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This section of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) evaluates the McKinley Elementary School Campus Master Plan Project's (Proposed Project) potential impacts on public parks and recreational facilities.

A California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) scoping meeting was conducted on January 31, 2023 where verbal comments were received in response to the Initial Study/Notice of Preparation (IS/NOP) regarding the potential impacts to recreational facilities at the McKinley Elementary School (McKinley ES) campus. In addition, written comments were received regarding the potential impacts to recreational facilities on the campus. These comments are considered in this section below. The IS/NOP and all scoping comment letters are included as Appendices B and C of this document.

5.11.1 Environmental Setting

5.11.1.1 REGULATORY BACKGROUND

State and local laws, regulations, plans, or guidelines related to public parks and recreation facilities that are applicable to the Proposed Project are summarized in this section.

State

Quimby Act of 1975

The Quimby Act of 1975 (California Government Code Section 66477) requires the dedication of land and/or in-lieu fees for public park and recreational purposes as a condition for approval of a tentative map or parcel map. The act establishes procedures that can be used by local jurisdictions to reserve land for neighborhood and community parks and recreational facilities. It allows cities and counties to require up to five acres of park for every 1,000 residents.

Mitigation Fee Act

The California Mitigation Fee Act, Government Code sections 66000, et seq., allows cities to establish fees which would be imposed upon development projects for the purpose of mitigating the impact that the development projects would have on the City's ability to provide specified public facilities. In order to comply with the Mitigation Fee Act the City must follow four primary requirements: 1) Make certain determinations regarding the purpose and use of a fee and establish a nexus or connection between a development project or class of project and the public improvement being financed with the fee; 2) Segregate fee revenue from the General Fund in order to avoid commingling of capital facilities fees and general funds; 3) For fees that have been in the possession of the City for five years or more and for which the dollars have not been spent or committed to a project the City must make findings each fiscal year describing the continuing need for the money; and 4) Refund any fees with interest for developer deposits for which the findings noted above cannot be made.

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California Public Park Preservation Act

The primary instrument for protecting and preserving parkland is California's Public Park Preservation Act of 1971 (Public Resources Code). Under the act, cities and counties may not acquire any real property that is in use as a public park for any nonpark use unless compensation, land, or both are provided to replace the parkland acquired. This ensures no net loss of parkland and facilities.

Local

City of Santa Monica Municipal Code

Chapter 9.67 Parks and Recreation Development Impact Fee Program

The purpose of this Chapter of the Municipal Code is to implement the goals, objectives, and policies of the City of Santa Monica's Open Space Element and Parks and Recreation Master Plan when new development is constructed within the City limits. Imposing a fee that is reasonably related to the burdens on and increased demand for the City's parks and recreation facilities created by new development will assist the City in constructing the required capital improvements to support the fulfillment of these goals, objectives, and policies. City of Santa Monica General Plan

Land Use and Circulation Element

The City of Santa Monica Land Use and Circulation Element (LUCE) was adopted July 6, 2010 and revised July 24, 2015. The LUCE establishes the City's land use, urban design, and transportation vision. The following goals and policies related to park and recreational facilities are relevant to the Proposed Project (City of Santa Monica, 2015).

General – City wide Park and Recreational goal and policies

Goal LU4: Complete Sustainable Neighborhoods. Create complete neighborhoods that exemplify sustainable living practices with open spaces, green connections, diverse housing, local employment, and local-serving businesses that meet the daily needs of residents and reduce vehicle trips and GHG emissions.

- **Policy LU-4.1. Active Centers.** Create active neighborhood districts that cluster services, goods, and cultural and recreational uses within walking distance of residences to create a focus for community activity and an active environment that can sustain local uses.
- **Policy LU-4.6. Open Space.** Provide open space and green connections near residences that are part of an expanding and comprehensive system of passive and active open space and complete street design emphasizing interconnectivity, recreation, and gathering spaces.

Community enrichment – Citywide Goals and Policies

Goal CE-1: Expand the amount, quality, diversity and interconnectivity of parks, open spaces and recreational facilities throughout the city.

- **Policy CE-1.8.** Seek to improve and expand sports and recreational facilities throughout the City.

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- **Policy CE-1.9.** Continue to maintain a diverse range of recreational facilities, offering residents of all ages affordable and safe access to high-quality recreational opportunities.

