

5 Parks, Schools, and Community Facilities

The presence of a well-designed system of parks, schools, and community facilities is essential to achieving the ideal image envisioned by the City and its residents. The purpose of this element is to document existing facilities, identify areas for improvement, and ensure they are adequate to meet the recreational, educational, and community needs of existing and future residents.

5.1 PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES

A main goal of the 2030 General Plan update is to create and maintain a park system that meets citizens' recreational needs and contributes to the City's positive image. This Element will serve as a guiding document for any implementation documents prepared by the Parks and Recreation Department in the process of developing parks in Lemoore.

EXISTING PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES

Currently, the Parks and Recreation Department of the City of Lemoore maintains approximately 88 acres of the parkland summarized in Table 5.1, which excludes the City-owned municipal golf course. The City's ponding basins, including the one adjacent to West Hills College, provide an additional 38 acres of open space (in the table they are counted at less than half value because they are available for recreational use only on a seasonal basis). The City's current park standard for public parkland is 5 acres of parkland per thousand residents. With a population of 23,390 residents in 2006, the City currently provides 5 acres of parkland per thousand residents. In the near future, the City plans to develop a joint Little League Park and Youth Football facility, involving the relocation of the Little League Field.

Table 5.1 Existing Public Parks and Recreation Facilities

Name	Acreage
Community Park	
Soccer Complex	28
Heritage Park	24
Neighborhood Park	
19 th Avenue Park	18
Bevalaqua Park	9
City Park	4
Lions Park	11
Little League Park	8
Rotary Skate Park	2
Pocket Park	
Plaza Park	0.2
Train Depot Complex	2
Special Recreation Areas (seasonal use)	
Rainwater Detention Basins (at 50 percent)	12
TOTAL	117

Source: City of Lemoore, 2007.



Little league baseball is a popular recreational sport for kids and teenagers in Lemoore.

CLASSIFICATION

The City of Lemoore uses a hierarchy to classify the types of parks and park standards that are desirable for various locations in the city. This hierarchy is an adaptation to local conditions of the National Recreation and Park Association Open Space Standards.

- Pocket Park.** A Pocket Park is typically under an acre in size and intended to serve the needs of a specific neighborhood within a ½ mile radius. Pocket parks are usually fully landscaped with trees and turf and are between one-quarter acre and two acres in size. Besides residential neighborhoods, they can also be found in downtown areas to serve the needs of shoppers or employees as places to rest or eat.
- Neighborhood Park.** In Lemoore, a Neighborhood Park is typically located close to an elementary school, surrounded by several neighborhoods. This type of park is primarily for children in the 5-14 year age group and for families. The Neighborhood Park should be approximately 7.5 acres.
- Community Park.** A Community Park is intended to serve the needs of the entire city especially those living within about a 2-mile radius of the park. Being larger in size, it provides outdoor and indoor facilities that accommodate a much wider range of recreational interests than a Neighborhood Park. Facilities usually include fields and courts for various adult sports,



Lyons Park is an existing neighborhood park that also serves as a ponding basin.

swimming pool, stadium, gymnasium, community center building for arts, crafts, clubs and social activities, spaces for free play by all age groups, family picnic area, and landscaped quiet area. An ideal size for a Community Park is 20 acres or more.

In general, the park classifications listed above should consider only flat land as functional acreage. A range of facilities such as sport fields, tennis courts, basketball courts, soccer fields, picnic areas, children play areas, as well as grass areas for informal play, may be developed. Currently, there is a joint use agreement between the Lemoore Union Elementary and High School Districts and the City to share facilities after school hours. School fields and facilities, however, are not included as part of park land calculations. Table 5.2 summarizes the total acreage and ratio of parkland per thousand residents.

Table 5.2 Summary of Existing Parks and Recreation Facilities

<i>Park Type</i>	<i>Acreage</i>
Community Park/Soccer Complex	52
Neighborhood Park	51
Pocket Park	2
Special Recreation Areas	12
Total Acres	117
Existing Parks Ratio (acres/1,000 residents)	5

Source: City of Lemoore, 2007.

FUTURE PARKLAND

Future parkland in Lemoore will come primarily from two sources:

- Neighborhood and Community Parks provided as a result of dedication by developers in new development areas; and
- Other parkland provided through City acquisitions or contributions by public and private sources.

