

To the Departments of Parks and Recreation and Neighborhood Empowerment

SNC Report on LA Park Needs Assessment:

## INTRODUCTION

It needs saying that the Budget hangs over any discussion of what our interest may be for our neighborhood and our parks. What would be necessary to bring the expenditures and the revenue into alignment is going to be a difficult challenge. My goal is to present the status quo of the neighborhood, and what could be possibly or desirably done. It would seem that maintaining what parks we have, and the programs for youth sports, recreation, elderly involvement, etc., may be competing for diminishing resources.

## WHAT WE HAVE NOW

We have six City of LA parks: Sylmar Park, Lakeside Park, Stetson Ranch Park, Carey Ranch Park, Telfair Park, and San Fernando Road Park. Only Sylmar Park has facilities and programs that require Park staff to be on site. Otherwise only maintenance and ground keeping workers come to perform needed work, and open and close these parks. To varying degrees, they all suffer from vandalism and graffiti. Attached are maps of the parks except for San Fernando Road Park.

Sylmar Park has robust programs going there with a swimming pool, soccer / football fields, softball / baseball fields, basketball / tennis courts, and a Children's play area. And the SNC is very happy to see progress in the creation of a senior center there, and we would enjoy any opportunity to aid that coming to completion. The one suggestion we have is to address the traffic congestion around the park. The streets of Borden Avenue and Astoria Street are undersized for residential streets. Both are approximately 33' wide, and standard design is 2 - 10' travel lanes, and 2 - 8' parking lanes: 36'. It has been my observation over the past two decades being with the SNC, when the park is busy, Sylmar HS is busy, the Catholic school and church is busy, these two streets have many conflicts where one vehicle turns partly into the parking lane to allow an opposing vehicle to pass. Borden Avenue is part of a bus route, and one of our board members was involved in an accident with a bus at this location. I am certain there were others. We understand this is not the responsibility of your department but talking with park employees at this site they immediately acknowledged there was a problem here. We will take this to the Public Works Department and seek support from affected entities.

Lakeside Park is the newest park but has suffered the worst from vandalism. State of the art restrooms were installed, and now they are locked even when the park is being used. At the northwest corner of the park someone had dug out the earth below the fence to gain entrance to the park, only one pole to the east the fence was cut to make another entry point. Along the south fence there is a slope and the fencing stair-steps between the supporting poles, and it is at the poles on the lower fencing side that there is evidence that climbers make entry here. At the east fence, 3 or 4 houses from the south fence, the owner there uses his ladders to enter the park and trims the landscaping he feels is a fire hazard to his home. I tried to tell him he could get into trouble, but he ignored me. These things need to be addressed for security and safety at the park.

Stetson Ranch Park is our equestrian park. The park can be approached from the intersection of Glenoaks Blvd., and Foothill Blvd. Take Glenoaks Blvd. north underneath the 210 Freeway and immediately turn left onto a dirt road to the dirt parking lot. There are 4 arenas. There is little to vandalize or graffiti at the park. Our Parks and Open Space Representative has found the locks unused when they needed to be, or locked when they shouldn't have been. She has suggested additional security and surveillance measures be taken.

Carey Ranch Park is a park given to the city as a part of the requirement for approval of a subdivision project. It is about 20 acres and has a grass field, a children's play area, a few shade trees with picnic tables, and 30+ parking spaces. The only two places to graffiti, the play area and a concrete drainage swale below the parking lot, are covered. There are 4 safety signs at the children's play area that need to be replaced due to graffiti and defacing: 2 signs are "No Animals In Children's Play Area Allowed", a "Don't Leave Children Unattended" sign, and an "Emergency Assistance - Call Office of Public Safety (w/phone No.)" sign . The park perimeter is bordered by Laural Canyon Blvd. on the west, Crestknoll Dr. on the south, and Edgecliff Ave. on the east. Laural Canyon has bushes growing over and through the fence. There is a break in the fence approximately 543' measured from the curb of Carey Ranch Lane (north of Crestknoll), where access to the park was made. At the corner of Laural Canyon and Crestknoll there is a "Park Closed"(that was all I could read) sign 93' from Laural Canyon. It needs replacing due to defacing and graffiti. Next to it on the left is a dead tree with a broken branch that aids people to get over the fence, and 6' to the left of that tree are 4 vertical bars of the fence that are broken from the bottom horizontal bar creating another entry point to the park. The corner could use a sign(s) directing people to the park. In a short distance is the entry driveway to the park, it could use an identifying sign. To the east along Crestknoll, two more dead trees can be

found; one approximately 180' east of the park driveway, and the second 84' further. The driveway to the park goes uphill to the grass field. Between the metal fences along the streets to the grass field, and the houses uphill from the grass field, are bushes and trees. This area constitutes 4 to 6 acres and should be considered for regular trimming as a fire hazard. In the area of the intersection of Edgecliff Ave. and Osceola St. a 6' to 8' portion of fence is setback 2' from sidewalk to access utility meters or valves set in the ground. On the left side of the setback four vertical bars have had the paint removed in some way, and been left to rust, I presume to be broken to gain access into the park in the future. The grass field has some areas that are tall and thick with weeds.