Goal CE-7: Create convenient and Safe opportunities for physical activity for residents of all ages and income levels.

- **Policy CE-7.1.** Promote land use patterns and transportation decisions that enable all residents to walk and bicycle to meet their daily needs.
 - Increase the amount and distribution of park and recreational space, and provide clear connections between facilities.

Goal CE-12: Support the SMMUSD and Santa Monica College capital planning and implementation in recognition of their important role in the City.

- **Policy CE-12.1.** Encourage implementation of the SMMUSD's Facilities Master Plan and provide guidance based on LUCE principles, including green building, shared parking, and improved access to open spaces and cultural facilities.

Goal CE-13: Maximize the community benefit of educational and City facilities through coordinated planning and shared use.

- **Policy CE-13.1.** Explore with the SMMUSD possible coordinated facility development or shared use opportunities, such as coordinated shared use planning between the Civic Center area and Santa Monica High School, including possible shared athletic and cultural facilities, and shared use planning between the Memorial Park Activity Center Overly and the school district headquarters.

Goal CE-16: Support lifelong learning through land use and transporting measures that offer physical facilities and program materials.

- **Policy CE-16.3.** Continue to partner with SMMUSD and other organizations to transform schools into "learning communities" that offer preschool, childcare and early education, after school enrichment programs, after school sports and recreation programs, health services, social services and adult education at local schools that are accessible to people of all ages and abilities.

Open Space Element

The City of Santa Monica Open Space Element was adopted March 1997. The Open space element establishes the long-range vision for the future development of parks and open spaces within the city of Santa Monica (Santa Monica 1997). The following objectives and policies related to park and recreational facilities relevant to the entire City and Proposed Project.

Objective 1: Develop and maintain a diversified and balanced system of high-quality open space.

- **Policy 1.1.** Preserve existing public open space.

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- **Policy 1.2.** Provide opportunities for the enjoyment of open space within every Santa Monica Neighborhood.

Objective 2: Expand the open space through use of public properties.

- **Policy 2.2.** Expand open space tole through shared use of certain facilities.
- **Policy 2.3.** Improve school sites as public open space.

5.11.1.2 EXISTING CONDITIONS

City Parks and Recreational Facilities

The City of Santa Monica Community Services provides parks and recreational programs and services to Santa Monica Residents of all ages. The City of Santa Monica operates and maintains 32 parks, a total of approximately 130 acres (Santa Monica 2022). Parks located near the campus include Schader Park, Park Drive Park, Douglas Park, Colorado Center Park, Memorial Park, and Virginia Avenue Park, which are approximately 0.08, 0.09, 0.15, 0.18, 0.63, and 0.80, miles away, respectively.