The amount of parks and open spaces allocated under the General Plan, as shown in Table 5.3, is larger than is required under current City Park Standards and the Quimby Act. This is in response to the wish of Lemoore residents to have greater access to recreation facilities and a higher quality of life.



The Skateboard Park is a popular destination for teenagers.



The Rotary Park has water jets shooting up from the concrete that create a refreshing and wonderful place for children to play.

Table 5.3 Summary of Proposed Parks in Lemoore

	Acres
Existing Parks and Recreation Areas	117
Proposed Parks ¹	180
Total Parkland at Buildout	298
Parkland Ratio Provided by General Plan (acres/1,000 residents)	6

¹Assumes approximately 20 acres of the parkland dedicated in approved subdivisions would be developed for neighborhood parks.

Source: Dyett & Bhatia, 2007.

The parkland goal will be achieved through parkland dedications in new subdivisions, at a ratio of 5 acres per thousand residents, and additional parkland at 1 acre per thousand residents, to be acquired by the City through private and public funding sources and through impact fees. The system of parks and recreational facilities will be geographically distributed throughout the City. With full buildout of the General Plan, 96 percent of Lemoore residents will live within ¼ mile of a neighborhood park or ½ mile of a community park.

GUIDING POLICIES

PSCF-G-1 *Create and maintain a high-quality public park system for Lemoore.*

IMPLEMENTING POLICIES

PSCF-I-1 Establish a goal of 6 acres of parkland per thousand residents to be met by:

- Dedication and reservation requirements consistent with the Quimby Act, for landscaped open spaces, parks, trail systems, and/or special community service facilities in new residential developments based on a standard of 5 acres of developed parkland per thousand residents; and
- A standard of one acre per thousand residents to be met with an impact fee for City-owned and operated parks and special recreation areas that serve all residents.

In addition to new parkland dedicated by developers, the City will continue to acquire or re-develop parklands as needed, subject to availability of funding. It is the City’s intent to meet the parkland goal with functional public acreage only. Restricted recreation facilities (such as golf courses, raceways, and on-site school recreational facilities) are not included in this parkland total. The City also will maintain flexibility in the location and design of parks. In-lieu fees will only be acceptable where an exemption from providing a neighborhood park facility would not adversely affect local residents because an existing park is nearby.

PSCF-I-2 Require that at least 75 percent of new residents live within a half mile or less of a public park facility, using the development permit review and approval processes.

The only exemptions would be for residents in very low density development.

- PSCF-I-3 Require non-residential developers contribute to the City’s parks and open space system based on proportional share of needs generated and use of facilities, in compliance with the State Mitigation Fee Act and other applicable laws.
- A “nexus” study will be undertaken to establish impact fees based on surveys of park use during the workday by employees of nearby development. Exemptions for small infill projects may be granted.*
- PSCF-I-4 Develop new parks with high quality facilities, universal accessibility, durability and low maintenance in mind. Existing parks will be improved, if feasible and economically justified, to reduce maintenance cost and water use, as well as improve park safety and aesthetics.
- PSCF-I-5 Incorporate the following elements into the creation of new community, neighborhood, and pocket parks:
- A mix of passive and active recreational facilities that meet the needs of citizens of all ages and interests;
 - Clear pedestrian and bike connectivity between parks and local schools, shops, and other neighborhood resources;
 - Visual permeability, so the interior of the park is visible from the street;
 - Parking, when necessary and appropriate, including use of on-street space in and around community and neighborhood parks;
 - Bicycle parking, storage, and other support facilities; and
 - Native, drought-tolerant landscaping and water-conserving irrigation systems including “smart” irrigation that utilizes moisture and weather sensor technology.
- PSCF-I-6 Use existing natural and man-made features of the community, such as creeks, canals and railroad corridors when possible to enhance the parks and open space network.
- PSCF-I-7 Develop a system of consistent, recognizable and pedestrian-scale signage for the parks and trail system throughout the City, including bikeways, pathways and sidewalks that link key community resources (e.g. schools, public facilities, and transit) to the parks and open space network.
- PSCF-I-8 Provide lighted facilities for certain specialized community recreation areas (e.g. tennis courts, basketball courts, pathways) in order to extend usable hours. When possible, design electric lighting to be light-sensitive (dims during the day), solar powered, and to allow as little light pollution as possible.
- PSCF-I-9 Incorporate shallow ponding basins in community parks and large neighborhood parks, where feasible, to promote the efficient use of land.

