted with deadfalls, rabbit drives, and by burning undergrowth, while larger game such as deer were hunted using bows and arrows. Fish were taken by hook and line, nets, traps, spears, and poison (Bean and



Smith 1978; Reid 1939[1852]). The primary plant resources were the acorn, gathered in the fall and processed in mortars and pestles, and various seeds that were harvested in late spring and summer and ground with manos and metates. The seeds included chia and other sages, various grasses, and islay or holly leafed-cherry (Reid 1852).

The Tongva have been referred to by many names. As with many California Indian groups, there isn't a single term by which this group is known. The term Gabrielino was first applied to the Tongva by Father Crespi, after the naming of the first mission in the Los Angeles basin as Mission San Gabriel and its recruits as Gabrielino, sometimes also referred to as Gabrieleno (McCawley 1996:9). Some present day descendants prefer the latter spelling, but it seems to be an anglicized version of the former. Tongva comes from a word by the Gabrielino living near Tejon, but it is unclear what it means precisely. Some scholars view it as a derivative of a village named tōjwe (McCawley 1996:9). The Gabrielino from the Los Angeles area seem to have referred to themselves as *Komiivet* (McCawley 1996:9-10). This could mean that these local inhabitants were from the village of Komii, although the location of such a village has not been ascertained. Today, they are referred to most commonly as Tongva or Gabrieleno.

The Gabrieleno territory was extensive including most the Los Angeles basin, portions of Orange County & Riverside County, and several of the southern Channel Islands: Santa Catalina, San Clemente, and San Nicholas. The territory included portions of the Santa Ana and San Gabriel Mountains as well as the valleys and even some portions of the desert in Riverside County.

### Mission Period

The Mission Period served as the major turning point in the lives of most California Indians. Recruitment into the local missions began with the founding of Mission San Gabriel in 1771. This mission took longer than most to recruit local Indians due to the vicious treatment of local Indians by the Spanish guards. While previously in aboriginal times, people were free to roam and organize their own time, mission life was regimented. This was something foreign to the California Indians. Once in the missions, they were not free to come and go as they pleased. Indians were punished for leaving the mission and for minor infractions of the daily routine. However, one thing about the mission system that was attractive to certain people was that it changed the caste system of aboriginal life and raised people from the common ranks into new levels of authority. This process also served to break down traditional life of the local Indian community. There is evidence now that the neophytes were often mal-nourished, given the grueling work schedule and hard work (Engelhardt 1912; Castillo 1978).

The Indians did learn new skills at the missions. Women learned weaving, sewing, cooking, soap and candle making. Men learned skills for agriculture and new building techniques, including making adobes and building structures like aqueducts. Men also learned skills for ranching and carpentry. Traditional techniques and rituals were discouraged and some even forbidden. However, one consequence of this lifestyle and overcrowding was that the Indians were exposed to new pathogens to which they were completely vulnerable. Close quarters and poor living conditions insured that diseases ran rampant through the population (Castillo 1978:102; Cook 1940). Several epidemics hit the missions with devastating results in the numbers of Indians that perished. The mission padres themselves often complained about the living conditions of the neophytes, asking for more medicine and doctors to treat the sick. Those that complained too much were removed from their positions (Castillo 1978:102).

Resistance among the Gabrieleno began with the founding of Mission San Gabriel. The soldiers and padres were met by members of the village of *Sejat* who shot arrows at them. Rebellion and resistance was common at the missions (Castillo 1978). After a time, depression and resentment became a common condition to the neophytes (Castillo 1978). Many Indians began to desert the missions. Soon the missions were sending groups of soldiers to round-up deserters and bring them back to the missions. This tactic often led to formal conflict with California Indians and severe retribution (including massacres) by soldiers to often innocent California Indians (Cook 1960).

Gabrielenos were recruited in missions San Fernando, San Gabriel, and San Juan Capistrano. Despite this close contact for many years, the Spanish were fairly ignorant of the subtle as well as clearer distinctions between various California Indian groups. This finally led the Spanish government to survey the mission padres. This culminated in the Interrogatories of 1812-1813. This was the first systematic collection of data for the California Indian tribes. One of the more thorough and conscientious of the mission padres responding was Father Geronimo Boscana of Mission San Juan Capistrano. He collected data about the Gabrieleno during his tenure at San Juan Capistrano. He authored a book on the Gabrieleno originally titled Historical Account of the Belief, Usages, Customs, and Extravagancies of the Indians of this Mission of San Juan Capsitrano Called the Acagchemen Tribe often known simply as *Chinigchinich*. *Chinigchinich* was the spiritual god of the Tongva people. The book is an invaluable guide today to the common beliefs and practices of the Tongva, although available only in limited printings.

### Historical Background

Rio de Los Angeles State Park is uniquely connected to the literal flow of history related to the development of the City of Los Angeles and neighboring Glendale. Because of its position on the Los Angeles River channel and floodplain, it was a natural transportation corridor through the Glendale Narrows for the Tongva/Gabrieleno Indians. It was also the route taken by members of the 1769 Portolá expedition. Traveling from San Diego to found a settlement at Monterey, they camped along the dry east river bank reportedly near the present-day Broadway Bridge on August 2nd. Father Crespi, the expedition's diarist, named the river and valley which it bisected "El Río y Valle de Nuestra Señora la Reina de Los Angeles de la Porciúncula." He described the area as having "a very large bed, closing with the river here; it is plain what large torrents this must carry in season, with many dead trees that must have come down from the mountains." He noted that "the bed is well-lined with large trees, sycamores, willows, cottonwoods, and very large live oaks." There were also "great amounts of brambles, grapevines, and rose bushes having good-sized roses." To the south the river bed opened up into "very large, very green bottomlands, looking from afar like nothing so much as large cornfields," which Crespi described as having "all the requisites for a large settlement" (Brown 2001:337; and Pitt 1997:106).

Five years later, on March 22, 1774, another noted Spanish explorer, Captain Juan Bautista de Anza, retraced the Portolá Expedition's route through the area while leading a group of thirty-four colonists from Sonora, Mexico to Monterey. Participating in one of the longest treks in history, Anza's 1,200-mile trek proved the viability of an overland route connecting Alta California to Mexico City. Two years later Lt. Colonel Anza retraced the route with a larger party of 240 Sonorans to found the present town of San Francisco (Pitt 1997:21).

Another important group of Spanish settlers who passed just south of the park was the *Pobladores*, who founded *El Pueblo de la Reina de los Angeles Sobre el Rio de la Porciúncula* just downstream on the river's west bank on September 4, 1781. Of the group's twenty-two men and women, only two were white Spaniards; the majority being of Indian, Mestizo, African, and Mulatto descent. The primary purpose for founding the pueblo was to take advantage of the areas rich, well-watered soil to grow crops to feed and supply Spain's California military garrisons (or *Presidios*) rather than having to depend on irregular supply by ship. As the town developed, Los Angelinos utilized San Fernando Road along the present-day park's eastern boundary as a major transportation corridor for traffic passing into and out of Los Angeles. As part of the El Camino Real (The King's Highway), it linked the nascent town to the Mission San Fernando Rey de España and the northern coastal missions, presidios, and ranchos beyond via the Cahuenga Pass. The road also connected the town to the San Joaquin and Central Valleys via the Tejón Pass through the Tehachapi Mountains (Coalition 2004; EDAW 2004:23; LA Almanac 2005; and Pitt 1997:70, 135, 297 and 494).

San Fernando Road continued to serve as a vital transportation and communications corridor during the Mexican Rancho era. The nexus of three ranchos: Rancho San Rafael (aka La Zanja); Rancho Los Feliz; and Cañada de los Nogales. The first was a 36,403 acre section of land between Arrowy Seco and the Los Angeles River, including what is now Glendale, Atwater Village, Glassell Park, Cypress Park, and portions of Mt. Washington. The second Spanish land grant in California, it was given by Governor Pedro Fages to José María Verdugo. A former corporal in the Spanish Colonial forces, Verdugo had served at Mission San Gabriel prior to his retirement from the colonial army. Although he had received his grant on October 20, 1784, Verdugo and his family did not live on the ranch until 1790. The second rancho, Rancho Los Feliz, which borders on the park's northwestern boundary, was granted to Vicente Félix in 1802. The third, Rancho Cañada de los Nogales (The Glen or Dale of the Walnut Trees), bordering the park's northeastern boundary along San Fernando Road, was granted to José M. Aguila in 1844. Besides running cattle and horses, Don Verdugo planted and grew wine grapes, vegetables, oranges, pomegranates, figs, peaches, apples, and wheat in the fertile soil. There were also mountain lions, grizzly bears, deer, coyote, and quail to hunt. During Verdugo's ownership, colonial New Spain became the independent Republic of Mexico in 1821. As a result, the rancho system was greatly expanded in California as trade with the outside world increased, based primarily on the export of steer hides. Adding to this was Governor José Figueroa's 1831 proclamation ordering the secularization of the missions, which shifted economic and political power from the former Spanish missionaries to the rancheros. However, Verdugo died that year, leaving the land to his son Julio and daughter Catalina. Due to drought and financial hardships, by 1861 they had to relinquish their claims. There are no reports or indications of the existence of any buildings or structures associated with the Verdugo family's operation of the ranch within the park. In the ten years following the Verdugo family sale of their ranch, it was sold and subdivided into smaller ranch and farm properties (Coalition 2004; Cowan 1977:36, 53, 87, 146 and 148; Pitt 1997:526; and Rolle 1998).

One historic activity that can be traced to the property during the Verdugo ownership is that of the Butterfield Overland Mail line. The United States Post Office had granted the line's founder, John Butterfield, a contract to run mail along the 2,700-mile line in 1858. Besides carrying the mail, the line's horse-drawn coaches offered the first direct two-way through passenger service from St. Louis, Missouri to California. Traveling by way of El Paso, Texas, and Tucson, Arizona, or south from San Francisco through the Central Valley, coaches stopped near the plaza in Los Angeles. One of six stage stops in the Greater Los Angeles area. The others included El Monte, Cahuenga, Mission San

Fernando, and Fort Tejón. Although it was discontinued at the outbreak of the Civil War, it had already helped to end the state's isolation from the rest of the United States. Taken over by the Wells-Fargo Express Company after the war, the route continued to link Los Angeles with the rest of California and points east. Except for the present alignment of San Fernando Road, there is no reported evidence of historic stagecoach-related activities in the study area (Beck 1974: 51-52; Conkling 1947 vol. 2:248, 251-252 and Map Supplement; Pitt 1997:68 and Overland 1958).

Hard on the heels of the stagecoach was the coming of the transcontinental railroad through the Glendale Narrows in 1876. That year the Southern Pacific Railroad began construction of its main line into Los Angeles from San Francisco via what is now Los Angeles River SP. A subsidiary of the transcontinental Central Pacific Railroad, its president, Collis P. Huntington, reportedly attempted to bribe city officials into granting the SP the exclusive use of the Los Angeles riverbed for its right-of-way. While this and other schemes failed, the railroad was able to acquire a considerable amount of public lands for rail yards gratis (Fickewirth 1992:145; and Pitt 1997:478-479).

As part of SP's transcontinental railroad, that section of the route through the present-day state park saw a new wave of settlers through the Glendale Narrows into the Los Angeles basin. So much so, that by 1880 the area's population had nearly doubled. The Santa Fe Railroad's 1886 completion of a second transcontinental line into Los Angeles caused a fare war that drove fares to an unprecedented low. More settlers continued to head west and the demand for real estate skyrocketed. As real estate prices soared, land that had been farmed for decades outlived its agricultural value and was sold to become residential communities. The subdivision of the large ranchos took place during this time. The San Rafael Land Grant was subdivided and sold to Andrew Glassell, Alexis Jeffries, and Harriet Atwater Palmour, among others. Sixty new town sites were platted in 1887 alone (Gumprecht 1995).

As the SP's rail traffic increased, it was necessary to construct a number of rail yards along the Los Angeles River north of its original 1874 passenger and freight depot and train yard at Alameda and Commercial streets. In 1888 SP established a freight storage yard adjunct at what is now the Los Angeles River SP. Laid out along a sandy river terrace between the main line along San Fernando Road and the river's eastern bank, it could hold as many as 225 freight cars. SP expanded the facility between 1907 and 1911 some two-and-a-half miles to the south. By 1913 the yard's receiving capacity included ten tracks totaling 21,000 feet spread across both sides of the main line. In addition, the Pacific Fruit Company, a jointly owned Southern Pacific-Union Pacific subsidiary, erected a 50,000 ton a day ice plant between the storage tracks and the river. The following year the Pacific Fruit Express Company located its Los Angeles shops nearby (Coalition 2004; and Mullaly and Petty 2002:123 and 321).

After a near disastrous flood in 1914, when water flowing into the Pacific Ocean along the Los Angeles River equaled that of the Colorado River, SP began a major overhaul to what was then referred to as the "New Classification Yard." During the 1920s the nation's surging post-World War I economy had brought about an increase in rail traffic into and out of the city. In 1925 SP shifted supervision of its entire Los Angeles freight handling operations from the River Station to a new freight yard at Taylor Yard (Mullaly and Petty 2002:123-124; and Pitt 1997:303).

The history behind the freight yard's new appellation has an interesting story. In 1908 SP installed a switch and laid a spur line at the New Classification Yard just north of Elm Street parallel to San Fernando Road's eastern alignment. The spur tracks serviced the new feed mill of the Taylor Milling Corporation. The corporation's owner, J. Hartley Taylor, was an influential businessman, whose

career began in the area. Taylor had come to Los Angeles with his family from their native Ohio in 1887. Settling in the narrows, the family established a little hog farm along the river's east bank, where they also grew vegetables and had milk cows. Whatever surplus they had they sold at a roadside stand along the trail that eventually became San Fernando Road. The stand evolved into a grocery, meat, and produce store. The Taylors soon added a mill and grain storage facilities next to the store where local farmers could bring their grain to have it ground and mixed into feedstuffs, breakfast cereal, and flour (Nootbaar 2000:1).

In order to supplement his income, Taylor would drive his two-horse team into Los Angeles, where he would tie them up. He then boarded the last run of the Sherman Railway, after which he changed into a conductor's uniform, and served as such until the end of the line at the beach. Here he would unroll his blanket and sleep in one of the cars until the morning run back to Los Angeles. After changing back into his overalls, he picked up his team and headed over to the hotels and restaurants along Main and Spring streets. He then proceeded to load up the wagon with garbage and offal and hauled it back home to feed the hogs (Ibid.).

Taylor's business interests expanded exponentially during World War I, as a result of having to meet a high demand for vital foodstuffs for the war effort. Completed in 1929 at the end of the Taylor Spur, his company's new all-concrete Taylor Mill Grain Silo was the second-highest structure in Los Angeles at the time, second only to City Hall. Over the next fifteen years, Taylor, whose company purchased several grain and feed mills at Stockton, Oakland, and Visalia, became the West Coast's largest commercial feed supplier. Taylor's business empire included a number of diverse interests. For example, the Western Industrial Engineering Company manufactured milling and industrial machinery; the Bonquet [sic] Laboratories manufactured food supplements; while Runnymede Farms became the world's largest supplier of chicken eggs. He was also the founder of the White Mountain Salt Company. Located in the Owens Valley, its now-historic 17-mile tramway hauled mineral salt down the White Mountains to the rail station at Keeler. His brother-in-law, well-known brick maker Elmer Simons, influenced his decision to found the Van Nuys Brick & Tile Company. His sister Margaret ran the Mountain Meadow Dairy in Jacumba, California. Taylor later acquired the exclusive Cadillac/Oldsmobile dealership in Glendale, served as both Director of Citizens National Bank and Trustee of Occidental College (Ibid:2-4 and Winter 2003).

In addition to his business achievements, J. Hartley Taylor also lived an accomplished personal and social life. He served as master of his local Masonic Lodge, commander of the Glendale Commendary of Knights Templar, patron of his Eastern Star Chapter, worthy grand patron of the State of California Eastern Star, and as founding sponsor of the Eagle Rock Chapter of the Order of De Molay (Winter 2003).

The Southern Pacific Railroad introduced a number of modern railroad methods to Southern California at Taylor Yard. The most significant was the "hump-based" classification system, where small switch locomotives shoved strings of freight cars to the top of an artificially created eight-foot-high hillock or "hump." Originally located just south of the park, here, under the direction of switch foremen situated in a number of control towers along the tracks, uncoupled freight cars were allowed to roll down the opposite side to prearranged tracks. Manned by car riders, who used brake wheels to slow their descent, the cars rolled into a "classification bowl," where they were assembled into consists. Between fifteen and twenty car riders were employed on any given shift. The yardmen of the Taylor "train factory" were disassembling and reassembling as many as sixty freight trains a day.



Operating 24-hours a day, the yard, especially around the assembly tracks, was a cacophony of steam locomotives, rumbling freight cars, and crashing knuckle couplers (Mullaly and Petty 2002:124-125).

In addition to switching cars, other activities occurring at Taylor Yard were light repairs such as cleaning cars and oiling friction bearings. However, because the eight “rip” (repair in place) car repair tracks were narrowly spaced at 13-foot centers, the yard was an extremely dangerous place to work as rolling freight cars lumbered down the hump with only the car men on board to slow them down before coupling into the cars ahead (Ibid.:122 and 125).

Taylor Yard was successful in alleviating freight traffic congestion at the downtown freight yards and the Alhambra repair shops. It became the centerpiece of the Southern Pacific Railroad system and an indispensable Los Angeles Basin focus from which all rail transport in and out of town had to pass. Situated only a few miles north of downtown Los Angeles, Taylor Yard was a crowded spot, forcing trains at times to wait on the yard’s periphery for hours before getting into Taylor’s arrival tracks (Winter 2003).

SP dealt with this problem in 1931 by allowing the rival Union Pacific Railroad to lay double tracks along the river’s eastern bank. This allowed the redirection of west-bound freight trains entering or leaving Los Angeles from having to cross the river. That same year SP built a new roundhouse and divisional shop facility at Taylor Yard between the Pacific Fruit Express grounds and the riverbed. The last large roundhouse built by SP, it provided servicing of freight locomotives of the San Joaquin and Los Angeles divisions. Because Taylor Yard was situated above the Los Angeles River Channel’s natural flood plain, and SP’s erection of a levee along the river bank saved the facility from extensive damage during another flood in 1938. The worst flood in LA’s history to date; it crippled SP’s operations out of the city for days. As a result, the City of Los Angeles began an extensive channelization of the river. A panoramic view of Taylor Yard taken during the 1950s shows the entire length of the river’s east bank covered with concrete, with culverts opening out onto the river bed (Mullaly and Petty 2002:128, 138, and 184-185).

For nearly 40 years, Taylor Yard continued as the City’s major railway hub and the surrounding community of Cypress Park was home to hundreds of railroad workers. During this time SP spent \$2.5 million to upgrade Taylor Yard. In 1949, the Taylor Yard facility was updated with diesel shops, which lined the river, to accommodate Southern Pacific’s growing fleet of diesel-powered engines. Among the most important improvements was the relocation and automation of the Hump Yard. Situated in the park’s lower section, it featured pneumatically controlled retarders that pinched the cars’ steel wheels as they rolled down the hump sans brakemen. Expanding to twenty-five receiving tracks, as many as 2,700 cars passing over the hump were combined into forty different trains in a typical 24-hour period (Ibid.:175-176, 179 and 221).

The completion of a modern freight classification yard at West Colton in 1973 greatly reduced Taylor Yard’s importance as the “epicenter” of SP’s switching operations in the southland. The majority of the Southland’s freight now passed through the Palmdale-Colton cut-off to the West Colton Yard. While Taylor Yard was still an important engine and car repair facility, its switching days were over. For the next twelve years, SP began to slowly phase out these operations, finally closing the yard in 1985. This invariably had a detrimental social impact: the loss of several hundred residents in the surrounding communities who lost their jobs (Ibid.:237, 239 and 248-249).

In 1997, the Union Pacific Railroad merged with the Southern Pacific and operated Taylor Yard as two sections: an "Active Yard," where some rail maintenance activities still occurred, and a "Sale Yard," which was divided into several individual parcels for sale. The passage of Prop 12 in 2000, the statewide parks bond, provided a potential catalyst for the "greening" of at least one segment of Taylor Yard. In June 2000, the Coalition for a State Park at Taylor Yard urged Governor Davis and the California State Legislature to approve \$45 Million to acquire lands at Taylor Yard for a State Park. The newest State Park in Los Angeles in over a generation, it would be the lynchpin the development of the proposed Los Angeles River Parkway (EDAW 2004: 9; and Mazowiecki 1996:2).

### Cultural Resources in the Project Vicinity

#### *Archaeological Resources*

Although the Taylor Yard complex lies in an area of Los Angeles that contains a tremendously rich and diverse prehistory, surveys conducted within the past 15 years have failed to uncover any archaeological sites in the vicinity of the former rail yard. Those areas northeast of Los Angeles were among the first to be settled and developed in the years following the establishment of the Pueblo. Much of the area is either developed with structures and pavement, or disturbed. It is likely, however, that subsurface intact archaeological remains may exist.

#### *Historical Resources*

While the park certainly has had a rich history containing the routes of several historic transportation corridors, there are few surviving features. In fact, except for a solitary signal cantenary tower along San Fernando Road and what appears to be a section of graded single track roadbed beneath it, there are no intact historical features above ground that would suggest that this was the site of an active railroad facility for over 100 years.

However, there are a number of historic resources in the areas bordering the park. They include a variety of structures, features and cultural landscapes associated with early Spanish exploration and settlement, the evolution of water systems in Los Angeles, the development of the railroads, and early 20<sup>th</sup> century community development. A number of noteworthy resources are described below.

**Portola Trail Campsite.** Don Gaspar de Portola and a small contingent of men, including Father Juan Crespi, camped near what is now the Elysian Park entrance, on the northwest corner of North Broadway and Elysian Park Drive, during their initial visit to the area in August of 1769. Fr. Crespi reportedly conducted the first Roman Catholic Mass in Southern California at this site.

**Juan Bautista de Anza Trail.** Setting out on his exploratory journey in 1774, Juan Bautista de Anza was the first European to establish an overland route from Mexico, through the Sonoran Desert, to the Pacific Coast of California. The de Anza trail passes near the confluence of the Arroyo Seco and the Los Angeles River and continues through northeast Los Angeles.

**Zanja Irrigation System.** This irrigation system was built during the first year of settlement of the Pueblo. The system was greatly expanded over the following 100 years, as it successfully carried water from the Los Angeles River to homes for domestic use and for the irrigation of agricultural fields. Portions of this system have been identified, the most recent section uncovered in an area off of State Park property, but at the Cornfield Yard in downtown Los Angeles (Horne 2000).

**Bernard Spilkor Store.** Built in 1895, this 19<sup>th</sup> century industrial building is located at 1803 San Fernando Road, across the street from Taylor Yard.

**The Los Angeles River.** The Los Angeles River has played an integral role in the growth and direction of Los Angeles and its surrounding area. Appealing to early explorers, the river provided ample water to the surrounding area and created a rich and diverse landscape suitable for California's southern Pueblo. As the Pueblo grew, it suffered as a result of both water shortages and floods. Plans to resolve Los Angeles' flood issues began in 1914. A series of large-scale construction efforts followed with the building of dams, retention basins, and channels. These efforts continue today.

**Adobes.** The San Rafael Adobe and the Catalina Verdugo Adobe are two vestiges that remain from the Verdugo land grant era. Both are located in nearby Glendale.

**Fletcher Drive Railroad Trestle.** Constructed above Fletcher Drive, just west of Riverside Drive (formerly Woodstock Avenue) in 1903, a complex trestle was built to accommodate travel on the Glendale and Los Angeles Electric Railway. The concrete pilings as well as a set of stairs that led to a passenger station remain. This is but one of many railroad-related features in the area.

**Dayton Signal Tower.** Constructed at the south end of Taylor Yard's facility in 1932, this tower is reinforced concrete with an art deco style. The tower is located on the west side of the Los Angeles River just north of I-5.

**Hemphill Diesel Engine Technical School.** Located at 212 San Fernando Road, this is a two-story art deco style structure dating to the 1920s and 1930s.

**Franciscan Pottery Site.** The Franciscan Ceramics Pottery facility was known as the Pacific Art Tile Company from 1875 to the 1930s and then the Gladding McBean Company from the 1930s through the 1950s. Located in Atwater Village, the Gladding McBean Company produced some of the finest Franciscan wares in the world. Many of the architectural tiles manufactured during that time period continue to embellish historic buildings in Los Angeles today (Regardie 1996). The facility's structures were demolished in 1988 and the site was excavated by archaeologists during the 1990s.

**Commercial Buildings.** By March 1925, a number of commercial buildings were nearing completion along Glendale Boulevard. Among them were the Shugart Building at Garden Avenue and the Saunders Building between Glenfeliz Boulevard and Edenhurst Avenue.

**Tam O'Shanter Inn.** Originally opened in 1922 as Montgomery's Country Inn, the Tam O'Shanter Inn on Los Feliz Boulevard and San Fernando Road is among the oldest establishments in the area.

**Glassell Park School.** Located at 2211 West Avenue 30, this two-story Spanish Colonial Revival/Art Deco structure was built in 1923.

**Service Station.** Built between 1936 and 1938, this now modern gas station is located at 2751 Fletcher Drive.

**Fletcher Drive Bridge.** Landmark 469-foot-long bridge over Los Angeles River, constructed in 1927.

**Van De Kamp's Holland Dutch Bakery.** Built in 1930 and 1931, the Van De Kamp's bakery and headquarters located on Fletcher Drive and San Fernando Road were designed with a 16th century Dutch Revival flair, complete with windmill, gables, and ornamental brickwork. Van de Kamp's embodies an excellent example of architecture that combines thematic architecture with the function of an industrial plant. Revitalization plans are currently underway at the site.

**Atwater Residential Districts.** The majority of the residences associated with the Brunswick Avenue, Fantasy Bungalow, and the Atwater Craftsman and Revival Bungalow Districts were built during the 1910s and 1920s. The architectural style of the Brunswick Bungalow District was likely influenced by the whimsical and fanciful sets of the silent motion picture era. The Atwater Craftsman District comprises a fairly dense grouping of modest, relatively unaltered bungalows in Craftsman, Colonial Revival, English Revival, Queen Anne, and American Foursquare styles.

**Cypress Park Residential Districts.** The Huron/Idell/Jeffries District and the Loosmore-Maceo Streets Cluster District located in the neighborhood of Cypress Park are comprised of structures built between 1900 and 1920. The Huron and the Loosmore Districts consist of relatively modest single-story Craftsman homes, most of which are located in the 2000-blocks of Huron, Idell, and Jeffries Streets and the 3000-block of Loosmore Street.

### Interpretive/Educational Resources

Interpretive and educational resources are programs that heighten and increase public understanding, appreciation, and enjoyment of the natural, cultural, and recreational values. Providing interpretive and educational experiences that are both meaningful and inspiring are central to the California State Parks experience. These experiences have the potential to touch the minds, hearts, and spirits of all who visit the Park, whether a park visit comprises a few hours or a pattern of regular visits. Careful examination of the Park's existing conditions provides an inventory of possibilities.

### Local, Regional, and Statewide Context

At the local level, Rio de Los Angeles State Park is in close proximity to one of only three soft-bottom sections of the Los Angeles River, affording a rare opportunity to observe first-hand the survival of native wetland and riparian habitats. The local community has demonstrated a commitment to protect the river throughout the public meetings held in preparation for the General Plan. The public desire for an integrated park which includes the creation of a natural ecosystem is evidence of this support.

At the regional level, the city, Los Angeles, is the most populous city in Southern California, and inflicts a proportionally large toll on the natural environment. This is manifest through urban encroachment on rivers and river habitat. Regional networks such as The River Project, Northeast Trees, San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy, Heal the Bay, Friends of the Los Angeles River, and the Los Angeles and San Gabriel Rivers Watershed Council demonstrate the dedication of multiple agencies and multi-jurisdictions to protect the river areas.

At the statewide level, the Department's strategic initiatives, documented in the *Seventh Generation: The Strategic Vision of California State Parks* are central to the development of careful stewardship of natural resources across the state. The initiative seeks to increase leadership in natural resource management,

create urban connections, and expand recreational opportunities. Rio de Los Angeles State Park has the potential to contribute in all three of these areas as it participates in changing the site's current brownfield designation into a thriving natural habitat that greatly enhances the revitalization of the Los Angeles River.

### **Current Education and Interpretation**

An interpretive planning team has been assembled to address the educational and interpretive component of the IPU project, scheduled to be completed during 2005. The team is comprised of California State Park staff and members of The River Project, a non-profit organization dedicated to natural resource protection in Los Angeles County. Appendix X provides a list of IPU Interpretive Planning Team members. Grants have been obtained by local non-profit groups to provide local school children with opportunities to learn about the natural, cultural, and historic resources of the area and the importance of the Los Angeles River to the founding of Los Angeles. Students are also encouraged to participate in artistic interpretation exercises related to the IPU, and receive a curriculum focusing on water resources and sustainability.

### **Profiles of Similar Educational and Interpretive Facilities in the Surrounding Communities**

The vicinity of northeast Los Angeles has a number of facilities that address the area's natural and cultural heritage and connection to the Los Angeles River. The following profiles offer a sample of some sites and programs available within the surrounding communities:

- **AUDOBON CENTER AT DEBS PARK** is a multi-million dollar Audubon Nature and Science Center serving wildlife and humans at the 300-acre Ernest E. Debs Regional Park. The Center provides environmental educational programs for over 50,000 schoolchildren who live within two miles of the park. Families also have the opportunity to learn about the natural world at Deb's Park through hiking, painting, cooking, and exploration activities. The Deb's Park facility is part of the Audubon Society's focus on establishing centers in urban communities. An ecological monitoring program assists in protecting the health of the walnut-oak woodland, grassland, coastal sage scrub, and 138 bird species, scarce remnants of the native habitats that once rimmed the Los Angeles Basin.
- **GRIFFITH PARK – Los Angeles Zoo's Native Garden for Wildlife** represents the natural habitat of Griffith Park connecting the oak woodlands and scrub plant associations native to Griffith Park with the sycamore woodlands and riparian corridor of the Los Angeles River. There is an edible garden program called "meals that appeal" which uses plants as an enrichment and nutritional supplement for the animals at the Zoo. The Zookeepers depend on the plants that grow within the Zoo and Griffith Park as a unique "edible garden".
- **SMITH PARK** in the city of San Gabriel hosts a Native American Garden that contains indigenous plants from the Los Angeles basin used by the Gabrieleno/Tongva native people for food, medicine, baskets, construction, and shelter. The Native American Garden entices visitors to learn about the relationship between native plants and native people. Specific Gabrieleno/Tongva tribal members have permission to take cuttings from Smith Park to use in the making of baskets, for healing practices, and in ceremonies. The park was planned by



Mark Acuna, an ethnobotanist from Claremont and cultural liaison to the Gabrieleno/Tongva Tribal Council.

- **LOS ANGELES RIVER CENTER & GARDENS** in Cypress Park features courtyard gardens with fountains surrounded by Spanish-style buildings. The Center provides meeting spaces for community forums, is a location for celebrations and events, and is a hub for non-profit organizations that promote environmental protection and education. A visitor center provides self-guided tours about the history and wildlife of the Los Angeles River. The River Garden Park celebrates the Los Angeles River with an artistic interpretation of the river as its central feature.
- **LOS ANGELES RIVER PARKWAY** is a series of trails, parks, and natural lands located near the Los Angeles River. Interpretive panels associated with the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail and sculptural installations with design references to the wildlife of the river can be found throughout the parkway.
- **SOUTHWEST MUSEUM OF THE AMERICAN INDIAN** has supported research, publications, exhibitions, and educational activities for nearly 100 years to advance the public's understanding and appreciation of the indigenous cultures of the Americas. The museum is now under the umbrella organization of the Autry National Center. Its collections represent Native American cultures from Alaska to South America, including Pre-Columbian pottery and textiles, Hispanic folk and decorative arts, and materials associated with early California. Programs include school tours, pre-visit curriculum materials, outreach programs, teacher training programs, family programs, college student/adult programs, and the "Dig It!" archaeology program for students.
- **EXPOSITION PARK – The Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County** is the third largest Natural History Museum in the United States. More than 15 million specimens and artifacts from over 900 million years of the Earth's history are found in the museum's collections. Annual attendance is approximately one million visitors. Exhibit areas include science, history, and human studies. Programs include school guided tours, self-guided school visits, after-school and intersession programs, family programs, mobile education programs, and summer camps for children and families, including overnight camping in the museum's halls.

### Importance of the Park in Meeting Interpretive and Educational Needs

Interpretation and education are essential to the achievement of the California State Parks *Mission*. Interpretive and educational opportunities enhance experience of visitors and aid in the appreciation for intrinsic values in State Parks. Since the Park has been open for only a limited time, the following assessment of the importance of the Park in meeting interpretive and educational needs focuses on statewide and district-wide data.

From 2001-2002, State Parks provided over 19,000 school programs to 665,048 students (Source: California State Parks, Interpretation and Education Division). During that same year, State Parks located in the Los Angeles area provided 585 school programs to 19,178 students. These numbers are modest considering that there are more than 746,000 K-12 students enrolled in Los Angeles Unified

School District, the nation's second largest district. While State Parks in the Los Angeles area has consistently offered school programs, considering the numbers of school children in the area, there is an enormous unmet need and huge potential to expand our services.

According to *Public Opinions and Attitudes on Outdoor Recreation in California*, visiting museums and historic sites is rated among the top five recreational activities with high unmet demand in the state. The total number of hours of participation in existing interpretive programs has been steadily increasing, concomitant with a steadily declining satisfaction with the opportunities for learning. This indicates that visitors to California State Parks want more programs than are currently being offered.

State Parks also conducts a statewide standardized survey of teachers who bring school groups to State Parks. These survey results from the past five years show consistently high marks for the Department's efforts to provide programs that meet school curriculum needs. Participation in K-12 programs, however, is not increasing at the same high rates seen for the Department's regular programs. This may be partly due to the limited number of school programs that can be scheduled during peak periods. Those offered are continuously filled to capacity.

There are more than 80 elementary and middle schools within a 5-mile radius of the park site. Furthermore, with over 9 million people living in Los Angeles County alone, California State Parks has the potential to reach nearly a third of the state's entire population by providing interpretive and educational opportunities in the Los Angeles area. As a new addition to the State Park System, Rio de Los Angeles State Park is in a prime location to meet interpretive and educational needs for local and regional schools and residents, as well as for other Californians who visit the area.

#### Interpretative and Educational Resources and Collections

A unit data file is being compiled, detailing the unit's natural, cultural, and recreational resources. An emerging interpretation of the unit will be refined, with specific programs to be implemented, as discussed in Chapter 4 of this General Plan.

### **Aesthetic Resources**

#### Visual Setting

The Park connects to the local neighborhood through its frontage onto San Fernando Road, a first impression that will become increasingly prominent as the Park is developed and the entrance relocated to San Fernando Road. The Park is located in an area characterized as the first suburb in the City of Los Angeles. Adjacent properties surrounding the Park are a mix of industrial, commercial, and residential uses and styles. Industrial complexes have devalued the land and taken a visual toll on the suburban character of the surrounding communities. Freeways eviscerate neighborhoods; railroad tracks and high voltage power lines cut through residential neighborhoods. The ongoing industrial build-up and the freight switching operations annihilated the natural characteristics of what is now the Park.

However; not all development has had a negative visual impact surrounding the Park. There are numerous historic bridges spanning the Los Angeles River. The nearest historic bridge to the Park is Fletcher Bridge, located northeast of SR 2, a beautiful backdrop to Parcel G-1, less than 0.25 miles away. Furthermore, although channelized, this section of the Los Angeles River uniquely thwarts any visual attempt to be another cement enclosure in the 52-mile river. The Los Angeles River has began

to heal and repair the damage in the section by allowing natural processes to take place showcasing what the Los Angeles River once was – a free flowing, soft bottom geological and biologically distinct and diverse ecosystem. The riparian vegetation in this soft bottom section has encouraged sandbars to build-up that provide habitat for fish and other aquatic organisms. Additionally, the Park's location adjacent to the Glendale Narrows provides a unique backdrop setting. The site is overlooked by hills to the east and west, with environmental thematic pocket parks on the opposite side encouraging rebounding wildlife to hang-on until the channel turns into a river again. An aerial view of the park area and photos from the site are provided on Figures 9 and 10, respectively.