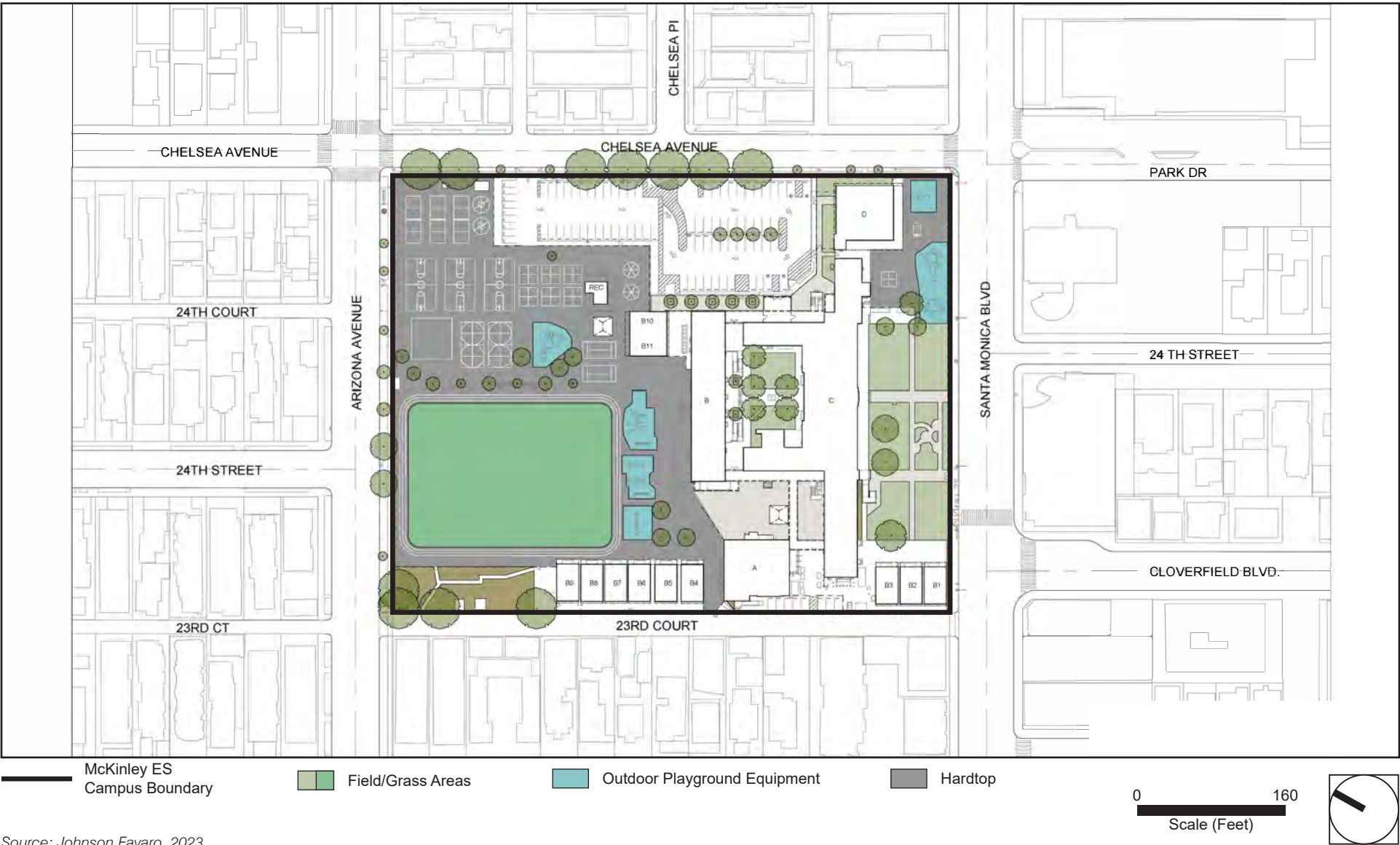
School Recreational Facilities

The existing athletic facilities at the school are available for community use through the Civic Center Act and joint use agreement between the District and the City. When the school facilities are not in use and are not scheduled for school-sponsored or other District-related events, certain community organizations and members are permitted to use school facilities for their events by obtaining a Civic Center Permit from the SMMUSD. Permitted events may include community and/or city use of the playfields, common areas, and classrooms, as permitted in the 2022 “Master Facility Use Agreements with the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School” (City of Santa Monica 2022a).

Recreational activities that occur on McKinley ES through the Civic Center Permit during non-school hours include the American Youth Soccer Organization (AYSO), Childcare Recreation Enrichment Sports Together (CREST) enrichment and camps, Summer Adventure, School Age Programs (SAP), P.S Arts (Visual Arts), playground access and a small learning garden (Santa Monica 2023). As shown in Figure 5.11-1, *Existing Recreational Facilities*, the existing campus has a total of 3.82 acres of playgrounds, fields and open space; with 123,275 square feet of playground/playfield area. The campus currently contains 43,124 square feet of landscaped areas and open space, including a learning garden located near the intersection of the 23rd Court and Arizona Avenue.

Use of school facilities for community use occur outside normal school operating hours, generally after 3:00 pm on weekdays, and after 8:00 a.m. on Saturdays and Sundays, and all outdoor activities must be completed by sunset, on both weekdays and weekends.. Indoor activities are typically completed by 9:00 p.m. but can be permitted until 10:00 p.m. Parking for Civic Center uses is provided in the school’s on-site surface parking lots.

Figure 5.11-1 - Existing Open Space and Recreational Facilities



Source: Johnson Favaro, 2023.

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5.11.2 Thresholds of Significance

According to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, a project would normally have a significant effect on the environment if the project:

- R-1 Would increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated.
- R-2 Includes recreational facilities or requires the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment.

