

# UPTOWN OPEN SPACE VISION PLAN

**City of Long Beach**

**Department of Parks, Recreation and Marine Department**

**Department of Health and Human Services**

**Office of Vice Mayor Rex Richardson**

Prepared by City Fabrick

2017

# PROJECT MATRIX\*

\*PRESUMES FUNDING IS AVAILABLE, PHASED IN OVER TIME

	PROJECT	NEIGHBORHOOD	PARK/ CONNECTOR TYPE
UNDERWAY PROJECTS [2018]	Myrtle Neighborhood Connector	Houghton/Hamilton	Neighborhood Connector
	Uptown Plaza Program	Houghton	Plazas
	Davenport Park Expansion	St Francis – adjacent	Neighborhood Park
	DeForest Wetland Restoration	DeForest Park	Community Park
	PROJECT	NEIGHBORHOOD	PARK/ CONNECTOR TYPE
SHORT TERM* [YEARS 1 - 10]	SR 91 Embankment Greenbelt <sup>✱</sup>	Hamilton	Greenway
	Coolidge Underpass Park <sup>✱</sup>	Coolidge	Mini-Park
	Starr King Mini-Park <sup>✱</sup>	Starr King	Mini-Park
	Fire Station #12 Adaptive Reuse	Grant	Special Use
	North Long Beach Senior Center	Grant - adjacent	Special Use
	Butler Neighborhood Connector	Coolidge Triangle - Starr King	Neighborhood Park
	PROJECT	NEIGHBORHOOD	PARK/ CONNECTOR TYPE
MID TERM* [YEARS 10 - 20]	McKinley Park <sup>✱</sup>	McKinley	Neighborhood Park
	Downey Avenue Greenbelt <sup>✱</sup>	St. Francis	Greenway
	Victoria Street Greenway	Longwood	Greenway Connector
	Greenleaf Park Extension	College Square	Neighborhood Park
	South Street Greenway	Multiple	Greenway Connector
	Hamilton River Park	Hamilton	Neighborhood Park
	San Pedro Branch Rail with Trail	Grant - Hamilton	Greenway
	MECHA Garden Streets	Starr King	Pavement to Park
	Obispo Neighborhood Connector	Grant - Hamilton	Neighborhood Connector
	PROJECT	NEIGHBORHOOD	PARK/ CONNECTOR TYPE
LONG TERM* [YEARS 20 - 30]	Los Angeles River Park <sup>✱</sup>	Coolidge - DeForest	Regional Park
	Longwood Linear Park	Longwood	Greenway
	Grant Buffer Park	Grant	Neighborhood Park
	St. Francis Buffer Park	St. Francis	Neighborhood Park
	Edison - Hamilton Park	Hamilton	Community Park
	Paramount Greenway	Multiple	Greenway Connector
	Walnut Neighborhood Connector	Grant - Hamilton	Neighborhood Connector

## TOP FIVE

### BIG IDEAS

Community members voted on their favorite visionary open space idea that could add a large amount of open space, informing the direction of open space planning in North Long Beach.

more popular

#### SCE LINEAR PARK

REGIONAL PARK | 180 ACRES

Convert the Southern California Edison right-of-way understorey into a linear park that can accommodate passive recreational uses.

#### LA RIVER

COMMUNITY PARK | 130 ACRES

Revitalize the Los Angeles River into a park greenway that can accommodate passive recreational uses and connections between Coolidge and DeForest Parks.

#### I-710 CAP

REGIONAL PARK | 30 ACRES

Construct a park on top of the I-710 Freeway from Artesia Boulevard to Long Beach Boulevard, functioning similar to a tunnel below while offering park space above.

#### BROWNFIELD CONVERSION

REGIONAL PARK | 110 ACRES

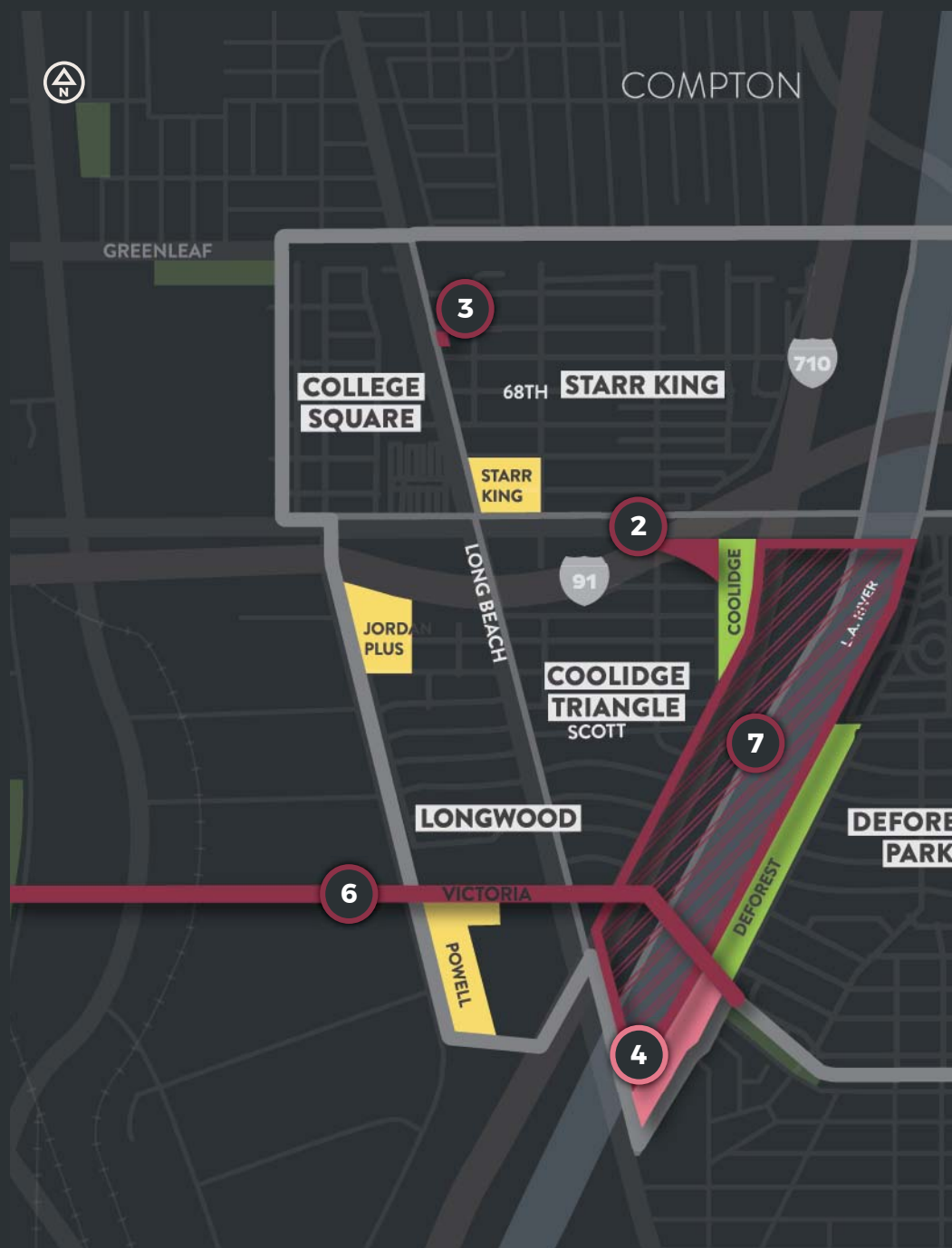
Remediate and convert industrial uses between the Grant and St. Francis neighborhoods into park space, connecting them east to west.