Telfair / Cobalt Park is a pocket park occupying 1.5 acres at the west corner of the Telfair Ave. and Cobalt St. intersection. It has a grass field, a walking / jogging path, a few picnic tables, and a children's play area. It appears to be kept locked and is not in use: the lawn is mowed.

San Fernando Road Park is part of a small lot subdivision. It occupies a little more than a quarter-of-an-acre and is almost entirely used as a children's play area. It is our understanding that the HOA deals with the maintenance of the park.

## CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Whatever facility or program is available at any park there is a portion of the population that is an advocate for its continuation and enhancement. I foresee different groups at a park, different parks in a neighborhood, and different neighborhoods in the city waging the "mother of all wars" to get what they want. Hopefully we can all get together and share the burden to get pass this and grow the parks and ourselves anew. We have to think outside the box. Some parks may have to be closed. That would be a hard choice even among likely candidates. Staff will have to be cut. Could neighborhood volunteers do some of the maintenance and groundskeeping? Could volunteers do some of the youth sports programs? Are there some sports that have liabilities and should be discontinued? Are there any services or recreation opportunities that the public should pay for? Can the city use the power to tax to be part of the solution?

George Ortega , Treasurer Sylmar NC  
Budget Committee Chair  
Executive Committee  
Outreach Committee  
Planning & Land Use Committee