### Visual Qualities of the Park

Because the Taylor Yard complex was used for freight switching operations and other industrial activities for more than 75 years, none of the site has retained its natural character. Fill material stockpiled on Parcel D has been removed or graded to the undulating slopes and depressions visible today. The entire parcel is enclosed by a chain-link fence; however, stray dogs, illegal dumpers, and vagrants regularly gain access to the site. The Park connects to the local neighborhood through the parcel's San Fernando Road frontage, a first impression that will become increasingly prominent as the Park is developed and the entrance relocated to San Fernando Road.

Large overhead utility lines parallel the Los Angeles River on the G-1 Parcel. Overall, Parcel G-1 is flat and devoid of structures and vegetation. A few piles of rubble, concrete pads, small trees, and isolated patches of vegetation are visible on this otherwise barren dirt lot. Industrial buildings border the lot on the north, while to the east lie an elevated railroad track (Parcel A) and at-grade service road. Further north lie the Heron Gates and historic bridges spanning the Los Angeles River.

### Viewsheds

The Park is situated along the Los Angeles River between the Repetto Hills (Mount Washington) to the east and the Elysian Hills (Elysian Park) to the west. Although located in a highly developed area, the location and elevation of Parcel D affords views of Elysian Park to the southwest, Griffith Park (Santa Monica Mountains) and Griffith Observatory to the northwest, the Verdugo and San Gabriel Mountains to the far north, and the Repetto Hills to the east. The views are especially unique in the urban setting during spring, when the wildflowers are blooming and the hills are green. Regular trains passing the site offer countless opportunities for children and train enthusiasts to enjoy spotting southern California's rolling stock.

Parcel G-1 runs along the Los Angeles River and offers similar views of the surrounding mountains. The views from Parcel G-1 down to the river are of hardy plants, tall trees, and assorted birds, rare in urban Los Angeles. The Glendale Narrows boasts the highest level of diversity of plants and animals in the Los Angeles River (Gumprecht 2001).

### *Designated Scenic Areas and Routes*

The Park itself and adjacent lands are not designated scenic areas, but the natural hillsides of the surrounding open space provide a visually attractive setting for the Park. Griffith Park, visible to the northwest, is the largest urban park in the United States (Gumprecht 2001). This massive expanse of

open space offers refreshing views in the midst of the chaotic urban landscape and serves as a strong reminder of the natural environment.

SR 2 is the closest officially designated state scenic highway. However, it does not become a scenic highway until it reaches the San Gabriel Mountains approximately 11 miles north of the Park, where its name changes to the Angeles Crest Highway. There are no state designated scenic areas or routes in the vicinity of the project area (Caltrans 2003).

The City of Los Angeles has four designated scenic highways within a 3.5-mile radius of the Park: Los Feliz Boulevard, Glendale Boulevard, Eagle Rock Boulevard, and Colorado Boulevard. The scenic portion of Los Feliz Boulevard runs from Western Avenue to Riverside Drive and exposes viewers to hillside and city views. The scenic section of Glendale Boulevard stretches from the Los Angeles River Bridge to the city of Los Angeles boundary with Glendale. Its scenic features include views of the river and a wide landscaped median. The Eagle Rock Boulevard scenic section offers a landscaped median and runs from Verdugo Road to Colorado Boulevard. The scenic stretch of Colorado joins Eagle Rock Boulevard at Eagle Dale and continues to Monte Bonito. All the roads are subject to special city standards, which seek to enhance and maintain the scenic quality (City of Los Angeles 1999).

### **Recreational Resources**

There are currently no recreational resources, no habitable buildings, and no structures available to the public at the Park; however, the fairly even terrain on Parcel D and Parcel G-1 is suitable for a variety of recreational uses. Aside from utility lines, there are few physical obstructions to the development of Parcels D and G-1.

Parcels D and G-1 were used for industrial purposes for many years before being abandoned and purchased by the Department. Past rail yard operations at these sites resulted in soil contamination and contributed to groundwater contamination under much of the area, particularly Parcel G. These parcels have been cleared for residential development; however, prior to development of these parcels for recreational use, it must be determined that the soil contamination levels are within acceptable limits. Until such a determination is made, the state operated portions of Parcels D and G-1 will not be developed for recreational purposes.

### **Circulation**

The circulation network around the Park is extensive due to the site's proximity to major freeways, an arterial road system, bus service, rail service, and bikeways. The primary components of the surrounding circulation network are described below.

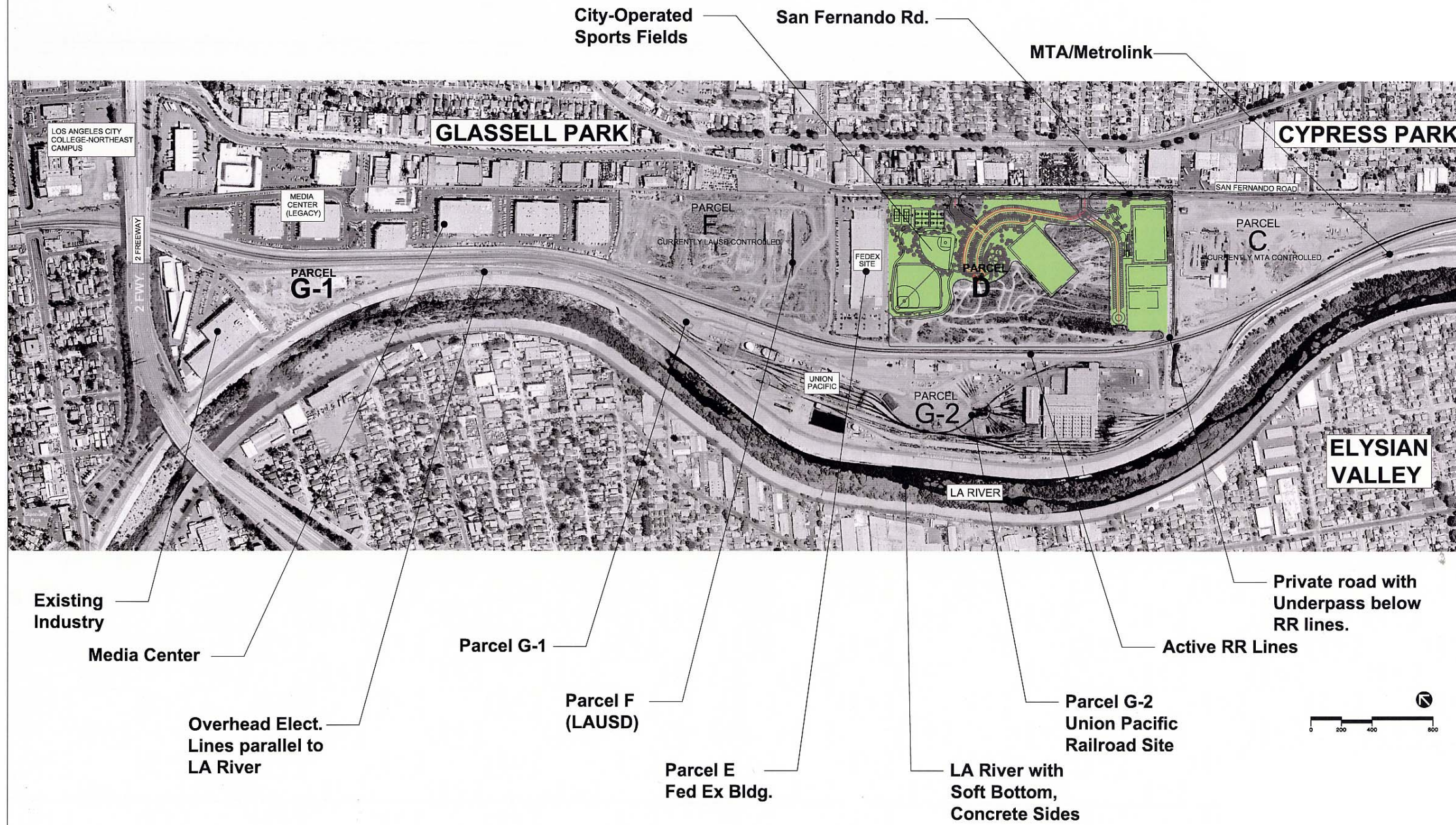
### **Freeways**

Three freeways are located within 2 miles of the Park: I-5, SR 2, and SR 110 (see Figure 9). I-5, the westernmost north-south interstate in the United States, starts at the Canadian border in Washington and travels south to the Mexican border in San Diego, California. It passes within 0.4 mile of the Park site on the western side of the Los Angeles River and intersects both SR 2 and SR 110.



# RIO DE LOS ANGELES STATE PARK

## FIGURE 9 EXISTING CONDITIONS PLAN



Source Data: Map features digitized by EDAW, Inc., ESA, and North East Trees. Aerial base from Eagle Aerial; flown October 7, 2002.

**EDAW**  
March 10, 2005





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# RIO DE LOS ANGELES STATE PARK

## FIGURE 10 EXISTING CONDITIONS PHOTOS



Entry to Parcel C-1 looking S/E



LA River along Parcel G-1 looking S/E



Parcel D looking East



San Fernando Rd. at Parcel D looking N/W



LA River along Parcel G-2 (not a part)



LA River along Parcel G-1 looking NW

Source: All photos taken by EDAW..

**EDAW**  
March 10, 2005



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Bounding the northern extent of the Park is SR 2, which begins at the Foothill Freeway (I-210) at the Glendale/La Cañada Flintridge city boundary. The freeway travels southwest past the Taylor Yard complex and terminates where it joins Glendale Boulevard in Silver Lake to become a highway. On- and off-ramps near the Park site are located at San Fernando Road just south of Fletcher Drive. The northern boundary of Parcel G-1 is located at SR 2.

SR 110 begins in Pasadena and follows the Arroyo Seco southwestward past Los Angeles River Park to the Santa Monica Freeway (I-10). At the Hollywood Freeway (I-101) it becomes the Harbor Freeway (I-110), which terminates at the Port of Los Angeles. SR 110 travels east-west, just over a mile south of the Park site. The on- and off-ramps nearest to the site are located at West Avenue 26 and North Figueroa Street.

### Arterial Streets

The major streets surrounding the site include San Fernando Road, Eagle Rock Boulevard, Figueroa Street, and Fletcher Drive. All four streets are designated Major Highway Class II. The City of Los Angeles completed a corridor study along San Fernando Road during 2003 to address specific traffic and pedestrian issues, including improved access to the Park. Specific recommendations for the San Fernando Road corridor are provided in that study.

### Bus Service

Six MTA bus routes run through northeast Los Angeles to downtown Los Angeles, providing access to the Park. Table 2 below lists the bus number, bus route, and the closest stop to the site (MTA 2003). The Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT) does not run any local or commuter buses (DASH) in or through the neighborhood (LADOT 2003).

**Table 2. Bus Routes in the Project Site Vicinity**

Bus Number	Bus Route	Nearest Bus Stop
90/91	Downtown Los Angeles to Sylmar	San Fernando & Fletcher
94/394	Downtown Los Angeles to Sylmar	San Fernando & Fletcher
176	El Monte to Glassell Park	San Fernando & Fletcher
603	Downtown Los Angeles to Glendale	San Fernando & Fletcher

Source: MTA 2003.

### Rail Service

The Metro Gold Line, running from Union Station in downtown Los Angeles to Sierra Madre Villa in Pasadena, provides light rail service to the Park. The nearest stations are located at Avenue 26 and at French Avenue, each approximately 1.5 miles from the Park. Ultimately, the Gold Line will extend beyond Pasadena to Claremont.

Metrolink trains run from Union Station to Lancaster in Los Angeles County; Montalvo in Ventura County; San Bernardino in San Bernardino County; Riverside in Riverside County; and Oceanside in San Diego County. The Antelope Valley and Ventura County lines pass through the Taylor Yard

complex numerous times daily. As of April 2005, 54 Metrolink trains and 12 Amtrak trains pass through the Taylor Yard complex each weekday, in addition to a varying volume of freight traffic. Eight Metrolink and 12 Amtrak passenger trains pass through Taylor Yard on Saturdays, and 12 Amtrak trains on Sundays. The nearest stations to the Park are Union Station in downtown Los Angeles and the Glendale Station (Metrolink 2003).

### **Parking**

Currently, there are no designated parking areas for public use at the unit.

### **Trails**

Currently, no hiking, biking, or equestrian trails run through Parcels D or G-1. The Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail (de Anza Trail) starts near Nogales, Arizona, traverses California, and terminates in San Francisco. The famous trail passes just west of the Park as it follows the Los Angeles River northwest through the Glendale Narrows. While much of the de Anza Trail can be hiked, most of the trail through Los Angeles must be explored via automobile. Many interpretive sites are located in the area providing present-day explorers the opportunity to learn more about de Anza's journey (NPS 2003).

The existing and proposed bike routes in the vicinity of the Park are shown in Figure 7. The Los Angeles River Bike Path, a Class I bike path, starting in San Fernando Valley, runs along the bank of the Los Angeles River, passing the Park on the western bank. A biking station, with water and air, is provided at the Los Angeles River Center and Gardens, on the eastern side of the River and approximately 0.9 miles from the Park. This bike path will eventually run from the Sepulveda Basin to Long Beach via the Los Angeles River. Class II bike routes are located on Fletcher Drive from San Fernando Boulevard to I-5 and along Eagle Rock Boulevard and Cypress Avenue (City of Los Angeles 2002). A bike path is proposed along the eastern bank of the river from SR 2 to San Fernando Road (LADOT 2000). This bike path would add to the recreation resources and nonmotorized circulation near the site. The Arroyo Seco bikeway is proposed to run parallel with the Arroyo Seco Channel/Pasadena Freeway and intersect with the Los Angeles River Bike Path (City of Los Angeles 2002) and would provide non-motorized access to the Park from Pasadena.

### **Pedestrian Bridges**

There are currently no bridges over the Los Angeles River between Fletcher Drive and Figueroa Street. A pedestrian bridge over the river is proposed for the area near the Park site; however, the exact location and timing of bridge construction have not been determined.

## **2.1.4 UTILITIES**

### **Sewer/Water Treatment**

One 24-inch-diameter cement pipe sewer line runs across the Park. The line runs in a southerly direction along Eagle Rock Boulevard and bends with the roadway when Eagle Rock Boulevard becomes Cypress Avenue. From Cypress Avenue, the line crosses San Fernando Road and the Park and crosses the Los Angeles River in a coupled (21-inch and 15-inch) vitrified clay line, connecting to



the sewer line underneath Newhall Street. The next closest sewer line to the Park is located along Kerr Street (SCC 2002).

The Northeast Interceptor Sewer (NEIS) is under construction and runs adjacent to Parcel D. Wastewater from the project site would be directed into the NEIS either directly or by means of another pipeline in the area. NEIS will provide additional capacity for projected wastewater flows. The sewer project will be completed by December 2004, prior to Park operation.

### **Storage Tanks**

There are no above- or below-ground storage tanks on Parcels D or G-1. The hazards database search for the project identified several USTs in the vicinity of the Park. Nearby UST locations include industrial facilities and service stations along San Fernando Road and several sites on Parcel G-1.

### **Oil and Gas Pipelines**

No oil or gas pipelines run through Parcel D or G-1; however, southwest of the parcel boundary, a 10-inch-diameter pipeline runs along the railroad alignment. The pipeline, owned by Southern Pacific Pipe Lines, Inc., is not currently being used (SCC 2002).

### **Power Lines (High Voltage)**

No large power lines run within or along Parcel D; however, several utility poles are located on the northeastern portion of the parcel. LADWP overhead power transmission lines run along the northern levee of the Los Angeles River along the western edge of Parcel G. The lines are supported by steel-frame towers and are spaced 600 to 800 feet apart with several footings on Parcel G-1 (SCC 2002).

### **Telecommunications Lines**

Five telecommunication lines run along the active rail line parallel to Parcels D and G. One bundle of four 2-inch cables contains telecommunication cables; the fourth is currently unused. The fifth line, carrying Qwest telecommunication cables, parallels the border between Parcels D, and G-1 and G-2 (SCC 2002).

### **Storm Drains**

Several storm drains run through the Taylor Yard complex, conveying water from the developed areas located north and east of the Park into the Los Angeles River. None of these drains flow under Parcel D; however, several bisect Parcel G-1.

## **2.2 PLANNING INFLUENCES**

### **2.2.1 SYSTEMWIDE PLANNING**

Systemwide planning improves the ability of the Department to fulfill its mission by establishing methods and guidelines for managing state-owned park land. A number of documents guide the Department in the achievement of its Mission, as outlined in the Department Mission Statement.

#### **California State Parks Planning Handbook**

The Department Planning Handbook provides guidance for the different levels of State Park planning, including systemwide/regional planning, unit classification and naming, general planning, management planning, and specific project planning. The handbook provides specific guidelines for the various components of the General Plan and EIR with an emphasis on broad management strategies and policies. This General Plan has been prepared in accordance with the Department Planning Handbook.

#### **Statewide Trails Plan**

The California Recreational Trails Plan (Phase One), published in June 2002, addresses the mission and overall role of the California State Parks Statewide Trails Office as well as provides guidelines for future actions of the Statewide Trails Office. The mission and vision of the Statewide Trails Office is to:

*Promote the establishment and maintenance of a system of trails and greenways that serves California's diverse population while respecting and protecting the integrity of its equally diverse natural and cultural resources. The system should be accessible to all Californians for improving their physical and mental well-being by presenting opportunities for recreation, transportation, and education, each of which provides enhanced environmental and societal benefits.*

This plan serves as a guideline for establishing and maintaining parks in California and integrates the Department's trail programs with the local government agencies and private organizations that operate and maintain the trails. Furthermore, it serves as a planning and maintenance guide for the over 40 miles of hiking and horseback riding trails within the Park.

#### **Systemwide Park Operations and Concessions Policies**

The concessions program provides a very important part of the visitor's experience. Concessionaires offer the facilities, services, and goods that the state could not otherwise provide, ranging from traditional food services and campground grocery stores, to jeep tours and rafting trips. Within the system's historic parks, concessionaires help the Department achieve its educational mission by providing historical reenactments and other educational programs, known in the Park profession as "interpretation." These programs add vitality, interest, and excitement to our fascinating heritage preserved and protected by the Department.

The Department partners with a variety of businesses, nonprofits, and public agencies through concession contracts, co-operative agreements, and operating agreements to offer the public these

goods and services. How these opportunities are made available to the public is regulated by the California PRC Section 5080 et seq.

### **Access to Parks Guidelines**

Access to Parks Guidelines, based on accessibility laws, was first published by the Department in 1994 and revised in 2000. The guidelines detail the procedure to make State Parks universally accessible, while maintaining the quality of park resources. Also included in the guidelines are recommendations and regulations for complying with standards for accessibility.

### **Public Resources Code**

California PRC Sections 5019.50 to 5019.80, Classification of Units of the State Park System, provide guidelines for the designation of State Park Units and guiding principles for State Park improvements. The PRC classifies different types of State Park Units and provides guidelines for the upkeep and improvements of park units.

### **Guidelines for Filming**

The Guidelines for Filming in California State Parks, dated 1998, outlines the measures that must be taken by film crews to protect natural resources, maintain public safety, and observe the rights of the public. Each park may establish its own park-specific regulations. Filming is allowed within the Rio de Los Angeles State Park as long as activities comply with the Department's guidelines.

### **Other Influences**

Many biological resources in California are protected and/or regulated by laws, regulations, and policies. Key regulatory compliance issues that may need to be addressed prior to implementation of the General Plan are listed below.

- Federal Endangered Species Act
- Clean Water Act
- California Endangered Species Act
- Section 1600 of the California Fish and Game Code
- Section 3503.5 of the California Fish and Game Code
- State Parks' DOM Manual

#### **2.2.2 REGIONAL PLANNING INFLUENCES**

Planning for the Park must be wide-ranging to consider issues that cross Park and district boundaries. Federal, state, county, and community agencies are responsible for providing oversight and review of various planning-related laws and policies. Some of the land management plans that directly influence and potentially impact the Park are described below.

## **Southern California Association of Governments 2001 Regional Transportation Plan**

The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) 2001 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) is a long-term transportation plan that confronts the needs of six southern California counties: Los Angeles, San Bernardino, Riverside, Imperial, Orange, and Ventura. The main factors that influence the RTP are growth forecasts, financial assumptions, regional aviation system, regional transit services, transportation and air quality conformity, and environmental justice. The Park is within the SCAG region and will be affected by any plans related to the transit services or highway system; however, no new transit services or highway projects are proposed in the 2001 RTP that would directly affect circulation around the Park.

## **SCAG Regional Comprehensive Plan and Guideline Policies**

The SCAG Regional Comprehensive Plan and Guideline Policies address issues of regional growth. The Growth Management Chapter (GMC) contains goals that are particularly applicable to the update of the General Plan. These goals include improving the regional standard of living; improving the regional quality of life; and providing social, political, and cultural equity in the region.

## **County of Los Angeles General Plan**

The County of Los Angeles General Plan provides general goals and policies and specifically addresses Conservation and Open Space, Land Use, Housing, Circulation, Noise, Economic Development, Safety, and Public Facilities. The Park falls specifically under the Regional Recreation Area Plan, which is within the Conservation and Open Space Element of the General Plan. A regional recreation area is defined by the County as “an extent of land and/or water surface which, by its unique features and/or unusual or extensive development, offers recreational opportunities that attract visitors from beyond the immediate vicinity without regard to physical, political or community boundaries.” The goal of this plan is to provide “adequate regional recreation opportunities for County residents and visitors” (County of Los Angeles 1986).

## **Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board Programs**

The LARWQCB programs cover a wide span of water-related disciplines, including Enforcement and Groundwater Permitting, Regional Programs (includes focus on Information Technology, Standards and Total Maximum Daily Loads, Non-Point Source, and Watershed Management coordination), Remediation (Clean-up), Storm Water (including issuance and enforcement of Storm Water National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permits), Underground Storage Tanks, and Watershed Regulation (focusing on Municipal Permitting, Industrial Permitting, and General Permitting/ Special Projects).

## **Los Angeles River Master Plan**

The *LARMP* creates a vision of the Los Angeles River as a resource. The *LARMP* goals are to guarantee flood protection to surrounding communities, provide diverse recreational opportunities, enhance river appearance, and create sustainable local economies. Combined, these goals seek to enrich the quality of life adjacent to the Los Angeles River. The Park is within the Glendale Narrows reach of the *LARMP*.

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## **City of Los Angeles General Plan**

The Park is located in the city of Los Angeles, which covers an area of 472 square miles. Because the unit is surrounded by City land, the goals and policies of City should be addressed. The City Open Space Element goals include the preservation of remaining open space, protection of resources, and efficient maintenance and management of open space areas.

## **Northeast Los Angeles Community Plan**

The City's *Northeast Los Angeles Community Plan* encompasses the communities of Atwater Village, Cypress Park, Eagle Rock, El Sereno, Glassell Park, Highland Park, Lincoln Heights and Montecito Heights, Monterey Hills, and Mount Washington. The area is approximately 15,000 acres with 250,000 residents. The plan provides guidelines for building a cohesive community by meeting the housing, commercial, employment, educational, recreational, cultural, social, and aesthetic needs of residents. The plan designates the Los Angeles River as open space and the Taylor Yard complex as industrial/manufacturing.

## **California Heritage Task Force**

Established in 1981 by the California state legislature, the California Heritage Task Force (CHTF) was created to develop a set of policies and programs for the state's cultural heritage resources. In 1984, the CHTF Report was published as a guide to cultural resource management legislation writing.

## **Draft Program Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement for the Proposed California High-Speed Train System (SCH 2001042045)**

The California High Speed Rail Authority issued the Draft Program EIR/EIS for the Proposed California High-Speed Train System for public review between February and August of 2004. The proposed statewide high-speed train system would include approximately 700 miles of track servicing San Diego, Los Angeles, Fresno, Bakersfield, Merced, Sacramento, and San Francisco Bay. The proposed alignment would pass through the Taylor Yard complex. Comments on the California High Speed Draft Program EIR/EIS were submitted by the Director of California State Parks on August 19, 2004.

## **Natural Communities Conservation Program**

The Natural Communities Conservation Program (NCCP), developed by the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) in 1991, is an effort unique to California. The NCCP provides regional planning strategies for the protection of plants, animals, and their habitats, while allowing suitable economic development. The primary objective of the NCCP is the conservation of natural communities at the ecosystem scale, concurrent with accommodation of compatible land uses (CDFG 2003). There are no designated NCCP areas in the Park; however, this General Plan adheres to the principles established in the NCCP regarding the protection of habitat and biodiversity.

## **Integrated Resources Plan (IRP)**

Over 100 community leaders have joined engineers and planners from the City of Los Angeles to develop an Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) which outlines alternatives for wastewater, stormwater,

and recycled water infrastructure for the year 2020 and beyond. The IRP is the second phase of the Integrated Plan for the Wastewater Program and builds on the initial conceptual planning phase to include a more detailed plan, EIR, and financial plan. The IRP intends to integrate the City's water, wastewater, and stormwater management service functions.

### **Other Planning Studies**

Rio de Los Angeles State Park and the surrounding region has been the subject of numerous studies and planning efforts, in addition to those described above. These studies, undertaken by a variety of agencies, nonprofit groups, and other entities, are important components of the planning effort at the Taylor Yard complex. A brief description of some of the pertinent studies is provided below.

*Parks and Park Funding in Los Angeles: An Equity Mapping Analysis.* This report, prepared by the University of Southern California (USC) Sustainable Cities Program, provides a statistical analysis of access to park space available to children/youth and residents according to their race/ethnicity and socioeconomic status.

*Common Ground, from the River to the Sea and Beneficial Uses of the Los Angeles and San Gabriel Rivers.* These studies were prepared by the Los Angeles and San Gabriel Rivers Watershed Council. *Common Ground* was prepared to support and inform planning efforts by cities; federal, state, and local agencies; communities; groups; and individuals in the watershed. *Beneficial Uses* describes issues and policies pertaining to water quality in the Los Angeles River and San Gabriel River watersheds.

*Los Angeles River Bikeway and Greenway Planning Study.* This study identified green opportunities and bicycle circulation possibilities to connect existing bikeways and greenways along the Los Angeles River. The bikeway begins immediately south of the Taylor Yard complex; however, important linkages to downtown Los Angeles and the Los Angeles River State Historic Park are addressed. This study was prepared by Northeast Trees with funding from the SCC.

*Taylor Yard Multiple Objectives Feasibility Study.* This study analyzed the feasibility of habitat restoration, flood storage, and recreational opportunities on Parcels G and D. This study was prepared by Everest International Consultants for the SCC.

*Northeast Los Angeles Community Linkages Master Plan Study.* This study analyzes the pedestrian, nonmotorized, and motorized connections within northeast Los Angeles and strives to make the community safer and more aesthetically pleasing through street improvements. The San Fernando Road corridor, which runs along the Park, is one of the main arterial roads being analyzed in this master plan. This study was prepared by the City of Los Angeles Council District 1.

*California Department of Parks and Recreation, Office of Historic Preservation, Five Views: An Ethnic Historic Site Survey for California.* This study was developed in 1988 by the Department to broaden the spectrum of ethnic community participation in historic preservation activities, and to provide better information on ethnic diversity.

### **2.2.3 DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE**

#### **Population Trends and Projections**



The changing demographic trends of an area affect the demand for and use of recreational space. The following key factors will affect future use patterns in the Park.

The population in the SCAG region is projected to increase by 40 percent by the year 2025 (SCAG 2001); however, most of the growth is expected to be in Riverside and San Bernardino counties, which are on the eastern side of the SCAG region (SCAG 2002). Los Angeles County grew by 7.4 percent between 1990 and 2000 (USDC 2000). Regional growth is expected to increase recreational demand at the Park. In addition to an overall growth in population, shifts in visitor types will occur as changes in regional demographics occur.

The Hispanic and Asian/Pacific Islander populations are increasing at a faster rate than other populations. By 2003, the proportion of Hispanics in the region will exceed that of non-Hispanic whites (SCAG 2001). These data suggest that Park user groups may change and, therefore, recreational use patterns may also shift.

Responses in surveys completed by Park visitors throughout California would suggest that most visitors have a bachelor's degree or higher and an average household income of \$75,000 or more. Such figures are not representative of the immediate surrounding area and are not believed to represent the education and income levels of the majority of expected Park visitors. Within the SCAG region, only 24 percent of residents attained a bachelor's degree, and the region's per capita income in 2000 was \$29,330 (SCAG 2002). Such data suggest that the Park would serve people with diverse income levels and educational backgrounds.

Another anticipated trend is that the number of people in the SCAG region age 65 and above will increase by 2025 to 15.4 percent of the total population, from 9.9 percent in 1997 (SCAG 2002). This shift to an older population will affect how recreational places are used. Some facilities may need to be improved to meet the needs of an older, active population.

### **Characteristics of the Local Community**

The Park is located in one of the Los Angeles' most densely populated and park-poor Council Districts, Council District 1. District 1 had a 1999 census population of 241,980. From 1990 to 1999, the population in District 1 increased by 13,294 persons, an increase of 5.8 percent (City of Los Angeles 2001a). Table 3 summarizes relevant population data from the 2000 Census. As shown in the table, approximately 10.6 percent of the population of Los Angeles County is within 5 miles of the Park. By comparison, the land area within a 5-mile radius of Rio de Los Angeles State Park is approximately 1.9 percent of the land area in Los Angeles County, 27% of the population within a 5-mile radius of the Park does not have access to a vehicle. The surrounding community reflects the rich heritage of Los Angeles. When compared to the City of Los Angeles averages, the community surrounding the Park can be generally characterized by the following:

- Quickly growing population
- Ethnically diverse, particularly in Cypress Park and Elysian Valley
- Changing ethnicity dominances
- Limited English proficiency
- Low proportion of citizenship
- Lower than average levels of educational attainment

- High residential density
- Lower than average household income
- Employment based in the service and retail sectors
- Higher levels of unemployment
- Growing job base, declining wage base
- Limited access to a vehicle

**Table 3. Population in Vicinity of Park Unit as Compared to Los Angeles County**

Age	Within 0.5 Mile	Within 1 Mile	Within 2 Miles	Within 5 Miles	L.A. County
< 4 years	657	2,602	10,028	93,351	886,580
5 to 17 years	1,328	5,238	18,918	168,104	1,773,222
18 to 64 years	4,279	17,028	67,522	649,968	5,932,566
> 65 years	658	2,342	9,757	96,304	926,970
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,922</b>	<b>27,209</b>	<b>106,225</b>	<b>1,007,727</b>	<b>9,519,338</b>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2002

#### Demographic Diversity

The population of Council District 1 shows distinctly different demographics from those of Los Angeles and Los Angeles County, within which it is located. The Council District has above average proportions of Hispanic/Latino and Asian residents, while the White/non-Hispanic population is considerably lower than the city and county averages. Ethnic distribution in the vicinity of the Park, from the 2000 Census, is included in Table 4, with county averages for comparison. As shown in the table, the Hispanic/Latino population within 0.5 mile of the Park is well above the county average. This number decreases slightly as the distance from the Park increases; however, the Hispanic/Latino population within 5 miles of the unit remains well above the average for the county.

**Table 4. Percent (%) Ethnicity Distribution in Vicinity of Park Unit as Compared to Los Angeles County**

Race	Within 0.5 Mile	Within 1 Mile	Within 2 Miles	Within 5 Miles	L.A. County
White	39.3	38.5	40.9	39.5	48.6
Black	1.0	1.5	1.9	3.7	9.6
American Indian	1.1	0.9	0.9	0.8	0.7
Asian	16.7	17.8	18.5	17.1	11.9
Hawaiian/Pacific	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.3
Other	37.0	36.1	31.9	32.6	23.8
Multi-Racial	4.8	5.3	5.9	6.2	5.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Ethnicity</b>					
Hispanic/Latino*	67.9	66.8	60.4	57.4	44.6
Non-Hispanic	32.1	33.2	39.6	42.6	55.4

\*Persons of hispanic ethnicity may be of any race.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2002

### Poverty Levels

Poverty levels near the project area are shown in Table 5. The numbers from the table indicate that approximately 10.7 percent of the total number of households in Los Angeles County that are below the poverty level are located within 5 miles of Taylor Yard. Twenty-four percent of the households within 5 miles of the Park are below the poverty line, as opposed to 15 percent of households in Los Angeles county.

**Table 5. Poverty Levels in Vicinity of Park Unit as Compared to Los Angeles County**

	Within 0.5 Mile	Within 1 Mile	Within 2 Miles	Within 5 Miles	L.A. County
<b>Below Poverty Level</b>	335.3	1,423.9	6,170.7	80,500.5	474,533.0
<b>At or Above Poverty Level</b>	1,700.6	6,527.9	28,279.7	255,392.6	2,661,746.0
<b>Total Households</b>	<b>2,035.9</b>	<b>7,951.7</b>	<b>34,450.5</b>	<b>335,893.1</b>	<b>3,136,279.0</b>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2002

### **2.2.4 PARK INTEREST GROUPS**

#### **The Coalition for a State Park at Taylor Yard**

The Coalition for a State Park at Taylor Yard is a collective group of community interest groups that support the development of Parcels D and G-1 as a Park. They are involved in community outreach efforts, which raise support for the development of a park at Taylor Yard rail yard complex.

Interest groups associated with the Coalition include Anahuak Soccer Club, Arroyo Arts Collective, CANDER, Center for Law in the Public Interest, Citizens Committee to Save Elysian Park, Coalition for Clean Air, Coalition LA, Committee for Safe Children, Concerned Citizens of South Central, Cypress Park Advisory Council, Cypress Park Chamber of Commerce, Divine Savior Church Youth Group, Eagle Rock Victory Outreach, Echo Park Improvement Assn., El Centro del Pueblo, Friends of Atwater Village, Friends of the Los Angeles River, Heal the Bay, LA County *Bicycle Coalition, Latino Urban Forum, Lincoln Heights Neighborhood & Preservation Association, Reverend Eugene Williams and Los Angeles Metropolitan Churches, Mt. Washington Association, Natural Resources Defense Council, North East Trees, Northeast Renaissance Corp., PLAYS (Parks for Los Angeles Youth Soccer), People for Parks, Planning and Conservation League, The Advancement Project, Sierra Club, Southern CA Council on Environmental Development, St. Ann Church Youth Ministry, St. Bernard Glassel Park Youth Ministry, The Ad Hoc Committee for Safe Children, The River Project, Tree People, United Nations Youth Organization, and Wetlands Action Network.*

#### **Profile of Anticipated Park Visitors**

The Park is expected to primarily serve nearby residents in Los Angeles, but may draw visitors from throughout the state to enjoy or study the restoration efforts, or participate in hiking along any of its trails connecting the mountains to the sea. It is expected that most Park visitors will walk to the

park. At most, the majority of park visitors are not anticipated to travel more than a mile to get to the Park. Visitors are anticipated to be comprised of two primary groups. The first and possibly the more frequent visitor will be Angelenos, or residents of Los Angeles County. The majority of visitors from Los Angeles County are anticipated to comprise residents from the surrounding Bicycle Coalition, Latino Urban Forum, Lincoln Heights Neighborhood & Preservation Association., Los Angeles Metropolitan Churches, Mt. Washington Assn., Mt. Washington Homeowners Alliance, Natural Resources Defense Council, North East Trees, Northeast Renaissance Corp., Parks for Los Angeles Youth Soccer (PLAYS), People for Parks, So. CA Council on Environment & Development, St. Ann Church Youth Ministry, St. Bernard Glassell Park Youth Ministry, The River Project, Tree People, United Nations Youth Organization, Wetlands Action Network, and over 2,500 individual community members.

### **2.2.5 EXPECTED PARK VISITORS**

The expected park visitors include residents from surrounding neighborhoods as well as students and instructors from area schools and colleges. The second group is comprised of the occasional visitor, which includes residents of from throughout Californian as well as travelers from other states and countries.

### **2.2.6 PUBLIC CONCERNS AND COMMENTS**

The public has several opportunities to provide comments and suggestions for Park improvements during the general planning process. As described in Section 1.1.3.3, the Department and City conducted several joint public meetings and design charettes to develop the IPU. Four public meetings were held for local residents and community groups on September 4 and 17, and November 5 and 18, 2003. Between 100 and 200 individuals were in attendance at each of these meetings, where conceptual park designs were presented, followed by opportunities for public feedback.

The General Plan serves as a first-tier Environmental Impact Report (EIR), as defined in Section 15166 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines. The analysis of broad potential environmental impacts discussed in the Environmental Analysis Chapter 5 will provide the basis for second level environmental review in the future. Such review will provide more detailed information and analysis at the site-specific level for individual developments and projects. During the month-long scoping period for this General Plan and EIR, letters were received from stakeholders and public agencies. These comments have been addressed in the General Plan alternatives.