#### LBUSD JOINING USE

NEIGHBORHOOD PARK | 50 ACRES

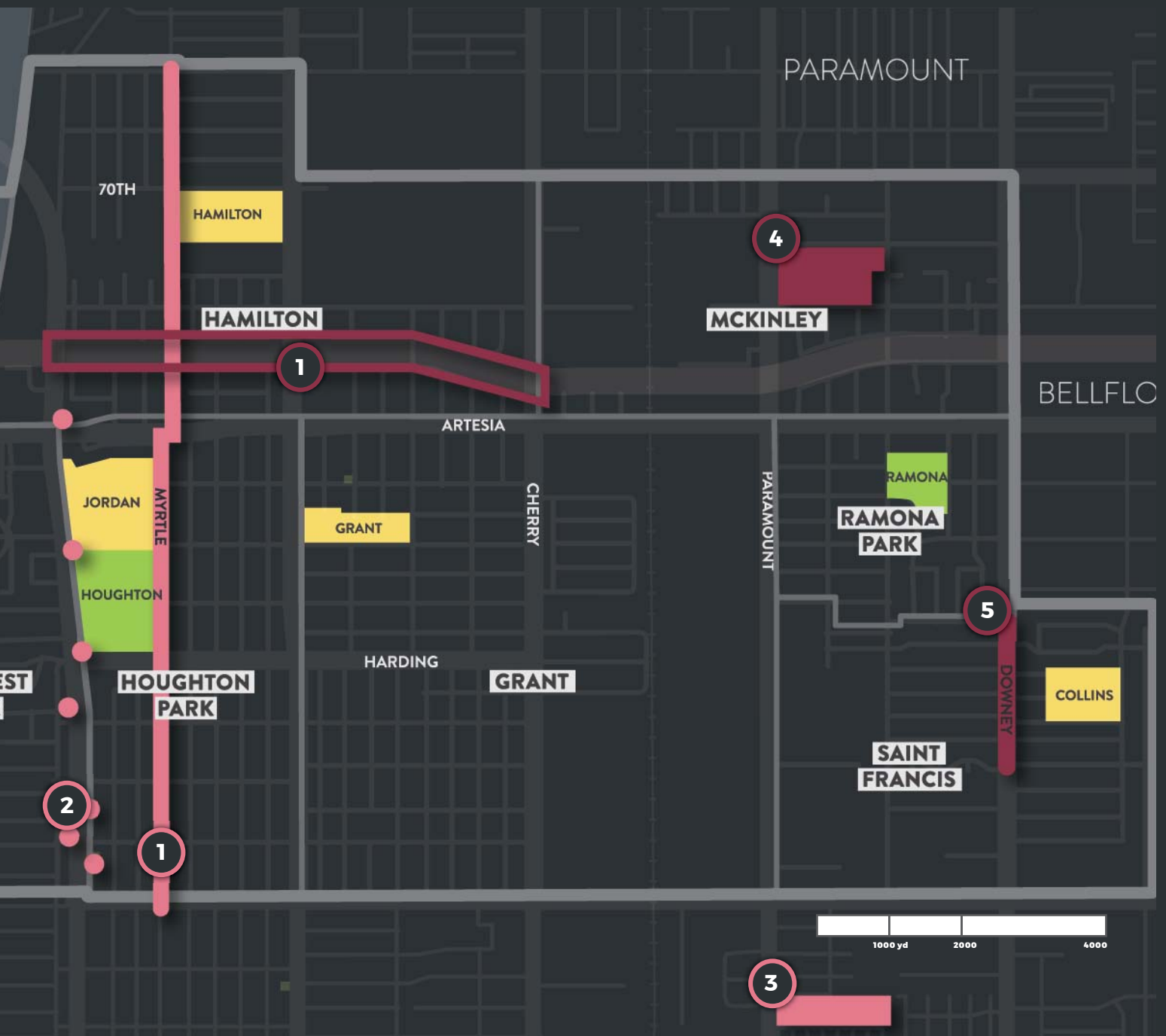
Enter into a joint agreement with Long Beach Unified School District to open a part of each campus during after school hours, weekends and holidays to the public.