5.11.3 Environmental Impacts

5.11.3.1 IMPACT ANALYSIS

The following impact analysis addresses thresholds of significance for which the Initial Study disclosed potentially significant impacts. The applicable thresholds are identified in brackets after the impact statement.

Impact 5.11-1: The Proposed Project would not result in increased use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated. [Threshold R-1]

The demand for parks is created by population growth that may result from the development of new housing and/or actions that generate an increase in population in area. As described above, the City of Santa Monica operates and maintains 32 parks, a total of approximately 130 acres. The closest park to the campus is Shader Park, located at 1425 Cloverfield Boulevard, approximately 0.08 mile southeast of the campus. The campus is currently used for other community recreational activities as described above.

The Proposed Project would modernize the McKinley ES campus to serve the existing student population. The Proposed Project would not increase student enrollment, would not result in an increase staff at the school, and would not increase population in the surrounding community. Thus, the proposed project would not result in the need for construction of new recreational facilities.

As shown in Figure 5.11-2, *Phase 1 Open Space and Recreational Facilities*, and Figure 5.11-3, *Phase 2 Open Space and Recreational Facilities*, implementation of the Proposed Project would include the modernization and reconfiguration of the existing campus playground.

Construction

Reconfiguration of the existing McKinley ES campus playground would begin during Phase 1 of the Proposed Project with the removal of 11 portable classrooms located on the southern portion of the playground and implementation of the interim parking lot located near the intersection of Chelsea Avenue and Arizona Avenue. During the construction period for Phase 1, the majority of the existing playground, including the grass playfield and portions of the hardtop playground, would be available for use by students and recreational community programs.

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Phase 2 of the Proposed Project would centralize the campus playground areas and concentrate them closer to the core of the campus. During the construction for Phase 2, which could be up to 18 months, access to the campus playground would be temporarily restricted; thus, recreational uses of the playground would be limited to hardtop playground areas located directly west of Building D and the location of the former portable classroom buildings. Physical education programming would be moved to the multi-purposed room (MPR) or other outside areas that are not under construction. Additionally, construction of Phase 2, would require temporary relocation of the ongoing community recreational uses on the campus. Other District facilities would be available for use during construction of the Proposed Project for community recreational activities and programs, including Franklin Elementary School, located approximately 0.7 miles from the campus; Lincoln Middle School, located approximately 0.75 miles from the campus; and Grant Elementary School, located approximately 1.2 miles from the campus. The District would coordinate with each program that currently uses McKinley ES to ensure other recreational facilities are available during construction at McKinley ES. Upon completion of Phase 2, the campus playgrounds and fields would be available for student use and community programs, similar to existing conditions.