## CHAPTER 3

### ISSUES AND ANALYSIS

The following is a summary of the major issues identified in the general plan process. This plan attempts to resolve these issues with goals and guidelines and guidance for future planning efforts.

The following is a list of key planning issues that were considered during this general plan process:

- Park Connectivity
- Visitor Needs
- Access and Transportation
- Natural Resources
- Cultural Diversity
- Recreation Activities and Open Space
- Education and Interpretation
- Operational Facilities and Public Safety
- Multiple Plans, Studies, Expectations, and Perceptions
- Fiscal Challenges

#### 3.1 PARK CONNECTIVITY

##### 3.1.1 REGIONAL CONNECTIVITY OF PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

**Issue:** Due to its rail yard and brownfield site past, the Park currently has a tenuous physical connection with the emerging regional green open space network along the Los Angeles River/Arroyo Seco corridors, as well as with other regional recreation, cultural, interpretation, and public open space networks.

**Analysis:** Los Angeles is one of the most park-poor regions of the urban United States, a fact particularly obvious for the area immediately surrounding the Park. A lack of open space consequently means that regional areas of open space, such as Griffith Park and Elysian Valley, although substantial in size, are physically separated by the intermediate urban environment. The two parcels that make up the Rio de Los Angeles State Park contribute to the regional acquisition and connectivity of open space. With almost 4,000 linear feet of frontage onto the Los Angeles River, the Park affords the opportunity to link in with an existing corridor that flows year-round and is regularly inhabited by wildlife. Although in its infancy, the Los Angeles River green corridor is emerging as a regional-scale network of open space, constituting large parks and smaller open space linkages. Ultimately, there is hope that the entire length of the Los Angeles River, from the San Gabriel Mountains to the Pacific Ocean, will constitute a meandering, naturalized river channel.

There are various planning studies and proposals for park projects with a connection to the Los Angeles River, including the Los Angeles State Historic Park. There are also parks and public spaces in the area with a focus on the natural resources of the Los Angeles Basin as well as the cultural heritage of the region. Planning for the Rio de Los Angeles State Park presents an opportunity to

coordinate and partner with many of these similar open space and educational planning efforts to support and reinforce the resources and message of all organizations and agencies. Efforts towards this objective will help establish a regional network of mutually supportive public open space elements.

The link with regional open space via the Los Angeles River is an exciting opportunity to enhance both the Los Angeles River and the Park, particularly Parcel G-1. A mutually beneficial relationship between these adjacent areas of open space affords the opportunity to enhance each individually while contributing to the greater regional goals for open space provision. This symbiotic relationship provides a chance to both enhance the habitat value of the Los Angeles River by expanding open space in this vicinity, and to provide a naturalized setting for the Park and the recreational activities that will take place on Parcel G-1. The Park is an important component of the regional goal to link open space in such a way as to enhance the aesthetic, recreational, and habitat values of the Park, the Los Angeles River corridor, and the existing regional open space. (See Section 4.5 and 4.5.1)

### **3.1.2 PARK UNIT CONNECTIVITY & COHESIVENESS**

**Issue:** At present, the two parcels that constitute the Park are separated by two railroad tracks and private property, which hamper development and use of the unit as a contiguous whole and contributing to perceptions about the Park's viability as a "River Community." Coordinating future partnerships with adjacent property owners (private and public) that separate the two parcels will require multi-agency cooperation. A partnership between the City of Los Angeles and California State Parks through a lease agreement was executed in November 2003 to develop and operate a seamless park on Parcel D. The partnership could be used as a model to acquire and operate adjacent property consistent with the mission of California State Parks. The Project Concept Statement for the combined California State Parks 20-acre Interim Public Use and the City of Los Angeles' long term development on the adjacent 20-acres is to "develop a seamless park design that fulfils the mission statements of the state and the city for the benefit of all stakeholders in a sustainable manner."

**Analysis:** Although only 900 feet apart, two railroad tracks and three non-park properties separate Parcels D and G-1, separating the areas of open space within the Park unit. To travel between the parcels requires over 1.5 miles via existing surface roads. This distance results in operational inefficiencies and creates the impression in the minds of Park users of there being two parks rather than one. Inter-park connectivity needs improvement to ensure that the Park is utilized and perceived as a contiguous unit. Several issues are tangential to that of the segmentation of the Park by the railroad tracks, including the protection of viewsheds, noise pollution due to the close proximity of the trains, creation of buffer zones, and the establishment of safe physical access between the parcels.

Furthermore, although the Taylor Yard complex is referred to as a single undeveloped entity, the Park may have difficulty being recognized as a single entity because the parcels are separated. To overcome the feeling of separate parcels the Department needs to strive to evaluate options to overcome access barriers between the two parcels and create a thematic/facility development program that will promote the parcels as one contiguous land holding on which the Park's mission and vision are implemented. This situation is not dissimilar to that faced at many other parks in the California State Parks system, where the park is comprised of discontinuous parcels surrounded by



privately owned property. Opportunities to purchase additional property or easements that could physically connect the two parcels needs to be explored. Ideas such as, lowering the grade of the railroad tracks could help to visually connect the parcels, and the possibility of undergrounding the train tracks into a tunnel could allow for safe physical access between the parcels via a vegetated covering over the tunnel. Thus, issues of signage, way-finding, and promotion of the Park as one entity will require greater consideration regarding the implications of each option. (See Section 4.4.4)

### 3.2 VISITOR NEEDS

**Issue:** The Park will need to accommodate the needs of a diverse visitor base. The local population and likely the largest visitor base include young children, elderly, individuals not proficient in English, and families living in poverty.

**Analysis:** The dense urban environment surrounding the Park is characterized by a very diverse population. It reflects the rich cultural heritage that defines Los Angeles and much of California. These potential visitors from the surrounding communities include a high population of Asians and Hispanics, many who live in poverty and who are newcomers to the state; a high number of residents who are not English language proficient; and people of various ages, from children to seniors. It is anticipated that once the Park is open, many people from these neighborhoods, as well as a great diversity of out-of-town visitors, will use the Park as a place to appreciate nature, relax, and recreate. Identifying methods for removing barriers to language, education, and economic class differences is essential if the Park is to provide meaningful experiences that meet the unique needs of the visitors as well as echo the potential conceptual/historical/interpretive themes of the Park. Ensuring visitors feel comfortable and at ease will be a critical component in serving these diverse audiences.

The department has an opportunity to explore innovative ways in recreational and educational settings to communicate and collaborate with Park visitors in order to reach diverse audiences that would not otherwise receive the Park message. These ideas may be incorporated into interpretive and recreation program development. Multi-lingual interpretation that understands and serves audiences diverse in ethnicity, cultural background, and language would help to deliver the message of the importance of this park. Multi-lingual interpretation is also important in making activities, exhibits, and programs effective and accessible to diverse audiences as well as enriching the character of activities that can occur at the Park. Interpretation (including programs and activities) and facilities should also accommodate the needs of all age groups. (See Section 4.4.3)

### 3.3 ACCESS AND TRANSPORTATION

**Issue:** A number of physical and operational characteristics combine to make local and regional vehicular access, public transportation connectivity, circulation, and parking core issues for the Park. Current key considerations include safe access from adjacent communities, connections to regional transportation systems, an emphasis on multi-modal transportation, and parking availability. Regionally, the Park is well placed in terms of transportation networks, but immediate links between transportation termini and the Park itself are lacking. Whether it is busy San Fernando Road; the Los Angeles River; or the tangle of freeways, ramps, and interchanges, access to the Park through local communities is limited and difficult to navigate. Park planning and design, including interpretive programming, has many opportunities to recognize and incorporate this important site

history, support the use of multi-modal transportation, and provide convenient connections to regional transportation systems.

**Analysis:**

Vehicular Access: Accessing Parcel D from the local street network is hampered by fast-moving traffic along San Fernando Road. A planned City project will install traffic signal lights at the main Park entrance and will assist in providing pedestrian and vehicular access to the Park. Additional City-planned traffic regulating measures and street improvements along San Fernando Road will likewise regulate traffic speeds and improve the safety of Park visitors.

To access Parcel G-1 from Casitas Avenue requires travel along a circuitous system of backstreets underneath SR 2. Pedestrian access is limited, although the construction of a bicycle path along the eastern bank of the Los Angeles River will provide better access from the north and south.

The presence of the Los Angeles River also affects access to the Park. There are currently no bridges over the Los Angeles River between Figueroa Street and SR 2. As such, residents, hikers and bicyclists coming from the areas west of the river, particularly Elysian Valley, must use Fletcher Drive or Figueroa Street to access the Park. The provision of a pedestrian/bicycle bridge across the Los Angeles River, connecting Elysian Valley to Parcel G-1, would greatly improve local accessibility to the Park, as well as regional circulation for associated bicycle traffic.

For pedestrians, access to the Park is hampered by these same factors – San Fernando Road, the backstreets leading to Cassitas Avenue, the Metrolink line, and the Los Angeles River. The industrial and commercial properties lining San Fernando Road further separate residential areas from the Park, adding to perceived barriers preventing easy access to the Park. To encourage local residents to walk to the Park, such barriers must be overcome in safe, practical ways. Traffic-calming measures along San Fernando Road, way-finding signage, easements, and creation of bicycle/pedestrian paths, particularly along the Los Angeles River, would diminish the perception of these barriers and encourage the use of pedestrian means to access the Park.

Connections to regional transportation systems and multi-modal forms of transportation: As part of the State Park network, it is anticipated that visitors from across the state and beyond may frequent the Park. The Park area is accessible via a number of freeways and major arterials, including the I-5, SR 2, and SR 110 freeways, and San Fernando Road, Eagle Rock Boulevard, Figueroa Street, and Fletcher Drive. Buses service the area from downtown Los Angeles, the San Fernando Valley, and the San Gabriel Valley, and the Metro Gold Line provides light rail service to the project area. The nearest light rail stations are located approximately 1.5 miles south of the site at Avenue 26 (Avenue 26 Station) and on French Avenue just off of Figueroa Street (French Station). A Metrolink railroad line borders the western edge of the Park; however, the nearest stops are located in downtown Los Angeles and Glendale.

Critical links between these transportation nodes and the Park are needed to ensure visitors can find and access the Park. This takes on several forms, including signage to guide visitors from local freeways to the Park, and development of public transportation links that bring visitors directly to the Park entrance, rather than leaving them at the Gold Line stations or nearby bus stops several blocks down the road. (See Section 4.4.11)

**Parking:** The limited amount of Park area and the intent of Park planners and other stakeholders to maximize recreation open space indicate that the land area for parking is at a premium. Land set aside for on-site parking will be competing with potential recreation uses.

Planning will consider appropriate parking options for Park visitors, while providing an appropriate level of on-site parking for accessibility purposes and other specialized needs. Realizing the need for vehicle parking and the emphasis on maximizing recreation space, planning efforts will consider creative and alternative opportunities for vehicle parking for Park visitors. (See Section 4.4.10.9)

### 3.4 NATURAL RESOURCES

**Issue:** Development in California has destroyed a great deal of natural habitat, limiting animals to pockets of land in which they can survive, particularly in the greater Los Angeles area. Loss of native vegetation has resulted in the isolation of habitats to the point where wildlife movement has been constrained or eliminated, and habitat linkages severed. As indicated in Section 1.1.1, the Park parcels are not only separated from each other, but also from other areas of open space, such as regional and local parks. This separation diminishes the value of open space for habitat that promotes the survival of threatened and endangered species. Furthermore, in its current biologically degraded state, the Park parcels add minimal value to the Los Angeles River wildlife movement corridor.

**Analysis:** In the Los Angeles basin and along the Los Angeles River there is a severe shortage of native plants and natural vegetation. Re-vegetation of natural riparian areas, woodlands, scrub habitats, and native grasslands could enhance populations of several native birds, insect, reptile, and other animal species. The Park provides the opportunity to restore important biological resource functions and values at both local and regional levels by enhancing the existing biological resources on-site. The effective implementation of native habitat creation or restoration on the Park parcels would provide refugia for plant and animal species and enhance avian movement corridors for better connectivity to other areas of open space in the region.

Park development and the anticipated usage could potentially impact the sometimes fragile habitat linkages that exist between the property and the surrounding heavily vegetated portion of the Los Angeles River. Once established, the Park has the potential to become significant in the habitat linkage along the Los Angeles River. Habitat linkages can be defined as large areas of natural open space that provide connectivity to other, and often to regional, biological resources. Instead, habitat linkages are wide enough to allow relatively free movement of wildlife species along multiple paths between resources. Local extinctions increase as habitat is fragmented and smaller islands of habitat become isolated from each other. This results in discontinuous spaces between which animals are unable to travel to forage for food, find suitable habitat, and mate. Habitat linkages provide routes for animal movement through an area, ensuring vital genetic exchange between populations, preserving the long-term health and viability of native wildlife populations.

Parcel D is relatively small and isolated from large areas of native open space; therefore, it currently does not effectively serve as a functioning wildlife habitat linkage. However, the proximity of both parcels, particularly Parcel G-1, to the Los Angeles River may synergistically establish and attract avian wildlife from throughout the region by providing protective cover, water, and forage for a variety of species, such as red-winged blackbird, northern rough-winged swallow, and mallard as

they travel up and down the river valley. The site resides in the Pacific Flyway. Regionally, the Park will continue to provide intermediate open space refuge for migratory species.

To this end, re-vegetation efforts will focus on the removal of invasive non-native species and the replanting of native upland habitats would enhance the native fauna as well as the aesthetic value for the surrounding communities, and would provide a brief glimpse in to local history. Re-vegetation with native species helps to increase the possibility that native insects, butterflies and birds will return to the area for foraging and reproduction.

Despite the small size of the Park, it may provide linkages to nearby and larger regional habitat areas in the future, given its proximity to the Los Angeles River and the surrounding hills. Improved habitat connections near the site and to larger regional open space areas can help protect the survival of the remaining native species. Re-vegetation and habitat establishment efforts also provide opportunities for public education and participation.

In addition to the physical fragmentation of habitat, noise and light sources can disorient nocturnal wildlife and act as a barrier between potential habitat areas. Wildlife can become disoriented in turn affecting foraging, reproduction, communication, and other essential behaviors. Community ecology is disrupted by artificial light in competition and predation. Only those species which are able to adapt are able to benefit thereby altering the overall community structure and functionality. Overall ecosystem changes can be dramatic and disruptive to key functions and natural wildlife assemblages. Attention to park design will be needed to ensure adequate corridors are provided through the park for wildlife movement. (See Section 4.4.2)

### **3.5 CULTURAL DIVERSITY**

#### **3.5.1 DIVERSITY OVER TIME**

**Issue:** A plethora of stories related to changing land use patterns over the course of the last two centuries needs to be integrated into park development, design and programming.

**Analysis:** The history of the changing landscape in the vicinity of the Park is broad and complex. The Park location is centered in one of the most populated areas of Los Angeles. As the Los Angeles River Greenway is pursued and developed and the Los Angeles River begins to heal, the story of the Park's role and community's struggle to stop industrial development on the site in order to create the Park will become increasingly important to record and recall. A strong stewardship base will also need to be nurtured and implemented with local visitors to assist in the successful restoration of the Los Angeles River. Strong interpretive programs with an emphasis on the diversity that has been a part of the area from its first inhabitants to the present time and themes about its agricultural and industrial, history, changing neighborhoods and social conditions must involve the local community.

Planning for the Park presents opportunities to coordinate with many others to provide an inclusive account of the area. Park planning should consider the existing natural and cultural resources at the site and evaluate their importance within the greater Los Angeles environmental movement. The Park can bring together the many different stories about early Los Angeles and the history of the Los Angeles River that are scattered throughout many locations in the region, to be told as one comprehensive saga.

### 3.5.2 LOCAL ETHNIC DIVERSITY

**Issue:** The Park is located in an area known as an ethnically diverse community. If it is to integrate successfully as part of the local community and become a meaningful destination for visitors, the Park will need to enhance, acknowledge, and embrace the diversity or the individuality represented by each culture.

**Analysis:** The Park is located in the midst of an ethnically diverse community and thus has the opportunity to actively facilitate opportunities to incorporate interpretation for the celebration of that diversity. This can be achieved through a park design that creates an environment conducive to accommodating specific cultural activities, as well as through the development of policies that enable use of the Park during appropriate hours and that permit culture-specific activities.

Throughout the planning phase of the project, the public has voiced a preference for facilities that enable large group gatherings. Such features may include common group meeting areas and assembly points, large picnic areas, and group camping/outdoor experience opportunities, to accommodate a variety of extended family, social, and school groups. The Park design and operations must balance the need for parking for these activities with the need to preserve the Park's limited land area for other uses, as well as the need to minimize impacts on surrounding land uses. Because of the distance between Parcels D and G-1, parking is needed at both locations. By designing the Park to include features culturally appropriate for the anticipated Park users, the Park can provide maximum utility for Park users.

Operational policies also have the potential to either facilitate or restrict the ability for a diversity of cultures to organize and participate in specific activities at the Park. Policies regarding different activities, the effects of those activities, the hours during which they can be conducted, and designated responsibility for the events (where applicable) could influence the degree to which the Park can be used by the community for certain culture-specific activities.

The Park needs to be a safe and inviting location, and it needs to be sensitive to the needs of the ethnically diverse local community as well as statewide interests. To this end, the Department should ensure that a wide range of activities, attracting these diverse cultures, are encouraged to take place in a welcoming and safe environment.

## 3.6 RECREATION ACTIVITIES AND OPEN SPACE

### 3.6.1 PROTECTION OF OPEN SPACE

**Issue:** The Park is viewed as premium open space in a heavily developed metropolitan area. The General Plan must balance the value of natural and recreational open space with the need for developed Park facilities to serve visitor and operational needs.

**Analysis:** The recent history the community activism in lobbying for the state acquisition of the Park site, in addition to statistical evidence of the lack of open space, indicates the premium placed on open space in this locality. A major focus of the Park planning effort is to maximize this precious open space, while at the same time provide the necessary facilities for Park operations, maintenance, education, and visitor services.

Interpretive facilities could be developed at nearby off-site locations, sharing similar facilities in partnership with other local agencies or State Parks. It would benefit both the proponents of maximizing open space and those looking for larger interpretive or operational facilities for the Park to consider the benefits and constraints of these off-site buildings or parcels. This may also provide new opportunities for partnerships with local property owners and the City of Los Angeles. The benefits of the Park parcels for open space would also provide on-site and off-site interpretive and historic preservation advantages to visitors. Although the need for establishing the Park as green open space is a crucial issue that must be met, an appropriate and creative approach can be combined to also fulfill diverse public open space needs.

### **3.6.2 DIVERSITY OF RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES**

**Issue:** Within the local vicinity of the Park, recreation opportunities consist almost exclusively of walking trails and areas of open space. Recreation opportunities supported by the community for inclusion at the Los Angeles River Park, such as picnic and barbecue areas, trails, native gardens, and an informal amphitheater, are not readily available within existing local open spaces.

**Analysis:** The *Mission* of the State Parks System is to protect and enhance the State's natural, scenic, cultural, or ecological resources while providing for public recreation that is compatible with and enhances the public's appreciation of those resources. Generally, recreation improvements that are not dependent on or do not directly enhance the public's enjoyment of a park's resource values are not permitted. Sports fields are not considered resource-based recreation because they do not support recreational activities that are dependent on the natural and cultural resources (one of a park's most significant resources) of the site.

As demonstrated above, there is relatively little public open space available for structured recreation in the vicinity of the Park. While the Park increases the amount of open space in the community, it is important that it also provide recreation opportunities.. There are a number of areas of open space in the vicinity of the Park (see Table 1 in Chapter 2); however, even the larger areas do not necessarily offer the full range of recreation opportunities being sought by the community. For example, although Elysian Park is approximately 605 acres in size, use of this park focuses on walking and sight-seeing.

Through the public planning process, the Park has been identified as a location where a range of recreational opportunities can be provided, including picnic and barbecue facilities, nature trails, outdoor performance areas such as an informal amphitheater, native plant gardens, educational gardens, camping areas, and flat grassy areas to allow for informal and spontaneous play activities. Section 3.5.2 also focuses on the recreational opportunities being proposed at the Park. The Department should evaluate a wide range of recreational opportunities that could be considered compatible with the Park.

### **3.6.3 LOCAL AND STATEWIDE INTERESTS**

**Issue:** From acquisition and throughout the planning meetings, there has been considerable interest and involvement by the community in planning the Park. During the planning process, there has been a very strong preference by many stakeholders toward addressing local needs.. For almost



10,000 residents, the Park will be a quarter-mile walk from their homes. There is a need to focus on the statewide importance of the park, while accommodating compatible local interests.

**Analysis:** The existence of the Park can largely be attributed to the efforts of a committed group of stakeholders who would not accept further industrial development in the area and on this particular site. To this end, the property was ultimately purchased by the State. Many local groups consider this property to be a part of a greater Los Angeles River Greenway project, the aim of which is to expand and restore riparian habitats within the Los Angeles coastal plain, stretching from the Santa Susana and San Gabriel Mountain range to the Pacific Ocean. As such, State Parks' restoration of a portion of this site contributes a small effort toward their goal for the overall improvement the 834 square mile watershed, balancing local recreational needs with those of the statewide population. Additionally, the Park will contribute toward efforts by regional and local groups to increase wetland and riparian ecosystems and enhance wildlife habitat.

The perceived conflict between local versus statewide focus is an issue that will be addressed in this plan. Providing for the recreational needs of the public, while also serving statewide interests, such as protecting and restoring various habitats, is a key issue considered in this planning process.

### **3.7 EDUCATION AND INTERPRETIVE PROGRAMS AND FACILITIES**

#### **3.7.1 ESTABLISHING A RIVER COMMUNITY IN AN URBAN ENVIRONMENT**

**Issue:** Educational and interpretive programs, services, and facilities need to enhance the public's understanding and appreciation of the Los Angeles River and continue to involve the community in the river revitalization process.

**Analysis:** As stated throughout this planning document, open space is at a premium throughout the Los Angeles area. This loss impacts not only the ability of native flora and fauna to survive, but reduces the quality of life for human beings. The ability of California State Parks to succeed in the restoration/revitalization of the Los Angeles River at the park site will depend on opportunities to work with the communities in the area and along the river. The recent history of the site has been built upon community support. Their active participation in the General Plan public input process has demonstrated their commitment. The momentum of a cooperative partnership between the community and California State Parks must continue if the dream of a restoration along this stretch of the Los Angeles River is to come to fruition. As demonstrated throughout the state and nation, ongoing efforts in the area of public awareness and education are critical for projects such as those proposed at the Rio de Los Angeles State Park. By developing an educational and interpretive strategy that involves the community and other visitors, the vision of establishing a river community in one of the state's most developed urban centers can truly be realized.

### **3.8 OPERATIONAL FACILITIES AND PUBLIC SAFETY**

#### **3.8.1 PARK STAFF**

**Issue:** By early 2006, construction of the Los Angeles City Park on adjoining 20-acre portion of Parcel D will be complete. The State will develop the IPU and later, this General Plan, requiring

coordination between City and State staff regarding park operations and interface between park uses.

**Analysis:** Each department will maintain and operate the parks separately. However, communication, emergency response, parking, land acquisition, resource protection, recreation and education/interpretation programming should be optimized for a seamless cohesive experience for the park visitors. The possibility of sharing park office space with the City of Los Angeles on the leased 20 acres (Parcel D) could maximize operational resources for both departments.

Furthermore, the city park features will have soccer fields, multi-purpose sports fields, baseball fields, basketball courts, tennis courts, running/bike path, children's play areas, children's water play area, restrooms, support facilities and park offices and over 300 parking spaces. These uses potentially conflict with the re-vegetation and natural experience emphasis which will govern establishment of the State's portion of the Park. Ambient light, carrying capacity, noise, and run-off from the sport playing fields and children's splash areas will need to be regulated and monitored to avoid impacts to water quality and wildlife.

**Issue:** There are currently no on-site staff or operations facilities to provide visitor services and public safety, carry out Park operations and maintenance functions, and to manage and protect sensitive resources.

**Analysis:** The presence of on-site staff will be essential for establishing a safe environment that is a key factor to the long-term viability and success of the Park. Since acquisition of the Park property and during General Plan preparation, park rangers and maintenance staff have traveled from the district's main office in Baldwin Hills, a distance of approximately 13 miles, to patrol and maintain the Park. Once opened, residents of the surrounding neighborhoods will begin to use the site as a place to relax and recreate, partly due to its relative convenient accessibility. When this happens, there will be an urgent need for on-site personnel to provide visitor services, meet regulatory requirements, manage and protect sensitive resources, establish a presence and provide for public safety and provide for sufficient maintenance of the Park. The presence of Park staff will assist in establishing a safe ambience that is a key factor to the long-term viability and success of the Park. (For specific discussion about Park interpretive staff, see Section 4.4.10.1.)

### **3.8.2 CRIME, SAFETY, AND DESIGN**

**Issue:** The Park is located in an area that experiences the effects of urban safety and crime issues such as vandalism, gangs, and drugs. As a large area of public open space, the Park may invite criminal activity but also presents opportunities for positively influencing and redirecting the local at-risk population away from criminal activities and lifestyles.

**Analysis:** The Park is located within the jurisdiction of the Northeast Police Station of the Central Bureau of the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD). The Northeast Police Station serves an area of 29.25 square miles, within which 267,762 people reside. Criminal records indicate that during 2003, this station recorded 17.0 arrests per 1,000 people, compared to the LAPD-wide figure of 31.9 arrests per 1,000 people. This was a 22 percent decline in arrests for the station. Traffic accident rates and moving citations stand at 10.8 and 66.1 per 1,000 people, compared to the LAPD-wide statistics of 13.4 and 114.0 per 1,000 people (LAPD 2003). Overall, the area served by the Northeast Police Station experiences lower rates of crime than the city averages.

Statistics for the local area surrounding the Park indicate that 3,015 individuals between 18 and 25 years of age have been arrested for, convicted of, or are on probation for a crime, of whom 19% are substance abusers. Child abuse has affected 15% of local youth. School records indicate that 68% of the high school population has been suspended or expelled from schools, and that 51% of the youth population in high school is Basic Skills Deficient, based on standardized test reading and calculation scores at 9<sup>th</sup> grade level or below (Statistics provided by City of Los Angeles, Department of Community Development; sourced from LAUSD, LA Probation, and American FactFinder). Such information suggests that the vicinity of the Park, even though within a relatively safe area of the city, still experiences significant amounts of crime and criminal activity.

Perceptions of Safety: Such a setting necessitates the Department's attention to ensure that the Park is safe and inviting for visitors. It is also important that the Park be perceived as safe. Unless local residents feel that the Park is a safe place to visit, it will fail to provide the much-needed benefits to the local community and will fail to gain the prominence deserved by a State Park. Design elements can be incorporated into the Park's layout to promote these values. The concept of defensible space is often used by planners in urban areas. Defensible space commonly refers to architectural and environmental design used to reduce crime by increasing observation and ownership. When public space is used in ways that make people feel safe and secure, social interactions – a primary source of crime deterrence – are more likely to occur. When people feel safe they are more likely to interact with one another and intervene when crime occurs. In that way, community is the first line of defense for crime control. Techniques such as lighting, fencing, and landscaping can define spaces in ways that promote community safety by decreasing criminal activity. The concept of defensible space is most effective when used in conjunction with other programs, such as community policing and neighborhood watches, to reduce crime.

Staffing: Appropriate Park staffing will be particularly important after sunset when the City portion of Parcel D may continue to be used for recreational activities, but the unlighted State portion is left dark to encourage nocturnal wildlife. This interface between recreational portions of the Park should be carefully monitored, with a specific policy developed to patrol this area and ensure that it does not become the scene of criminal activities.

There is also a need to coordinate law enforcement efforts conducted by the various jurisdictions at the Park, including the LAPD, State Park rangers, and City Parks staff. The Department should ensure surveillance and patrol activities are coordinated so neither duplication of effort nor gaps in the patrol schedules, which could create inefficiencies or compromise public safety, diminish the quality of a Park experience.

Diversion: The Park also affords important opportunities to divert youth away from criminal and deviant lifestyles and to instead foster responsibility and leadership. Through recreational and educational opportunities, as well as the responsibility of stewardship through volunteer participation, the Park affords multiple opportunities to direct and reform youth toward safe and productive lives, deterring them from otherwise criminal lifestyles. The Department should rely on and build upon the expertise and experience of local nonprofit groups and government agencies familiar with working with youth in the Park's vicinity to offer the Park as a location for the positive diversion of youth toward more profitable activities. This can commence from early childhood, when children get involved in learning and appreciating the world around them, through adolescence when the more active responsibility of leadership and stewardship can be assumed.

The General Plan will consider a variety of elements that may contribute to increased safety, including community involvement in Park planning, programs, and volunteer work, as well as adequate presence of Park staff. Design elements to enhance safety, provide adequate emergency vehicle access, and including other defensible space strategies are also issues that must be addressed.

### **3.8.3 HAZARDS EXPOSURE**

**Issue:** Previous industrial practices have contaminated soil and groundwater at and around the Park site. Public use of the site, particularly by children, must not result in exposure of the public to unsafe hazards levels.

**Analysis:** All Park visitors may be exposed to any resultant contamination and hazards; however, children are likely to be more exposed to hazardous materials entrained in Park soils and groundwater due to their smaller body mass, which can be more affected by contaminants, as well as typical play activities that often involve greater contact with the soil, such as picking up objects from the ground. By comparison, adults tend to experience less direct contact with hazardous materials, tending to prefer picnicking and walking, but still have the potential for exposure. Park staff also have potential for regular exposure to any on-site hazardous materials. Exposure of any individual to hazards and hazardous materials at the Park should be avoided.

As discussed in Section 2.1.3, soil and groundwater at the Park are known to be contaminated due to years of use of the site for industrial and rail yard purposes. Following extensive cleanup efforts, DTSC concluded that Parcel D has been cleared to be developed for residential or unrestricted use. Soil testing is in progress on Parcel G-1; until DTSC declares that Parcel G-1 has been approved for closure or partial closure, the site is not cleared for any development. (See Section 4.4.10.7)

## **3.9 MULTIPLE PLANS, STUDIES, EXPECTATIONS, AND PERCEPTIONS**

**Issue:** The Park has been the subject of studies over at least a decade but still lacks a cohesive, coordinated approach to planning as an area of public open space.

**Analysis:** As indicated in Section 2.2.2, numerous planning studies have focused on the Park, as well as the Taylor Yard complex in recent years, with emphasis on various enhancements, from restoring the natural resources associated with the Los Angeles River environment, to major urban development projects. There is a wide variety of stakeholders, voicing a number of divergent perspectives, expectations, needs, and desires for the area. With the acquisition of the Park parcels, the Department is in the position to gather and use much of this valuable information and to develop partnerships with the academic institutions, associations, stakeholder groups, and communities that have been comprehensively studying this area.

### **3.10 FISCAL CHALLENGES**

**Issue:** In this time of scarce economic resources and fiscal challenges, the Department must seek out opportunities for creative partnerships to provide adequate funding for Park development and maintenance.

**Analysis:** As with many public agencies and private organizations, funding for project development, operations, maintenance, staffing, and project enhancements is decreasing each year, yet the responsibilities and public expectations often increase. The Department must respond to these challenges by seeking partnerships and creative funding possibilities in order to pursue the vision of a river oriented park. Park planning may also include ideas for innovative concession opportunities.

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## CHAPTER 4

### PARK PLAN

This Park Plan chapter establishes the overall long-range purpose and vision for the future of the Park. Specific goals and supporting guidelines further clarify the vision for the future of the Rio de Los Angeles State Park. The goals and guidelines contained in this chapter are designed to rectify the currently identified issues described in Chapter 3, which provided an overview of issues and analysis associated with the Park, while providing a solid foundation for continued resource protection, preservation, and recreation opportunities, as well as facility development and interpretation at the Park. The goals and guidelines provide direction for future Park managers and set the parameters for subsequent management and development plans.

This General Plan is, by necessity, visionary in nature. Although currently identified issues drive much of its content, future Park issues cannot be fully predicted. Therefore, a general plan is designed to establish desired future conditions of both natural and cultural resources as well as the desired visitor experience. This visionary approach permits managers the opportunity to apply new resource information, emerging technologies, and improved management concepts for resolving current issues, along with the ability to provide adequate direction for resolving issues in the future.

#### 4.1 UNIT PURPOSE AND VISION

The purpose and vision of a State Park serve as guidelines for future management of the Park. They are related yet distinct, planning concepts that provide a context and direction for future management and planning efforts for the Park.

##### 4.1.1 DECLARATION OF PURPOSE

A Declaration of Purpose is required by the PRC, Section 5002.2(b). The Purpose of the Rio de Los Angeles State Park is to restore, protect, and preserve the riparian and upland vegetation ecosystems of the Glendale Narrows section of the Los Angeles River, while providing important public access for various recreational, interpretive, and educational uses in Northeast area of Los Angeles.

##### 4.1.2 VISION STATEMENT

The vision for the Park is a description of what the Park should ultimately look like in the future. As part of the General Plan process, a vision for the Park has been developed based on the shared vision of the Department and coordination with local stakeholders. The Vision for the Rio de Los Angeles State Park is as follows:

*The Rio de Los Angeles State Park is a place where the respite of nature thrives amidst densely populated urban life. The Park affords relief from the surrounding urban environment and the promise of physical activity in a natural setting. For the surrounding Park-deprived communities, the Park represents one of the most significant additions of urban green space developed in the past decade, and will be a vital component of the emerging Los Angeles River Greenway. The Park is a*



*river community that supports riparian and upland vegetation ecosystems, flourishing along the Los Angeles River, and will serve as a nursery for nesting native birds, mammals, and amphibians by enhancement of habitat and re-establishment of native plant communities, which contribute to the natural, aesthetic and ecological beauty of the region. The Park's recreational appeal also entices local residents who have fought for years to ensure that what was once a blighted, industrial wasteland would be transformed into a beautiful park and enriching ecological asset for the entire City, region, and state.*

Rio de Los Angeles State Park plays a vital role in providing cultural and environmental experiences for the residents and communities close to the Park, as well as visitors from outside the immediate community. Visitors from the region, state, nation and around the world will visit the Park to experience and learn about the environment and ecological restoration in Los Angeles. The Park's open space will provide a rejuvenating respite from the surrounding urban development and a link to the restored Los Angeles River.

The Park's program will reflect the interests of many visitors, from the local resident to world-travelers. Educational programs are varied in media and scope and are relevant, intriguing, and entertaining. They reflect the region's rich natural and cultural heritage and are intended to bring a personal connection to the Los Angeles River story. Park users range from individuals to groups that come for recreation activities, passionate environmental enthusiasts, tourists, and school classes that reflect the multi-ethnic and multi-generational population of Los Angeles. The Park's location near the heart of the city, connected by public transportation, also makes it easily accessible.

## **4.2 PARK CONCEPT PRINCIPLES**

Park Concept Principles are intended to guide the distinctive and site-specific content, design, and development of the Park, incorporating both Parcel D and Parcel G-1. The six core Park concept principles are:

- Natural Resource Restoration and Stewardship
- Environmental Educational / Interpretation
- Cohesive Visitor Experience
- Connectivity / Access
- Recreation Opportunities
- Sustainable Design, Construction and Maintenance

### **4.2.1 PRINCIPLE: NATURAL RESOURCES RESTORATION AND STEWARDSHIP**

The primary focus of the Park is the restoration, enhancement, and long term stewardship of its natural resources to support a "River Community." It will also allow the Park to serve as a counterpoint to the historical and cultural focus of the Los Angeles State Historic Park planned approximately 2 miles further south. In addition, this principle will address the critical need in the region for additional opportunities for residents and visitors alike to experience "nature in the city".

### **4.2.2 PRINCIPLE: ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION/INTERPRETATION**

Provide a variety of design features and programs in the Park to educate visitors about the natural resources of the Park and the region. Include interpretive facilities and staffing to heighten visitors' awareness, understanding and appreciation of the critical environmental systems and processes upon

which life in Los Angeles depends. Also look for ways to partner with schools, universities, museums and other similar entities to maximize the Park's educational and interpretive value and contribution to the community.

#### **4.2.3 PRINCIPLE: COHESIVE VISITOR EXPERIENCE**

Develop the Park as an integrated whole that is composed of interwoven and mutually supportive areas providing a multi-faceted interpretive and recreational experience. This principle will be especially challenging and critical to achieve at Rio de Los Angeles State Park since this Park unit it is composed of two noncontiguous sites, Parcel D and Parcel G-1. This challenge is increased by the presence within Parcel D of the 20 acres that will be operated by the City of Los Angeles for sports fields and other recreation (but which is NOT a part of this General Plan.) Despite this challenge, the Park must be designed such that the visitor experience is not fragmented or disjointed, but cohesive and complete.