# SYLMAR PARK

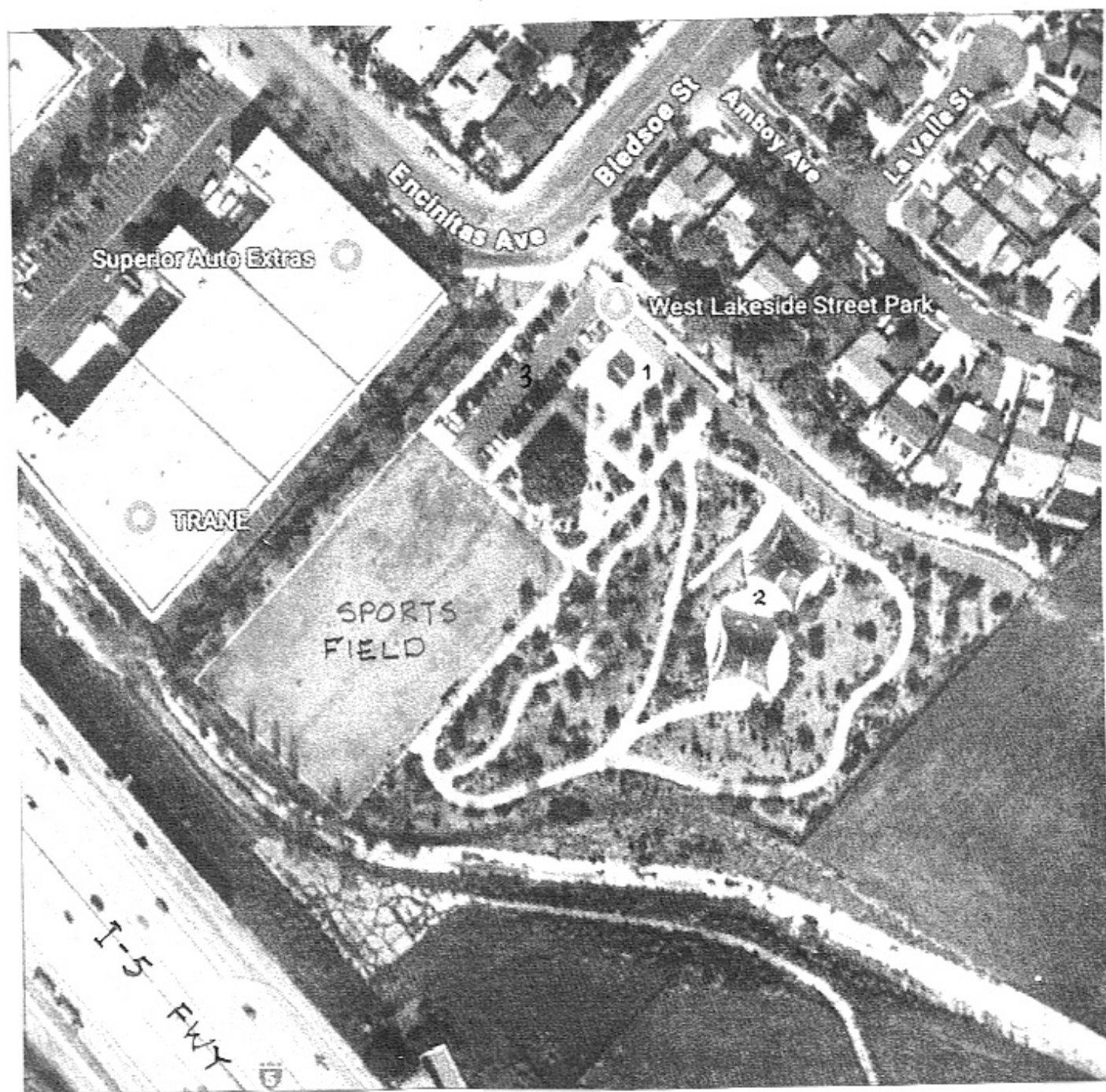


- 1 3 PARKING LOTS
- 2 CHILDREN'S PLAY AREA
- 3 PARK OFFICE & 2 GYMS
- 4 SWIMMING POOL

- A SYLMAR HS
- B OLIVE VISTA MIDDLE SCH.
- C ST. DIDACUS CHURCH & SCH



# LAKE SIDE PARK



- 1 RESTROOMS
- 2 TWO COVERED PAVILLIONS
- 3 PARKING LOT





# STETSON RANCH PARK



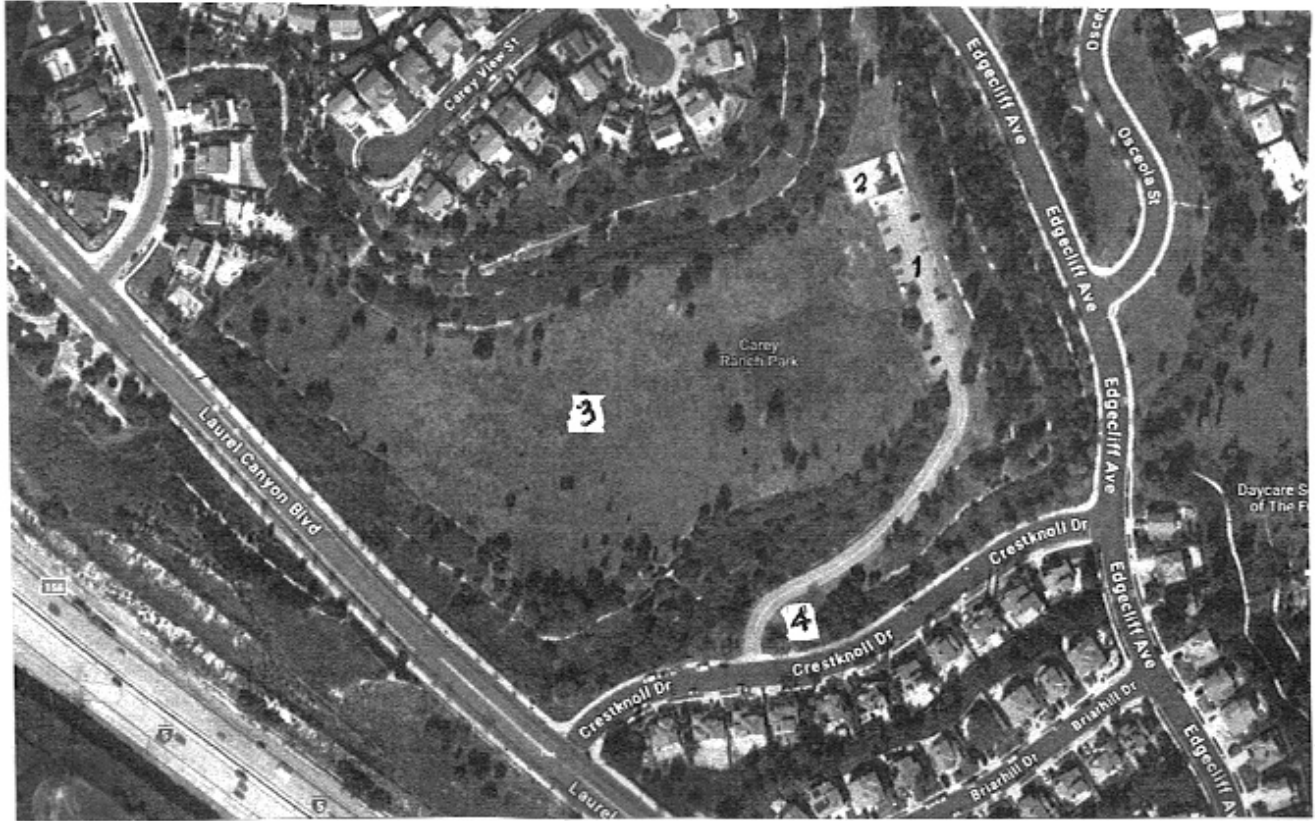
- 1 PARKING LOT
- 2 LOWER ARENA W/ BLEACHER
- 3 MIDDLE ARENA W/ SHORT RAILING
- 4 UPPER ARENA
- 5 TO I-5 FWY
- 6 WEST ARENA

GLENOAKS  
BLVD.

4

# CAREY RANCH PARK

CAREY RANCH  
LANE



- 1 PARKING LOT
- 2 CHILDREN'S PLAY AREA
- 3 GRASS FIELD
- 4 ENTRY DRIVEWAY



# TELFAIR PARK



1. GRASS FIELD
2. CHILDREN'S PLAY AREA
3. PICNIC AREA