A credit toward parkland requirements will allow up to 50 percent of ponding basin land provided by a subdivider to count toward dedication requirements if it will be available for recreation purposes during the spring and summer. Basins that have less recreational availability will only get partial credit toward this goal.

- PSCF-I-10 Improve the 19th Avenue Park and other existing parks that are not fully developed with features such as landscaping, trails, children’s play areas, and a hedge or wall where the park adjoins the freeway.

Future improvements made should be based on the ponding requirements and future footprint of the new interchange anticipated to start construction in 2013.

- PSCF-I-11 Create landscaped open spaces at the main entrances to Lemoore, to include trees, bushes, and other native vegetation.

This will include the intersection of SR-198 with Houston Avenue, SR-41 off ramp at Bush Street, the intersection of SR-41 and Hanford Armona Road, the entrance at SR-41 south of Idaho Avenue, and the entrance at SR-198 near Marsh Drive/21st Avenue.

- PSCF-I-12 Acquire the land and funding to redevelop the Little League Park, relocating it from its current location on Iona Avenue to the possible park location at Cedar Lane and 19th ½ Avenue or another suitable location.

The new Little League Park will also serve as a neighborhood park and shall have additional facilities other than baseball. The existing site will not be considered for other land uses until the relocation is complete.

- PSCF-I-13 Adopt and implement a 10-year Parks and Recreation Master Plan to be reviewed biennially and updated quadrennially.

The Parks and Recreation Department of Lemoore will be responsible for implementing the Master Plan, and ensuring that the development of parks and recreational facilities proceeds as planned.

Chapter 2: Land Use and Chapter 3: Community Design contain additional policies related to entrances to the community. Chapter 4: Circulation contains additional specific policies relating to bikeway requirements and their relationship to public parks.



The Lemoore Municipal Golf Course is not counted in the park acreages; however, it does provide a wonderful recreational amenity to the community.

5.2 SCHOOLS

The Lemoore Union Elementary School District and the Lemoore Union High School District oversee public schools in the Planning Area. The Elementary School District is comprised of four elementary schools (from grades K-6), one middle school, and one charter elementary /middle school (K-8). The Lemoore Union High School District has a larger coverage area that includes the unincorporated community of Stratford and Naval Air Station Lemoore (NAS Lemoore) and currently comprises the main campus of Lemoore High School, an adjoining campus of the Gertrude F. Gundacker Alternative Education Facilities, and Lemoore Middle College High School which is located at the West Hills College Campus. Together, both elementary and high school districts provide education to approximately 5,600 students. Although both elementary and middle school facilities are running under capacity, the Lemoore Union High School is running 17 percent over capacity. Table 5.4 summarizes recent enrollment and capacity counts for these schools. The locations of school facilities are illustrated in Figure 5-1.

Table 5.4 Existing Public Schools in Lemoore, 2006-2007

<i>School</i>	<i>Enrollment</i>	<i>Capacity</i>	<i>Enrollment as a Percent of Capacity</i>
Elementary Schools (K-6)			
Cinnamon Elementary	620	630	98
Lemoore Elementary	674	700	96
Meadow Lane Elementary	587	650	90
P.W. Engvall Elementary	697	700	100
<i>Elementary School Subtotal</i>	<i>2,578</i>	<i>2,680</i>	<i>96</i>
Middle Schools (7-8)			
Liberty Middle	602	700	86
Lemoore University Charter (K-8)	191	240	80
<i>Middle School Subtotal</i>	<i>793</i>	<i>940</i>	<i>84</i>
High Schools (9-12)			
Donald C. Jamison High (Continuation)	76	100	76
Lemoore Union High	2,104	1,755	120
Lemoore Middle College High	54	60	90
<i>High School Subtotal</i>	<i>2,234</i>	<i>1,915</i>	<i>117</i>
Total	5,605	5,535	101

Source: Capacity data from Lemoore Union Elementary School District, 2006; Lemoore Union High School District, 2006. Latest enrollment data from California Department of Education, Education Demographics Unit 2007.