less popular



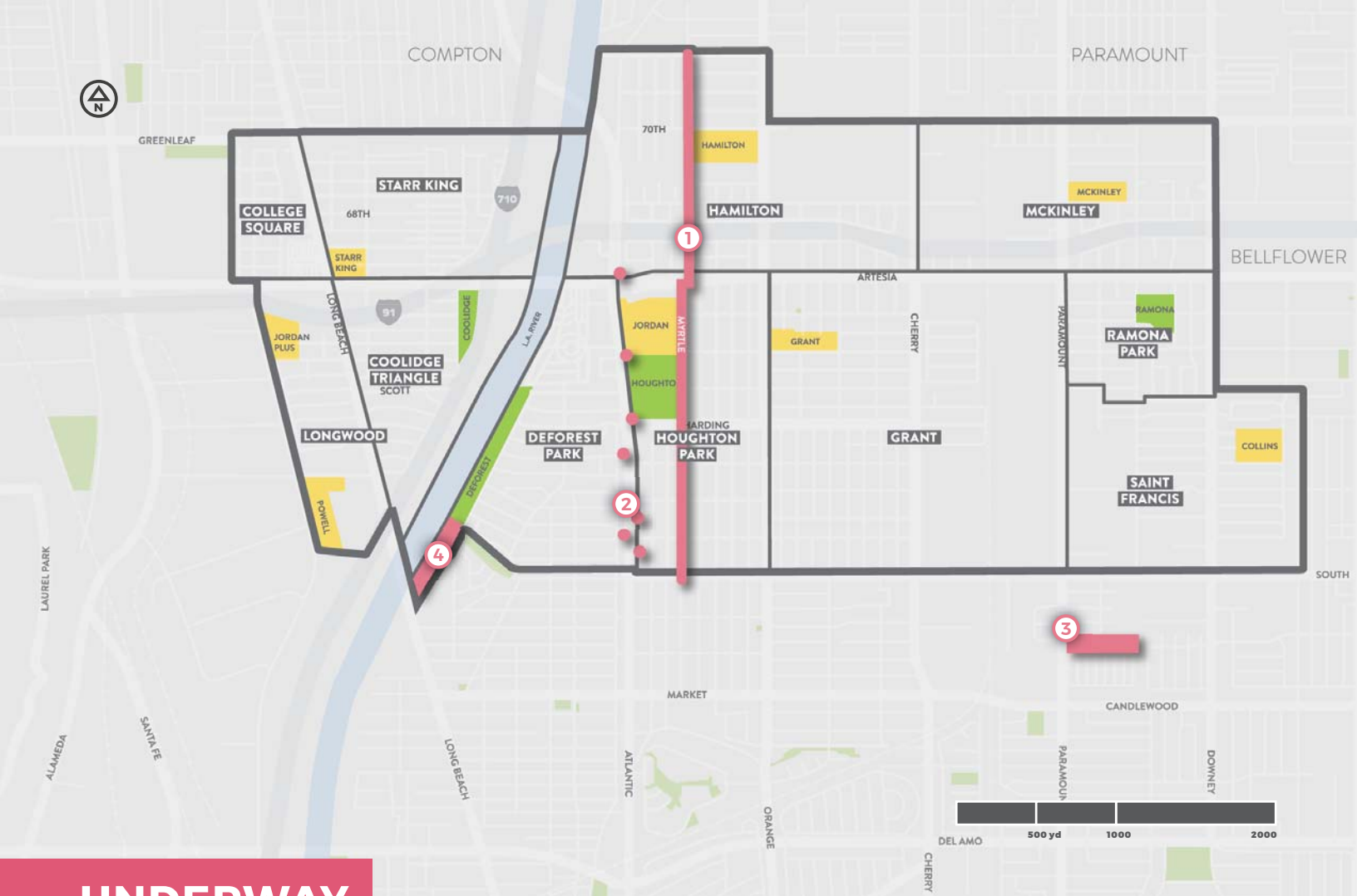
### UNDERWAY PROJECTS

- |                                 |                                |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 MYRTLE NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTOR | 2 UPTOWN PLAZA PROGRAM         |
| 3 DAVENPORT PARK EXPANSION      | 4 DEFOREST WETLAND RESTORATION |



## PRIORITY PROJECTS

- |                              |                            |                          |                  |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|------------------|
| 1 SR 91 EMBANKMENT GREENBELT | 2 COOLIDGE UNDERPASS       | 3 STARR KING MINI PARK   | 4 MICKINLEY PARK |
| 5 DOWNEY AVENUE GREENBELT    | 6 VICTORIA STREET GREENWAY | 7 LOS ANGELES RIVER PARK |                  |



## UNDERWAY

## PROJECTS [2018]

While there are no new parks under development in the Uptown Open Space Vision Plan study area there is currently substantial investment taking place related to improvements to the existing park system and active transportation network. There also continues to be substantial investment in regular repairs and capital improvements to address deferred maintenance of park facilities.

A substantial engagement effort was completed and funding strategies are being formulated for the Houghton Park Community Center, which costed seven million dollars in 2018. The Master Plan lays out incremental improvements to the park to expand programming, enhance access and establish an aesthetic harmony

throughout the park. The Master Plan has evolved from a careful evaluation of existing site character, site accessibility, program needs, resource conservation, sustainability, budget, maintenance practices, and safety. The Community Center Plan imagines the creation of a multifunction campus of structures serving a diverse range of users' needs and programs. Public meetings have been held throughout the process of planning, designing and building the new Community Center.

The DeForest Wetlands are currently undergoing a massive restoration project to add 34 acres, which cost over seven million dollars in grants, that when complete, would anchor the north end of the Dominguez Gap/DeForest Park Wetlands

habitat. These projects currently underway have required substantial partnerships and coordination to see them implemented. Their continued operations and programming similarly need investment of funds and resources to be most beneficial to park users.