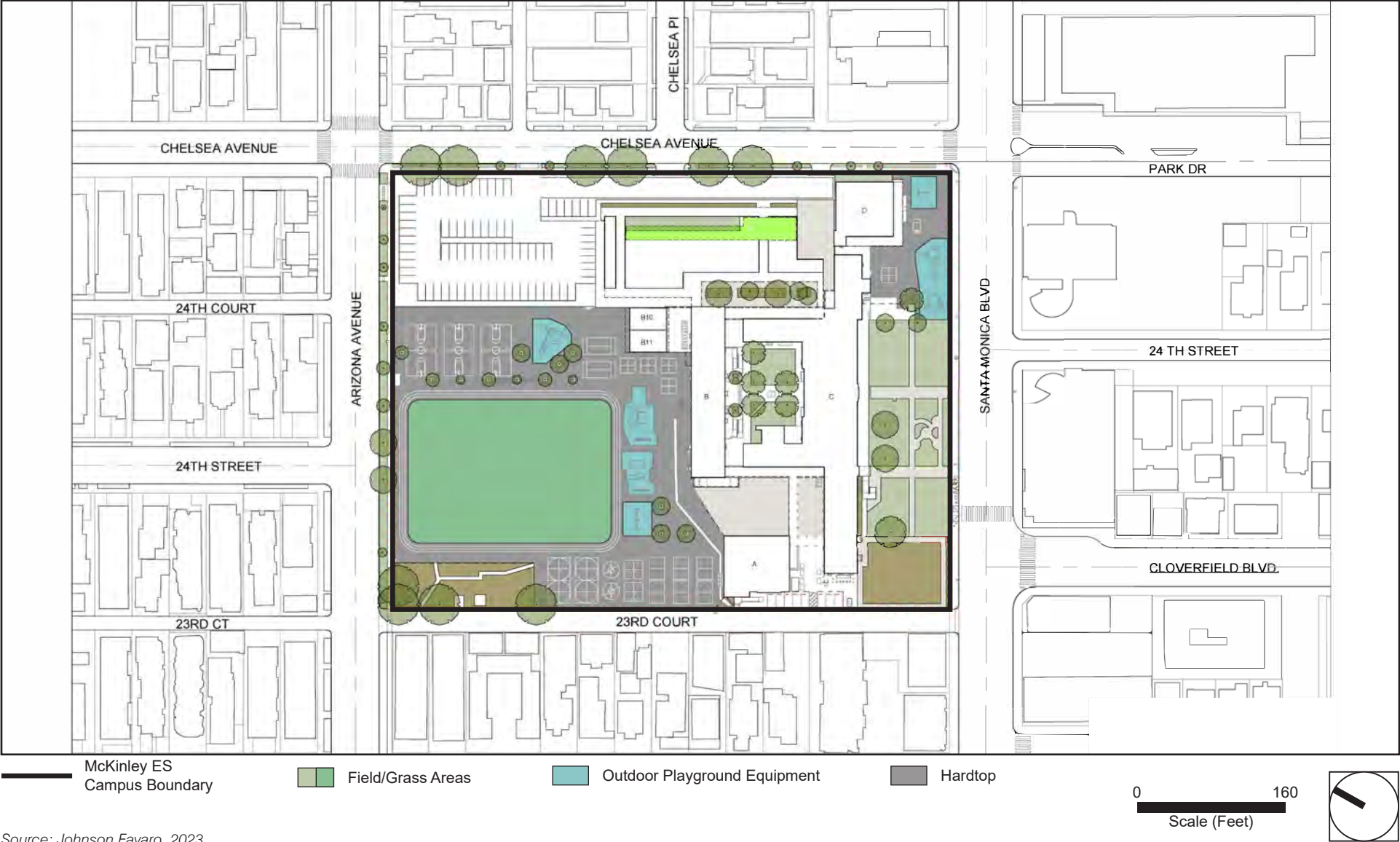
Construction of Phase 3 of the Proposed Project would implement a new parking lot located along 23rd Court, near the intersection with Arizona Avenue. Construction of Phase 3 would require implementation of the new parking lot on the southern portion of the campus, in the location of the former portable classroom buildings. However; construction activities during Phase 3 of the Proposed Project would not restrict the use of the campus playground.

Although, construction activities would restrict partial use of the campus playground, primarily during Phase 2 of the Proposed Project, the athletic fields and facilities at other campuses throughout the District would be available for permit use by the community through the Civic Center Act and joint use agreements with the City of Santa Monica. Because this relocation is temporary and involves few activities, relocation would not result in increased use of other existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of recreational facilities would occur or be accelerated. Therefore, temporary construction impacts to the campus's recreation facilities would be **less than significant**.

Operation

The modernization of the campus would accommodate current and planned future student enrollment in accordance with the District's educational specifications. The proposed facilities and upgrades would be adequate to serve the existing and future student population; thus, increased demand for off-site recreational resources, parks, or other facilities within the City is not anticipated as a result with the Proposed Project's implementation. Additionally, all other community recreational activities that occur under the Civic Center Permit would continue after the completion of construction, in compliance with Policy CE-1.8 and CE-1.9 of the Santa Monica General Plan, to improve and expand sports and recreational facilities throughout the City and provide recreational facilities, offering residents of all ages affordable and safe access to high-quality recreational opportunities. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that the substantial physical deterioration of recreational facilities would occur or be accelerated. Impacts would be **less than significant**.