#### **4.2.4 PRINCIPLE: CONNECTIVITY / ACCESS**

Ensure that linkages between the Park and the surrounding community are well considered and provided for, including a variety of modes of travel, including: pedestrian, bicycle, public transportation, and private motor vehicles. Also ensure that the Park is well connected with the surrounding transportation and open space systems to maximize visitor access to the Park, and to related resources and institutions. Both State Park and concession-offered visitor services should provide environmentally appropriate and enjoyable recreation opportunities for the widest possible range of visitors with respect to age, ethnicity, religion, race, income, education, and physical ability.

#### **4.2.5 PRINCIPLE: RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES**

Provide a diversity of accessible recreation opportunities and green open space in an urban environment for Park visitors of all ages and abilities. Establish open space that will be flexible and able to respond to the changing needs of future generations. Provide more recreation alternatives to the recreation facilities planned for the City-operated portion of Parcel D.

#### **4.2.6 PRINCIPLE: SUSTAINABLE DESIGN, CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE**

The facilities at Rio de Los Angeles State Park should be of a distinctive and sustainable quality that represents the integrity of California State Parks. Design, construction and maintenance of Park facilities should embody forward-thinking theories, strategies and methods and produce meaningful places and spaces that are accessible to all and are sustainable over time. The principle of sustainability should be applied not only to the design and construction of the Park, but also its on-going maintenance and management. Adhering to this principle will not only minimize the Parks impacts on the environment but also help the Park "lead by example" in carrying out the Environmental Education/Interpretation principle noted in above in 4.2.2.

### **4.3 PARK DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT**

This section provides the General Plan’s development concept for the Park and the goals and guidelines for planning land use and facilities for public access, interpretation, recreation, and Park administration. The Park concept formulated in this General Plan is intended to provide land use strategies, arrangements, and treatments that will create a holistic park with a strong purpose and identity. Park planning elements have been developed in this General Plan as a guide for systematizing land use, activities, resources, and opportunities. The planning elements represent functions of the plan program that should be managed with specific focused strategies.

This section also provides goals and guidelines for both the overall preferred Park concept and each of its component planning elements. Preferred Park concept goals and guidelines apply to the entire Park site in regard to land use, general Park development, access, and connectivity. Planning element goals and guidelines pertain to the functions, conditions, and activities that occur chiefly within that planning element.

#### **4.3.1 PREFERRED PARK CONCEPT**

The Preferred Park concept translates the Park’s Declaration of Purpose and Vision into an overall concept for creating a “River Community” of statewide significance and providing a setting for high-quality, diverse, and meaningful park visitor experiences.

Los Angeles River Park sites, Parcel D and G-1 will be transformed from former rail yards and brownfield site to a verdant Park and gathering place to enjoy avian wildlife and participate in recreation, reflection and learning in a more naturalized open space within the urban landscape of Los Angeles. The Park should become a key focal point within the regional urban mosaic of green open spaces, historical/cultural points of interest, learning centers, and diverse neighborhoods. This concept focuses on the experience of the natural environment in an urban setting, with special interpretive and recreational opportunities created by the proximity of the Los Angeles River and its planned Greenway/Bikeway.

#### **Statement of Management Intent**

Create a Park that has a direct ecological relationship with the Los Angeles River and provide recreational opportunities to learn about and enjoy the natural interrelationships between plant and animal communities and human interaction in a compelling and meaningful way. The entire Park should be an interpretive “River Community” that promotes environmental stewardship and connections to the natural and sustainable ecological systems that invoke intimate and sensory involvement. Park development should function in harmony with existing resources and minimize the environmental impact of restored areas. The Park concept provides a setting for enhancing continuing community vitality and activities of surrounding neighborhoods as a part of an evolving history and basic understanding of the natural behavior of an ecosystem. Park development must consider the urban environment where safety and security must be a priority to provide for visitors, staff, and surrounding neighborhoods, while supporting preservation and restoration of plant and animal communities. Due to its location and purpose, the Park will be an essential part of the urban revitalization of the greater downtown Los Angeles area, a vital component of the emerging Los Angeles River Greenway, and a unifying nexus of distinctive surrounding diverse communities.

## **Social Experience**

The Park will be a gathering place where people from all social, economic, and cultural backgrounds can meet, interact, and build a vibrant community spirit and where Park visitors can enjoy learning about the rich natural and cultural history of this site and region, and its environmental evolution. These stories should include human history and human interaction with the natural and built environment and the profound mutual influences and effects involved.

## **Primary Plan Elements**

The primary plan elements are the physical areas that make up the plan concept. The planning area descriptions, goals, and guidelines define the strategies and objectives for creating and managing the Park. The Park Concept and Planning Element Goals and Guidelines are intended to be coordinated and combined with the other goals and guidelines of the plan (natural resources, cultural resources, interpretation, operations, aesthetics, etc.).

### **4.3.2 NATURALIZED OPEN SPACE ELEMENT**

The Naturalized Open Space Element protects natural, cultural, and aesthetic resources and permits low to moderate intensity uses. Organized recreational activities are discouraged through the absence of turf areas and formal sports facilities. Interpretive programs offer opportunities to learn and enjoy recreational activities, such as bird watching and nature walks. These areas afford greater protection for sensitive natural resources than the Transitional Open Space Element (described below) and aims to provide a natural setting in which to enjoy and appreciate environmental and cultural experiences. As shown in Figure 11, this plan element occupies most of the state-operated portion of Parcel D, adjacent to the railroad line, and throughout Parcel G-1, maximizing the nearly ½ mile of frontage along the Los Angeles River in this parcel.

## **Statement of Management Intent**

The Naturalized Open Space area will help to connect visitors to natural habitats including those that may have once existed in and near the Park site and will strengthen the connection to the Los Angeles River. This “River Community” focus will be on reestablishing native vegetation and wildlife habitats. Trails will provide opportunities for discovery and education about the area’s natural heritage, focusing on the native species once found in the Los Angeles region.

## **Social Interaction**

Visitors would expect to experience a low to moderate amount of interaction with others. Individuals, families, and groups (classes, youth groups, and others) can explore a variety of nature activities in this area.

## **Activities**

Stewardship, nature study, observation, bird watching, and learning about the natural heritage of the Los Angeles region will be the major activities. Trails throughout this area will provide spaces for

walking and bicycling. Benches, tables, and spur trails to small activity areas could provide opportunities for environmental education, talks, discussion, and/or relaxation.

### **Facilities**

Facilities in this area are intended to enhance the visitor's enjoyment of the Park and knowledge of the region's natural heritage. Facilities could include trails, benches, tables, and interpretive elements, as well as possible outdoor amphitheater-type seating for structured interpretive programs. On Parcel G-1, some limited parking would be allowed in the Naturalized Open Space planning element, while on Parcel D it would not, since parking is being planned for in the design of the other planning elements of Parcel D, primarily on the City-operated portions. Habitat restoration areas and riparian wetland habitat restoration would also occur in this park zone.

### **4.3.3 TRANSITIONAL OPEN SPACE ELEMENT**

#### **Statement of Management Intent**

Of the two parcels that comprise this Park, only Parcel D contains the Transitional Open Space element. As the name implies, the intent of this area is to provide a visual and experiential transition from the sports recreation areas on the City-operated portion of Parcel D to the Naturalized Open Space element of the site, minimized ambient light, environmental impacts to wildlife and plant communities. As shown in Figure 11 the approximate extent of this element is designated along the edge of the City-operated zone.

#### **Social Interaction**

Due to the limited size of this area and its function as a transition space, the social interaction within it will be with users of the main adjacent City-operated recreation sports fields and facilities and also with those using the recreation and interpretive resources in the Naturalized Open Space and Interpretive Center elements. The social experience can be one of active participation in smaller group activities, family recreation, or more passive individual activities. Contact with other visitors could be moderate to high depending on the types of group activities and events occurring in adjacent areas, or on the intensity of overall Park attendance.

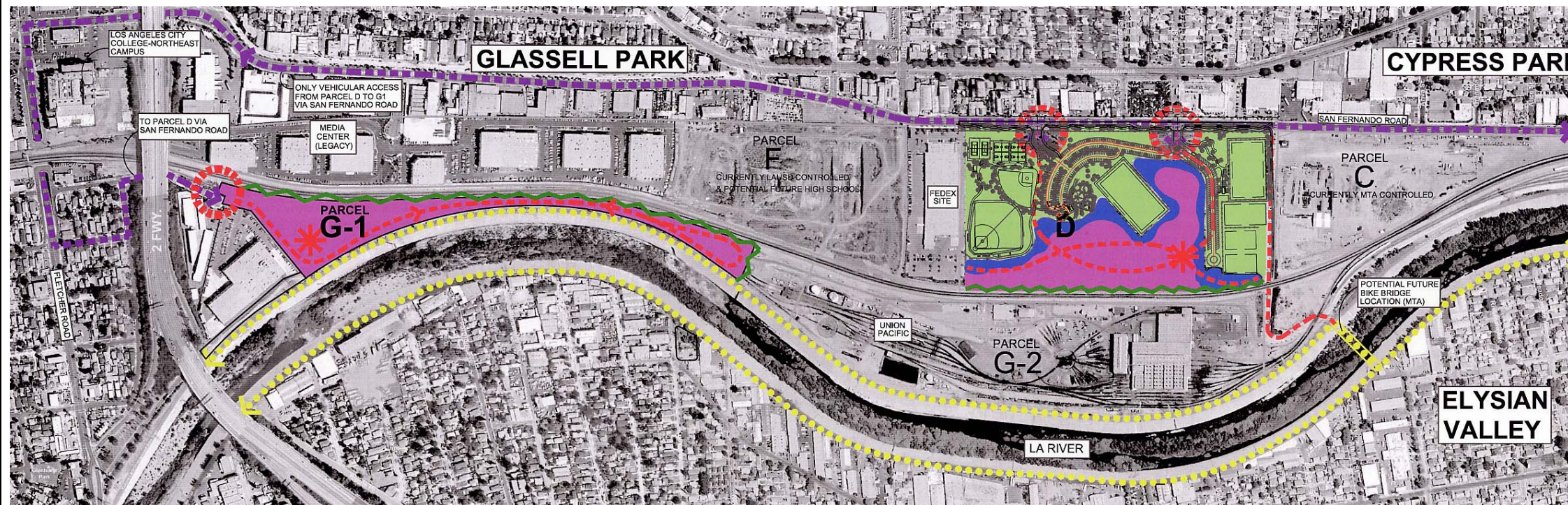
#### **Activities**

Informal/passive recreation activities will be allowed in this area. These activities include family and group picnicking, jogging, casual walks, and even just an outdoor place to watch the a recreation occurring on the adjacent City-operated sports fields. In addition to informal/passive recreation activities, this area can also serve as an alternative venue or expansion area for appropriate special events or celebrations.



# RIO DE LOS ANGELES STATE PARK

FIGURE 11  
PREFERRED CONCEPT  
ALTERANTIVE PLAN



## LEGEND

- ACTIVE RECREATION ZONE  
(Not a Part of General Plan)
- TRANSITIONAL OPEN SPACE
- NATURALIZED OPEN SPACE
- PRIMARY ACCESS POINTS  
(Vehicular and Pedestrian)
- ✱ POTENTIAL INTERPRETIVE CENTER SITE
- PROPOSED LA DOT BIKEWAYS
- KEY VEHICULAR LINKAGES
- KEY PEDESTRIAN LINKAGES
- RAILROAD LANDSCAPE BUFFER

Source Data: Map features digitized by EDAW, Inc., ESA, and North East Trees. Aerial base from Eagle Aerial; flown October 7, 2002.

**EDAW**  
March 10, 2005



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## Facilities

Facilities may include family and group picnic areas, shade structures or tree canopies on the perimeter of activity spaces, an informal amphitheatre, and restrooms. Limited parking and/or passenger drop-off areas should be in a nearby convenient location.

### 4.3.4 INTERPRETIVE ELEMENT

#### Statement of Management Intent

Since the two parcels that make up this Park are separated by significant physical barriers and there is no direct visitor-accessible pedestrian or vehicular linkage between them, the management intent is to include at least one area to serve as a focus of – though not the only – interpretive activities and facilities on each parcel. The content of these interpretive focal points should be tailored to the unique features of each site. They would be mainly open air facilities but could have more or less extensive indoor facilities if funds permit. These areas of the Park would provide visitor information, general park orientation, and interpretation, as well as indoor and outdoor gathering spaces for education and events, such as community celebrations. The concentration of activities and facilities in these areas are intended to strengthen the Park's identity and may provide a focal point or gateway for Park access and events. The facilities in these areas can be a destination or an embarkation point to other areas and interpretive facilities, such as self-guided visitor interpretive signage throughout the Park, or the Multi-Use Trail, which could itself also offer more dispersed and subtle interpretive features and facilities.

#### Social Interaction

Interpretation would offer differing levels of social interaction. The interpretive focal points or 'hubs' might be more active areas affording a high degree of contact with other Park visitors and providing opportunities for interaction among different groups. As primary visitor information and orientation areas for each of the Park's two parcels, visitor and staff contact would be common. The other, less concentrated forms of interpretation could be dispersed through out the Park and could offer opportunities for less social interaction.

#### Activities

Interpretation in the park could be in the form of a variety of activities, both in the focal areas and dispersed throughout each parcel. Interpretation would occur through a variety of formal and informal techniques. Lectures, classes, and hands-on activities may be some of the methods used to teach visitors about the natural resources of the site and the region, and how the various cultures that have used the Park site over time have impacted the environment and ecology. Cultural events and celebrations are also activities which could occur.

#### Facilities

The interpretive facilities could include some of the more developed facilities in the park. Both indoor and outdoor gathering and educational spaces could provide the flexibility necessary for the amount and diversity of possible activities. These facilities will provide visitor gathering spaces for celebrations, learning activities, and park orientation. Such facilities could include more dispersed

design features such as trails and interpretive signage throughout each parcel. For Parcel G-1, a potentially well-suited site for an interpretive hub might be towards the north end of the site, but near the Los Angeles River edge to take advantage of views to the River and engage with the future LADOT bikeway along the River, while not intruding too much on the site.

#### **4.3.5 MULTI-USE TRAIL ELEMENT**

##### **Statement of Management Intent**

The multi-use trail would be intended to allow a range of more recreational uses such as walking, jogging, and biking. The trail would also serve to help link the various interpretive facilities and programs offered in the Park.

##### **Social Interaction**

Groups and unacquainted visitors can interact and share their different backgrounds and how they may be connected to the interpretive themes and stories that are a part of the Park.

##### **Activities**

Individuals, families, or groups could use the trail as a learning opportunity or as a recreational facility. Spur trails connected to the main trail can provide discussion or activity areas for both groups and individuals. The trail can also be a venue for organized interpretive program activities.

##### **Facilities**

This facility would be a wide, natural permeable-surfaced trail that can comfortably accommodate both pedestrians and casual recreational joggers and cyclists. Interpretive features could include information panels as well as design treatments with interpretive themes embedded into the trail and adjoining Park areas. Spur trails connected to activity or discussion areas could also be developed.

#### **4.3.6 RAILROAD BUFFER ELEMENT**

##### **Statement of Management Intent**

The management intent for this planning element is to reduce the negative impacts on the visitor and staff Park experience resulting from the active railroad tracks that border the west side of Parcel D (approx. 1,700 feet) and the east side of Parcel G-1 (approx. 2,500 feet, or nearly a ½ mile). Using primarily trees, and other plantings (consistent with the other vegetation management goals and guidelines in this General Plan), the hope is to screen views of the rail lines from Parcel G-1. On Parcel D, a berm will separate a vegetated human-made depression and the property edge facing the railroad line. This will serve the dual purposes of creating the topography necessary for detention of water so that a riparian wetland can be created, as well as mitigating some train noise. On the 20 acres leased by the City of Los Angeles, clusters of trees and grassy upland areas will be provided from where park visitors can view the trains and the Los Angeles River. If at some time in the future, State Parks acquires additional land, a physical connection between parcels G1 and D could be established, which would require changes in this buffer concept.

## **Social Interaction**

The buffer area is not intended as a place in which social interaction would occur. However, its presence may improve social interaction within the Park sites by making the outdoor spaces feel more contained and comfortable to visitors.

## **Activities**

This planning area is not intended as a site for visitor activities.

## **Facilities**

In addition to the vegetative screening, the railroad buffer should also include decorative fencing to discourage visitor access to the railroad right-of-way and tracks, and improve visitor and staff safety until the tracks can be submerged, which is the optimum solution. Fencing and signage could incorporate interpretive information about the natural heritage, and the area's railroad and transportation history.

## **4.4 PARK GOALS AND GUIDELINES**

### **4.4.1 INTRODUCTION TO GOALS AND GUIDELINES**

This section is the heart of the General Plan in that it delineates the plan's proposals for managing the Park's natural, cultural and aesthetic resources; for interpreting these resources; for providing recreational facilities and opportunities; and for operating and maintaining the Park. The "Goals" establish the purpose and the "Guidelines" provide direction and parameters that the Department would consider to achieve the goals.

The goals and guidelines apply parkwide for resource management and planning facilities for public access, recreation, interpretation, and Park administration. They address planning issues that apply to all geographic areas of the Park. These goals and guidelines are driven by the Declaration of Purpose and Park Vision found earlier in this chapter.

These goals and guidelines were developed in response to an evaluation of existing conditions and are intended to address existing issues and provide ongoing guidance for the incremental actions that will be taken over time to realize the long-term vision for the Park. The Park's resources will be managed by balancing the need for recreation space with the protection and restoration of its cultural and natural resources.

### **4.4.2 NATURAL RESOURCES**

The Park has potential to become a significant link in the Los Angeles River habitat corridor. Development in California has destroyed a great deal of natural habitat, particularly in the greater Los Angeles area, limiting animals to discontinuous pockets of land. Loss of native vegetation has resulted in the isolation of habitats to the point where wildlife movement has been constrained or eliminated, and habitat linkages have been severed.

The potential to restore the natural resources of 57 acres on the Los Angeles River in the Glendale Narrows was one of the key considerations of the Department in establishing this unit of the State Park system. Establishing the two parcels that comprise this unit as a State Park demands wise stewardship to retain the biological, historic, aesthetic, educational, and recreational values. The effective implementation of native habitat restoration or creation would provide refugia for plant and animal species and enhance avian movement corridors for better connectivity to other areas of open space in the region.

This portion of the General Plan contains broad goals and guidelines for managing the various Parkwide natural resources of the Park site. Each main resource type has its own section containing guidelines that relate to the goals for each specific resource. Essential to these goals is the periodic assessment of the status and conditions of key resources recognized as requiring attention and special management within the Park.

#### **4.4.2.1 Biocorridors**

Due to the highly urbanized and disturbed ecosystem conditions across the region, bio-connectivity to other habitat areas will be an on-going challenge for the Park unit.

**Goal:** Reflect natural ecosystem dynamics to enhance or maintain the dispersal and movement of native plants and animals throughout the Park and across the region.

#### **Guidelines:**

**Biocorridors 1:** California State Parks will maintain high standards for ecosystem health and bio-diversity by protecting plant and animal habitat and dispersal corridors in the Park.

**Biocorridors 2:** California State Parks will coordinate with local communities, county, state and federal agencies, research institutions, and relevant organizations to evaluate the ecological component this park could add to a regional bio-corridor system.

**Biocorridors 3:** Human impacts to the Park's natural resources will be inventoried and monitored periodically to assess and document the health of species, particularly those that rely on large areas to live, hunt and disperse. California State Parks will coordinate with other government agencies and research institutions in regional resource monitoring.

#### **4.4.2.2 Buffers**

The Park is located within one of the most developed regions of California. Existing and future development pressures will adversely affect the natural resources of the area and pose challenges to future re-vegetation and restoration efforts.

**Goal:** Establish, maintain and protect ecosystem buffers adjacent to Rio de Los Angeles State Park. Within the Park, design buffers that promote the re-establishment of native plants and animals.

**Guidelines:**

**Buffers 1:** California State Parks will coordinate with neighboring land and business owners, communities, and city, county, state, and federal agencies to develop and maintain a buffer system along the outer edge of the Park boundaries.

**Buffers 2:** California State Parks will form partnerships with neighbors, public agencies, and private businesses to plant native or non-invasive horticultural plant species in the vicinity of the Park.

**Buffers 3:** Integrate the Re-vegetation Management Plan (see below, Section 4.4.2.3) with the design of future Park facilities to ensure areas promoting the values of California's biological diversity are adequately buffered from the affects of Park facilities and recreational activity.

**4.4.2.3 Re-vegetation Management Plan**

The restoration of this highly degraded parkland in Los Angeles may serve as a guide for future restoration efforts in other highly developed regions. The successful re-establishment of native plants and animals to the Rio de Los Angeles State Park will be a challenging process that will require the development and implementation of a Re-vegetation Management Plan.

**Goal:** Develop and implement a comprehensive Re-vegetation Management Plan.

**Guidelines:**

**Re-vegetation Management Plan 1:** Prior to development of the site, a Re-vegetation Management Plan will be completed by a State Parks Resource Ecologist or other qualified biologist. This Plan will be utilized in the design of future park facilities and will addresses the re-establishment of natural ecological processes essential for the development and maintenance of local native plant and wildlife communities.

**Re-vegetation Management Plan 2:** Evaluate the Re-vegetation Management Plan for consistency with other natural resource plans and conservation efforts for the region.

**Re-vegetation Management Plan 3:** The Re-vegetation Management Plan should perpetuate local native vegetation and wildlife establishment and protect, where possible, existing native vegetation complexes

**4.4.2.4 Air Quality**

The park's recreational facilities and activities will not contribute significantly towards the reduction in air quality. In the long term, the revegetation of the site should actually serve to improve the air quality. However, in the short term, impacts could be possible from construction of the park facilities.

**Goal:** Reduce potential construction-related emissions impacts.

**Guidelines:**

**Air Quality 1:** Consider phasing construction projects in such a manner that minimizes the area of surface disturbance (e.g., grading and excavation), the number of vehicle trips on unpaved surfaces, and concurrent use of diesel equipment and other equipment or activities that release emissions. Minimizing these effects may entail clustering certain construction activities or performing them in a particular order.

**Air Quality 2:** At the time of construction, consider implementing a compliance-monitoring program in order to stay within the parameters of project-specific compliance documents, where appropriate. The compliance-monitoring program would oversee these mitigation measures and would include reporting protocols.

**Air Quality 3:** Incorporate requirements of the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) Rule 403 (Fugitive Dust Abatement) into construction contracts. Standard dust abatement measures could include the following elements: water or otherwise stabilize soils, cover haul trucks, employ speed limits on unpaved roads, minimize vegetation clearing, and revegetate disturbed areas post-construction.

**Air Quality 4:** Analyze potential impacts to biological resources from construction activities before facility development begins, to ensure success of the reestablished of habitat.

**4.4.2.2 Watershed and Water Quality**

The Park is located within the watershed of the Los Angeles River, which has been heavily modified from its natural state by urban development. Potential impacts related to the hydrology, geology, and soils within the Park site must be considered when constructing new buildings and trails, or when any ground-disturbing activities are planned. Excessive soil erosion and runoff could impact the nearby Los Angeles River, already designated as an impaired waterbody by the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB).

**Goal:** Promote healthy watershed processes and manage the site to restore and protect natural watershed functions as much as possible within the limits of the urban setting.

**Guidelines:**

**Water 1:** Identify and manage any human-made erosion occurring from areas of the Park due to roads, trails, debris piles, or from on-site drainage systems. Reduce concentrated surface water runoff and sediment transport, keep disruption of soils to a minimum, reduce impervious surfaces where feasible, and use proper techniques for water removal from planned roads, parking lots, trails, and buildings. Implement a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan that includes DPR-approved Best Management Practices (BMPs) to prevent soil erosion during and after construction.

**Water 2:** Evaluate all proposed Park projects to ensure they do not degrade surface and groundwater quality. Refer to the current edition of the RWQCB's Basin Plan for the water quality standards and the surface water quality objectives for the Los Angeles River.

Increase public awareness of water quality problems in the Los Angeles River watershed including the impacts of erosion, urban development, and recreational use. Participate, where feasible, with universities, colleges, and other researchers to increase the scientific knowledge that could benefit Park watershed management and water quality.

**Water 3:** Potential water quality impacts could be reduced by implementing the following:

- New facilities shall include water quality control features such as detention basins and vegetated buffers or bioswales, to prevent pollution of adjacent water resources by runoff. Parking lots can be equipped with runoff treatment systems in compliance with Standard Urban Storm Water Mitigation Plan (SUSMP) regulations.
- Storm water drainage systems should be equipped to collect the anticipated increases in trash loads. The systems shall assist in reducing the Park's trash contribution to the Los Angeles River from existing levels.
- Where appropriate, operational BMPs for street and parking lot cleaning, litter control, and catch basin cleaning should be routinely implemented to prevent water quality degradation.
- SWPPPs shall be submitted to the RWQCB prior to the commencement of construction activities. Plan requirements will include on-site soil and dust control BMPs to minimize construction site erosion. DPR-approved BMPs shall be established and implemented in compliance with the RWQCB guidelines. A Spill Prevention and Response Plan will also be included as part of the SWPPP to prevent water quality degradation due to spills of vehicle fluids during any construction projects.
- A Pesticide Management Plan shall be established for the Park to regulate storage and/or application of pesticides on the site to protect water quality.
- A Wetland/Riparian Creation Plan shall be established which focuses on the restoration of topography and hydraulic functions through the creation of a combination of wetlands and riparian ecosystems that simulate what was once the natural setting for the river. This plan may include grading and planting phases, followed by monitoring during establishment, and ongoing maintenance.

**Water 4:** Potential runoff and downstream flooding impacts could be reduced by implementing the following:

- Any new construction shall include adequate storm water drainage facilities to accommodate increased runoff volumes where necessary. This may include the construction of detention basins or structures that will delay peak flows and reduce velocity. System designs shall be designed to eliminate increases in peak flow rates from current levels.



- A drainage plan shall be incorporated into the design and construction of the park facilities. Drainage systems shall be designed to maximize the use of detention basins, vegetated areas, and velocity dissipaters to reduce peak flows where possible.

#### 4.4.2.3 Vegetation Management

Due to the unusual circumstances of creating a Park from a former Brownfield site and rail yard, native vegetation re-establishment at the Park will be unique relative to vegetation management in many other State Parks. Native wetland and riparian vegetation re-establishment is intended to enable the Park to become a part of the regional Los Angeles River natural open space network.

The Park's vegetation management framework allows for specialized landscaping within the various planning elements or areas within the Park. There are specific site development and vegetation treatment possibilities considered for each of these elements, including:

- Turf-substitutes such as meadow grasses and groundcovers for recreation areas in the Transitional Open Space element;
- Predominantly native vegetation and habitat establishment within the Naturalized Open Space element; Windrows or other large-scale screen planting as part of the Railroad Buffer element;
- Various specialty plantings and gardens in and around the Multi-Use Trail and Interpretive Center elements, including possible children's gardens, demonstration gardens, or other plantings addressing specific cultural or interpretive needs.

The overriding long-term objective of native vegetation establishment and management is to create sustainable, inspiring places with lasting values that are tied to the site's specific natural resources and interpretive themes and message. The goals and guidelines below help achieve this long-term objective.

**Goal:** Vegetation management should establish the Park as an important green open space in the Los Angeles urban area.

**Guideline:**

**Vegetation 1:** Vegetation management should establish a native vegetation framework that enables it to become part of the regional Los Angeles River natural open space network and supports the Park's connectivity goals. The framework should utilize local native plant species from riparian and freshwater marsh habitats along the Los Angeles River.

**Goal:** Vegetation management should emphasize the creation of sustainable ecosystems, including systems that will survive with the natural rainfall and can adapt to the microclimate, drainage, and soil conditions of the site.

**Guidelines:**

**Vegetation 2:** Use California native species with a focus on plants endemic to the Los Angeles Basin to familiarize the public to local native plant species, the area's biotic heritage, and vegetation that can enhance habitat values for native wildlife species. encourage further studies and monitoring related to post-Brownfield effects on native and horticultural species.

**Vegetation 3:** Vegetation management and maintenance should consider composting vegetation waste from the site to help reduce landfill usage and increase the sustainability concepts for the Park.

**Vegetation 4:** Direct vegetation management toward reestablishing local native plant communities. Plants should include those species known to have historically occurred on-site and should include trees, shrubs, sub-shrubs, vines, grasses, and annual wildflowers, as appropriate.

**Vegetation 5:** Develop programs to educate Park visitors about local plants, birds and insects, native to this region of Los Angeles.

**Vegetation 6:** At specialized areas of the Park, including transition areas such as access points (or gateways) and trail crossings, consider the additional use of other local Southern California native species, to achieve greater multi-sensory impact. Select plant species that encourage interaction through the human senses while still maintaining a primarily native plant community.

**Vegetation 7:** Design and establish native vegetation in a manner that provides areas protected and buffered from human disturbances such as facilities and trails, and off-trail hiking or foot traffic.

**4.4.2.4 Non-Native Plant Control**

Generally, a non-native plant species is one that is not known to have naturally occurred previously in an area. Invasive non-native plants pose a threat to native species and usually proliferate in the absence of natural ecological processes, often out-competing native plants for valuable resources.

**Goal:** Implement strategies to address the control of non-native invasive species throughout the Park. Strategies must focus on those species that detract from the natural setting, those species that are highly invasive, and those species that will detract from the restoration and establishment of native plants and animals.

**Guidelines:**

**Invasive Plants 1:** The Department should develop an invasive non-native plant species management plan for identifying, monitoring, and controlling non-native plant infestations. A variety of control methods should be evaluated to control problem species so that they do

not become established and pose a threat to native vegetation and their reestablishment on-site.

**Invasive Plants 2:** The Department will develop programs to improve public awareness regarding the threatening impacts of non native plants on native ecosystems.

#### 4.4.2.5 Native Wildlife Reestablishment

**Goal:** Promote the re-establishment of native wildlife and insects at Rio de Los Angeles State Park.

**Guidelines:**

**Wildlife 1:** If it is necessary to regulate non-native animal populations in order to reestablish native wildlife and insects at Rio de Los Angeles State Park, use methods consistent with DOM chapter (2004), Natural Resource Management section. Invasive non-native animal control is most effectively accomplished by developing a program to monitor and control non-native pests.

**Wildlife 2:** Re-vegetation and habitat creation on Parcel G-1 will be designed to encourage use of the site by wildlife, including use by migratory birds that commonly use the Los Angeles River ecosystem.

**Wildlife 3:** Reduce or minimize artificial night lighting around native plant associations used to help promote the re-establishment of a wildlife component at Rio de Los Angeles State Park. Artificial lighting should be concentrated in those areas where wildlife is not likely to establish.

**Wildlife 4:** Facilities development shall be designed in a manner that protects and buffers from human disturbance any vegetation restoration areas. Protection and buffers shall take account of disturbances which detract from wildlife establishment such as: night lighting, noise, trails and off-trail foot traffic, and grounds maintenance.

**Goal:** Reestablish native plants and plant communities at Rio de Los Angeles State Park to promote native wildlife re-establishment.

**Wildlife 4:** Provide areas that will promote the re-establishment of local native plants and their associated native plant communities to provide food and shelter for native wildlife species still occurring in the Los Angeles basin. Educational programs should focus on watching and recording native wildlife and insects observed to help all visitors appreciate the native plant and animal interaction.

#### 4.4.2.6 Exotic Animal Control

Non-native animal species have been shown to exert pressure on native species through predation and competition for resources. Although this is not currently a major issue at the Park, it may become more problematic as wildlife is attracted to the Park and the impact of domesticated or feral cats and dogs is felt.

**Goal:** Control non-native animals at the park to reduce the impacts to native species.

**Guidelines:**

**Exotic Animal Control 1:** California State Parks will work to control exotic animals that are found to upset natural ecological dynamics of native species.

**Exotic Animal Control 2:** Regular monitoring of exotic species will be conducted to track the spread of ecologically damaging organisms. This may require cooperative work with neighboring landowners, including local and federal government agencies.

#### 4.4.2.7 Paleontological Resources

**Goal:** Protect any paleontological resources that may be discovered in the park.

**Guidelines:**

**Paleontology 1:** A qualified paleontologist should review all proposed subsurface operations, including but not limited to grading, excavation, trenching, or removal of existing features of the subject property. Any fossils recovered from the park shall be recorded and maintained by the Department, for the benefit of current and future generations.

#### 4.4.3 EDUCATION INTERPRETATION

*Education* is the knowledge obtained through learning.

*Interpretation* is a communication process that forges emotional and intellectual connections between the interests of the audience and the inherent meanings in the resource. (National Association for Interpretation)

Through education and interpretation, the park has the ability to provide direction, information, experience and stewardship opportunities for visitors. Effective education and interpretation helps visitors to gain knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of the park's cultural and natural heritage. At its best, it can foster an ethic of sustainability that will ensure park resources are cared for and protected for future generations.

The overall educational and interpretive direction of the park must be identified before goals and guidelines can be developed. This direction is based on the significance of Rio de Los Angeles State Park as a unique place for tracing the natural and cultural history associated with the Los Angeles River. Building from ideas generated by park staff and public input, the following interpretive mission statement and interpretive themes has been developed:

##### **Interpretive Mission Statement**

The interpretive mission of the Park is to create interpretation that fosters understanding of the impacts that industrial and urban development have had – and continue to have – on the fragile habitat of the Los Angeles River and communicates how it is being restored.

### **Unifying Theme:**

Rio de Los Angeles State Park offers opportunities to study successful re-establishment of a healthy river system to serve as an inspiration and example of how to create a sustainable living environment.

### **Primary Theme: Sustainability**

The long-term survival of the river community at Rio de Los Angeles State Park depends on the healthy coexistence of human and natural systems.

### **Primary Theme: Change**

The Los Angeles River and its environs is a changing landscape that continues to evolve both naturally and culturally.

### **Primary Theme: Transportation**

From trails to rails, the land encompassed by Los Angeles River State Park has been a route of transportation and commerce throughout its history.

**Supporting Theme:** Los Angeles' Taylor Yard, a rail yard once part of a nationwide rail system, had major impacts – both positive and negative – on the area's natural and human communities.

### **Secondary Theme: First Peoples**

The Tongva/Gabrieleno flourished because of the wise use of local resources and trading networks.

### **Secondary Theme: Conflict**

Taylor Yard, a small part of a nationwide rail system, was a thriving rail yard operation in Los Angeles that had major impacts – both positive and negative – on the area's natural resources and on people's lives.

### **Secondary Theme: Recreation**

Rio de Los Angeles State Park provides a unique place for reflection, relaxation, recreation, rejuvenation, and inspiration. **Goals and Guidelines**

**Goal:** Develop interpretive facilities and programs that encourage the public to explore the natural and cultural history associated with the Los Angeles River and its recovery.

### **Guidelines:**

**Interpretation 1:** Develop stewardship programs that allow visitors to experience nature in an urban setting while becoming a participant in the recovery of the Los Angeles River.

**Interpretation 2:** Integrate the site's industrial past to provide the public with a richer understanding of the environmental costs associated with land development and human

occupation. Include the community's story regarding the acquisition and transformation of Taylor Yard.

**Interpretation 3:** Create opportunities for visitors to discover the importance of wetlands and migratory birdlife in urban areas, and the Park's relationship to bio-corridors, the Pacific Flyway, and other natural pathways and habitats in the area.

**Interpretation 4:** Develop programs that make connections between the statewide significance of riparian habitats and the ongoing recovery of the Los Angeles River and its environs at the Park.

**Interpretation 5:** Coordinate with federal, state, local, and non-profit/community-based organizations to develop interpretive programs that promote the significance and recovery of the Los Angeles River.

**Interpretation 6:** Promote the Park as a destination point in Los Angeles where visitors can experience the biological transformation of a river environment within an urban setting.

**Interpretation 7:** Connect the success of the river's transformation in the Park to the health of the Los Angeles River Watershed and to the health of the community.

**Interpretation 8:** Partner with the native Tongva/Gabrieleno people to develop educational and interpretive programs that relate to their long-lasting association with the river environment.

**Interpretation 9:** Provide meaningful interpretation that incorporates multiple perspectives, including those of the park visitor. Organize cultural activities and demonstrations that allow local residents to share their values and skills with visitors.

**Interpretation 10:** Use the most current subject matter research and interpretive techniques to provide opportunities for increasing the visitors' knowledge and appreciation of the significant natural resources of the region.