### UNDERWAY PROJECTS [2018]

- ① Myrtle Neighborhood Connector
- ② Uptown Plaza Program
- ③ Davenport Park Expansion
- ④ DeForest Wetland Restoration





①

## Myrtle Neighborhood Connector

NEIGHBORHOOD	PARK TYPE	CONNECTOR LENGTH
Multiple	Neighborhood Connector	9 miles
OPPORTUNITY TYPE	AMENITIES	
Various	Multipurpose Space and Picnic Area	

*The Myrtle Neighborhood Connector is the northern portion of the Daisy Avenue bike boulevard currently under development which connects Downtown Long Beach to the northernmost city boundary. The bike boulevard project includes new controlled crossings at major thoroughfares and traffic calming improvements through the residential neighborhoods. Initial improvements began in 2017 with the balance of construction taking place in 2018.*



②

## Uptown Plaza Program

NEIGHBORHOOD	PARK TYPE	PARK SIZE
Houghton-DeForest	Plazas	One Acre Total
OPPORTUNITY TYPE	AMENITIES	
Various	Multipurpose Space and Picnic Area	

*The Long Beach Successor Agency to Redevelopment had released its remaining properties along Atlantic Avenue for development that supports the Uptown Business District. The urban design strategy includes a series of community plazas incorporated in each new development, creating a string of connected public open spaces along Atlantic Avenue. The plazas at the Michelle Obama Library, which opened in 2016 and features a learning garden and the Veterans' Memorial in Houghton Park, which opened in 2017 and features a memorial walkway, are designed to be public-facing and are jointly maintained by the City of Long Beach and local community groups.*



③

## Davenport Park Expansion

NEIGHBORHOOD	PARK TYPE	PARK SIZE
St. Francis-Adjacent	Community Park	Ten Acres Total
OPPORTUNITY TYPE	AMENITIES	
Brownfield	Walking Trail and Outdoor Fitness Zone	

*The expansion of Davenport Park [as discussed in Chapter 3] is proposed to double the size of the public space, incorporating a former landfill and industrial property. The Legacy Disposal Site Abatement and Landfill Closure has taken place to prepare the site for incremental development of the park. Initial phases of the park expansion include development of a walking trail and some opportunities for outdoor gym equipment. Future phases are proposed to include playing fields, multi-purpose space, and sand volleyball courts.*

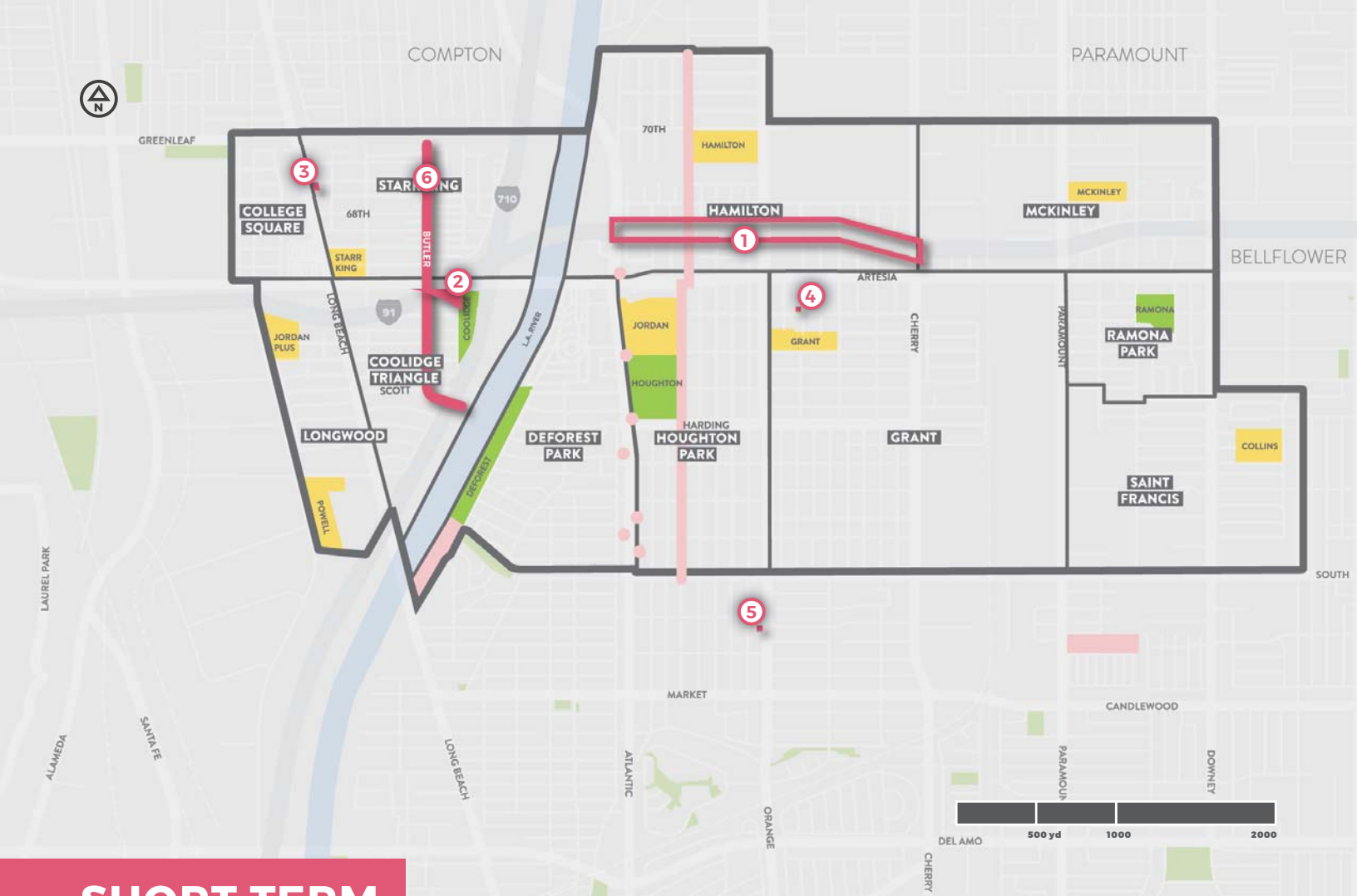


④

## DeForest Wetland Restoration

NEIGHBORHOOD	PARK TYPE	PARK SIZE
DeForest Park	Community Park	39 Acres
OPPORTUNITY TYPE	AMENITIES	
Los Angeles River	Nature/Wetlands and Walking Trail	