In addition to public schools, a number of private and alternative schools provide educational opportunities to Lemoore residents. Mary Immaculate Queen School and Kings Christian School provide private elementary and middle school education while Kings Christian also provides high school level education within the Planning Area. Several elementary schools administered by the Central Union School District, a Yokuts (American Indian) High School, and a Community Day School at Lemoore Naval Air Station are also located within a ten minute drive of the Planning Area.

To meet projected enrollment within Lemoore, the Lemoore Elementary School District is planning to build a new school located on the corner of 19th Avenue and Cinnamon Drive within the next five years. Meanwhile, the High School District is also planning to acquire a new site and build a new high school. This project is considered high priority because enrollment at the Lemoore Union High School has already exceeded optimum capacity. A site acquisition study has already identified several potential sites shown on Figure 5-1.

West Hills College Lemoore is located at the west side of the Planning Area and provides college level education to residents from around the region. The college presently accommodates 3,770 students onsite and online. When the campus is fully completed, the college expects to enroll approximately 11,100 part-time students or 6,000 full-time equivalents.



West Hills College located west of SR-41 offers both academic and vocational programs to local and regional students.



Historic Lemoore High School cannot continue to be the only area high school. To ensure the quality of education, more high schools will need to be built in the future.

Projected Enrollment

Buildout of the General Plan will result in the addition of 8,020 households (single family and multi-family), with an additional population of approximately 24,860. Student generation factors by household type shown in Table 5.5 are used to calculate future enrollment. School size assumptions for households in the planning area are as follows:

- K- 6: 750 students per school
- 6- 8: 800 students per school
- 9- 12: 1800 students per school

Table 5.5 Student Generation Factors

Type	Household Type	
	Single Family	Multi-family
Elementary School (K-6)	0.354	0.320
Middle School (7-8)	0.088	0.070
High School (9-12)	0.183	0.117
Total	0.625	0.507

Source: Lemoore Union Elementary School District and Lemoore Union High School District, 2006.

Parks and Schools Map

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Planned Facilities

According to a California Department of Education report, an estimated 4 percent of all school-age children in Kings County attended religious, private, or chartered schools in 2005-2006. Future school demand estimates have taken this into consideration. Assuming the ratio of public to private schools remains constant, 4 new elementary schools, 1 middle school, and 1 high school will be required at full buildout in year 2030. However, the Lemoore Elementary School District has a desire to keep 7-8 graders on the new elementary school sites. Therefore, larger K-8 campuses are delineated on the General Plan Diagram to accommodate both elementary and middle school students. Figure 5-1 illustrates planned school sites in the Planning Area.

According to typical school size guidelines provided by the California Department of Education, a minimum of 125 acres should be reserved for new schools. This estimate serves only as a guide. The actual amount of land needed will depend on each school's facility requirements, expected enrollment and land costs.

Table 5.6 Buildout Student Population and School Demand

Type	Additional Students		Students at Buildout in Excess of Current Capacity		New Schools Needed ²	Acres Needed ³
	at Buildout ¹	Current Students	Current Capacity	Current Capacity		
Elementary School (K-6)	2,682	2,578	2,680	2,580	4	60
Middle School (7-8)	655	793	940	508	1	20
High School (9-12)	1,326	2,234	1,915	1,645	1	45
Total	4,660	5,610	5,540	4,730	6	125

¹ Assumes 0.354 elementary school, 0.088 middle school, and 0.183 high school students per single family household, and 0.320 elementary school, 0.070 middle school, and 0.117 high school students per multi family household.

² Assumes average school size of 750 students (grades K-6), 800 students (grades 7-8), and 1,800 students (grades 9-12).

³ Assumes average school sizes of 15 acres (grades K-6), 20 acres (grades 7-8), and 45 acres (grades 9-12). Estimated enrollment and site acreage needs based on California Department of Education, Guide to School Site Analysis and Development: 2000 Edition.

Source: Lemoore Union Elementary School District and Lemoore Union High School District, 2006; Dyett & Bhatia, 2007.