**Interpretation 11:** Create accessible interpretive facilities and programs, including a well-trained staff, which can effectively provide educational and interpretive services that meet visitors' diverse needs. Employ guidelines, such as *All Visitors Welcome: Accessibility in State Park Interpretive Programs and Facilities* and *California State Parks Accessibility Guidelines*

**Interpretation 12:** Reach as many visitors as possible by offering multi-sensory and multi-lingual interpretive opportunities in a variety of locations and settings throughout the Park.

**Goal:** Explore traditional, new, and innovative technologies and techniques for developing the park's interpretive and educational programs and facilities.

#### **Guidelines:**

**Interpretation 13:** Provide learning experiences that engage one or more of the senses to enhance the intellectual understanding of park messages.

**Interpretation 14:** Use the area’s natural and cultural features as design references for developing the interpretive facilities, integrating a variety of public art media to enhance the visitor experience.

**Interpretation 15:** Use education and interpretation to enhance all park activities, special events, and public facilities, including both permanent and temporary exhibits to facilitate park interpretation.

**Goal:** Assist the Department in meeting its goal of increased diversity by reducing barriers, strengthening partnerships, and providing interpretive programs that encourage public participation.

**Guidelines:**

**Interpretation 14:** During the interpretive planning phases of the park identify strategies and implementation methods for removing barriers resulting from language, education, and economic differences.

**Interpretation 17:** Promote diverse volunteer participation in park programs and in the development of the park’s support organizations. Refer to the Department’s *Volunteers in Parks Program Guidelines* and *Cooperating Associations Program Manual*.

**Interpretation 16:** Develop and strengthen partnerships and relationships with local park departments, nature centers, gardens, arboreta, and other public institutions to encourage collaboration to develop interpretive facilities and programs that meet the needs of the area’s residents and those of other Californians, and that complement or enhance existing facilities and programs in the Los Angeles area.

**Interpretation 17:** Develop outreach efforts with community groups to support and develop interpretive programs. Current and potential partners include: Chambers of Commerce; local, regional, and non-profit organizations with similar or complementary goals; schools, colleges and universities; concessionaries and government agencies.





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**Goal:** Maximize the use of interpretation to enhance visitor experiences with the park’s resources, the surrounding environment, and the region’s year-round temperate climate.

**Guidelines:**

**Interpretation 20:** Use a holistic interpretive planning approach for the site that connects the interpretive themes and messages of the Park with the creative use of open space.

**Interpretation 21:** Develop outdoor interpretive facilities that can serve as multi-use areas to reduce development of the Park’s open space.

**Interpretation 22:** Encourage the use of portable facilities such as interpretive discovery carts and interpretive concession carts to increase flexibility and mobility of a variety of interpretive services.

**Goal:** Create meaningful educational and interpretive opportunities to promote lifelong learning.

**Guidelines:**

**Interpretation 23:** Develop programs and partnerships with local schools, youth groups, colleges, and universities that are in alignment with state educational standards and the park’s significant resources.

**Interpretation 24:** Offer park programs that meet the diverse needs of students, parents, instructors, and schools. This includes programs such as in-school programs, after-school programs, remote learning programs, student internships, professional mentoring, and student service projects.

**Interpretation 25:** Provide environmental education programs that meet the diverse needs of multigenerational visitors and sustains an ongoing stewardship and support of the park by visitors.

**Goal:** Create a comprehensive strategy for supporting ongoing interpretation and educational programs for the Park.

**Guidelines:**

**Interpretation 26:** Establish a program to preserve and interpret the personal stories and experiences of the people associated with the park’s multi-faceted history. Use methods such as oral history, written narratives, and photography.

**Interpretation 27:** Create a resource library that is connected with the environmental education community, schools, and libraries.

**Interpretation 28:** Develop a park-wide plan for regulatory, informational, and interpretive signage to coordinate their appearance, minimize impacts to the resources, and meet multiple language needs. Signs and other media should be maintained, repaired, replaced, or updated with relative ease.

**Interpretation 29:** Prepare comprehensive interpretive plans for the park, using the Department's *Workbook for Planning Interpretive Projects*. **Interpretation 30:** Develop a *Scope of Collections Statement* to identify which objects the park is to collect and how they will be managed. Follow the Department's *Guidelines for Writing a Scope of Collections Statement*.

**Goal:** Prepare comprehensive interpretive plans for the park, including public safety, land use, critical resources, human impacts, resource management strategies, and other issues.

**Guidelines:**

**Interpretation 31:** Train staff and volunteers both in content and methods, to promote high quality interpretive services.

**Interpretation 32:** Review visitor and management demands for interpretive programming. Determine the most effective way to meet that demand with available resources and staff.

**Interpretation 33:** Use non-intrusive interpretive techniques to minimize impacts around sensitive and fragile resources to maximize the Park's aesthetic resources.

#### 4.4.4 **COHESIVENESS / CONNECTIVITY**

**Goal:** Ensure that the design of the Park is not fragmented, but rather that its components are well integrated, providing a cohesive visitor experience.

**Guidelines:**

**Cohesiveness 1:** Organize the primary elements of Parcel D and Parcel G-1 so they are mutually supportive.

**Cohesiveness 2:** Incorporate common themes, features, and treatments throughout the Park that create a unified and holistic visitor experience.

**Cohesiveness 3:** Carefully coordinate and design the interface between the recreation on the City-operated portion of Parcel D (not part of this General Plan) and the state-operated portion of Parcel D (included in this General Plan) such that Parcel D is experienced as a cohesive, seamless whole by visitors and the surrounding community, despite the difference of uses on the two halves of Parcel D.

**Cohesiveness 4:** Consider future acquisitions that may make public access between parcels G1 and D safe and easy and compliant with ADA standards.

**Cohesiveness 5:** Consider working with Union Pacific Railroad to lower the grade of the tracks and allow for a vegetated covering over the tunnel to provide visual, physical, and biological connectivity between parcel D and G1.

**Goal:** Integrate the Park with regional and surrounding community access, education, and planning networks. Maximize connectivity of the Park with visitors and with other related resources and institutions.

**Guidelines:**

**Connectivity 1:** Establish open space areas that allow the Park to become a vital part of the Los Angeles regional green open space network and connection to the Los Angeles River landscape and Arroyo Seco corridor. Enhance or establish visual and physical links to Elysian Park, Elyria Canyon Park, Ernest E. Debs Park, Santa Susana and San Gabriel Mountains, the Los Angeles River, and other existing and planned open spaces.

**Connectivity 2:** Develop programs that encourage the public to share their cultures, experiences, perspectives and histories.

**Connectivity 3:** Maximize the frontage along the Los Angeles River within Parcel G-1 to establish future potential connections to the planned Los Angeles River Bikeway and Greenway.

**Connectivity 4:** Preserve the option for linkage between Parcel D and the planned pedestrian/bicycle bridge over the Los Angeles River which is to be built by the MTA.

**Connectivity 5:** Establish a symbolic connection to the adjoining Los Angeles River and future greenway through Park design elements such as reintroducing local native vegetation, water features, benches, lighting, art, and interpretation.

**Connectivity 6:** Implement program strategies to facilitate the connection of the Park to the Los Angeles State Historic Park through staff coordination, trails, education programs, volunteers, and stewardship.

**Connectivity 7:** Establish a connection between ecological values and environmental education through the use of sustainable design. Consider the latest technology and application of energy and water conservation, permeable paving, and recycled materials, among other methods to strive for ecological balance in an urban landscape.

**Connectivity 8:** Connect surrounding neighborhoods by providing a venue to celebrate the rich multi-ethnic cultural tapestry represented by Cypress Park, Glassell Park, Elysian Valley and the other nearby communities and historic districts that exist throughout Northeast and Central Los Angeles.

**Connectivity 9:** Help establish a coordinated network of Parks and open spaces with linkages to the surrounding neighborhoods. and coordinate Park planning with other planning efforts in the area, such as the Los Angeles River Master Plan, Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, Los Angeles River Bikeway and Greenway planning efforts, and the Arroyo Seco bikeway plans, among others.

**Connectivity 10:** Coordinate physical and institutional linkages between the Park and key nearby schools, community centers, and other centers of learning, such as the new Los Angeles City College Northeast Campus and the new LAUSD high school planned for Parcel F.

**Connectivity 11:** Coordinate the planning and design of the Park with City of Los Angeles street improvements planned for the San Fernando Road corridor, including access points, intersections, and pedestrian crossings.

**Connectivity 12:** Develop clear wayfinding strategies for visitors to move between the Parcel D portion of the Park and the Parcel G-1 portion of the Park, as well as to find the two different sites. This is especially critical given the somewhat more remote vehicular and pedestrian access for Parcel G-1.

#### 4.4.5 RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES

The Park should be designed to actively engage and welcome participation from the local communities as well as other California or out-of-state visitors. It can provide diverse recreational opportunities for visitors to restore and “re-create” themselves physically and spiritually from the stresses of urban living and daily life. The past and current culture that surrounds the Park should be interwoven, by incorporating interpretation into the recreational visitor experience. The Park will provide a critical recreation area for neighborhood and regional residents and will provide an opportunity for visitors to interact with people from divergent cultures and life experiences, and experience diverse outdoor environments.

**Goal:** Provide low intensity recreational areas in the Park for visitors to improve their wellness in harmony with the physical surroundings and in ways that are compatible with the interpretive nature of the Park.

#### **Guidelines:**

**Recreation 1:** Provide recreational facilities and programs that serve a broad cross-section of the local as well as statewide visitors.

**Recreation 2:** Develop recreational facilities and programs that are universally accessible and comply with the ADA requirements.

**Recreation 3:** Develop recreational opportunities that are responsive to the needs of the school age children and the community.

**Recreation 4:** Maintain a flexible system of park and recreation facilities and programs that provide a broad range of low intensity recreational opportunities to its multi-racial/cultural/ethnic visitors.

**Recreation 5:** Provide recreational areas in the park for visitors to improve their health and wellness in harmony with the physical surroundings and that are compatible with the natural features of the park.

**Recreation 6:** Consider areas in the Park for cultural recreational education. **Recreation 7:** Provide broad-based recreational opportunities that include learning and participating in physical/social/spiritual programs.

**Recreation 8:** Integrate recreational facilities with other operational facilities to ensure that the site plan, design and construction preserve and emphasize key elements of the natural and cultural environment.

**Recreation 9:** Integrate recreational programs with other programs that interpret the environmental exploitations or sustainable environmental success of the past.

**Recreation 10:** Provide a variety of outdoor open space areas (such as native grasses, gardens, etc.) that can accommodate a diversity of informal recreation activities for individual and group activities.

**Goal:** Develop Multi-use Trails as a primary interpretive and unifying site element.

**Guidelines:**

**Recreation 13:** Develop an interpretive multi-use trail throughout the Park that provides a unifying site feature for the Park. The trail should have spur trails to interpretive program areas and rest areas. The trail should accommodate pedestrians and casual recreational cycling in addition to being universally accessible.

**Recreation 14:** Adhere to Department performance standards and specifications for trail design, construction and maintenance.

#### 4.4.6 SUSTAINABLE DESIGN, CONSTRUCTION, AND MAINTENANCE

Sustainable design, sustainable development, design with nature, environmentally sensitive design, holistic resource management - regardless of what it's called, "sustainability," the capability of natural and cultural systems being continued over time, is key. This is not a new concept but rather the latest expression of a long-standing ethic involving peoples' relationships with the environment and the current generation's responsibilities to future generations.

The concept of sustainable design has become much more prominent in public discourse over last 20 years. It is a concept that recognizes that human civilization is an integral part of the natural world and that nature must be preserved and perpetuated if the human community itself is to survive. Consideration must be given to economic, environmental, and cultural resources.

Sustainable design articulates this idea through development that exemplifies the principles of conservation and encourages the application of these principles in our daily lives. Sustainable projects and programs contribute to the Department's mission to preserve important resources, create a healthier environment, and help create less-intensive, more self-sustaining programs to maintain and enhance Park facilities.

A sustainable facility or program creates low levels of negative impacts to natural or cultural resources, can be maintained with materials that are nontoxic to people or the environment, and contains materials that are recyclable.

**Goal:** Site and facility design should evaluate and implement sustainable design practices and principles, wherever feasible.

**Guidelines:**

**Sustainability 1:** Use sustainable design in the siting, construction, and maintenance of Park facilities (including buildings, parking lots, day use areas, and trails) and in natural and cultural resource programs.

**Sustainability 2:** Promote and incorporate the use of sustainable “green” design for Park buildings and facilities. New technology and materials, innovative strategies for visitor use areas, and more efficient equipment will be embraced.

**Sustainability 3:** Where possible, use natural, renewable, indigenous, reclaimed and recyclable materials, and simple-to-maintain and energy-efficient design.

**Sustainability 4:** Use long-term lifecycle cost/benefit analysis to help justify the use of more costly sustainable construction materials and/or design.

**Sustainability 5:** Through interpretive programs, explain to the public both the tangible and intangible benefits of sustainable practices in the Park including natural and cultural resources, site design, building design, energy management, water supply, waste prevention, and facility maintenance and operations.

**Sustainability 6:** Set a good example of sustainable practices in all facets of the operation including services, concessions operations, maintenance, utilities, and waste handling.

#### 4.4.7 **AESTHETIC RESOURCES**

Rio de Los Angeles State Park provides local and statewide visitors with an open space experience highlighted by good visibility of Mount Washington, the hillsides of Elysian Park, and the Los Angeles River. Likewise, the Park will be visible from these areas. Implementation of the following goals and guidelines will help to protect the Park’s viewshed and provide consistent design elements and positive aesthetic qualities to the Park.

**Goal:** Protect and enhance scenic viewsheds and features and preserve the visitor’s experience of the riparian wetland landscape / “River Community” by minimizing adverse impacts to aesthetic resources.

**Guidelines:**

**Aesthetics 1:** Landscaping, structures, and other facilities should incorporate the design elements of the Los Angeles River Parks (Egret Park, Great Heron Gates at Rattlesnake Park, Oso Park, and Steelhead Park) to develop thematic unity along the Los Angeles River Greenway.

**Aesthetics 2:** Landscaping, structures, and other facilities should be sited to be sensitive to scenic views from and through the Park. Facilities should be sited to minimize the impact on views from key viewpoints and to protect and/or emphasize positive scenic views.

**Aesthetics 3:** Work with adjoining jurisdictions regarding land use and development within the Park viewshed that might affect the site and its aesthetic resources. For example, the State Parks should coordinate with the City of Los Angeles on the planning and development of the proposed San Fernando Road improvements and the planned new high school on Parcel F.

**Goal:** Integrate the Park’s vision into the design of Park facilities and programs.

**Guidelines:**

**Aesthetics 3:** Create design guidelines that establish an architectural vocabulary that can be used for facilities throughout the Park. The intent is to establish a cohesive design theme through the use of compatible styles and/or materials. The design of pedestrian bridges, fencing, lighting, trails, signage, and other Park infrastructure should be consistent with the overall design guidelines and with the Park’s vision and educational, recreational, and environmental objectives.

**Aesthetics 4:** Establish entry points into the Park and develop design standards for these “gateway” areas that will create a sense of arrival and establish an initial identity and sense of place for the Park. Design standards and guidelines for entry points should distinguish primary and secondary gateways and connect to the Los Angeles River Greenway.

**Aesthetics 5:** Create positive visitor experiences by providing visitors with positive natural fragrances and sounds, such as the scent of landscape plantings and the sounds of water features. Consider buffering traffic and transit line noise with appropriate materials.

**Aesthetics 6:** Avoid or reduce negative impacts on visual aesthetics by appropriate siting, design, and selection of materials. Specific project designs will define aesthetically appropriate design features, identify visual resources, and identify optimum methods for protecting existing resources. Potential aesthetic quality impacts associated with the development of new facilities should be reviewed at the project-level for specific facilities or management plans proposed. Measures shall be considered, including but not limited to:

Implement design practices that reduce the overall aesthetic effect of new facilities, including, but not limited to:

- Include vegetation to screen negative views, or soften the visual effect of parking areas, visitor facilities, roads, trails, or transit corridors, where appropriate;
- Incorporate architectural site/design elements that support and are consistent with the plan vision;



- Where night lighting is necessary, direct the lighting downward and locate new exterior lighting such that it is not highly obtrusive;
- Evaluate the location of structures and activity areas to enhance positive views within and outside of the Park site;
- Design and site new roads and trails to minimize grading and the visibility of cut banks and fill slopes; utilities should be placed underground if possible;
- Schedule construction and maintenance activities to decrease any negative impacts to visitors and adjacent property owners.

**Aesthetics 7:** Advocate responsible use of the Park and enforcement of the rules and regulations established for use of the Park through public education and awareness of resource sensitivity and by publishing rules and regulations for Park visitors. Measures shall be considered, including but not limited to:

- Implement an inspection and maintenance program for facilities used by the public and inspection of perimeter fencing and access gates, as appropriate, to minimize trespass, illegal dumping, and ensure well-maintained facilities.
- Establish coordinated enforcement of public use of the Park with adjacent jurisdictions.
- Include appropriate staffing to monitor public use of the Park and enforcement of Park rules and regulations.

**Goal:** Provide a buffer zone along the railroad lines bordering both Parcel D and Parcel G-1 to help mitigate the negative aesthetic views of, and access to, the railroad facilities and trains from Park areas.

**Guidelines:**

**Aesthetics 8:** Coordinate with federal, state, local and railroad authorities to create a tunnel to bury the railroad tracks, so the trains will be out of the view of park visitors.

**Aesthetics 9:** Utilize dense tree plantings and adhere to the other vegetation management goals and guidelines set forth in the General Plan and perform a primary screening effect for more distant views, but also large shrubs to address views for more foreground views.

**Aesthetics 10:** Coordinate with railroad authorities on all proposed issues related to plantings and railings adjacent to their right-of-way.

**Goal:** To the extent feasible, the Park design should strive to mitigate the negative aesthetic impacts of the overhead power lines which parallel the river frontage along Parcel G-1 and are also visible from Parcel D.

**Guidelines:**

**Aesthetics 11:** Where feasible use plantings, structures, or other design features to screen foreground views to the tower bases or key distant views of the tower tops and the power lines.

**Aesthetics 12:** Explore with the applicable energy authorities the potential for more long-term options for reducing the visual impact on the Park; such options might include undergrounding of the lines in this area, re-routing lines aerially, or installing more aesthetically pleasing tower structures. All these techniques have been employed in other visually sensitive sites around the world, but are costly and may prove infeasible here.

**4.4.8 CULTURAL RESOURCES**

Due to California State Park's Mission to protect and preserve significant cultural resources; state laws to protect state-owned historical resources such as PRC 5024; and the purpose for the unit as outlined in its classification and requirements as a State Park, and in this general planning document, it is essential to have goals and guidelines for appropriate treatment and protection of cultural resources. Although no known cultural artifacts have been found on the Rio de Los Angeles State Park, the site has been party to a diverse and lengthy human occupation, which has the potential to leave artifacts of archaeological and historic significance. State Parks recognizes the sensitivities associated with such remains and consequently proposes continued study of extant and potential resources, as well as the need to constantly update and expand scholarship and knowledge of historic activities at the Rio de Los Angeles State Parks in support of interpretive and educational programs. Knowledge of other significant resources, historic activities, and events both adjacent and nearby the current Park property will also warrant long-term study to assist with stewardship of cultural resources and potential for future acquisition and partnerships. This should allow for the Department to take on an active leadership role in stewardship of Los Angeles' significant cultural resources in this area.

**Goal:** Cultural resource investigations should be expanded to include research about the environmental exploitations or sustainable, environmental successes of the past.

**Guidelines:**

**Cultural 1:** Investigate the tangible cultural resources of the past that shaped the land use, development of the site, human activities and events.

**Cultural 2:** Conduct research on all aspects of human settlement including community, dwelling, industry, environmental exploitations, and economic development.

**Goal:** Identify, document, evaluate, and interpret cultural resources at the Park.

**Guidelines:**

**Cultural 3:** Facilitate ongoing research, scholarship, and interpretation of the Park's cultural resources within the broader context of regional environmental network.

**Cultural 4:** Conduct research and scholarship on the Park site’s environmental history and its association with historic land uses, activities, events, groups, individuals, and sites that reflect important trends and peoples that make up Los Angeles’ cultural fabric.

**Cultural 5:** Conduct oral histories to help capture the stories and experiences of those who worked or lived at or near the site as well as those who contributed to its acquisition.

**Cultural 6:** Establish academic and scholarly partnerships and enable volunteers to assist in conducting potential historical research, archaeological fieldwork, site monitoring, and interpretive programs.

**Cultural 7:** Develop and maintain an archive of historical and ethnographic documents, reports, and research materials pertinent to the resources and interpretive programs at the Park.

**Cultural 8:** Identify areas, resources, or events in or around the Park with potential significance to Los Angeles’ ethnic groups or local communities through use of historical accounts, oral history interviews, and other means. Document, record, and interpret these areas, resources, or events.

**Cultural 9:** Assure that all potentially eligible and listed historic properties receive appropriate treatments as outlined by applicable California State Park resource directives and policies and compliance with the *Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*.

**Cultural 10:** Assure that no activity or development will impact either directly or indirectly, alter, or damage any significant cultural feature found on the property. Periodically monitor the condition of the resource at appropriate intervals in order to insure that the feature is not undergoing deterioration or degradation.

#### **4.4.9 MANAGING VISITOR CAPACITY**

This General Plan assumes that the significant regional population could result in high visitation potential at the Park. A major purpose of this plan is to provide direction for appropriately meeting some of this demand while protecting the Park’s resources and quality of visitor experience from deterioration. Changing demographics and use patterns will require ongoing periodic evaluations of Park operations and resource management and sustainability programs.

The purpose of this Visitor Capacity Management (VCM) section is to present the Department’s methodology that was used to evaluate existing and future desired conditions, and to analyze the capacity issues related to general plan concepts and recommendations for the future development and use of Rio de Los Angeles State Park.

It is intended by the Department that the general plan and this discussion of visitor capacity will satisfy the initial requirements of the Public Resources Code, Section 5019.5, which states: “Before any Park or recreational area development plan is made, the department shall cause to be made a

land carrying capacity survey of the proposed Park or recreational area, including in such survey such factors as soil, moisture, and natural cover.”

This analysis focuses on the initial capacity of developed facilities, desired resources and social conditions. Subsequent surveys, analysis, and monitoring programs are necessary in order to make final determinations and adjustments in visitor capacity through future management actions. The methodology and steps to be used in this process are outline below:

#### 4.4.9.1 VCM Methodology

The following represents an adaptive management cycle, or methodology, that involves research, planning, monitoring, and management actions to achieve sustainable resources and social conditions. This methodology was initiated during this general planning effort and applied with the level of detail commensurate with the conceptual nature of this plan. This includes the identification of existing opportunities and constraints, and description of desired resources and social conditions. Visitor capacities are addressed for Park areas where sufficient data is presented.

Visitor Capacity management is defined by the Department as:

*A methodology used to determine and maintain the desired resource and social conditions that fulfill the purpose and mission of a Park. It includes establishing initial visitor capacities, then monitoring key indicators in order to identify appropriate management actions in response to unacceptable conditions.*

#### 4.4.9.2 Adaptive Management Process

The following tasks are usually carried out during the resource inventories, unit classification, and general planning processes. Subsequent management plans and site investigations provide the more detailed information necessary for project-level analysis, and impact assessments in order to initiate required mitigation and monitoring programs. These tasks are presented here to provide a sense of the iterative process that the Department engages in from the early programmatic planning stages of a General Plan, through the project implementation and monitoring phases.

1. **Identify Existing Opportunities & Constraints:** Through ongoing research, surveys, and site investigations we are able to document existing resources and social conditions. This data helps identify opportunities and constraints, and establishes the baseline condition for natural, cultural, & recreational resources.
2. **Determine Vision & Desired Conditions:** The analysis of current uses and condition assessments begin to shape the types of activities and experiences that are desired. This increases our ability to determine the resource conditions we desire and the protective measures, including thresholds (standards) of acceptable resource conditions that are necessary to maintain it.
3. **Identify Issues & Evaluate Alternatives:** The analysis of resource and social impacts related to current use helps identify the issues, problems, and thresholds that shape the vision or desired conditions of the Park. Additional surveys, studies or site analysis may be necessary to understand the full effects of existing uses, potential alternatives, or feasibility of desired improvements. It is at this stage that the objectives of visitor use and capacity for

specific units are determined, which may include quantitative limits on certain Park uses (e.g., the number of campsites or parking spaces in the Park).

4. **Develop Measurable Indicators and Thresholds:** Key “indicators” are identified that can diagnose whether the desired conditions for a Park are being met. These Indicators must be measurable and have a direct relationship to at least one desired condition (e.g. the number of exposed tree roots per mile of trail). “Thresholds” are then identified for each indicator (for example: 100 tree roots per trail mile). Through monitoring processes, management is alerted when conditions exceed a determined threshold or deviate outside the acceptable range.
5. **Establish Initial Visitor Capacities:** Initial visitation capacities are formulated based on the analysis of existing conditions, alternative considerations, desired future conditions, and prescribed goals and objectives. Implementation occurs when sufficient knowledge is gained and plans are finalized. As environmental impact assessments and monitoring programs are initiated, plans are implemented and new patterns of use are generated.
6. **Monitor Use & Identify Changing Conditions:** Through monitoring and further study we can assess the degree of impact or changing conditions that occur over a specified period of time. Thresholds and indicators are used in the monitoring process to determine when an unacceptable condition exists. Unacceptable conditions trigger management action(s) appropriate to mend the unacceptable condition.
7. **Adjust Environmental or Social Conditions:** As monitoring efforts reveal that conditions may be approaching or exceeding thresholds, management must consider alternatives and take appropriate action. The analysis of impacts and their causes should direct management toward a course of action that attempts to push resource/ experience conditions back to a desired state. This may include further studies, new project design, and stronger enforcement of the rules and regulations, which may also require adjustments to the initial visitor capacities.

#### 4.4.9.3 Research, Investigations, and Monitoring

Data from research, pre-project site investigations, visitor impact assessments, post-project evaluations, and baseline resource monitoring can all be captured and used to make sure the “desired condition” of the Park is maintained. A program of continued research and site investigations provides and documents updated data on resource conditions and new problems as they may occur. Periodic surveys provide a measure of visitor satisfaction and identify recreation trends and public opinions on the types of activities and experiences people are seeking. These on-going efforts build the unit data file for subsequent planning and analysis, and monitoring programs ensure that development actions achieve the desired outcomes.

#### 4.4.9.4 Existing Opportunities and Constraints

The Park site is undeveloped land – a clean slate, aside from the IPU facilities developed at the time of this general plan. It represents enormous development potential to improve water quality, wetland and riparian vegetation, develop interpretive activities and provide open space for recreation. The Park’s programs and environmental themes described by this general plan offer a

wide range of possible development and use intensities, which makes it difficult and undesirable to pre-determine what the appropriate visitor capacity should be.

Physical constraints exist, such as roads, overhead power lines, easements, drainages, railroad tracks, elevation changes, and the concrete channel walls of the Los Angeles River, soil and groundwater contamination, etc. that ultimately become determining factors in Park design and area visitor capacities.

Social constraints also exist, due to the population diversity of California and Los Angeles communities. However, these differences are viewed as opportunities for environmental awareness and undoubtedly will influence the development of thematic treatments in design of traditional landscapes.

#### **4.4.10 PARK OPERATIONS**

This component of the plan characterizes broad-level goals and guidelines for operations of the Park and its relationship to the visitor experience and management of resources. The infrastructure is the underlying “foundation” (including basic installations and facilities), on which the health, safety, and comfort of Park visitors depend. The infrastructure can enhance the visitor’s enjoyment of the Park by providing a basic level of information, service, and comfort.

##### **4.4.10.1 Staffing and Support Facilities**

Once the Park is fully developed, there will be a need for on-site personnel and support facilities to enhance the visitor experience, meet regulatory requirements, protect sensitive resources, provide for safety, and maximize the capability of staff to maintain the Park and serve the needs of the public. The Park should provide adequate staff (permanent, part-time, and/or volunteer) to support visitor use by adhering to PRC Section 14000(f) which requires all state agencies to look to the corps first to perform projects that enhance or develop natural resources, and maintain environmentally important lands and waters.

The resulting increase in visitor interaction will help visitors more completely enjoy their Park experience. On-site staff will also enhance educational programs and projects, increase community involvement and outreach capability, keep facilities clean and well-maintained, and minimize safety concerns.

Adequate facilities, such as, recreational amenities, trails, roads, and administrative office space are critical for the Park to be effective.

**Goal:** Provide for appropriate Park infrastructure and support facilities.

#### **Guidelines:**

**Support Facilities 1:** Establish partnerships with the City of Los Angeles to coordinate public safety efforts throughout the Park site. Where feasible share office space, and collaborate on public safety programs and information.

**Support Facilities 2:** Establish a location for administrative facilities that promotes efficient management of the Park. Consider the accessibility of both parcels when siting administrative and other staff facilities.

**Support Facilities 3:** Maintenance and storage areas and trash disposal facilities will be needed on site, but should not be openly visible from public use areas.

**Support Facilities 4:** Establish multi-lingual signage wherever appropriate; use international symbols for signs wherever possible.

**Support Facilities 5:** Incorporate the input of diverse cultures when developing programs and facilities, including those represented in the nearby communities.

**Goal:** Obtain adequate staff and equipment to serve the public and meet the State Park's mission at the Park.

**Guidelines:**

**Staffing-Support 1:** Provide a sufficient and proper staffing balance to implement the Park's land management, infrastructure maintenance, resource preservation, and visitor services programs.

**Staffing-Support 2:** Develop innovative strategies to supplement staffing needs including volunteer programs, community outreach and involvement, and partnerships.

**Goal:** Develop facilities and programs that facilitate an excellent visitor experience relevant to a diverse population with different needs.

**Guidelines:**

**Staffing-Support 3:** Seek out and hire multi-lingual staff.

**Goal: Concessions**

Consider appropriate concessions for expanding and enhancing visitor services. Possible concessions may include an environmental library and book shop, gift shop, and guided tours.

**Guideline:**

**Concessions 1:** Develop a Concessions Plan that recommends potential concession opportunities in the Park. These concession opportunities should enhance the recreational and/or educational experience at the Park and be compatible with the Park's vision, purpose, classification and guidance for aesthetics and resource values.



#### 4.4.10.2 Maintenance

Maintenance of Park facilities has the potential to affect the visitor experience. Benefits of properly and regularly maintained facilities include, but are not limited to, an improved aesthetic character of the Park and increased utilization of recreational facilities.

The anticipated volume of year-round visitor use and the maintenance and visitor services needs at the Park will create the need to store and maintain vehicles, equipment, tools, supplies, trash disposal bins, and other items. At the same time, the relatively small size of the Park and lack of any “out of the way” space for a maintenance facility creates the need to minimize space allocated to maintenance activities to the extent practical. State Parks should seek opportunities to share facilities of other local agencies, organizations, or other State Park units, or look at offsite possibilities, but this must be done in a manner that would not result in inefficient Park operations.

**Goal:** Maintain Park facilities to meet visitor needs.

**Guidelines:**

**Maintenance 1:** Incorporate the Re-vegetation Management Plan (see Section 4.4.2.3, above) into the regular Park operations and maintenance schedule.

**Maintenance 2:** Maintain facilities in a manner that minimizes impacts on Park resources while sustaining the quality of the facilities.

**Maintenance 3:** Provide facilities that are clean and in good repair.

**Maintenance 4:** Maintain roads, parking, and trails to the degree appropriate for the intended use, and in such a manner that they are clearly delineated to the user while not detracting from the visual aesthetics of the area in which they are located.

**Maintenance 5:** Promote energy conservation, waste reduction, recycling, and other resource conservation practices in maintenance activities.

**Maintenance 6:** Place an emphasis on appropriately sized and designed maintenance facilities, location of support facilities needed for Park maintenance and operation, and maintenance yards and facilities that are screened from view.

**Maintenance 7:** Manage maintenance as an integral part of the Park, with the goal of not intruding into Park uses.

**Maintenance 8:** Size service yards and garages for heavy equipment adequately and appropriately located to maximize convenience to high demand areas.

**Maintenance 9:** Design Park service roads so that maintenance vehicles and equipment can easily access all visitor serving uses, recreation, and active use areas. Include appropriate accommodations for service vehicle parking, landscaping maintenance, and other related infrastructure maintenance in planning of all Park facilities.

**Maintenance 10:** Conduct facility maintenance in a manner appropriate to meet standards for public health and safety, maintain public and departmental expectations for cleanliness and appearances, meet security requirements, and extend the life span of facilities, tools, and equipment.

**Maintenance 11:** Seek opportunities to share facilities of other local agencies, organizations, or State Parks.

#### 4.4.10.3 Filming and Special Events

State Parks are popular locations for commercial motion picture filming, still photography, and special event activities. These activities can have an effect on Park resources, Park visitor experiences, and Park operations.

**Goal:** Regulate filming and special events to ensure compatibility with natural and cultural goals and values and visitor use.

#### **Guidelines:**

**Filming/Events 1:** Develop Special Events Policies and follow DPR’s “*Guidelines for Filming in California State Parks*”, to permit such activities to occur while not detracting from the general public’s enjoyment of the Park, or negatively impacting the Park’s resources.

**Filming/Events 2:** Prepare Filming and Special Events guidelines for the Park, which would be updated regularly. Continue to evaluate environmental and Park visitor impacts.

#### 4.4.10.4 Safety/Security

Special care and consideration shall be given to creating a safe Park environment to enhance the feeling of well-being, and to protect the public, structures, and the facilities. The Park is situated in a heavily urbanized area. Currently, rangers and maintenance staff are based at Baldwin Hills Scenic Overlook, a part of Kenneth Hahn State Recreation Area, approximately a 45 minute drive from the Park. Staff presence on-site would increase the safety of visitors and establishment of an enjoyable Park environment.

**Goal:** Ensure that the Park and all its facilities provide a safe environment.

#### **Guidelines:**

**Safety 1:** Provide facilities to optimize the on-site presence of staffing and volunteers.

**Safety 2:** Incorporate public, law enforcement, maintenance staff, Park professionals, and adjacent land owners in the design of facilities and landscape to achieve the safest environment possible. While planning, consider the use of such things as visual surveillance, lighting, security systems, patrol and vehicle accessibility, fencing, gates, location and visibility of Park facilities, and landscape design to enhance safety.

**Safety 3:** Coordinate public safety requirements between State Park rangers and all jurisdictions serving the Park. Consider entering into reciprocal agreements with adjacent jurisdictions, where determined appropriate.

**Safety 4:** Incorporate community involvement, education and outreach programs to enhance safety.

**Safety 5:** Discourage unauthorized use of the Park through education, site design, regulations, and enforcement. Coordinate with local, state, and Federal law enforcement agencies.

**Safety 6:** Seek equipment and methods that aid staff emergency and safety response abilities within the Park.

**Safety 7:** Participate in cooperative efforts resulting in clear understanding by all law enforcement personnel of their responsibilities and jurisdiction with respect to protection of the Park's prime resources.

**Safety 8:** Coordinate with local law enforcement agencies and emergency response providers, as well as appropriate MTA, Union Pacific Railroad, Southern California Edison and other authorities, in promoting the safety of Park visitors.

**Safety 9:** Work cooperatively with local jurisdictions and public agencies in providing a safe environment for Park visitors during special events, including safe access to and from the Park.

**Safety 10:** Consider installation of call boxes for contacting public safety officials in key locations throughout the Park.

**Safety 11:** Accommodate access for emergency vehicles where appropriate throughout the Park, including emergency access during peak recreation periods and events.

**Safety 12:** Manage Park service roads and associated gates to allow easy and rapid access to the Park by public safety personnel.

**Safety 13:** Use vegetation and/or fencing to prevent public access both at the perimeter and in other key areas where necessary.

**Safety 14:** Install fire roads and hydrants where necessary to facilitate fire protection.

**Safety 15:** Comply with manufacturers' specifications and state standards for use, transportation, and disposal of hazardous materials (pesticides, motor oils, etc.). Provide for proper storage of such materials.

**Safety 16:** Include considerations for creating a safe Park environment when planning specific locations and configurations of Park plan elements. Park development arrangements that promote optimum Park safety considerations include (but are not limited

to) general visual surveillance, location and visibility of development areas, lighting, patrol and emergency vehicle accessibility, fencing and boundary treatments, access control, and landscape design.

**Safety 17:** Coordinate with local law enforcement and other agencies managing urban Parks to encourage communication about innovative security techniques and design.

**Safety 18:** Promote positive outreach to adjacent neighborhoods and communities to increase local visitation and foster a sense of ownership in the Park.

#### 4.4.10.5 Fire Hazards/Emergency Services

**Goal:** When planning new buildings or other flammable elements or facilities within the Park., the potential for fire hazards shall be carefully assessed and minimized to protect structures and facilities, ensure public and employee safety, and to reduce impacts to natural resources.