*The DeForest Wetland Restoration is proposed to create almost three miles of recreated wetland and related habitat along the Los Angeles River. Wetland areas is proposed to be created in this area and would act to treat and improve water quality of both dry season low flows and stormwater that is retained on-site before it is discharged to the Los Angeles River. Other project elements proposed in this area consist of trails, including boardwalks, an entrance gate, and interpretive displays focusing on the historical ecology of the region.*



## SHORT TERM PROJECTS

Projects that can conceptually be implemented within a ten-year period are smaller-scale open space opportunities that can be accomplished incrementally across the Uptown Open Space Vision Plan study area. These projects are distributed in order to begin filling the need for park space for neighborhoods in the study area currently lacking convenient open space access. Capital investment in connectors, greenbelts and park expansion would also focus on expanding access, with a number of the projects physically bridging neighborhoods.

Projects like the Downey Avenue Greenbelt, Butler Avenue Neighborhood Connector, Fire Station #12 Adaptive Reuse, and former North Branch Library

are utilizing existing City assets, while the SR-91 Embankment Greenbelt and Coolidge Underpass Park rely on Caltrans assets. These would necessitate substantial coordination between City departments as well as Caltrans District Office 7 throughout planning and implementation.

Ideally, the planning effort for these projects should begin soon after the adoption of the Uptown Open Space Vision Plan to be ready for the diversity of funding sources that can support their implementation. Projects utilizing the Caltrans rights-of-way and former municipal buildings can actually be tested and developed incrementally as soon as safe and secure access can be secured for the respective facilities. The projects reconfiguring City rights-

of-way need additional community engagement and study to develop support and consensus for their eventual implementation.

### SHORT TERM [YEARS 1 - 10]

- ① 91 Freeway Embankment Greenbelt
- ② Coolidge Underpass Park
- ③ Starr King Mini Park
- ④ Fire Station #12 Adaptive Reuse
- ⑤ North Long Beach Senior Center
- ⑥ Butler Neighborhood Connector



## ④ Fire Station #12 Adaptive Reuse

### NEIGHBORHOOD

Grant

### PARK TYPE

Special Use

### PARK SIZE

0.35 Acres

### OPPORTUNITY TYPE

Adaptive Reuse

### AMENITIES

Community Garden, Playground, Clubhouse, Multipurpose Space, and Outdoor Fitness Zone

*The historic Fire Station #12 at the northwest corner of 65th Street and Gundry Avenue has already begun its new life as an informal community center since the Fire Department moved to the new facility on Artesia Boulevard. The project has benefitted from a significant amount of prototyping of programmatic elements to determine uses that might fit better than others. The Fire Station #12 Adaptive Reuse as a special use community center would necessitate upgrades to electrical, plumbing and mechanical systems as well as changes to the facility to meet current accessibility standards.*



## ⑤ North Long Beach Senior Center

### NEIGHBORHOOD

Grant-Adjacent

### PARK TYPE

Special Use

### PARK SIZE

0.41 Acres

### OPPORTUNITY TYPE

Adaptive Reuse

### AMENITIES

Senior Center and Community Garden

*With the opening of the new Michelle Obama Library there is the opportunity to consider converting the old North Branch Library on Orange Avenue. Similar to Fire Station #12 Adaptive Reuse, programming can begin on temporary basis, studying what uses would serve the community best. Throughout the planning process community members across the study area expressed an interest having a dedicated senior center for North Long Beach. The drive aisle on the south side of the facility can be converted to a community garden which would have strong synergies with senior programming.*