GUIDING POLICY

PSCF-G-2 *Provide superior educational opportunities for all members of the community.*

IMPLEMENTING ACTIONS

PSCF-I-14 Develop partnerships with the Lemoore Union Elementary School District, Lemoore Union High School District, private schools, community organizations, and West Hills College to facilitate planning for new school sites and facilities and infrastructure improvements which are compatible with City plans.

- PSCF-I-15 Develop partnerships with Lemoore Union Elementary School District and Lemoore Union High School District to optimize the joint use of school facilities for community benefit.

School playgrounds and grass fields offer excellent opportunities for use by the City during off-school hours to accommodate City-sponsored athletic clubs and the needs of after-school programs. Other school facilities that could be used by the City include auditoriums or cafeterias to host community meetings. Currently, both the elementary and high school districts have joint-use agreements with the City.

- PSCF-I-16 Support establishment of vocational and other training programs to prepare Lemoore's residents for employment, in addition to traditional educational opportunities.

5.3 COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Community facilities are the network of public and private institutions that support the civic and social needs of the population. They offer a variety of recreational, artistic, and educational programs and special events. New community facilities are not specifically sited on the General Plan Land Use Diagram. Small-scale facilities are appropriately sited as integral parts of neighborhoods and communities, while existing larger-scale facilities are generally depicted as public/semi-public land use, as appropriate. These facilities in Lemoore can be grouped into the following categories:

- **Community Centers.** Facilities designed to meet the needs of the population for civic meetings, recreational activities, social gatherings, and cultural enrichment;
- **Cultural Facilities.** These facilities house scientific and historical exhibits or offer space for artistic performances and presentations. The Sarah A. Mooney Museum is an example of these facilities;
- **Civic Buildings.** Includes City and County administrative and public buildings;
- **Libraries.** Facilities in which literary, artistic, and reference materials are kept for public use and circulation. The Lemoore Branch of Kings County Library, located at 457 C Street near downtown, will require larger facilities to meet the area's needs through General Plan buildout;
- **Medical Facilities.** This includes public and private clinics, care facilities, and medical offices (only NAS Lemoore and Hanford have hospitals);
- **Religious Facilities.** Includes houses of worship and other related uses. There are more than 40 churches, temples and other houses of worship in Lemoore from different religions.

GUIDING POLICY

PSCF-G-3 *Provide public and cultural facilities that contribute to Lemoore's positive image, enhance community identity, and meet the civic and social needs of residents.*

IMPLEMENTING ACTIONS

Community Centers

PSCF-I-17 Locate new Community Centers in mixed-use Neighborhood Centers, Downtown, or in parks, and offer incentives for developers who set aside land for the development of Community Centers.

The incentives could include density bonuses (units, or increases in maximum non-residential floor area) or transfers of development rights from land dedicated for this purpose.

Cultural Facilities

PSCF-I-18 Support the development of a range of cultural and arts facilities, such as museums, performing art centers and art exhibition spaces throughout the City.

The City will promote artistic and cultural activities by: 1) offering incentives to developers who set aside land for the development of cultural facilities, 2) allowing the use of City venues for art exhibitions and cultural performances by non-profit groups, 3) identifying grants and funding sources for arts and cultural projects, and 4) encouraging community participation in art and cultural events.



The Lemoore Civic Auditorium can be rented to the public for cultural events or private functions.

Libraries

PSCF-I-19 Work with the Lemoore Branch Library and Kings County to ensure library facilities are adequate to meet current and future needs and to implement supplemental funding programs, if warranted.

Institutions

PSCF-I-20 Work with health care providers to maintain a full range of health care facilities and services designed to meet regional and community needs.

PSCF-I-21 Facilitate the provision of safe, affordable, and quality elder care facilities, child care services and transitional housing for families who reside or work in Lemoore.

The City will work with Kings County, non-profit, and for-profit organizations to provide quality services to children and the elderly, as well as homeless individuals and families in need.

PSCF-I-22 Ensure accessibility for disabled persons to all buildings offering public health and social services, consistent with the Americans for Disabilities Act of 1990.

PSCF-I-23 Make provisions for houses of worship and pre-school facilities in new residential areas on arterial or collector streets, and simplify the approval process for these uses.