##### **Guidelines:**

**Fire 1:** Reduce potential construction phase fire hazard impacts by implementing a fire safety plan developed by the contractor and approved by State Parks prior to the start of construction.

**Goal:** Potential fire protection services impacts could be reduced by implementing the following:

##### **Guidelines:**

**Fire 2:** Requirements for emergency vehicle access shall be incorporated into project design, including access to physical structures and fire hydrants. Such requirements include emergency breakaway gates, vertical clearance, turning radii, turn-around areas, and signage. Emergency vehicle access shall be maintained at all times during construction phases.

#### 4.4.10.6 Geologic and Seismic Hazards

Potential geological and natural hazards will be considered when planning new buildings or multiple-use trails within the Park. Site-specific investigations will be conducted in any areas where new development is planned. The investigations may consist of existing literature review, reconnaissance geologic mapping, and geotechnical investigations. These investigations are important to protect structures, ensure public safety, and to reduce impacts to natural resources.

**Goal:** Provide for public safety and prevent structural failures due to seismic activity and related geologic hazards, including liquefaction.

##### **Guidelines:**

**Geology 1:** Conduct site-specific geotechnical investigations as appropriate during site planning to protect structures and the public, for siting and proper design of permanent structures and multiple-use trails, and to reduce impacts to natural resources. Geotechnical investigations to mitigate potential earthquake-induced damage would include:

- Review and update geologic hazard data such as hazard from flood and potential for earthquake-induced ground failure;
- Evaluate potential settlements as a resulting from loads imposed by new buildings and structures; placement of new fills including landscape berms, mounds, multiple-use trails, and ramps;
- Prepare specific geotechnical recommendations for seismic hazard mitigation, including effects of placement of new fills. Provide geotechnical parameters for foundation design, including estimates for differential settlements of underlying fills and soft clays, and seismic lateral loads; and
- Prepare recommendations for construction-related issues, including de-watering and temporary excavation support as required for construction of the proposed improvements.

**Geology 2:** As part of the planning and design process for area-specific projects, and prior to commencement of any ground disturbance, grading or construction related to new facilities, enhancements, or demolition, develop the appropriate project-level documentation providing the environmental evaluation and mitigation measures necessary to avoid, reduce, or minimize potentially significant geologic impacts.

**Geology 3:** Build new structures in accordance with the appropriate seismic guidelines for the area as set forth in the current UBC.

**Geology 4:** Potential seismic impacts should be reviewed at the project-level for specific facilities or Management Plans proposed under this Taylor Yard General Plan and mitigation measures shall be considered, including but not limited to:

- Geotechnical investigations shall be performed before final designs of any project facilities. The studies shall assess seismic hazards and soil suitability. Recommendations provided in these investigations shall be implemented.
- Project facilities shall be constructed in accordance with earthquake design standards in the current accepted edition of the California Building Code or the Uniform Building Code.

**Geology 5:** Potential erosion impacts could be reduced by implementing the following:

- Permanent BMPs would include, but not be limited to: 1) site drainage plans will be engineered to prevent excessive rainfall runoff; and 2) a landscaping and irrigation plan shall be developed to minimize erosion potential. Final grading plans shall be designed to minimize soil erosion potential.

**Geology 6:** Potential unsuitable soils impacts could be reduced by implementing the following

- Geotechnical investigations shall be performed before final designs of any project facilities. The studies shall assess seismic hazards, slope stability, and soil suitability. Recommendations provided in these investigations shall be implemented.
- Where appropriate, a California Certified Engineering Geologist shall approve grading and filling operations.
- A survey shall be conducted for new and abandoned wells to ensure the stability of nearby soils.

**Geology 7:** Use interpretive media to educate visitors about natural hazards and how to avoid danger. For example, warning signs could discuss the potential for and the actions to take in the event of an earthquake.

#### 4.4.10.7 Hazardous Materials Safety

The potential for exposure to hazardous materials will be considered when planning new structures, roads, parking areas, multiple-use trails, or other facilities or improvements requiring ground disturbance within the Park. Potential exposures could occur both from potentially hazardous materials used during construction and from residual chemicals in soil and groundwater resulting from previous site use.

**Goal:** Provide for public and Park employee safety and prevent exposure to hazardous materials from construction activities and from residual contaminated soil or groundwater.

**Guidelines:**

**Hazmat 1:** Where appropriate, construction work involving motorized vehicles will require a spill prevention and response plan to protect against accidental spills of vehicle fuels, lubricants or other potentially hazardous materials as appropriate.

**Hazmat 2:** To reduce the potential impacts from construction phase hazardous materials release, the following measures will be considered and applied where appropriate:

- All equipment will be inspected by the contractor for leaks immediately prior to the start of construction, and regularly inspected thereafter until the equipment is removed from the Park premises. The Department or its contractors shall implement as appropriate a spill prevention and control plan that requires all transport, storage, and handling of construction-related hazardous materials in a manner consistent with relevant regulations and guidelines, including those recommended and enforced by the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board and Los Angeles County.
- A spill kit shall be maintained on-site throughout the life of the project. The Department shall incorporate into construction contract specifications the requirement that construction staging areas be designed to contain runoff so that contaminants such as oil, grease, and fuel products do not drain towards receiving waters and soils. Heavy-duty construction equipment should not be stored overnight adjacent to a potential

receiving water or high-use recreation area; however, if necessary, drip pans shall be placed beneath the machinery engine block and hydraulic systems.

- Equipment will be cleaned and repaired (other than emergency repairs) outside Park boundaries. All contaminated water, sludge, spill residue, or other hazardous compounds will be disposed of outside of Park boundaries at a lawfully permitted or authorized destination.
- Any future site work that involves excavation or other ground-disturbing activities, or that may include contact with groundwater, will be conducted with guidance from the DTSC or the Los Angeles RWQCB.
- Soils disturbed by construction activities shall be sampled in accordance with waste disposal requirements and disposed of accordingly.

**Hazmat 3:** Site-specific investigations may be necessary in any areas where new development is planned and where previous soil remediation was not conducted. The investigations may consist of literature review of existing soil, soil gas, and groundwater sampling, and possible additional soil, soil gas, and groundwater sampling. These investigations are important to protect the public and Park employees, and to reduce impacts to natural resources.

**Hazmat 4:** The California Department of Toxic Substances Control and/or the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board will be consulted before any ground disturbing activities occur that may create an exposure pathway for contaminants in soil, soil gas, or groundwater.

#### 4.4.10.8 Noise

**Goal:** Reduce noise impacts during construction.

##### **Guidelines:**

**Noise 1:** When construction activities occur in the park, the department will evaluate mitigation measures contained in the City of Los Angeles' Noise Ordinance and will apply appropriate measures applicable to that type of construction.

**Noise 2:** Where practical, impact tools used for project construction shall be hydraulically or electrically powered. However, where use of pneumatic tools is unavoidable, the following measures will be considered to reduce noise levels:

- an exhaust muffler on the compressed-air exhaust
- external jackets on the tools themselves shall be used where feasible
- quieter procedures shall be evaluated and used where appropriate, such as drills rather than impact equipment.



**Noise 3:** Noise control measures shall be applied to construction equipment. Equipment and trucks used for project construction shall utilize normal noise control techniques (e.g. mufflers in good working order).

**Noise 4:** Plan construction activities so that additive noise and duration is minimized (e.g., avoid concurrent use of loud construction equipment).

**Noise 5:** Recreational users should be kept at a safe distance from the operation of construction equipment.

**Noise 6:** Limit the proximity of construction noise to sensitive receptors. Stationary noise sources, such as diesel generators, shall be located as far from sensitive receptors as possible. Haul-trucks and other construction equipment shall be restricted to routes that practicably avoid sensitive receptors.

**Noise 7:** The design of new facilities shall incorporate specifications that minimize significant noise impacts to nearby residences.

#### 4.4.10.9 Facilities

**Goal:** The facilities at Rio de Los Angeles State Park should represent the integrity of California State Parks and be of high quality. The design and maintenance of the Park facilities should embody forward-thinking, innovative approaches to creating meaningful places and spaces that are accessible to all.

#### **Guidelines:**

**Facilities 1:** Provide facilities that are clean and in good repair and meet ADA guidelines and best practices.

**Facilities 2:** Maintain facilities in a manner that minimizes impacts on Park resources while sustaining the quality of the facilities.

**Facilities 3:** Provide visitor-use facilities that offer the opportunity for diverse visitor experiences. Facilities will be placed to maximize visitor and staff use while minimizing negative effects on viewshed or cultural or natural resources.

**Facilities 4:** Park design should evolve from a collaborative and visual process, led by a design professional, and involve the users, DPR District staff, resource professionals, and other stakeholders.

**Facilities 5:** Promote and incorporate the use of sustainable “green” design for Park buildings and facilities. New technology and materials, innovative strategies for visitor use areas, and efficient equipment will be supported.

**Facilities 6:** Develop visitor use facilities to accommodate changing visitor uses and accessibility needs, population demographics, and increases in visitation.

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**Goal:** The design and development of Park facilities should embody and facilitate the California State Parks *Mission* while producing meaningful and sustainable places that are supportive of visitor needs and are worthy of preservation by future generations.

**Guidelines:**

**Facilities 7:** Facilities should incorporate the beauty of the natural and cultural environments in design, function, and purpose.

**Facilities 8:** Provide facilities for education, outreach, and volunteer programs.

**Facilities 9:** Provide public restrooms.

**Facilities 10:** Place facilities to maximize visitor and staff use while minimizing negative effects on the Park experience.

**Facilities 11:** Provide visitor-use facilities that offer the opportunity for diverse visitor experiences.

**Facilities 12:** Design decisions should be sensitive to the context of the site.

**Facilities 13:** Designs should promote and incorporate the use of sustainable building practices.

**Facilities 14:** Designs should be done in such a way as to minimize ongoing utilities costs, maintenance costs, routine replacement costs, and other lifecycle costs.

**Facilities 15:** Design operational support facilities that aid in staff efficiency and effectiveness.

**Goal:** Park facilities must allow for adequate Park administration and operations that promote effective and efficient management of the Park. This may require some duplication of facilities on each of the Park's two parcels in order to adequately serve visitors and staff (e.g. restrooms, parking, site directory maps, etc.)

**Guidelines:**

**Facilities 15:** Evaluate on-site or nearby locations to provide for the following Park operations and maintenance services: administrative offices; maintenance shop and vehicle, equipment, and materials storage; interpretive program support and artifact conservation; visitor services; and volunteer support facilities.

**Facilities 16:** Locate Park operations and maintenance activities and facilities in a manner that minimizes negative impacts on Park resources and quality Park visitor experiences.

**Facilities 17:** Determine how best to minimize the duplication of facilities on each of the Park's two parcels while still adequately serving visitors and staff needs.

**Goal:** The Park shall include programs, design features (e.g., trails, roads, parking, etc.) that maximize the opportunity for open space and educational enjoyment while minimizing potential conflicts.

**Guidelines:**

**Facilities 18:** Investigate opportunities to share similar facilities of other local agencies, organizations, or State Parks to maximize the space available at this Park for public use.

**Facilities 19:** Develop visitor facilities and experience to minimize conflicts between user groups.

**Facilities 20:** Roads, parking and trails will exist in such a way that they enable the visitors to experience the Park while minimizing negative effects on the resources.

**4.4.11 ACCESS AND TRANSPORTATION**

**Goal:** Promote safe and efficient access and transportation linkages to each of the two Park parcels, as well as between them and within each of them. Encourage multi-modal access and transportation to the Park and optimize pedestrian and cycling circulation within the Park.

**Guidelines:**

**Access 1:** Create a sense of entry and arrival at both Parcel D and Parcel G-1 of the Park. Provide ADA accessible orientation and information that will permit visitors to choose from a range of available Park experiences, and to learn how best to move within each parcel, and from one to the other.

**Access 2:** Develop clear wayfinding strategies for visitors to move between the Parcel D portion of the Park and the Parcel G-1 portion of the Park, as well as to find the two different sites. This is especially critical given the somewhat more remote vehicular and pedestrian access for Parcel G-1. This guideline is also noted in the earlier Connectivity section, but bears repeating as it is critical to both issues.

**Access 3:** Encourage pedestrian, bicycle, and public transportation (bus and rail) access to the Park. Coordinate with the City and others to improve the convenience and safety of pedestrian and bicycle routes to the Park.

**Access 4:** Minimize on-site parking and vehicular circulation within the Park to allow for maximum open space and visitor-serving activity areas.

**Access 5:** Explore opportunities to link pedestrian and cycling trails within the Park with neighborhood and regional transportation systems, including regional trails, such as the planned Los Angeles River Bikeway by LADOT.

**Access 6:** Explore opportunities to provide convenient and safe pedestrian and cycling access to the Park from communities along San Fernando Road and other nearby neighborhoods. Coordinate with the MTA and the City of Los Angeles Bureau of

Engineering in the location and design of the pedestrian/bike bridge that MTA is planning to build over the Los Angeles River near Parcel D.

**Access 7:** Coordinate with the City of Los Angeles and the LAUSD in its development of the San Fernando Road street improvements and new high school to coordinate Park access points with regard to signalized intersections and other safety features on the adjacent City street.

**Access 8:** Coordinate Park access and transportation planning with other agency/organization transportation planning efforts in the region.

**Access 9:** Coordinate with appropriate local, regional, state and other applicable authorities regarding any future impacts on the Park from potential future development of high speed use in rail rights-of-way adjacent to the Park.

#### 4.5 **PARTNERSHIPS, INTERAGENCY COLLABORATION AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

The Park is bordered by the Los Angeles River, private land owned or leased by Federal Express or the Union Pacific Railroad and land owned by a number of local and state jurisdictions, including the City of Los Angeles, LAUSD, and MTA. Park planning should be coordinated to ensure compatibility with the goals of local users and adjacent land owners, as well as at Los Angeles River State Historic Park.

##### 4.5.1 **PARTNERSHIPS AND OUTREACH**

Partnerships and alliances should be encouraged that enhance Park programming, maximize visitor services, leverage funding development, and provide quality recreational and educational opportunities. The extensive public outreach process that has preceded this stage of the Park's development should be continued to ensure ongoing dialogue with the surrounding communities and other stakeholders and understanding of their concerns and needs.

**Goal:** Work cooperatively in partnership with the City of Los Angeles and other organizations to provide a coordinated and coherent network of regional educational, open space and recreational opportunities.

##### **Guidelines:**

**Partnerships/Outreach 1:** Coordinate closely with the City of Los Angeles as they implement and operate the sports fields development on the 20 acres of Parcel D they will manage.

**Partnerships/Outreach 2:** Serve as a public steward for this important site that is recognized as having statewide significance.

**Partnerships/Outreach 4:** Designate a Park representative to maintain ties and consistent interaction with local city, county and state elected representatives, and community based organizations that focus on the Los Angeles River Greenway.

**Partnerships/Outreach 5:** Participate in economic, cultural, educational and natural resource development to enhance visitor experiences.

**Partnerships/Outreach 6:** Coordinate parking, public safety, and educational opportunities with state and local representatives.

**Partnerships/Outreach 7:** Participate in multiple use future development opportunities, leveraging funding and protection of open space.

**Goal:** Strengthen bonds and work collaboratively, effectively and efficiently with other involved agencies, individuals, community groups and other stakeholders towards creating a Park that local and long distance visitors will enjoy.

**Guidelines:**

**Partnerships/Outreach 8:** Work with the multiple jurisdictions and community based organizations to develop a new multiple-use trail connection that runs from the San Gabriel Mountains to the Pacific Ocean through Los Angeles River State Historic Park and the Park.

**Partnerships/Outreach 9:** Coordinate with visitor services and programs at the Los Angeles State Historic Park unit to enhance recreational and educational opportunities between the Rio de Los Angeles State Park and the Los Angeles State Historic Park.

**Partnerships/Outreach 10:** Partner with educational institutions using “cutting edge” technology to create virtual learning opportunities for long distance visitors and students.

**Goal:** Create quality recreational and educational opportunities for all Park visitors, regardless of their economic, social status, or physical ability.

**Guidelines:**

**Partnerships/Outreach 11:** Work with state local officials and community based organizations to expand recreational and educational opportunities to keep pace with the needs of California’s growing, diverse population and changing lifestyles.<sup>5</sup>

**Partnerships/Outreach 12:** Seek funding opportunities to support programs for low income youth.

**Partnerships/Outreach 13:** Connect to the surrounding communities and neighborhoods and participate in the diverse cultural activities and programs provided by the long-term residents.

**Partnerships/Outreach 14:** Coordinate with state, local officials, public and private schools and community based organizations in outreach efforts maximizing communication mediums.

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<sup>5</sup> California State Parks, *The Seventh Generation*. Page 19 (2001)

#### 4.5.2 LOS ANGELES STATE HISTORIC PARK SITE

The 32-acre Los Angeles State Historic Park unit of the State Park System, is approximately two miles south of the Rio de Los Angeles State Park site. Set back from the Los Angeles River and flanked by Spring Street and North Broadway, the Historic Park is a key parcel in the emerging Los Angeles River Greenway. While Rio de Los Angeles State Park will focus particularly on the natural environment and natural history, Los Angeles State Historic Park is planned to emphasize human and cultural history. The two Parks are intended to be complementary, and could be potentially connected by existing or future recreation trail systems. Because of the close proximity of the two sites, the Park site should address the influence of the Los Angeles State Historic Park's mission. Together, the two State Park units are major additions to the growing network of regional open space in the City of Los Angeles.

**Goal:** Work cooperatively with the City of Los Angeles and other organizations to provide a coordinated and coherent network of regional open space and recreational opportunities which strategically links Rio de Los Angeles State Park and Los Angeles State Historic Park to one another and the overall network.

**Guidelines:**

**Los Angeles State Historic Park 1:** Work with the City of Los Angeles and other organizations to develop a new multiple-use trail connection from the Rio de Los Angeles State Park site to the Los Angeles State Historic Park site, following the Los Angeles River corridor to the maximum extent feasible.

**Los Angeles State Historic Park 2:** Coordinate the Park's visitor services and programs to enhance recreational and educational opportunities.

**Los Angeles State Historic Park 3:** Coordinate with Los Angeles River State Park staff to maximize operational, public safety, and administrative functions for both parks.

#### 4.5.3 ACQUISITIONS

**Goal:** Evaluate future land acquisitions that include similar natural resources and recreational opportunities similar to those of Los Angeles River State Park

**Guidelines:**

**Acquisition 1:** Coordinate with federal, state and local jurisdictions and agencies to monitor development activities outside the Park's boundaries, and to ensure buffer zones are maintained or enhanced.

**Acquisition 2:** Actively work together and coordinate with other agencies and property owners to secure land acquisitions to ensure key biocorridors are preserved and enhanced.

**Acquisition 3:** Evaluate all land acquisitions based upon resource, cultural, and recreational values as well as visitor enjoyment opportunities.

## 4.6 FUTURE STUDIES

There are a number of planning efforts that require detailed consideration too specific for the overall planning efforts of this General Plan. Funding and staffing limitations restrict which studies California State Parks is able to address subsequent to this General Plan and require that State Parks set priorities. Many goals and guidelines within the Plan Section provide direction for management plans and/or future studies for the Park site as well as regional planning, connectivity, and coordination of State Park projects in the Los Angeles region and located within the Los Angeles River Greenway. Information resulting from these studies will benefit specific State Park projects (i.e. Los Angeles State Historic Park and Rio de Los Angeles State Park) as well as future planning efforts for the interconnected Parks and trails of the Los Angeles River Greenway. Planning, feasibility studies, and public coordination for these plans are ongoing.

All future efforts on specific management plans will involve the appropriate level of CEQA review and compliance and may include public participation beyond that what is required as part of the CEQA process. Implementation of such plans may incorporate mitigation measures including, but not limited to, natural and cultural resource protection, monitoring to avoid impacts, and access limitations in sensitive resource areas.

The following is a list of some of these proposed future planning efforts. Please refer to the appropriate goals and guidelines section of the General Plan for a more complete description of the intent of these plans.

- Management Plan
- Riparian, Wetland Habitat Management Plan
- Re-vegetation and Management Plan
- Wetland Creation Plan
- Interpretive Master Plan
- Parkwide Sign Plan
- Scope of Collections Statement
- Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan

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## CHAPTER 5

### ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

#### 5.1 INTRODUCTION TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

##### 5.1.1 PURPOSE OF THE EIR

This section of the Rio de Los Angeles State Park General Plan constitutes an EIR, as required by PRC Sections 5002.2 and 21000 et seq., and is subject to certification by the California Park and Recreation Commission (Commission). The Commission has sole authority for the approval and adoption of the General Plan. Following certification of the EIR and approval of the General Plan, the Department will prepare facility development and resource management proposals (or comprehensive plans) that implement provisions of the General Plan as staff and funding allow. Future projects, based on the provisions in this General Plan, may be subject to permitting requirements, additional environmental review, and approval by other public agencies that have resource protection authority over the activities in the project area.

CEQA requires state agencies to analyze and disclose the potential environmental effects of a proposed action. CEQA encourages options to avoid needless redundancy and duplication, such as combining General Plans and EIRs (CEQA Guidelines Section 15166) and the use of tiering, a process where a lead agency prepares a series of EIRs, progressing from general concerns to more site-specific evaluations with the preparation of each new document (CEQA Guidelines Section 15152). As discussed in Section 5.1.3 below, this EIR is a “program” level or “first-tier” EIR, which provides a broader level of analysis than a “project” level EIR would normally include. As subsequent management plans and site-specific projects are proposed, they will be subject to further environmental review (see Section 5.13).

When the lead agency combines a General Plan and an EIR, all requirements of CEQA must be covered and the document must identify where the requirements are met. This document meets all of the CEQA requirements for an EIR; therefore, the term “General Plan and EIR” is used to reinforce the concept of a single document fulfilling the dual requirements of Park general planning and CEQA compliance.

##### 5.1.2 FOCUS OF THE EIR

The Notice of Preparation (NOP) for this General Plan was circulated to the appropriate federal, state, and local planning agencies. Based on comments received during the NOP comment period and the planning process to date, this EIR was prepared to analyze potential environmental impacts that may result from the implementation of the management goals and guidelines as well as the area-specific management and facility prescriptions that, together, constitute the proposed General Plan. Environmental resources or topics that would not likely be affected by the General Plan are briefly addressed in Section 5.5, *Environmental Topics Eliminated from Further Analysis*. Those topics or issues that warrant further environmental analysis are analyzed in detail in Section 5.6, *Environmental Impacts*. As such, the majority of this chapter focuses on those issues carried forward for detailed environmental analysis.



### **5.1.3 SUBSEQUENT ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS**

The Rio de Los Angeles State Park General Plan and EIR serves as a first-tier EIR, as defined in Section 15166 of the CEQA Guidelines. Tiering in an EIR, particularly for a program-level project such as a general plan, allows agencies to consider broad environmental issues at the general planning stage. These environmental considerations are analyzed in greater detail in subsequent environmental documents when specific development projects and management programs are proposed. It should be noted that subsequent environmental documents would incorporate, by reference, the general analysis from this program-level EIR and would concentrate on the issues specific to the characteristics of subsequent projects (PRC Section 21093; CEQA Guidelines Section 15152).

Where a proposed project covers a wide spectrum of actions (i.e., broad General Plan policies as well as site-specific development actions), CEQA requires that “environmental impact reports shall be tiered whenever feasible” (PRC Section 21093(b)). Tiering is defined as “the coverage of general matters and environmental effects in an environmental impact report prepared for a policy, plan, program, or ordinance followed by narrower or site-specific environmental impact reports...” (PRC Section 21068.5; CEQA Guidelines Section 15385). While a tiered EIR may not defer all consideration of impacts to a point in the future, it can legitimately indicate that more detailed studies and project-specific impacts may be considered in future environmental documents.

The General Plan specifically envisions that a series of focused management plans (Cultural Resources, Interpretive, Concessions) will be prepared subsequent to adoption of the General Plan. These management plans will propose the activities to be carried out and will require CEQA compliance and public review as part of their approval. Future second-tier environmental review will be based on more detailed information about each proposed action, including facility size, location, and capacity. The environmental analysis for second-tier environmental review will be more specific and focused, identifying any significant environmental impacts and mitigation measures that are applicable to future projects. Future actions will also be evaluated for consistency with the proposed General Plan.

Because future environmental review will be more specific and focused, and the characteristics of future projects will be better defined, it will be possible to develop appropriate project-level mitigation measures that address potentially significant adverse impacts to the environment. Developing appropriate mitigation measures generally requires resource specialists to evaluate the scope of work, identify specific causes of impacts, and specify measures that avoid or contain impacts to a less-than-significant level. This information will be available once specific projects or actions are defined.

### **5.1.4 CONTENTS OF THE EIR**

This program EIR is prepared in accordance with CEQA Guidelines (Title 14, California Code of Regulations, Article 9). The required EIR sections are included in this document as described in Sections 15122 through 15131 of the CEQA Guidelines. This EIR includes the following sections:

**Introduction to the Environmental Analysis:** This section includes a brief overview of the environmental review process, legal requirements, and approach to the environmental analysis.

**EIR Summary:** This section provides a summary of environmental impacts associated with the proposed General Plan and proposed mitigation measures to address the impacts identified, an overview of the environmental effects of alternatives considered to the preferred General Plan, and a description of any areas of controversy and/or issues that need to be resolved.

**Project Description:** This section provides an overview of the proposed General Plan, which is the focus of the EIR.

**Environmental Setting:** This section summarizes the existing (baseline) conditions for those environmental issues or resources that are not addressed in Chapter 2, Existing Conditions, of this General Plan.

**Environmental Effects Eliminated from Further Analysis:** This section describes those environmental topics that did not warrant detailed environmental analysis and the supporting rationale.

**Environmental Impacts:** This section describes the level of environmental impact associated with implementation of the proposed General Plan, including goals and guidelines that address effects on the environment.

**Other CEQA Considerations:** This section contains information on other CEQA-mandated topics, including cumulative impacts, growth-inducing impacts, significant and unavoidable impacts, and significant irreversible environmental changes.

**Alternatives to the Proposed Project:** The alternatives analysis describes the various alternatives to the proposed General Plan (including the No Project Alternative) that are considered in this EIR and the associated environmental effects of these alternatives relative to the proposed project.

### **5.1.5 USE OF THIS GENERAL PLAN AND EIR**

As discussed above, the Commission has approval authority for all State Park General Plans and EIRs. The Commission determines whether to:

1. Accept the certified General Plan and EIR as a “Final EIR” under CEQA Guidelines Section 15166; and
2. Adopt the General Plan and EIR as a General Plan under PRC Section 5002.2

The Rio de Los Angeles State Park General Plan is the guiding policy document for subsequent operation and management of the Park. The General Plan proposes parkwide management goals and guidelines, which require further data collection, evaluation, and additional specific management planning and resource impact identification prior to new construction. Impacts discussed in this chapter are related to the proposed plan elements and goals and guidelines.

Some of the provisions of these focused management plans, as well as development, maintenance, facility use, and recreational activities allowed by the General Plan, have the potential to impact the environment. Prior to taking any further action, State Parks must evaluate whether that action

constitutes a “project” under CEQA; whether it is categorically exempt (i.e., routine maintenance); whether it may have a significant impact on the environment; and, if so, whether a negative declaration, mitigated negative declaration, or an EIR needs to be prepared.

The Purpose and Vision statements in Section 4 provide a context and direction for management and planning of the Park. The purpose and vision for the Park are realized through the implementation of the goals and guidelines in Chapter 4. These statements will guide future decisions related to Park management.

## **5.2 EIR SUMMARY**

### **5.2.1 SUMMARY OF IMPACTS AND MITIGATION**

Implementation of the General Plan is not expected to result in significant impacts on the environment, with the exception of potential impacts related to soil and groundwater contamination. The following mitigation measures are proposed by the Department in conjunction with this plan:

#### **Mitigation Measure HAZ-1**

Potential impacts from hazardous materials release during the construction-phase related to soil contamination should be reviewed at the project level for specific facilities or management plans proposed under the Rio de Los Angeles State Park General Plan. Appropriate mitigation measures shall be implemented, and may include but shall not be limited to:

- Prior to earthwork and construction activities on Parcel G-1, the state shall submit the project grading plans to DTSC for concurrence that the project is cleared for recreational development and is consistent with approvals described in the *Explanation of Significant Differences for Union Pacific Railroad Company – Taylor Yard – Sale Parcel Site- Hump Yard Area* (January 30, 1998). Approval to proceed with the recreational development on Parcel D shall be documented in writing.
- During project construction on Parcel G-1, soil sampling shall occur consistent with the requirements of DTSC in areas of heavy ground disturbance to ensure that construction workers and future Park users are not exposed to contaminated soil. Samples will be screened for petroleum hydrocarbons, soluble lead, VOCs, and SVOCs. If soil contamination levels are encountered that exceed regulatory standards, grading activities in the area(s) of contamination shall be halted until appropriate remediation measures are identified and approved by DTSC.
- If contaminated soils are encountered during construction on Parcels D and G-1, operations shall be stopped in the vicinity of the suspected impacted soil. Samples shall be collected and analyzed using appropriate collection and sampling techniques. If an area of contamination is identified, the department shall implement appropriate testing and handling of the soil to determine the appropriate disposal and treatment options. If the soils exceed the applicable screening criteria established by the RWQCB or are classified as hazardous (according to Resource Conservation and Recovery Act [RCRA] and CCR Title 22), soils shall be hauled to a Class I landfill or other appropriate soil treatment and recycling facility.

## **Mitigation Measure HAZ-2**

Potential construction-phase hazardous materials release impacts related to groundwater contamination should be reviewed at the project level for specific facilities or management plans proposed under the Rio de Los Angeles State Park General Plan. Appropriate mitigation measures shall be implemented, and may include but shall not be limited to:

- If groundwater is encountered during project grading or construction activities, construction shall be halted in the area until appropriate dewatering or avoidance measures are identified or other treatment is recommended or required by the RWQCB. If dewatering is required, the Department shall procure a permit from the RWQCB for treatment and disposal of groundwater and shall comply with all provisions of the permit.

### **5.2.2 SUMMARY OF ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED**

Several public meetings have been conducted for this project. At the first meeting, preliminary Park planning concepts and programming elements were presented. For the second public meeting in 2003, two plan alternatives were developed using resource data combined with Park staff, agency, and previous public input. Graphics of the alternatives were available at the meeting, where public comments were obtained by State Parks staff. As a result of the public comments, a Preferred Alternative (Preferred Plan) was developed and the alternatives were refined into two distinct plans. The Preferred Plan, shown in Figure 8, is enlarged in Section 5.3 of this EIR. The No Project Alternative and the alternative Park development plan are evaluated in Section 5.8.

### **5.2.3 AREAS OF KNOWN CONTROVERSY**

Several issues have been raised at the public meetings for the Rio de Los Angeles State Park General Plan and EIR. These comments were primarily related to the following topics:

- Recreation Activities and Open Space
- Operational Facilities and Public Safety
- Park Connectivity
- Visitor Needs
- Access and Transportation
- Natural Resources
- Cultural Diversity
- Education and Interpretive Programs and Facilities
- Multiple Plans, Studies, Expectations, and Perceptions
- Fiscal Challenges

Input from these public meetings helped in the development of the planning concepts, goals, and guidelines described in Chapter 4.

The most common public comments identified at the public meetings related to the types of recreational activities proposed for the site and the provision of open space. The urbanized areas adjoining the Park project generate high demand for sports fields and facilities to accommodate formal sports programs (i.e., soccer, softball, and baseball). As discussed in Chapter 3, there is a regional shortage of adequate sports fields and facilities in the Los Angeles central city area. Many public comments have indicated that all of the adjoining communities are deficient in the number of sports fields to accommodate the current recreation demand within their boundaries, as is the region as a whole. Unfortunately, these communities are also predominantly built out, leaving little open space or vacant land on which they can add new fields. Some of these communities and field sports organizations see the development of the Rio de Los Angeles State Park project as a possible solution to relieving the existing shortage.

The mission of State Parks is to protect and enhance the state's natural, scenic, cultural, and ecological resources while providing for public recreation that is compatible with and enhances the public's appreciation of those resources. Generally, recreation improvements that are not dependent on or do not directly enhance the public's enjoyment of the Park project's resource values are not permitted within State Parks. State parklands are not used to provide these types of recreation facilities; but, the state has worked with the City to allow them to provide adequate park facilities in the area leased by the City. For example, the department does not build or manage sport fields, but the Department is leasing 20 acres of land on Parcel D to the City of Los Angeles for active sports field development. The City-operated park is outside of the boundaries of the Rio de Los Angeles State Park.

As a first tier of planning for the Park, this General Plan does not address all of the project-specific comments in detail. Although the Plan sets the overall goals for Park management and provisions for public use, it does not define project-level development specifics or the methods for attaining resource protection goals. These will be part of future planning steps, such as the layout and design of facilities or specific resource management plans and processes.

The objectives of the Environmental Analysis section are to identify, where possible, the significant environmental impacts of implementing the General Plan and to define generalized mitigation criteria and policy-level alternatives. Once the General Plan is approved and adopted, the Department could prepare management and development plans as required and as staff and funding allow. These plans would address such issues as vegetation and site development. The area development plans will provide specific information on resources and design considerations (layout, facility configuration, capacities, etc.) within designated areas of the Park.

Implementation of development plans would generally be carried out as the first phase of major and minor capital outlay projects. At each planning level (whether a management plan, an area development plan, or major or minor capital outlay project), the plan or project would be subject to further, more detailed environmental review to determine if it is consistent with the General Plan and to identify any significant environmental impacts and mitigation measures that would be specific to the project. More detailed environmental review will be possible during the more detailed levels

of planning, where facility size, location, and capacity can be explicitly delineated, rather than at the General Plan level.

#### 5.2.4 **ISSUES TO BE RESOLVED**

This EIR analyzes, at a program level, the potential environmental impacts of a broad range of policies and management actions included in the Rio de Los Angeles State Park General Plan. The Department would require examination of many specific facilities and management plans included in the General Plan at the time they are proposed for implementation to determine if further environmental review at a more detailed project-specific and site-specific level were necessary. Generally, further environmental review would be necessary if new significant environmental effects beyond those identified in this EIR would occur as a result of changes in the project description (or further detail became known), new circumstances or information arose, or if new mitigation measures or alternatives that would reduce one or more significant effects of the project were found to be feasible but the Department declined to adopt the measure or alternative (CEQA Guidelines Section 15162). The following issues are not fully resolved in this General Plan and EIR:

- **Park connectivity.** Currently, access to Parcel G-1 is limited and, without a frontage onto a major thoroughfare, requires travel along a number of residential and industrial streets. If additional property is acquired or if easements can be obtained to improve the access points, further Park design could evaluate new locations for entry roads and parking. Issues of accessibility to the site and signage will need to be resolved to ensure that Park visitors can easily access the site. Connectivity with adjacent parcels will also need to be resolved with the neighboring land owners on a case-by-case basis.
- **Hazardous materials.** Another area of unresolved controversy concerns the status of Parcel G-1 with respect to hazardous materials. Until DTSC officially approves Parcel G-1 for Park development, construction pursuant to this General Plan can not commence.
- **Water sources.** The Natural Open Space plan element includes water features, habitat restoration, wetlands, and bioswales. At the time this General Plan is being written, the water source for such features has not been identified. While water from the Los Angeles River would be a logical choice, it is understood that this water is already fully allocated and another source may be needed.
- **Sustainability.** Although the General Plan includes a number of goals and guidelines related to sustainable design and management, the feasibility of these design features and management measures cannot be analyzed at this time, but will require further analysis when a specific project is proposed.
- **Park staffing.** As indicated in Sections 3.7.12 and 3.9.1, staff have not been assigned to the Park, prior to its opening. The numbers of staff and the areas of expertise needed, has yet to be determined.

### 5.3 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

To meet requirements set forth in Section 5002.2 of the PRC and Section 4332 of Title 14 of the California Administration Code, California State Parks has prepared this General Plan for the Rio de Los Angeles State Park. The plan delineates a number of conceptual plan elements and establishes a set of goals and guidelines that will guide Park management and specific project implementation. These goals and guidelines address recreational, operational, interpretive, and resource management opportunities and constraints consistent with the classification of State Park, as set forth in Section 5019.50-5019.80 of the PRC and consistent with Department policies. The General Plan does not actually design or locate facilities but instead establishes regions or activity areas that describe levels of acceptable facility development. It also provide goals and guidelines for the appropriate types, locations, and designs of facilities that may be proposed in the future. The State Parks Mission and Park Vision give insight into the Park purpose and future planning efforts. The General Plan also establishes the primary interpretive themes for programs and activities.