## ⑥ Butler Neighborhood Connector

### NEIGHBORHOOD

Coolidge-Starr King

### PARK TYPE

Neighborhood Connector

### CONNECTOR LENGTH

1 mile

### OPPORTUNITY TYPE

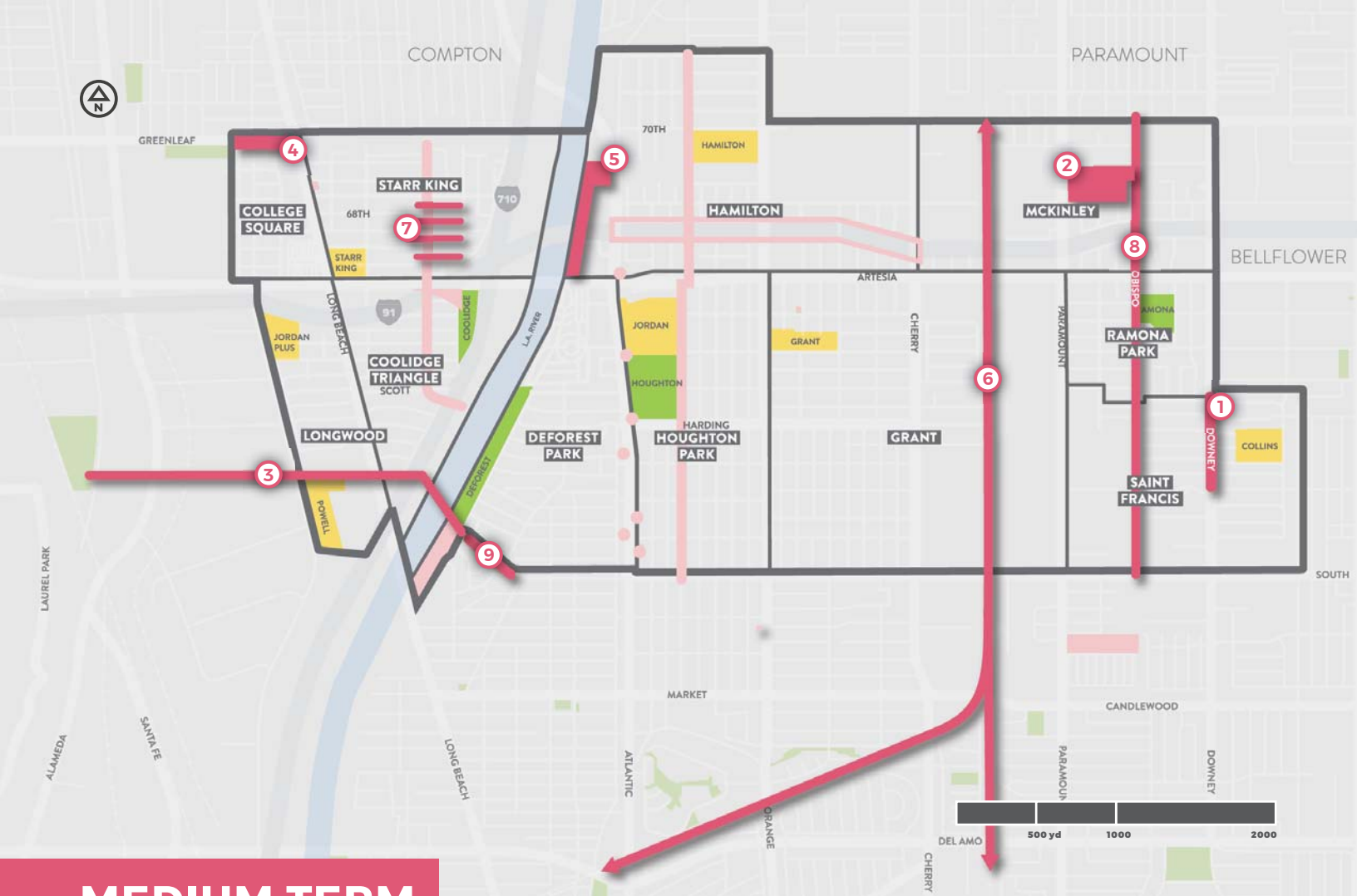
Public Right-Of-Way

### AMENITIES

Walking Trail and Class III Bikeway

*The Butler Avenue Neighborhood Connector is proposed to strengthen connections between the Coolidge Triangle and Starr King neighborhoods, improving access to Coolidge Park for walkers and cyclists. Enhancements would include traffic calming improvements to reduce vehicle traffic speeds and cut through traffic between the two neighborhoods. Improvements could include, but are not limited to, mini-traffic circles, gateway medians, street closures, and intersection realignment.*





## MEDIUM TERM PROJECTS

Planning for the second decade of open space and connector projects should actually start before the short term projects are completed. As most of these projects require the cooperation of other agencies and organizations, negotiations can take time – long before construction or design begins. This effort would benefit from early adoption of policies and Implementation Strategies described earlier in the chapter as they provide framework for consistent discussions with these agencies over the span of various projects/sites.

Early incorporation into other relevant projects and plans would ensure that there can be cohesive designs and potentially streamline their respective development. This relates to the

multiple open space and development projects taking place along the Los Angeles River and in cooperation with LBUSD.

As some of the projects would necessitate the acquisition or leasing of private property, there should be consideration of current market conditions versus those over the next decade. Properly forecasting real estate trends can yield substantially greater positioning for using limited public dollars for purchase prices and setting lease terms. Reconfiguring public rights-of-way – whether for Greenways, Neighborhood Connectors, or as Mini-Parks – would require substantial investment of time to develop consensus in the neighborhoods to their ultimate transformation.

### MEDIUM TERM [YEARS 10 - 20]

- ① Downey Avenue Greenbelt
- ② McKinley Park
- ③ Victoria Street Greenway
- ④ Greenleaf Park Extension
- ⑤ Hamilton River Park
- ⑥ San Pedro Branch Rail with Trail
- ⑦ MECHA Garden Streets
- ⑧ Obispo Neighborhood Connector
- ⑨ South Street Greenway



④  
**Greenleaf  
Park  
Extension**

**NEIGHBORHOOD**  
College Square

**PARK TYPE**  
Neighborhood Park

**PARK SIZE**  
4.01 Acres

**OPPORTUNITY TYPE**  
SCE Right-Of-Way

**AMENITIES**  
Walking Trail, Multipurpose Field, Picnic Area,  
Community Garden, and Dog Park

*Extending the Greenleaf Park from the City of Compton to the east into the College Square neighborhood is proposed to create a mile loop between the two open spaces, only separated by the driveway into El Camino College. Design features and amenities already included in the two portions of Compton's portion of the Greenleaf Greenbelt should be considered though larger, open multi-purpose fields which would provide more options for park users.*



⑤  
**Hamilton  
River  
Park**

**NEIGHBORHOOD**  
Hamilton

**PARK TYPE**  
Neighborhood Park

**PARK SIZE**  
13.92 Acres

**OPPORTUNITY TYPE**  
SCE Right-Of-Way

**AMENITIES**  
Wetlands, Walking Trail, Playground, Meadow, Multipurpose  
Field, Picnic Area, Community Garden, and Equestrian Trail

*The Hamilton River Park is proposed to connect the east bank of the Los Angeles River north and south of the SR-91 Freeway using residual County Flood Control District land, the freeway underpass and the adjacent SCE right-of-way. Due to the Opportunity Types, there are a limited number of allowable uses but the park is ideally located for equestrian activity.*



⑥  
**San Pedro  
Branch Rail  
With Trail**

**NEIGHBORHOOD**  
Multiple

**PARK TYPE**  
Greenway Connector

**PARK SIZE**  
6.55 mile

**OPPORTUNITY TYPE**  
Rails to/with Trails

**AMENITIES**  
Walking Path and Class II Bike Lanes

*Reconfiguring the San Pedro Branch Railroad right-of-way to include active transportation and freight rail is proposed to create over four miles of greenway connection stretching from the Long Beach Airport [LGB] to the north city boundary to the Los Angeles River. Significant coordination would need to take place with the Port of Long Beach, who owns the property, and Union Pacific Railroad, who owns the facilities and easement for use of the corridor.*



⑦  
**MECHA  
Garden  
Streets**

**NEIGHBORHOOD**  
Starr King

**PARK TYPE**  
Mini-Park

**PARK SIZE**  
3.70 Acres

**OPPORTUNITY TYPE**  
Public Right-Of-Way

**AMENITIES**  
Walking Trail, Playground, Multipurpose Space, Picnic  
Area, Community Garden, and Meadow

*Maker Lane, Eleanor Lane, Cummings Lane, Health Lane, and Artesia Lane [MECHA] along Butler Avenue are redundant streets with vehicle access almost entirely provided by the adjacent streets. With the approval of residents, these streets can be closed to vehicle traffic and turned into public open space of varying character and use. Converting these surplus streets into places for people can be implemented in phases though should be planned and designed collectively.*



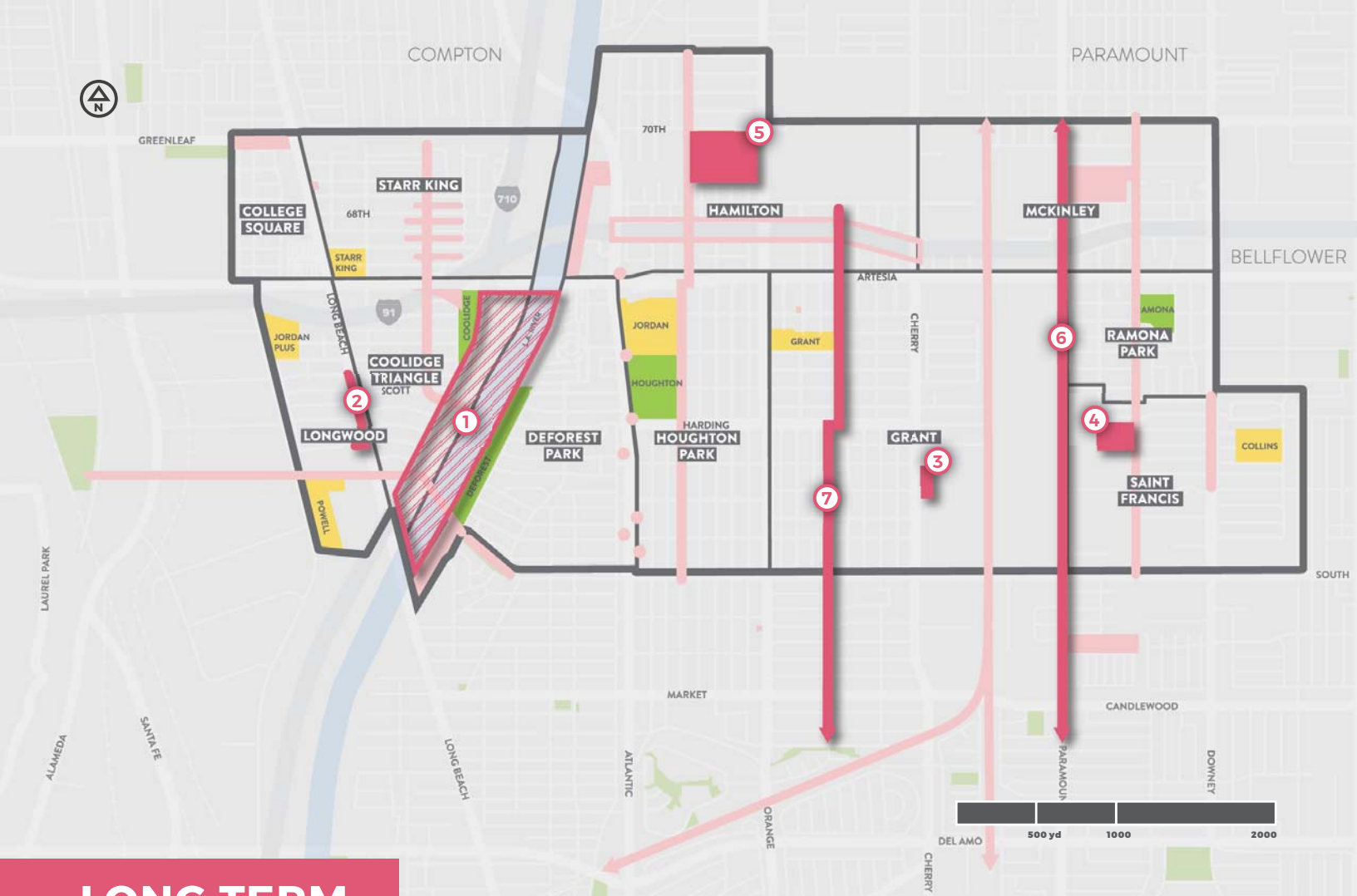
NEIGHBORHOOD	PARK TYPE	CONNECTOR LENGTH
St Francis- McKinley	Neighborhood Connector	2 Miles
OPPORTUNITY TYPE	AMENITIES	
Public Right-Of-Way	Walking Trail and Class III Bikeway	

*The Obispo Avenue Neighborhood Connector is proposed to connect the St. Francis and McKinley neighborhoods linking residents to Ramona and Davenport Parks as well as the future McKinley Park. The Obispo Avenue Neighborhood Connector would focus on creating safe crossings at South Street and Artesia Boulevard, as well as traffic calming through the neighborhoods. The south end of the project would require coordination with the City of Lakewood and additional design consideration for industrial neighborhoods.*



NEIGHBORHOOD	PARK TYPE	CONNECTOR LENGTH
Multiple	Greenway Connector	2.25 Miles
OPPORTUNITY TYPE	AMENITIES	
Public Right-Of-Way	Walking Trail and Class I Bikeway	

*The South Street Greenway is proposed to create a protected active mobility trail linking the expanded Davenport Park to DeForest Park and Wetlands area. While South Street increases in width and traffic volumes from west to east, the roadway has 10-15 feet of surplus width, without removing travel or parking lanes. Due to the limited number of driveways and relatively long blocks on the southside of the street, the greenway is proposed to be installed asymmetrically.*



## LONG TERM PROJECTS

Within thirty years, the long term projects would likely have the most substantial impact for North Long Beach as well as the city, and would require the most planning and investment of resources. Some of these projects would need to start planning and coordination after the adoption of the Uptown Open Space Vision Plan to conceivably be completed within the first half of the twenty-first century.