The Planning Concept, Goals, and Guidelines section of the General Plan includes proposed plan elements, Park development and operations, and designates appropriate land uses. This section constitutes the project description. As described above, State Parks will use this EIR in its decision-making process regarding Plan approval and in the approval and development of subsequent project-specific proposals. If the General Plan were fully implemented as written, the following proposals would be carried out:

- Parkwide Management Goals and Guidelines. A consistent set of goals and guidelines to be applied to Park maintenance and operations as well as facility development throughout the Park.
- Park Concept and Planning Element Goals and Guidelines. Goals and guidelines are to be applied to facility development as well as Park maintenance and operations within specific portions of the Park. This includes providing a range of experiences and educating the public about the dynamic and inter-related purposes of the Park: natural, recreational, interpretive, and cultural/historic.

In February 2004, the City of Los Angeles and the Department prepared the *Taylor Yard Park Development Project MND* (California Department of Parks and Recreation 2003). This MND evaluated the construction and operation of the 20-acres being leased by the city for a sports complex Park and the Department's 20-acre temporary park facilities on the remaining 20-acre portion of Parcel D. Specifically, the *Taylor Yard Park Development Project* analyzed the grading activities for Parcel D and the construction of the following components:

- Interpretive mound/overlook
- Transitional parkland and open space
- Natural amphitheater
- River ox-bow and nature walk
- Educational panels

The MND included mitigation measures to reduce potential impacts related to air quality, biological resources, and hazards and hazardous materials to a less than significant level. This MND is incorporated, by reference, into this General Plan and EIR.

Many of the components of the Plan were evaluated in the MND described above, including the grading of the entire 20-acre site. In addition, the following permanent facilities could be developed with implementation of the General Plan: administrative offices; vehicle, equipment, and materials storage; facilities for interpretive program support, visitor services, and volunteer support; indoor and outdoor gathering and educational spaces, which may include plazas and interpretive exhibits; possible concessions; multiple-use trails; limited parking; informational signage; and recreational and open space elements such as outdoor lighting, turf areas, picnic tables, shade structures, gardens, and natural habitat areas.

#### **5.4 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING**

Chapter 2 provides a description of the Park's existing land use, environment, and significant resource values. Information presented in Chapter 2 constitutes the CEQA environmental setting description for the following topics: Aesthetics; Air Quality; Biological Resources; Cultural Resources; Geology and Soils; Hazards and Hazardous Materials; Hydrology and Water Quality; Noise; Traffic and Transportation; and Public Services, Utilities and Service Systems.

#### **5.5 ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS ELIMINATED FROM FURTHER ANALYSIS**

Based on a preliminary review of the proposed project, several environmental topics do not warrant comprehensive analysis in this EIR because there is no potential for significant environmental effects resulting from the implementation of the General Plan. These topics include Agricultural Resources; Energy and Mineral Resources; Land Use and Planning; Population, Employment, and Housing; Recreation; and Aesthetics. A brief description of these topics and information supporting the decision to eliminate these topics from further analysis are provided below.

##### **5.5.1 AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES**

There are no Williamson Act lands in mainland Los Angeles County (California Department of Conservation 2003). Additionally, there is no prime farmland or farmland of statewide importance at the Park. None of the General Plan components would affect agricultural land or important farmland; therefore, no further consideration of agricultural resource impacts is necessary in this General Plan and EIR.

##### **5.5.2 ENERGY AND MINERAL RESOURCES**

The Park is not located within an area with existing or historical energy or mineral extraction land uses, and it is not designated as an important mineral resource by the California Department of Conservation or the City of Los Angeles. As such, no further consideration of energy and mineral resource impacts is necessary in this General Plan and EIR.



### **5.5.3 LAND USE AND PLANNING**

The Park is situated within the City of Los Angeles; however, development within the State-owned Park is not subject to the land use plans and policies of the City. Development within the Park is regulated by state land use guidelines and regulations as described in this General Plan. Any development outside of the current Park boundaries, including future land acquisition activities, would be subject to subsequent environmental documentation. The Park development would not physically divide any established communities or conflict with any land use plans adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect. For these reasons, no further consideration of land use impacts is necessary in this General Plan and EIR.

### **5.5.4 POPULATION, EMPLOYMENT, AND HOUSING**

The Park primarily serves the local community and regional population of Los Angeles County, which had a population of 9,519,338 at the 2000 census (USBC 2000). While implementation of this General Plan would not directly induce regional population growth, additional recreational facilities could attract residents to the area. Additional visitors may be attracted to the Park, potentially resulting in growth of the employment base of the surrounding communities. Given the 2000 unemployment rate of 5.0 percent and housing vacancy rate of 4.2 percent for Los Angeles County, it is expected that the increase in demand for labor and housing would be met by the existing local population and that no additional housing would be needed to serve growth associated with additional visitation (USBC 2000). For these reasons, no further consideration of population, employment, and housing impacts is necessary in this General Plan and EIR.

### **5.5.5 RECREATION**

This General Plan establishes a long-term vision for the Park and provides the goals and guidelines necessary to implement this vision. Although public recreational use of the Park will increase in the future, the goals and guidelines are designed to protect the Park from substantial physical deterioration while improving visitor experience. Development of specific recreational facilities at the Park would be subject to future environmental documentation, which would evaluate the project's effect on the environment and, if necessary, provide mitigation measures to minimize these impacts. The purpose of the General Plan is to meet the demand for recreational opportunities, to which end, the Park provides a positive beneficial effect for the local community. For these reasons, no further consideration of recreation impacts is necessary in this General Plan and EIR.

### **5.5.6 AESTHETICS**

The Park site was formerly used for freight switching operations and other industrial activities for more than 75 years and retains none of its natural character. The surrounding uses are a mix of industrial, commercial, and, further from the Park, residential. Several guidelines are provided in Section 4.4.7 of this General Plan that would minimize potential impacts related to light pollution at the Park. Consequently, there would be no impact from nighttime lighting from the Park to adjacent landowners. Impacts associated with the City's nearby sports fields have been evaluated in a separate CEQA document and is not a part of this General Plan. No scenic resources such as groves of trees, rock outcroppings, or historic buildings are located at the Park, and the Park is not visible from a state scenic highway. The Park is visible from many surrounding vantage points,

including Mount Washington and Elysian Park, and the General Plan would improve the views from these and other vantage points. The General Plan would substantially improve the existing visual character and quality of the site and the surrounding area by developing a Park on a visually unattractive vacant site. The proposed Park would not result in adverse aesthetics impacts; therefore, no further consideration of this issue is necessary in this General Plan and EIR.

## 5.6 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS EVALUATED IN DETAIL

### 5.6.1 AIR QUALITY

This section analyzes impacts related to air quality that would result from the implementation of the General Plan. The analysis is based on ambient air quality conditions in the project area and is focused on potential impacts associated with the construction of new facilities at the Park and operation of the new Park (i.e., increased vehicle trips).

#### Thresholds

Implementation of the General Plan would have a significant air quality impact if it would:

- Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan.
- Violate any air quality standards or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation.
- Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions that exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors).
- Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations.
- Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people.

In addition, the SCAQMD has adopted air quality thresholds of significance for construction activities and project operations that are shown in Table 6.

**Table 6. SCAQMD Air Quality Impact Significance Thresholds**

Pollutant	Project Construction		Project Operation
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	24.75 tons/qtr	550 lbs/day	550 lbs/day
Reactive Organic Compounds (ROC)	2.5 tons/qtr	75 lbs/day	55 lbs/day
Nitrogen Oxides (NO <sub>x</sub> )	2.5 tons/qtr	100 lbs/day	55 lbs/day
Particulates (PM <sub>10</sub> )	6.75 tons/qtr	150 lbs/day	150 lbs/day
Sulfur Oxides (SO <sub>x</sub> )	6.75 tons/qtr	150 lbs/day	150 lbs/day

Note: No significance threshold is established for ozone as it is not emitted directly but is a secondary pollutant produced in the atmosphere through a complex series of photochemical reactions involving ROCs and NO<sub>x</sub>.

lbs/day - pounds per day

tons/quarter – tons per quarter

SOURCE: South Coast Air Quality Management District, *CEQA Air Quality Handbook*, April 1993.

## Impact Analysis

### Impact: Degradation of Air Quality

Implementation of this General Plan would result in construction projects for the provision of public use opportunities and related facilities as discussed in Section 5.3. Grading operations for Parcel D were evaluated in the *Taylor Yard Park Development Project MND* and mitigation measures were identified to reduce construction-related air quality impacts to a less than significant level<sup>6</sup> (California Department of Parks and Recreation 2003). Operational impacts were also evaluated in the MND for public use of the interim facilities on Parcel D and no significant air quality impacts were identified. Development of other permanent facilities on Parcel D and development of Parcel G-1 would result in additional air quality impacts that were not evaluated in the previous MND. These impacts are discussed below.

Grading activities associated with Parcel G-1 could generate substantial amounts of dust (including PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub>), primarily from “fugitive”<sup>7</sup> sources, and lesser amounts of other criteria air pollutants, primarily from operation of heavy equipment. A large portion of the potential construction dust emissions would result from equipment and motor-vehicle traffic over paved and unpaved roads and the use of temporary, unpaved parking lots at construction sites. Potential dust emissions from construction would vary from day to day, depending on the level and type of construction activity, the silt content of the soil, and the prevailing weather.

Exhaust from potential construction equipment, haul trucks, and construction-worker commute trips would also result in increased PM10 levels, along with other criteria air pollutants such as CO, NOx, and ROC. In addition, potential asphalt paving and application of architectural materials would result in evaporative emissions. Criteria pollutant emissions of ROC and NOx from these emissions sources would incrementally add to regional atmospheric loading of ozone precursors during construction of projects that could be implemented under the General Plan.

During construction, compliance with SCAQMD rules and regulations, including SCQAMD Rule 403, would minimize the emission of criteria air pollutants from construction activities and stationary sources. Since only limited grading would be required for Parcel D, earthwork activities would primarily be limited to Parcel G-1. As such, air quality impacts during construction would be short-term and would be less than significant due to the implementation of the guidelines in Section 4.6.2.1 and the air pollutant control measures required by the SCAQMD rules and regulations. Additionally, project-specific environmental analysis would be required for future development projects, which may provide additional measures to further reduce air quality impacts during construction.

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<sup>6</sup> All mitigation measures provided in the MND, including habitat creation for freshwater marsh and disturbed riparian woodland habitats, are incorporated, by reference into this General Plan and EIR. Because the MND evaluated the complete grading of the entire Parcel D site, no additional mitigation measures for biological resources are required for this project.

<sup>7</sup> “Fugitive” emissions generally refer to those emissions that are released to the atmosphere by some means other than through a stack or tailpipe. Fugitive dust emissions typically include emissions from on-site surface disturbance activities and off-site vehicular travel on unpaved roadways.

New recreational development at the Park would generate additional vehicular traffic from increased visitation. The Transportation Project-Level Carbon Monoxide Protocol (Garza et al. 1997) states that signalized intersections at level of service (LOS) E or F represent a potential for a CO violation. The *Taylor Yard Park Development Project MND* evaluated the operational impacts associated with the anticipated future use of Parcel D. This analysis indicated that project-generated traffic associated with the development and operation of Parcel D would not increase CO concentrations or create a CO hot spot at any one of the modeled intersections and would not cause the exceedance of the 1-hour or the 8-hour average CO standard. As with Parcel D, the use of Parcel G-1 would add a relatively small number of vehicles to the local roadway network in the morning and evening peak hours. As such, operational air quality impacts are not anticipated to occur as a result of this project.

Several of the goals and guidelines in this General Plan encourage the use of alternative forms of transportation. Implementation of these measures would further reduce operational air quality impacts associated with the General Plan.

Typical recreational uses permitted in the State Parks system are not known to generate odors that would be considered objectionable to most people. Use of regulated herbicides and other air quality contaminants would be in accordance with state and federal rules and regulations. Given the above, impacts related to air pollutants are expected to be less than significant.

### **Significance**

Implementation of Guidelines Air Quality 1 through Air Quality 4 and compliance with the SCAQMD air quality rules and regulations would reduce potential impacts to a less-than-significant level.

### **5.6.2 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES**

This section analyzes impacts related to biological resources that would result from the implementation of the General Plan. Field surveys and existing reports were used to assess impacts on vegetation and wildlife that would result from implementation of the proposed General Plan.

### **Thresholds**

Implementation of the General Plan would have a significant impact on biological resources if it would:

- Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS).
- Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the CDFG or the USFWS.

- Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means.
- Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites.
- Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance.
- Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP); NCCP; or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan.

### **Impact Analysis**

#### Impact: Increased exposure, threats to vegetation and wildlife

Grading operations at Parcel D were evaluated in the *Taylor Yard Park Development Project MND* and mitigation measures were provided to reduce potential impacts to native plant communities and migratory birds to a less than significant level. Due to the past industrial uses on Parcels D and G-1 and recent grading of Parcel D, there are no known sensitive biological resources at the Park. Under this General Plan, restoration of riparian habitat and an emphasis on native species of vegetation would encourage native and migratory species to use the Park. Numerous General Plan goals and guidelines are provided to facilitate the creation of wildlife habitat on-site, control non-native plants, and otherwise protect biological resources. As shown in Figure 8, the majority of the State Park would fall within a Naturalized Open Space Zone. Consequently, the General Plan would have a beneficial effect related to biological resources.

Taylor Yard is not included in any adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Communities Conservation Plan, or other approved conservation plan.

### **Significance**

Because no significant biological resources have been detected and both parcels are highly disturbed, no impacts to biological resources would result from the General Plan.

### **5.6.3 CULTURAL RESOURCES**

This section analyzes impacts related to cultural resources that would result from the implementation of the General Plan. The analysis is based on a review of known (and potentially significant) cultural resources at the Park and proposed land use developments and resource management efforts prescribed in the proposed General Plan.

## Thresholds

Implementation of the General Plan would have a significant impact on cultural resources if it would:

- Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical or archaeological resource pursuant to CEQA Section 15064.5, such as physical demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of the resource or its immediate surroundings, such that the significance of the historical resource would be materially impaired.
- Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature.
- Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries.

## Impact Analysis

### Impact: Risk of Impacts to Significant Historic, Archaeological, and Paleontological Resources

A records search was conducted on May 28, 2002, for the proposed Park site and surrounding area. The results of that inquiry were negative. No historical or archaeological resources are recorded in the project area or within a 0.5-mile radius of the property boundaries. Nine previous archaeological studies have been conducted within a 0.5-mile radius of the property and most have yielded negative results; six of these studies overlap the current boundaries of Parcel D. None of the studies yielded positive results within the proposed project boundaries. While no historic resources are recorded within a 0.5-mile radius of the Park, it is possible that historic features or trash related to the historic use by the railroad might be still buried, although intact features would be unlikely.

The project site has an extensive historic background, which is uniquely connected to the early history of Los Angeles. A detailed history of the site is contained in the Section 2.1.3. Given the location of the Park in the Los Angeles River floodplain, it would not have been a primary location for an aboriginal village or a camp. Due to the extensive rail yard operations and remedial action that have occurred on Parcel D it is unlikely that any cultural feature survived or would still exist with any integrity. It is unlikely that any significant resources would be encountered during construction because site excavations would be shallow and site topography would not be substantially altered; therefore, impacts to historical resources would not occur.

The Park is situated upon a deep layer of artificial fill underlain by recent alluvial sediments, which have a low archaeological and paleontologic sensitivity. While deeper layers may have greater potential for significant paleontologic resources, excavations under the General Plan would be relatively shallow and would not likely disturb native soils. Likewise, the potential for encountering human remains is very remote. No formal cemeteries or other places of human interment are known to exist within the proposed project area. Project-specific environmental analysis would be required for future development projects prior to construction, which may provide additional measures regarding historic and archaeological resources.

## Significance

The General Plan for the Park outlines a number of goals and guidelines that protect and preserve the many cultural resources in the Park. Implementation of the guidelines provided in Section 4.6.3 would ensure that impacts to cultural resources would be less than significant.

### 5.6.4 GEOLOGY AND SOILS

This section analyzes impacts related to geology, soils, and seismicity that would result from the implementation of the General Plan. The analysis is based on a review of available geologic, seismic, and soils-related information for the project area in the context of development and resource management features included as part of the proposed General Plan.

#### Thresholds

Implementation of the General Plan would have a significant impact related to geology, soils, and seismicity if it would:

- Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the state Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault, strong seismic ground shaking, seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction, and/or landslides.
- Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil.
- Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse.
- Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property.
- Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater.

#### Impact Analysis

##### Impact: Risk of Geologic and Seismic Hazards

The Park is not located within an Alquist-Priolo Special Studies Zone. The nearest Alquist-Priolo Special Studies Zone is located along the Raymond Fault, which is approximately 1.8 miles from the site. Thus, the potential for ground surface rupture to occur at the Park is considered low.

The project site is located within the seismically active Southern California region where there are numerous faults of various type and magnitude potential. As such, Park development activities would be required to comply with all applicable building and safety code standards. These include requirements for construction, grading, excavations, use of fill, and foundation work including type of materials, design, procedures, etc., which are intended to limit the probability of occurrence and the severity of consequences from geologic hazards. Design and construction of the proposed project would conform to all applicable building and seismic codes; therefore, potential ground motion impacts would not be significant.

According to CDMG *Seismic Hazard Zones Map for the Los Angeles* quadrangle (released on March 25, 1999), the Taylor Yard complex is located in an area of liquefaction potential. This is due to the high water table and soils conditions under the site. Because the site is located in a liquefaction hazard zone, mitigation measures, as defined in PRC 2693(c), would be required for construction of the Park facilities. As a standard practice, a soils report would be prepared prior to construction of any habitable buildings at the Park. These reports would make foundation design recommendations (including measures identified in PRC 2693(c)) to minimize the potential for liquefaction impacts. Surface topography of the project site is generally flat; therefore, the potential for landslides is negligible. All fill soils will be graded if compacted to avoid settling and expansion.

Impacts related to geologic and seismic hazards would be less than significant.

#### Impact: Potential Erosion Impacts

During construction, a SWPPP would be required for the project, which would include BMPs to minimize soil erosion and runoff. No major grading activities would occur as a result of the project; however, grading on Parcel G-1 would occur in close proximity to the Los Angeles River. Implementation of the SWPPP would ensure that no significant impacts related to erosion would occur at the Park. Water quality impacts are discussed separately in Section 5.6.6 below.

Project-specific environmental analysis would be required for future development projects, which may provide additional measures to further reduce soil erosion impacts during construction.

The General Plan would not include septic tanks or any other type of alternative wastewater disposal system.

### **Significance**

Implementation of Guidelines Geology 1 through Geology 7 of the General Plan and the appropriate building and safety requirements would ensure that impacts related to geology and soils would be less than significant.

#### **5.6.5 HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS**

This section analyzes impacts related to hazards and hazardous materials that would result from the implementation of the General Plan. The analysis considers the types of proposed uses at the Park and the standard equipment and materials used in operating and managing the Park in relation to proposed hazards that could affect Park visitors and staff.



## Thresholds

Implementation of the General Plan would have a significant impact related to hazards and hazardous materials if it would:

- Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials.
- Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment.
- Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within 0.25 miles of an existing or proposed school.
- Be located on a site that is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would create a significant hazard to the public or the environment.
- For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area.
- For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area.
- Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan.
- Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands.

## Impact Analysis

### Impact: Routine Transport of Hazardous Materials

No hazardous materials would be routinely used during Park construction or operation; therefore, the General Plan would not create a significant health hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials.

### Impact: Impacts from Soil Contamination

Past industrial activities at the Taylor Yard complex, in conjunction with off-site groundwater contamination, have contaminated groundwater and soil under much of the former rail yard. As described in Section 2.2.2, the Taylor Yard complex was designated by DTSC as a brownfield site

after soils were found to be contaminated through analyzing soil samples and groundwater samples, and installing monitoring wells. As a result, DTSC undertook an extensive analysis of the contaminated soils and developed an action plan for remediation, the Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study (RI/FS). DTSC supervised the toxic cleanup on the Sale Parcels (Parcels A, B, C, D, E, F) in 1997. A number of remediation techniques were used, including soil-vapor extraction and chemical fixation, to rectify the contaminated soil (California Coastal Conservancy 2002).

Following the cleanup activities described above, approval was given for partial site closure while deed restrictions were under negotiation (DTSC 2003b). A separate evaluation was later prepared to evaluate the risk of lead exposure from the soil on Parcel D. On September 16, 1998, DTSC granted partial closure for soil at Parcel D (ERM 2003). Based on the evaluation, DTSC prepared the Explanation of Significant Differences for Union Pacific Railroad Company Taylor Yard – Sale Parcel Site, Hump Yard Area [Parcel D], dated January 30, 1998. This report concluded that soil cleanup levels for lead for residential and unrestricted use were established for the site and that residual lead concentrations would not pose an unacceptable risk if the site were developed for residential or unrestricted use. Since development of the facilities recommended in the General Plan would involve earthwork on-site, potentially significant impacts could occur from exposure to buried contaminated soils. Mitigation measures are provided in the *Taylor Yard Park Development Project MND* to reduce potential impacts related to soil contamination on Parcel D to a less than significant level.

Prior to the Department's acquisition of Parcel G-1, the site was remediated to levels suitable for industrial use. This was required for the sale, as the parcel was zoned for industrial uses at that time. Use of the site as a park requires remediation to residential levels. No formal clearance has been provided by DTSC indicating that this has occurred. Accordingly, development of Park facilities on this parcel could result in potentially significant impacts to construction workers and the Park visitors. Mitigation measures are provided to reduce potential impacts related to soil contamination to a less than significant level.

#### *Mitigation Measure HAZ-1*

Potential impacts from hazardous materials release during the construction-phase related to soil contamination should be reviewed at the project level for specific facilities or management plans proposed under the Rio de Los Angeles State Park General Plan. Appropriate mitigation measures shall be implemented, and may include but are not limited to:

- Prior to earthwork and construction activities on Parcel G-1, the state shall submit the project grading plans to DTSC for concurrence that the project is cleared for recreational development and is consistent with approvals described in the *Explanation of Significant Differences for Union Pacific Railroad Company – Taylor Yard – Sale Parcel Site- Hump Yard Area* (January 30, 1998). Approval to proceed with the recreational development on Parcel D shall be documented in writing.
- During project construction on Parcel G-1, soil sampling shall occur consistent with the requirements of DTSC in areas of heavy ground disturbance to ensure that construction workers and future Park users are not exposed to contaminated soil. Samples will be

screened for petroleum hydrocarbons, soluble lead, VOCs, and SVOCs. If soil contamination levels are encountered that exceed regulatory standards, grading activities in the area(s) of contamination shall be halted until appropriate remediation measures are identified and approved by DTSC.

- If contaminated soils are encountered during construction on Parcels D and G-1, operations shall be stopped in the vicinity of the suspected impacted soil. Samples shall be collected and analyzed using appropriate collection and sampling techniques. If an area of contamination is identified, the department shall implement appropriate testing and handling of the soil to determine the appropriate disposal and treatment options. If the soils exceed the applicable screening criteria established by the RWQCB or are classified as hazardous (according to Resource Conservation and Recovery Act [RCRA] and CCR Title 22), soils shall be hauled to a Class I landfill or other appropriate soil treatment and recycling facility.

#### Impact: Impacts from Groundwater Contamination

It is known that groundwater contamination does exist in the general project area; however, the extent of groundwater contamination beneath Parcel D and Parcel G-1 is still under evaluation. Historical data suggest that groundwater under Parcel D ranges from 20 to 65 feet bgs. Although the probability of encountering groundwater during construction of the Park is low, potentially significant impacts could occur if groundwater is encountered. If any excavations on Parcels D or G-1 encounter groundwater during construction, dewatering and treatment of contaminated groundwater would be required prior to discharge. Accordingly, a mitigation measure is provided to ensure that groundwater contamination impacts are less than significant.

#### *Mitigation Measure HAZ-2*

Potential construction-phase hazardous materials release impacts related to groundwater contamination should be reviewed at the project level for specific facilities or management plans proposed under the Rio de Los Angeles State Park General Plan. Appropriate mitigation measures shall be implemented, and may include but are not limited to:

- If groundwater is encountered during project grading or construction activities, construction shall be halted in the area until appropriate dewatering or avoidance measures are identified or other treatment is recommended or required by the RWQCB. If dewatering is required, the Department shall procure a permit from the RWQCB for treatment and disposal of groundwater and shall comply with all provisions of the permit.

#### Impact: Impacts from Other Hazards

The nearest school, Glassell Elementary School, is located approximately 0.25 mile northeast of the Park; additionally, Parcel F is being developed by LAUSD for a high school, which is located within 0.25 mile of both Park parcels. The General Plan would not entail emission, transportation, or storage of hazardous materials and so would not affect nearby schools. The proposed project would not be located within an airport land use plan or within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport or private airstrip. The nearest public airport to the proposed project is the Burbank-Glendale-Pasadena Airport, approximately 10 miles north of the site.

The General Plan entails development of the Park entirely within the two parcels. Two-way traffic during and after construction would be maintained on all surrounding streets. Access would be maintained to all homes and businesses, and traffic disruptions during construction or operation of the Park would be minimal. The General Plan would not substantially delay emergency vehicle response times nor interfere with an adopted emergency response or evacuation plan.

Land uses adjacent to the Park are predominantly industrial and commercial. There are no wildland fire hazard zones on or adjacent to the project site, nor would the project result in additional accumulation of brush, grass, trees, or other fuel sources. The General Plan would result in landscaping and maintenance of the site, which would reduce the risk of brush fires. The proposed project would not include any activities that would expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires.

### **Significance**

Implementation of mitigation measures HAZ-1 and HAZ-2 and General Plan Guidelines Hazmat 1 through Hazmat 4 would reduce potential impacts related to hazards and hazardous materials to a less than significant level.

#### **5.6.6 HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY**

This section analyzes hydrology and water quality impacts that would result from the implementation of the General Plan. This analysis considers the proposed development and resource management efforts prescribed in the General Plan in the context of the hydrological conditions that currently characterize the Park.

### **Thresholds**

Implementation of the General Plan would have a significant impact related to hydrology and water quality if it would:

- Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements.
- Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of preexisting nearby wells would drop to a level that would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted).
- Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner that would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site.
- Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner that would result in flooding on- or off-site.

- Create or contribute runoff water that would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff or otherwise substantially degrade water quality.
- Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map.
- Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures that would impede or redirect flood flows.
- Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam.
- Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow.

## **Impact Analysis**

### Impact: Water Quality Degradation

The project site is located within the Los Angeles River watershed, the majority of which is considered impaired due to a variety of point and non-point pollution sources. The 2002 303(d) list for the Los Angeles River implicates ammonia, coliform, lead, trash, scum, algae, oil, nutrients, odors, and trash in that impairment. Impairment may be due to water column exceedances, excessive sediment, high levels of pollutants, or bioaccumulation of pollutants. The beneficial uses threatened or impaired by degraded water quality are aquatic life, recreation, groundwater recharge, and municipal water supply.

Construction of the Park elements would require site clearing, excavation, building construction, landscaping, and parking lot pavement. All of these activities, individually or cumulatively, could have a significant impact on the water quality of the Los Angeles River if construction material is allowed to enter the drainage systems that flow to the river. The construction site would produce construction debris which, if uncontrolled, could also result in discharge of disturbed sediment/soils into the river, and/or release petrochemicals from construction equipment. To address these potential impacts, the Department would file a Notice of Intent to obtain National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) coverage under the RWQCB's MS4 Permit. To comply with NPDES permit requirements, a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) would be prepared and construction site Best Management Practices (BMPs) would be implemented. Adherence to these requirements would reduce construction-related surface water quality impacts to a less than significant level.

Implementation of this General Plan would allow for the development of new facilities and infrastructure, and has the potential to increase visitor use. Increased Park development and use could potentially derogate hydrology and water quality on the project site and the nearby Los Angeles River. However, implementation of the General Plan would generally be expected to result in improvements in water quality. Park features to encourage a return to the natural processes of water flows through creation of a range of features, such as bioswales, wetlands, meandering creeks,

and other water features. For Parcel D, the goal is for zero runoff by retaining, recycling, and processing all water onsite and allowing it to infiltrate through the soil to the groundwater table. Parcel G-1 would be converted to a natural open space area, which would ultimately improve surface water quality. Compliance with the General Plan management goals and guidelines, as well as compliance with existing stormwater regulations, would reduce potential surface water quality impacts to a less than significant level.

Although some impervious surfaces may be needed throughout the Park, such as in parking lots, the General Plan would reduce the overall pervious surface area through the creation of naturalized landscapes, such as natural parkland, wetlands, and grassy areas. This would be particularly apparent at Parcel G-1, where the existing hard dirt and concrete lot would be restored to a naturalized setting which permits increased groundwater infiltration.

Under the General Plan, uses on Parcel G-1 would be restricted to those of the Naturalized Open Space Zone. This zone focuses on restoration of natural processes; therefore, Park development would have minimal potential to adversely affect groundwater recharge and would likely improve surface water quality. Parcel D has been configured to retain surface runoff on-site, including runoff from the adjacent City park.

Although the project site is located within 0.25 mile of the Los Angeles River, the project would not violate any water quality standards or discharge requirements, and impacts related to stormwater runoff would be less than significant. Implementation of NPDES and Los Angeles County MS4 Permit requirements described above would ensure that potential stormwater runoff impacts would be addressed through proper design and construction management techniques.

Several General Plan guidelines, including Water 1 through Water 5, are provided to further reduce surface water quality impacts at the State Park site.

#### Impact: Groundwater Degradation and Goundwater Consumption

The project site is located within the San Fernando Groundwater Basin, which lies within the Upper Los Angeles River Area and encompasses approximately 7.5 square miles. Although the Pollock Well Field within which the Park is located is a drinking water resource, groundwater for drinking purposes is extracted upgradient of the Park. Infiltration from the Park does not affect any drinking water aquifers. Monitoring at municipal wells upgradient from the site has identified groundwater that is contaminated with volatile organic compounds (VOCs) at levels exceeding state drinking water standards or Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCLs) (MBE 2001; ERM 2000). While the clean-up efforts at the Taylor Yard complex have not completely treated the contaminated soils and groundwater, and the treatment and eventual total site clean-up is an on-going process that will take decades to complete, the General Plan would have the potential to improve groundwater quality over time.

The General Plan may result in the creation of water features with riparian vegetation which might convey river water onto Parcel G-1. This would not affect groundwater levels or groundwater quality in the area.

### Impact: Flood-Related Hazards

According to the City and County of Los Angeles General Plan Safety Elements, the proposed project site is located within the Hansen Dam and Eagle Rock Reservoir flood boundaries (DRP 1990). However, the proposed project site is located in a heavily developed urban area, more than 18 miles from the Hansen Dam and 4.5 miles from Eagle Rock Reservoir. Hansen Dam and Eagle Rock Reservoir are continually monitored by various governmental agencies to guard against the threat of dam failure. Catastrophic failure of a major dam as a result of an earthquake is regarded as unlikely. Therefore, the potential for the project site to be inundated as a result of a dam failure, and potential exposure of people and structures to flooding due to dam failure, are low.

Because there are no lakes or other large inland bodies of water in the vicinity of the proposed project site, there is no risk of inundation by seiche. The project site is located approximately 16 miles inland from the Pacific Ocean at an elevation of about 340 feet above msl. At this distance and elevation, the site would not be at risk of inundation by tsunami. The 1999 Seismic Hazard Zones Map for the Los Angeles USGS 7½-minute quadrangle indicates that the Park would not be located in an area of potential earthquake-induced landslides. Given these conditions, the project site is not at risk of being inundated by mudflow.

Portions of Parcel G-1 are located in the Federal Emergency Management Agency- (FEMA) designated 100-year flood zone. Further review would be required prior to construction of any structures within the 100-year floodplain. Project-specific environmental analysis would be required for future development projects, which may provide additional measures to further reduce impacts to water quality and hydrology during construction.

### **Significance**

The General Plan has the potential to impact hydrology and water quality in the project area; however, implementation of Guidelines Water 1 through Water 5 of the General Plan would reduce potential impacts to a less than significant level.

### **5.6.7 NOISE**

This section analyzes noise impacts that would result from the implementation of the General Plan. The analysis is based on typical noise levels generated by recreational uses that would be accommodated at the Park and the relationship with established noise standards.

### **Thresholds**

Implementation of the General Plan would have a significant impact related to noise if it would:

- Expose persons to or generate noise levels in excess of established standards.
- Expose persons to or generate excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels.

- Cause a substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project.
- Cause a substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project.

## Impact Analysis

### Impact: Potential Construction Noise Impacts

Implementation of the proposed General Plan would result in construction projects related to the provision of public use opportunities and facilities, and additional support facilities. Types of facilities that could be constructed under the General Plan are described in Chapter 4. Construction activities associated with potential General Plan projects could generate substantial amounts of noise within the proximity of individual construction sites.

The exact location and schedule of construction projects that could occur under the General Plan are unknown at this time, but could occur at locations that could adversely affect the noise environment of off-site land uses. There are no sensitive receptors immediately adjacent to Parcel D or Parcel G-1; however, numerous residences are located within 500 feet of Parcel D to the north and west. Parcel G-1 is located adjacent to the Los Angeles River and several industrial land uses and the nearest sensitive receptors are located approximately 500 feet to the south and east on the other side of the river. Recreational users in the area would also be considered noise-sensitive uses.

Construction of the potential projects would result in temporary, intermittent increases in ambient noise levels, and could potentially result in groundborne vibration or noise levels. Construction noise levels at the project area would fluctuate depending on the particular type, number, and duration of use of construction equipment. The affect of construction noise would depend on the volume generated and the distance between construction activities and noise-sensitive receptors. Table 7, Typical Commercial Construction Noise Levels by Phase, indicates the typical noise levels expected during different construction stages. Table 8, Typical Commercial Construction Noise Levels by Equipment Type, indicates the typical noise levels produced by various types of construction equipment.

**Table 7. Typical Commercial Construction Noise Levels by Phase**

Construction Phase	Noise Level (dBA, Leq) <sup>a</sup>
<b>Ground Clearing</b>	<b>84</b>
<b>Excavation</b>	<b>89</b>
<b>Foundations</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>Erection</b>	<b>85</b>
<b>Finishing</b>	<b>89</b>

<sup>a</sup> Average noise levels correspond to a distance of 50 feet from the noisiest piece of equipment associated with a given phase of construction and 200 feet from the rest of the equipment associated with that phase.

Source: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. 1971. *Noise from Construction Equipment and Operation, Building Equipment, and Home Appliances.*



**Table 8. Typical Commercial Construction Noise Levels by Equipment Type**

Equipment	dBA at 50 ft. <sup>a</sup> Without Controls	dBA at 50 ft. <sup>b</sup> With Controls
<b>Backhoe</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>Bulldozer</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>Graders</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>Front-end loader</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>Dump trucks</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>Concrete Pump</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>Flat bed delivery truck</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>Crane</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>Pumps</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>75</b>

<sup>a</sup> Average noise levels correspond to a distance of 50 feet from the noisiest piece of equipment associated with a given phase of construction and 200 feet from the rest of the equipment associated with that phase.  
<sup>b</sup> Implementing controls may include selecting quieter procedures or machines and implementing noise-control features requiring no major redesign or extreme costs (e.g. improved mufflers, equipment redesign, use of silencers, shields, shrouds, and ducts, and engine enclosures)  
Source: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. 1971. *Noise from Construction Equipment and Operation, Building Equipment, and Home Appliances.*

Noise from construction equipment in the Park, and haul trucks accessing the Park, could result in noise levels that exceed local thresholds when operated without noise controls and in areas near residences. Without noise controls and other sound-attenuation measures, noise impacts by construction or demolition activities could have a significant temporary impact, particularly if they are located near sensitive receptors close to the Park boundary. Noise control measures for construction activities are included in Section 4.6.8 of the Plan, which would reduce noise levels during construction to less than significant levels. Because implementation information, such as locations of specific facilities and development of project-specific management plans, is not yet known, specific facilities and plans would be reviewed at the time they are proposed for implementation to determine the potential for project-specific impacts and to identify appropriate mitigation measures.

#### Impact: Potential Operational Noise Impacts

Implementation of the proposed General Plan could allow additional noise sources associated with the operation of the potential new Park facilities and activities, such as special events and activities at the outdoor amphitheater. The plan anticipates an increased number of visitors to the Park if plan components were implemented. The amount of vehicular traffic to the Park is expected to increase, resulting in additional noise along adjacent roadways. Given the use of the site as a Park, it is not anticipated that implementation of the General Plan would result in operational activities or Park uses that would generate excessive groundborne vibrations or noise levels.

While implementation of the General Plan could result in additional noise sources, the General Plan includes several components that would limit the level of additional noise associated with plan development. The General Plan aims to limit the amount of vehicular traffic both to and within the Park by emphasizing non-vehicular public access to the Park via connections to pedestrian and bicycle trails and to public transit. Private vehicles would not have access throughout the Park, limiting areas that could be affected by vehicular noise. Potential visitor activities such as recreation and educational field trips could also contribute noise to the environment.

Several guidelines are provided in Section 4.4.4 to address noise considerations in facility planning. Because implementation information, such as locations of specific facilities, is not yet known, specific facilities would be reviewed at the time they are proposed to determine the potential for project-specific impacts and to identify appropriate mitigation measures.

### **Significance**

Normal park operations would not include activities that would generate substantial amounts of noise. Guidelines are provided in Section 4.4.10.8 of the Plan to address potential noise impacts during construction. Implementation of these goals would reduce potential noise impacts, both temporary and long-term, to a less than significant level.

### **5.6.8 TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION**

This section analyzes transportation and circulation impacts that would result from implementation of the General Plan. This analysis considers potential increases in visitation that would result from the proposed General Plan and the related effects on traffic and circulation in the project area. It should be noted that recreation use projections have not been developed for the Plan; therefore, the analysis represents a qualitative evaluation of this issue.

#### **Thresholds**

Implementation of the General Plan would have a significant impact related to transportation and circulation if it would:

- Cause an increase in traffic that is substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system (i.e., result in a substantial increase in the number of vehicle trips, the volume-to-capacity ratio on roads, or congestion at intersections).
- Exceed, either individually or cumulatively, a level of service standard established by the congestion management agency for designated roads or highways.
- Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment).
- Result in inadequate emergency access.
- Result in inadequate parking capacity.
- Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation (e.g., bus turnouts, bicycle racks).

#### **Impact: Increase in Trips and Effects on Roadway Safety**

Implementation of the General Plan would generate vehicular traffic to and from the Park. Most of the additional vehicular trips would occur during weekends and holidays. The main Park entrance is

located on San Fernando Road, with an additional entrance at Parcel G-1. Development of the City's Park would result in two new traffic signals and improvements to San Fernando Road to accommodate anticipated traffic flow associated with the Parcel D development of the Park. A traffic study prepared for the *Taylor Yard Park Development Project* concluded that operations at Parcel D would not have a significant effect on local intersections, parking availability, emergency access, or alternative transportation modes; consequently, no mitigation was deemed necessary.

The General Plan would not result in inadequate parking capacity or conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation (e.g., bus turnouts, bicycle racks). The Park's proximity to the future bike path along the Los Angeles River would encourage recreational activities such as biking, as well as education and group visitation, all of which utilize alternative transportation. The Park's central location relative to public transportation stops, such as bus stops along San Fernando Road and Metro Gold Line light rail stops south of the Park, also encourages alternative forms of transportation to the Park. Impacts would be less than significant.

The General Plan would develop two existing vacant parcels and would include parking at each parcel to accommodate the recreational opportunities at the Park. Short-term construction impacts may result from the General Plan, for which a construction staging and traffic plan would be prepared and implemented. Implementation of the required traffic control plan would reduce potential construction-related traffic impacts to a less than significant level. Project-specific environmental analysis would be required for future development projects, which may provide additional measures to improve access and reduce parking and construction impacts.

The nearest airport to the proposed project is the Burbank-Glendale-Pasadena Airport (Bob Hope Airport), approximately 10 miles north of the site. The General Plan would not affect air traffic, nor would it result in an increase in traffic levels that would cause safety risks; therefore, no impacts would occur.

The General Plan would not entail construction of public roadways and as such would not create sharp curves or dangerous intersections. Access for emergency vehicles and for all homes and businesses would not be affected by the General Plan.

The General Plan would not conflict with adopted policies or existing facilities related to alternative transportation. In fact, the Park would include bike paths, which would support alternative transportation policies. The General Plan Park improvements are also compatible with future roadway improvements planned for the San Fernando Road corridor.

### **Significance**

Potential impacts to traffic circulation and safety are addressed in the General Plan. Implementation of these goals and associated guidelines would ensure that traffic and circulation impacts would not be significant.

### 5.6.9 PUBLIC SERVICES, UTILITIES, AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

This section analyzes impacts on utility and public service systems that would result from the implementation of the General Plan. The analysis based on the potential demands for public services and utilities as part of proposed facility developments is included in the General Plan.

#### **Thresholds**

Implementation of the General Plan would have a significant impact related to public services and utilities if it would:

- Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for fire protection, police protection, schools, parks, and other public facilities.
- Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable RWQCB.
- Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects.
- Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects.
- Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed.
- Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider that serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments.
- Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs.
- Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste.

#### **Impact Analysis**

##### Impact: Increased Demand for Utility and Public Services

The General Plan would permit the development of new facilities and site improvements that may generate the demand for additional water, wastewater, electricity, natural gas, solid waste, telephone,

law enforcement, fire protection, emergency medical, and road maintenance services. For electricity, natural gas, and telephone services, the Department would contract with private service providers. Impacts related to the provision of these services are described below.

The General Plan is expected to result in the generation of minimal quantities of wastewater. The Park would accommodate interpretive centers, drinking fountains, restroom facilities, and a concessions building, which would produce wastewater. Wastewater would be conveyed from the site by the NEIS, currently under construction at San Fernando Road. This sewer line would be more than adequate to accommodate improvements under the General Plan. Wastewater would be transported to the Hyperion Treatment Plant (HTP) in Playa Del Rey, operated by LADWP. Wastewater generated as a result of the General Plan would represent a fractional percentage of the HTP daily treatment capacity. HTP could adequately accommodate additional wastewater generated by the proposed project, and operation of the Park would not result in a significant impact to wastewater treatment facilities.

Water would be supplied to the Park by LADPW, which provides in excess of 1.117 billion gallons per day to its customers. The General Plan would result in consumption of water for drinking; sanitation; and irrigation of landscaping, playing fields, and riparian areas. The landscaping and riparian areas would not require substantial amounts of water, considering most of these plants will be native species that do not require much, if any, irrigation. The increased water use for the Park would not create a significant impact on water supply.

Solid waste generated during project construction would be limited to minor demolition debris and construction materials. Project-specific environmental analysis would be required for future development projects, which would include plans by which to appropriately limit and dispose of any construction materials. Wastes resulting from Park operations would consist predominantly of Park patron waste and green waste from landscaping. The General Plan includes a number of measures to reduce the generation of solid waste at the Park.

For fire protection services, the Department would continue to coordinate with the City of Los Angeles Fire Department. Law enforcement within the Park would be provided by Park rangers; in addition, the Department would coordinate with the LAPD for major crime. Emergency medical services would also be provided by rangers, and patients may be transported by ambulance or helicopter to local hospitals.

The General Plan would not provide new housing and would provide relatively few employment opportunities. Therefore, it would not generate new students or increase the demand on local school systems.

The General Plan would permit new developments and improvements in infrastructure that may generate an increase in the demand for utilities and public services. Existing service providers and resource capacities are expected to be sufficient to meet this increase in demand. General Plan goals and guidelines are provided to ensure that existing facilities and utility systems are used where possible and would minimize impacts to the natural environment.

Construction and operations of the equipment and facilities are expected to be in compliance with state and federal rules and regulations, as well as management goals and guidelines of this General

Plan. As such, new infrastructure and services are expected to be compatible with the Park's resources. Environmental review for new development would be required. While the exact nature of the infrastructure and service needs would not be determined until the development proposal is available, it is expected that impacts to utilities and service systems as a result of the project would be less than significant.

## **Significance**

No impacts are anticipated as a result of the General Plan. Development of utilities would be minimized through the implementation of General Plan goals and guidelines in Section 4.4.6. These measures would ensure that potential impacts would not be significant.

## **5.7 OTHER CEQA CONSIDERATIONS**

### **5.7.1 UNAVOIDABLE SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS ON THE ENVIRONMENT**

Implementation of the Rio de Los Angeles State Park General Plan would not result in unavoidable significant environmental effects. The General Plan goals and guidelines and the proposed plan element designations are intended to avoid, mitigate, and minimize significant effects of facility development, maintenance, operations, and visitor use. The General Plan will be implemented by subsequent actions, each subject to further review under CEQA.

Future actions at Rio de Los Angeles State Park will be subject to the goals, guidelines, and mitigation measures set forth in this General Plan. Future actions must also be in compliance with local, state, and federal regulations, which include CEQA review and compliance. If a future project does not conform to the guidelines set forth in the General Plan, it would not be implemented.

With adoption of this General Plan, all potentially significant unavoidable environmental effects or significant irreversible environmental changes would be mitigated through appropriate management and the implementation of the Plan goals and guidelines.

### **5.7.2 SIGNIFICANT IRREVERSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS**

No significant irreversible changes to the physical environment are anticipated from the adoption and implementation of this General Plan. Facility development, including structures, roads and trails, may be considered a long-term commitment of resources; however, the impacts can be reversed through removal of the facilities and discontinued access and use. Ongoing adverse effects on the environment, if any, can be monitored by Park staff through their consideration of carrying capacity issues.

The construction and operation of facilities may require the use of nonrenewable resources. This impact is projected to be minor based on considerations of sustainable practices in site design, construction, maintenance, and operations that are generally practiced by the Department. Sustainable principles used in design, construction and management, such as the use of nontoxic materials and renewable resources, resource conservation, recycling, and energy efficiency, emphasize environmental sensitivity.

### **5.7.3 GROWTH INDUCING IMPACTS**

CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2(d) require that an EIR evaluate the growth-inducing impacts of a proposed project. Specifically, an EIR must discuss the ways in which a proposed project could foster economic or population growth, or the construction of additional housing, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment. Growth can be induced in a number of ways, including the elimination of obstacles to growth, or by encouraging and/or facilitating other activities that would induce new growth. Growth inducement itself is not an environmental effect but may lead to environmental effects. Such environmental effects may include increased demand on other community and public services and infrastructure, increased traffic and noise, degradation of air or water quality, degradation or loss of plant or wildlife habitats, or conversion of agricultural and open space land to urban uses.

If implemented completely, the General Plan may indirectly foster economic growth in the region associated with the development of new recreational and interpretive facilities. There would be a need to have permanent and seasonal staff at the Park. Increases in employment opportunities in both the public and private sectors could result in increases in local population growth, but this effect is expected to be minimal because the number of new jobs is not expected to be substantial and any new employees would likely be from the local area. Implementation of the General Plan at the Park would not result in significant growth-inducing impacts.

### **5.7.4 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS**

This EIR provides an analysis of cumulative impacts of the proposed General Plan, as required in CEQA Guidelines Section 15130. Cumulative impacts are defined in CEQA Guidelines Section 15355 as “two or more individual effects which, when considered together, are considerable or which compound or increase other environmental impacts.” A cumulative impact occurs from “the change in the environment, which results from the incremental impact of the project when added to other closely related past, present, and reasonably foreseeable probable future projects.” Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor, but collectively significant, projects taking place over a period of time (CEQA Guidelines Section 15355[b]). By requiring an evaluation of cumulative impacts, CEQA attempts to ensure that large-scale environmental impacts will not be ignored.

To evaluate cumulative environmental impacts, other projects that could cumulatively contribute to the impacts described in this EIR need to be identified. In addition to substantial growth across the Los Angeles region, several development and planning projects are being undertaken in close proximity to the Park by other public agencies, including:

- Los Angeles River State Historic Park General Plan and EIR (Department)
- Taylor Yard Sports Field Development (City of Los Angeles)
- High School #13 (LAUSD)
- Other local park developments (City of Los Angeles, SMMC)

- North East Interceptor Sewer (City of Los Angeles)

As described above, the facility development and resource management efforts proposed in the General Plan would not result in significant adverse environmental impacts based on implementation of the goals and guidelines included in the Plan. Although not individually significant, environmental issues may result in cumulative impacts to the extent that they are occurring in the region, such as water quality degradation and the loss of biological, cultural, and visual resources. The General Plan, in conjunction with nearby projects, would not result in significant cumulative impacts related to traffic or any other environmental issues. Future development is anticipated and planned for in various local and regional plans applicable to the project area including the City of Los Angeles General Plan, the Northeast Los Angeles Community Plan, the South Coast Air Quality Management District Air Quality Management Plan, the Regional Transportation Plan, the Regional Water Quality Control Plan, and the Southern California Association of Governments Regional Comprehensive Plan and Guide. The environmental documents prepared for these plans address the significant cumulative effects of future development that could occur under the plans and identify ways to mitigate those effects. According to CEQA Guidelines Section 15064(i)(3), a Lead Agency may determine that a project's incremental contribution to a cumulative effect is not cumulatively considerable if the project will comply with the requirements in a previously approved plan or mitigation program that provides specific requirements that will avoid or substantially lessen the cumulative problem (e.g., water quality control plan, air quality plan, integrated waste management plan) within the geographic area in which the project is located. The General Plan is consistent with local and regional land use, air quality, water quality, and transportation plans. The development of a Park in accordance with the provisions of this General Plan would not result in cumulatively considerable impacts.

## **5.8 ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED PROJECT**

The purpose of the alternatives analysis in an EIR is to describe a range of reasonable alternatives to the project or project location that could feasibly attain the basic objectives of the project but would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project, and to evaluate the comparative merits of the alternatives (CEQA Guidelines, Section 15126.6[a]).

Additionally, Section 15126.6(b) of the CEQA Guidelines requires consideration of alternatives that could avoid or substantially lessen any significant adverse environmental effects of the proposed project, including alternatives that might be more costly or could otherwise impede the project's objectives. The range of alternatives considered must include those that offer substantial environmental advantages over the proposed project and may be feasibly accomplished in a successful manner considering economic, environmental, social, technological, and legal factors.

### **5.8.1 FACTORS IN THE SELECTION OF ALTERNATIVES**

The CEQA Guidelines recommend that an EIR should briefly describe the rationale for selecting the alternatives to be discussed, identify any alternatives that were considered by the lead agency but were rejected as infeasible, and briefly explain the reasons underlying the lead agency's determination [CEQA Guidelines, Section 15126.6(c)].



The alternatives addressed in this EIR were selected in consideration of one or more of the following factors:

- the extent to which the alternative would accomplish most of the basic goals and objectives of the project;
- the extent to which the alternative would avoid or lessen any of the identified significant environmental effects of the project;
- the feasibility of the alternatives, taking into account site suitability, economic viability, availability of infrastructure, General Plan consistency, and consistency with other applicable plans and regulatory limitations;
- the appropriateness of the alternative in contributing to a “reasonable range” of alternatives necessary to permit a reasoned choice; and
- the requirement of the CEQA Guidelines to consider a “no project” alternative [CEQA Guidelines, Section 15126.6(e)].

#### **5.8.2 ALTERNATIVES ELIMINATED FROM FURTHER EVALUATION**

After the IPU process was completed for the Rio de Los Angeles State Park site, a range of preferred programming elements on Parcel D had been clearly defined by the public. Although a number of alternatives were considered in the General Plan process, the major variation among these alternatives focused on alternative uses for Parcel G-1, since a public consensus plan had already been developed for Parcel D. Also, because the IPU plan was designed by the Department and the City to provide a seamlessly integration between the two parks, a transition zone was required between the City portion and the state portion, further limiting the range of uses for Parcel D. Finally, the range of uses for both parcels operated by the state were restricted to those uses allowed within a State Park.

Those alternatives that were not carried forward for detailed evaluation are described below. The following list includes a brief description of the alternatives and the reason(s) that each has not been carried forward in the EIR:

- **Active Sports Fields Alternative.** In the early stages of the Park planning process, several public groups and organizations expressed the need for park uses for the entire 40 acres (Parcel D) at Rio de Los Angeles State Park, including soccer, baseball, football, basketball and tennis. These uses are not consistent with the State Parks' Mission and therefore could not be included within the State Park portion of Parcel D; however, the Department recognized the strong demand for these activities in the community and decided to lease 20 acres on Parcel D to the City of Los Angeles for Park development. Because these Park uses are not consistent with the State Parks' Mission, any alternatives that incorporate such uses on state-operated land would not meet most of the basic objectives of the project and would not be carried forward for detailed evaluation. Additionally, sports fields on the state-operated parcels would not avoid or lessen any of the identified significant environmental effects of the project.

- **Maximum Development Alternative.** The Maximum Development Alternative would include Transitional Open Space on Parcel D and G-1. This would allow more intensive uses to occur on both parcels and would not include the development of high quality natural habitat on either parcel. This alternative would aggravate the potential impacts related to construction and operation of potential future Park facilities because of its highly developed nature. While the Maximum Development Alternative would respond to some of the goals and objectives, the preferred alternative would provide greater balance between resource protection and development while avoiding significant resource impacts. Therefore, the Maximum Development Alternative was rejected.
- **Grass Lawn Alternative.** Provision of open grass lawns or turf areas on Parcels D and G-1 would not meet most of the basic objectives of the project and would not be consistent with the Department Mission or the Unit Purpose and Vision. This alternative would provide no wildlife habitat and would result in greater impacts than the proposed project, including increased water consumption and water quality degradation from fertilizer and other chemicals.

### 5.8.3 ALTERNATIVES CARRIED FORWARD FOR DETAILED EVALUATION

In addition to the preferred alternative (described in Chapter 4), the No Project Alternative and the Minimal Build-out Alternative have been carried forward for detailed analysis. A description of the project alternatives is provided below to allow for a meaningful evaluation, analysis, and comparison of these alternatives with the proposed General Plan.

#### **No Project Alternative**

CEQA requires an evaluation of the “no project” alternative and its impact (CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6[e][1]). The no project alternative represents perpetuation of existing management actions, and its analysis is based on the physical conditions that are likely to occur in the future if the project (the proposed General Plan) is not approved and implemented. The purpose of describing and analyzing a no project alternative is to allow decision-makers to compare the impacts of approving the proposed project with the expected impacts of not approving the project.

As this General Plan is the first for the Rio de Los Angeles State Park, not adopting it would result in the indefinite perpetuation of the current IPU conditions at Parcel D. The effects of the IPU have been evaluated in the *Taylor Yard Park Development Project MND*, which has been incorporated by reference into this EIR. No IPU exists for Parcel G-1; therefore, the existing situation will continue for Park development, operation, and management. Development of Parcel G-1 would be restricted to projects that:

- Repair, replace or rehabilitate an existing facility;
- Provide a temporary facility, so long as the construction does not result in the permanent commitment of resources;
- Are necessary for the protection of public health and safety; or

- Provide emergency measures necessary for the immediate protection of a natural or cultural resource [Public Resources Code 5002.2(c)].

This alternative would allow the Park to function (with the addition of the IPU facilities), but would not achieve any of the improvement goals of this General Plan. Under the No Project Alternative the site would continue to be owned by the Department and no further development would occur beyond the previously approved IPU Plan, which provides for limited facilities and development of the site. This alternative would result in a continued regional deficiency of urban open space access and opportunities.

The No Project Alternative would eliminate the potential of creating a State Park, with the inherent resource protection and public access it affords, in an area that is highly deficient in urban open space opportunities and altered from its natural conditions. The No Project Alternative would avoid potential construction and operation impacts associated with future Park uses and facilities, such as potential increases in vehicular emissions. However, as discussed above, the impacts of implementation of the preferred alternative can be reduced to less than significant at the program level with General Plan guidelines and mitigation measures identified in this EIR. Under the No Project Alternative, unauthorized transient habitation and illegal dumping would continue to take place, hence further degrading the site's viability as an improved urban open space area. This alternative would not respond to the Department's Mission statement or the purpose and vision set forth for the acquisition of the site, related to providing for recreation opportunities and protection of resources.

### **Alternative 2 – Minimum Development Alternative**

This alternative would provide limited public facilities and services on-site. On-site visitor parking would be limited to the parking areas provided in the IPU plan. The IPU Plan would be implemented for Parcel D, and no permanent commitment of resources would occur on this site. No visitor use facilities would be developed on Parcel G-1 and the site would provide only limited recreational opportunities to minimize grading requirements.

The Minimum Development Alternative would make it difficult for the Department to seek funds for restoration and interpretive improvements for use at Rio de Los Angeles State Park that could enhance visitor experiences and resource protection. The Minimum Development Alternative would require less mitigation than identified above in order to reduce impacts to a less than significant level (i.e., less grading and less potential for encountering hazardous materials). However, it is noted that the General Plan includes Guidelines and Mitigation Measures that would reduce all potential impacts to less than significant at the program level.

The Minimum Development Alternative would partially respond to the Department Mission Statement by providing public open space in a park-deficient region; however, it would not restore, protect, and preserve the riparian and upland vegetation ecosystems of the Glendale Narrows section of the Los Angeles River. Similarly, the alternative would fully respond to the Unit Purpose and Vision identified in this General Plan and would not provide a balance between recreation and natural resource enhancement and protection.

Impacts associated with this alternative would be less than those identified for the preferred alternative for most categories. Less grading would be required, therefore fewer short-term construction impacts would occur. Due to the decrease in visitor-serving uses, operational impacts would also be decreased as fewer visitors would drive to the Park.

#### **5.8.4 ENVIRONMENTALLY SUPERIOR ALTERNATIVE**

The state CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(d)(2) states that “if the environmentally superior alternative is the no project alternative, the EIR shall also identify an environmentally superior alternative from among the other alternatives.” The proposed General Plan would not result in any significant adverse environmental effects. As described above, impacts associated with the Minimum Development Alternative would be less than those associated with the proposed General Plan. As such Alternative 2 would be the environmentally superior alternative.

### **5.9 PUBLIC COORDINATION**

During 2003, four public meetings were held to develop the Rio de Los Angeles State Park IPU plan (September 4 and 17 and November 5 and 18). Conceptual Park designs were presented at each meeting, followed by opportunities for feedback and suggestions from the public. Public opinion on the Park design was obtained through large group discussions; small group break-out sessions; voluntary surveys; and comment forms, which were provided to be filled out at the meetings or sent back by mail. The comments and suggestions received from the public meetings were officially recorded and reviewed by the state, the City, and the project design teams. The conceptual site designs were updated after each public meeting to reflect the input, and revised concept plans were presented at subsequent meetings. By the fourth public meeting on November 18, 2003, the final IPU design (also referred to as the Public Consensus Plan) had been refined to include a wide range of recreational uses for the State Park.

After the IPU was developed, public meetings were held for the General Plan process. The first public meeting for the General Plan was the CEQA scoping meeting, which was held on September 27, 2004 at Glassell Park Elementary School. An NOP was circulated through the state Clearinghouse to state agencies, as well as to appropriate City and County planning offices, federal agencies, special interest organizations, and individuals. The public review period for the NOP started on September 22, 2004 and closed on October 22, 2004. The NOP and public comment letters were submitted to the State Park and Recreation Commission for their consideration in approving the Plan and are retained by the Department as part of the public record. These materials are available for public viewing at the Department (see address inside the front cover).

A second public meeting for the General Plan was held on October 12, 2004, to present the preferred Park plan. The preferred plan was presented at this meeting, and additional public comments regarding the plan were accepted by the Department. A number of these comments resulted in refinements to the plan, which is described in Section 4. No additional public meetings were held prior to the public release of the General Plan. The 45-day CEQA public review period began on 3-16-2005 and will end on 4-30-2005. During the EIR circulation and review period, public comments will be accepted related to the General Plan and EIR. Upon completion of the public review period, a Final EIR will be prepared that will include the comments on the Draft EIR.

Responses to these comments will be provided in the Final EIR, which will ultimately be presented to the State Parks Commission for certification and approval.

## CHAPTER 6

### MAPS & FIGURES SUMMARY

#### Executive Summary

*There are no figures in this chapter.*

#### Chapter 1

Figure 1 – Project Location Map

Figure 2 - Regional Planning Influences

Figure 3 - Vicinity Map

Figure 4 - Historic Timeline

Figure 5 - Interim Public Use (IPU) Plan

#### Chapter 2

Figure 6 - Land Use Zoning Context

Figure 7 - Access and Transportation Context

Figure 8 - Parks in the Vicinity of Rio de Los Angeles State Park

Figure 9 - Existing Conditions Plan

Figure 10 - Existing Conditions Site Photos

#### Chapter 3

*There are no figures in this chapter.*

#### Chapter 4

Figure 11 - Preferred Concept Alternative Plan

#### Chapter 5

*There are no figures in this chapter.*

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## CHAPTER 7

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## CHAPTER 9 APPENDICES

### 9.1 ACRONYMS

ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
AIA	American Institute of Architects
ASTM	American Society of Testing Materials
B.P.	before present
bgs	below ground surface
BMPs	Best Management Practices
BOD	Biochemical Oxygen Demand
Caltrans	California Department of Transportation
CCR	California Code of Regulations
CDE	California Department of Education
CDFG	California Department of Fish and Game
CDMG	California Division of Mines and Geology
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
	Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act
CERCLA	Act
CHMIRS	California Hazardous Material Incident Report System
CHTF	California Heritage Task Force
CIPA	California Institute of Public Affairs
CLIPi	Center for Law in the Public Interest
CNDDb	California Natural Diversity Data Base
CNPS	California Native Plant Society
CRA	California Resource Agency
CRMP	Cultural Resource Management Plan
dba	Decibels (Acoustic)
DIIT	District Interpretive Improvement Team
DPR	Department of Parks and Recreation
DTSC	Department of Toxic Substance Control
EIR	Environmental Impact Report
EPA	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
ERM	Environmental Resource Management
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
GAC	Granular Activated Carbon
GIS	Geographic Information System
GMC	Growth Management Chapter
HCP	Habitat Conservation Plan
HTP	Hyperion Treatment Plant
I-5	Interstate 5
IPU	Interim Public Use
LA	Los Angeles
LACDPW	Los Angeles County Department of Public Works

LADOT	Los Angeles Department of Transportation
LADWP	Los Angeles Department of Water and Power
LAPD	Los Angeles Police Department
LARMP	Los Angeles River Master Plan
LARWQCB	Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board
LAUSD	Los Angeles Unified School District
LUST	Leaking Underground Storage Tank
MBE	Miller Brooks Environmental, Inc.
MCL	Maximum Contaminant Levels
MND	Mitigated Negative Declaration
msl	mean sea level
MTA	Metropolitan Transit Authority
NCCP	Natural Communities Conservation Program
NEIS	Northeast Interceptor Sewer
NOP	Notice of Preparation
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
NPL	National Priorities List
NPS	National Park Services
PLAYS	Parks for Los Angeles Youth Soccer
PORTS	Parks Online Resources for Teachers and Students
PRC	Public Resources Code
RAP	Recreation and Parks
RCRA-	
LQG	Resource Conservation and Recovery Act Large Quantity Generator
RCRA-	
SQG	Resource Conservation and Recovery Act Small Quantity Generator
RI/FS	Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study
RTP	Regional Transportation Plan
RWQCB	Regional Water Quality Control Board
SCAG	Southern California Association of Governments
SCAQMD	South Coast Air Quality Management District
SCC	State Coastal Conservancy
SCLERA	screening-level ecological risk assessment
SFVGB	San Fernando Valley Groundwater Basin
SMMC	Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy
SPTC	Southern Pacific Transportation Company
SR 2	State Route 2
SVOCs	semivolatile organic compounds
SWPPP	Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan
UCLA	University of California Los Angeles
ULARA	Upper Los Angeles River Area
UPRC	Union Pacific Railroad Company
USACOE	United States Army Corps of Engineers
USBC	U.S. Bureau of the Census
USC	University of Southern California
USFWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
UST	Underground Storage Tank

VCM	Visitor Capacity Management
VOCs	volatile organic compounds
WEICO	Western Industrial Engineering Company
WRCB	California Water Resources Control Board

## 9.2 GLOSSARY OF TECHNICAL TERMS

**Alluvium** – sand, gravel, silt, and clay deposited by rivers and streams in valley bottoms.

**Anticlinal** – of or pertaining to an anticline.

**Anticline** – a fold, generally convex upward, whose core contains the stratigraphically oldest rocks.

**Aquifer** - a layer of water-bearing permeable rock, sand, or gravel capable of providing significant amounts of water to wells or springs. The upper boundary of the topmost aquifer is known as the water table. Some areas have several aquifers, each capped on top by an impervious layer (aquitard). If the recharge area is elevated higher than the capping layer, the water may be under considerable pressure, and flowing or Artesian wells may be likely.

**Aquitard** – a layer of impermeable sediments (clays and silts) or rock that impedes the flow of groundwater.

**Clay** – A particle of sediment less than 1/256 of a millimeter in diameter. Also, a family of platy silicate minerals that commonly form as a product of weathering.

**Gravel** – all sedimentary particles (rock or mineral) larger than 2 millimeters and smaller than 64 millimeters in diameter.

**Holocene** – An epoch of the Quaternary Period, from the end of the Pleistocene, approximately 8,000 years ago to the present time (see geologic time scale at end of glossary).

**Liquefaction** - In cohesionless (sand and silt) soil, the transformation from solid to a liquid state due to increased pore water pressure and resulting reduction of effective stress (loss of soil strength). Often induced by earthquake shaking.

**Paleontology:** a branch of geology that studies prehistoric life forms other than humans, through the study of plant and animal fossils. Fossils are the remains of organisms that lived in the region in the geologic and are now extinct. Fossils are found embedded in geologic formations that range in thickness from a few feet to hundreds of feet.

**Pleistocene** – an epoch of the Quaternary Period, after the Pliocene of the Tertiary and before the Holocene. It began 1.6 million years ago and lasted until about 8,000 years ago (Holocene).  
Syn: *ice age; glacial epoch*

**Quaternary** – The most recent period of the Cenozoic era, encompassing the time interval of 1.6 million years ago through today. See geologic time scale.

**Sand** – loose particles of rock or mineral that range from 0.0625-2.0 millimeters in diameter.

**Silt** - loose particles of rock or mineral that range from 0.002-0.0625 millimeters in diameter.

**Turbidity Current** – a density current in water or air; specifically a bottom-flowing current laden with suspended sediment, moving swiftly down an underwater slope and spreading horizontally on the floor of the body of water, having been set in motion by locally stirred-up sediment that gives the water a density greater than the surrounding clear water.

### **9.3 EXISTING RELEVANT POLICIES, PLANS, AND ORDINANCES**

#### **FEDERAL REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS**

##### **Clean Water Act (CWA)**

The USEPA has granted regulatory authority to the State of California (California EPA) to administer and enforce the provisions of the CWA and the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES). NPDES is the primary federal program that regulates point-source discharges to waters of the United States. The State of California adopts water quality standards to protect beneficial uses of state waters as required by Section 303 of CWA and PCWQCA. The State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) and the nine Regional Water Quality Control Boards (RWQCB) were established as the regulatory agencies (see Porter Cologne Water Quality Control Act below).

##### **CWA Section 401 Certification**

The Federal Clean Water Act, in Section 401, specifies that states must certify that any activity subject to a permit issued by a federal agency, such as the Corps, meets all state water quality standards. In California, the SWRCB and the nine RWQCBs are responsible for taking certification actions for activities subject to any permit issued by the Corps pursuant to Section 404 (or for any other Corps' permit, such as permits issued pursuant to Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899). Such certification actions, also known as 401 certification or water quality certification, include issuing a 401 certification that the activity subject to the federal permit complies with state water quality standards, issuing a 401 certification with conditions, denying 401 certification, or denying 401 certification without prejudice, should procedural matters preclude taking timely action on a 401 certification application. Should 401 certification be denied, the federal permit is deemed denied also. Once it has received a complete application for 401 certification, the state must act on the application within 60 days, although it may request additional time to act from the Corps, up to one year.

RWQCBs or their executive officers may issue 401 certifications. The SWRCB issues 401 certifications for projects that will take place in two or more regions. The regulations governing California's issuance of 401 certifications were updated in 2000, and are contained in Sections 3830 through 3869 of Title 23 of the California Code of Regulations. They are posted on the State Board's website at "[http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/water\\_laws/index.html](http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/water_laws/index.html)". Under the current regulations, the state may no longer waive certification.

### **CWA Section 404 - Permits for Fill or Physical Changes to Waters**

The Army Corps permit authority is derived from the Federal Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899, Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, and Section 103 of the Marine Protection, Research, and Sanctuaries Act. These Acts give the Army Corps jurisdiction over all waters of the United States including, but are not limited to, perennial and intermittent streams, lakes, ponds, as well as wetlands in marshes, wet meadows, and side hill seeps. Any person or public agency proposing to locate a structure, excavate, or discharge dredged or fill material into waters of the United States or to transport dredged material for the purpose of dumping it into ocean waters must obtain a Corps' permit.

*Nationwide Permits:* A nationwide permit (NWP) is a form of the ACOE 404 general permit, which authorizes a category of activities under the Nationwide Permit Program. The 401 certification is necessary for all of the Corps' NWPs whether a project proponent must report its activity to ACOE or not. The SWRCB, by letter dated March 12, 2002, has certified a number of NWPs for all of California, subject to conditions notification requirements specified in that letter. A copy of the letter is available at "<http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/news/index.html>" The RWQCBs are responsible for issuing 401 certification for all NWPs not certified by the SWRCB.

### **STATE REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS**

#### **Alquist Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone Act:**

The Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone Act (APEFZ) was passed in 1972 to mitigate surface faulting hazards associated with structures intended for human occupancy (Hart and Bryant, 1997). The APEFZ Act addresses only surface rupture hazards, rather than other earthquake hazards, the former being the most easily avoided of seismic hazards. The APEFZ Act defines an active fault as one that has ruptured within the last 11,000 years. Many of these faults have documented surface displacement within historical records. According to the current APEFZ maps the project site does not lie within a Special Studies Zone.

#### **Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act**

This Act, passed in 1969, established California's State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) and the nine Regional Water Quality Control Boards (RWQCB), which are responsible for protection of the State's surface water and groundwater supply. The Park is with the Central Coast RWQCB jurisdiction. The SWRCB is required under section 303 of the Clean Water Act, and the California Water Code (§13240) to adopt water quality standards. In response to these requirements the RWQCBs have prepared Water Quality Control Plans (Basin Plans) that designate the beneficial uses of waters to be protected, establish water quality objectives for the reasonable protection of the beneficial uses, and establish a program of implementation for achieving the water quality objectives. These standards and objectives are listed in the Los Angeles RWQCB Basin Plan (LARWQCB, 1994).

## **9.4 PLANNING INFLUENCES**

Existing State Park system-wide planning influences that cross park and regional boundaries may affect planning decisions regarding the Rio de Los Angeles State Park. The following represent such influential policies, regulations, and plans.

## **SYSTEM-WIDE PLANNING INFLUENCES**

### **Federal:**

- Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Title II and III
- Clean Water Act, Section 404
- Federal Endangered Species Act
- Federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act
- National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)
- Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, revised in 1992

### **State:**

- California Code of Regulations
- California Department of General Services, Division of the State Architect, Access Compliance
- California Endangered Species Act
- California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)
- California Fish and Game Code
- California Native Plant Protection Act
- California Public Resources Code:
  - Section 5019.50 State Park Classification
  - Section 5024 Preserving and Maintaining all State-owned Historical Resources
  - Section 5097.99 Felony Possession of Native American Human Remains and Artifacts
  - Section 5097.991 Repatriation
  - Section 5020.1(g) Native American Heritage and Department of Parks and Recreation Gathering Policy
  - Section 21083.2 Unmitigated Significant Effects on Archeological Sites
- Natural Communities Conservation Planning Act

### **California Department of Parks and Recreation:**

- California Department of Parks and Recreation Operations Manual
- California Department of Parks and Recreation Administrative Manual
- California Recreational Trails Plan
- California State Park and Recreation Commission Statements of Policy
- California State Parks System Plan
- Planning Handbook
- California State Parks Access to Parks Guidelines
- California State Parks Mission Statement
- Park Concessions Policies
- Policies, Rules, Regulations, and Orders of the California State Park and Recreation Commission and the California Department of Parks and Recreation

- Resource Management Directives. These directives amplify the legal codes contained in the Public Resources Code, the California Code of Regulations, and the California State Park and Recreation Commission's Statement of Policy and Rules of Order.

## **REGIONAL PLANNING INFLUENCES**

The policies, plans and programs of agencies and organizations in the region affect the park in various ways. These influences represent government on many levels and address regional issues that may affect planning decisions at Rio de Los Angeles State Park.

### **Federal:**

- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

### **State:**

- California Department of Fish and Game
- California Department of Transportation
- California Regional Water Quality Control Board

### **County and Local:**

- City of Los Angeles
- County of Los Angeles
- Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board
- Metropolitan Water District
- South Coast Air Quality Management District



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