Many of the open space projects would also require substantial investment of public dollars, leveraging Local, County, State, and Federal funding sources. This would require substantial education of, and coordination with, numerous agencies and elected officials. Ensuring the projects, programs, and policies are reflected in their respective planning

efforts and capital improvement programs could ease some of this effort.

Similar to medium term projects there are also park projects that would require the acquisition or leasing of public land. The City should consider a larger property acquisition strategy relative to real estate trends as Local governments tend to limit spending during down economies while real estate values are typically lower. Setting aside a rainy-day fund for such property acquisition and spending during down economies are often politically difficult decisions but prudent for the long term.

### LONG TERM [YEARS 20 - 30]

- ① Los Angeles River Park
- ② Longwood Linear Park
- ③ Grant Buffer Park
- ④ St. Francis Buffer Park
- ⑤ Edison - Hamilton Park
- ⑥ Paramount Greenway
- ⑦ Walnut Neighborhood Connector





②  
**Longwood  
Linear  
Park**

<b>NEIGHBORHOOD</b>	<b>PARK TYPE</b>	<b>PARK SIZE</b>
Longwood	Greenbelt/ Mini-Park	1.54 Acres
<b>OPPORTUNITY TYPE</b>	<b>AMENITIES</b>	
Pavement to Parks, Property Acquisition	Walking Trail, Playground, Multipurpose Space, Picnic Area, and Outdoor Fitness Zone	

*The Longwood Linear Park is proposed to reconfigure Long Beach Boulevard west frontage road to create a quarter mile long greenbelt between Bort Street and Barclay Street, anchored by a mini-park near the intersection with Arlington Street. Park amenities is proposed to be designed and located to work within the limitations and advantages of the two component spaces. The project can be implemented in phases based on coordinating access to adjacent properties along Long Beach Boulevard and acquisition of the vacant lot to the south.*



③  
**Grant  
Buffer  
Park**

<b>NEIGHBORHOOD</b>	<b>PARK TYPE</b>	<b>PARK SIZE</b>
Grant	Neighborhood Park	2.86 Acres
<b>OPPORTUNITY TYPE</b>	<b>AMENITIES</b>	
Property Acquisition	Sports Courts, Multipurpose Space, Picnic Area, Outdoor Fitness Zone, and Clubhouse	

*When considering undeveloped land and the guiding principles of the Uptown Open Space Vision Plan, the best opportunity for new open space in the Grant neighborhood would be along the block and a half of frontage along Cherry Avenue south of 61st Street. As this is residual land of a petroleum facility, special consideration would need to be made related to safety and access for continued operations as well as potential soil contamination remediation. The design and programming of the park would also need to consider these relationships in order to insure safe and comfortable use of the amenities.*



④  
**St. Francis  
Buffer  
Park**

<b>NEIGHBORHOOD</b>	<b>PARK TYPE</b>	<b>PARK SIZE</b>
St Francis	Neighborhood Park	7.08 Acres
<b>OPPORTUNITY TYPE</b>	<b>AMENITIES</b>	
Property Acquisition	Playground, Sports Courts, Skate Park, Multipurpose Space, Community Garden, Picnic Area, and Clubhouse	

*The St. Francis Buffer Park proposes to transition an existing truck chassis storage yard to a buffer open space that separates the existing residential neighborhood to the north and east from the industrial area to the west and south. The new neighborhood-scale park would be bound by Orizaba and Obispo Avenues, providing opportunities for improving connectivity within the neighborhood. The size of the park and proximity to Ramona Park provides the opportunity to expand upon the menu of currently available amenities to the community while extending park access.*



⑤  
**Edison  
Hamilton  
Park**

<b>NEIGHBORHOOD</b>	<b>PARK TYPE</b>	<b>PARK SIZE</b>
Hamilton	Community Park	13.92 Acres
<b>OPPORTUNITY TYPE</b>	<b>AMENITIES</b>	
SCE Right-of-Way, LBUSD Joint-Use	Walking Trail, Playground, Sports Courts, Sports Field, Multipurpose Field, Picnic Area, Community Garden, Outdoor Fitness Zone, and Meadow	

*The Edison - Hamilton Neighborhood Park is proposed to combine the recess areas of Hamilton Middle School and the adjacent SCE right-of-way to create a community-type park generally bordered by Orange Avenue, 70th Street, Myrtle Avenue and Inez Street. Establishing a cooperative agreement between the City and School District would allow a greater diversity of recreational uses to be available to students and residents.*





8

## Paramount Greenway

NEIGHBORHOOD	PARK TYPE	CONNECTOR LENGTH
Multiple	Greenway Connector	1.91 Miles
OPPORTUNITY TYPE	AMENITIES	
Public Right-Of-Way	Class I Bikeway	

*The Paramount Boulevard Greenway is proposed to create a nearly two-mile protected active mobility trail linking the expanded Davenport Park to McKinley School and Park, between the Cities of Lakewood and Paramount. There is fifteen feet of surplus roadway, without removing travel or parking lanes. Due to the limited number of driveways and relatively long blocks on the west side of the street, the greenway is proposed to be installed asymmetrically.*



9

## Walnut Neighborhood Connector

NEIGHBORHOOD	PARK TYPE	CONNECTOR LENGTH
Multiple	Neighborhood Connector	8 Miles
OPPORTUNITY TYPE	AMENITIES	
Public Right-Of-Way	Class III Bikeway	

*The Walnut Avenue Neighborhood Connector is proposed to connect the Grant and Hamilton neighborhoods as well as neighborhoods to the south as this would potentially be part of a citywide active transportation project. The project is proposed to include enhanced crossings at South Street and Artesia Boulevard, improvements at Harding Street and traffic calming through the neighborhoods. As a citywide project that travels through another jurisdiction, substantial planning would be required.*