Figure 5.11-2 - Phase I Open Space and Recreational Facilities



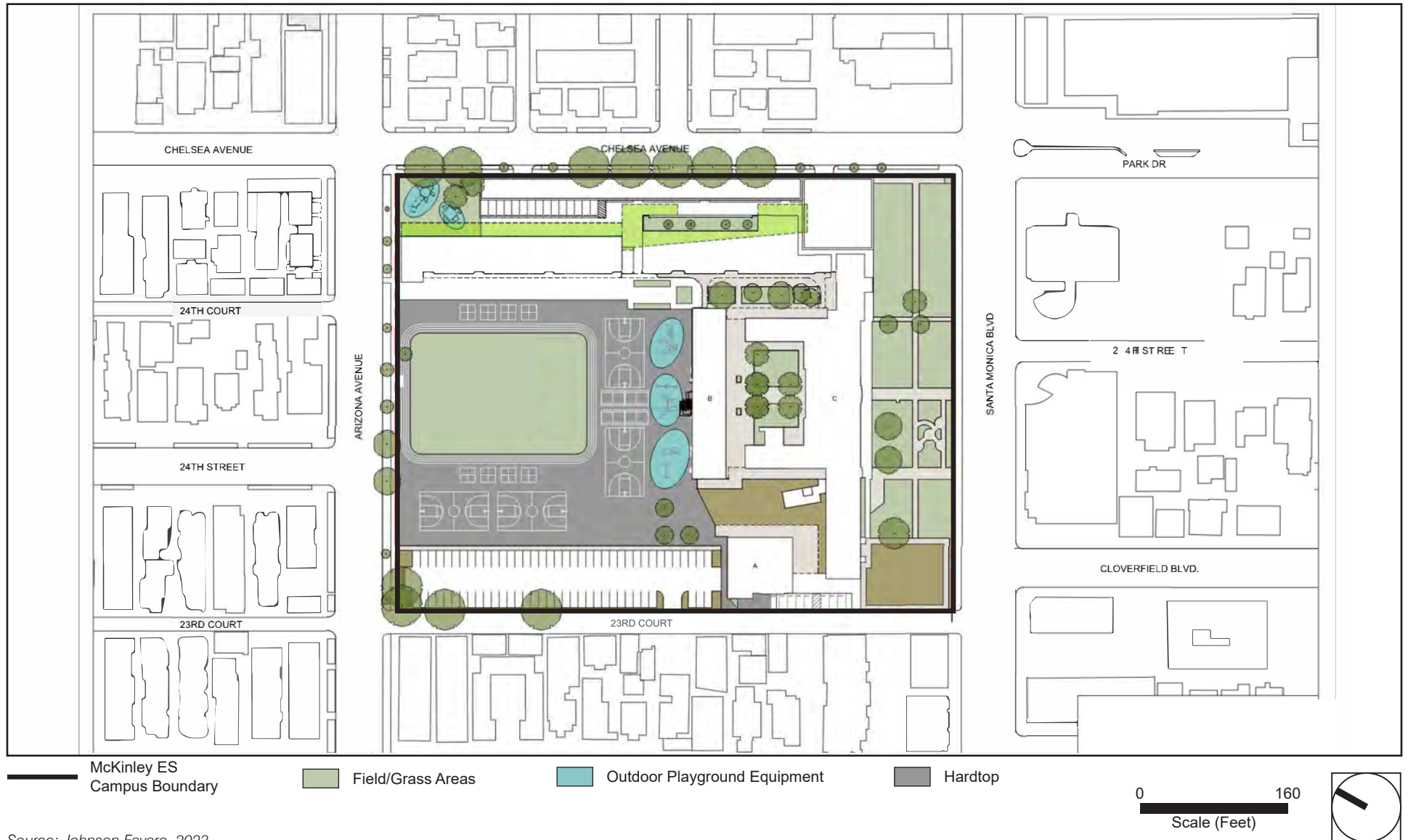
Source: Johnson Favaro, 2023.

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Figure 5.11-3 - Phase 2 Open Space and Recreational Facilities



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Impact 5.11-2: The Proposed Project would not include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment. [Threshold R-2]

The Proposed Project includes the improvement of existing publicly available recreational facilities within the Proposed Project's Site. The Proposed Project would not involve any construction of recreational facilities beyond what is proposed to serve the existing and future students, as described below.

As shown in Table 5.11-1, *McKinley ES Campus Open Space*, the existing campus contains a total of 166,399 square feet of open space, including 123,275 square feet of playfields and playgrounds, 43,124 square feet of landscaped areas, and zero outdoor classroom space.

Phase 1

Phase 1 of the Proposed Project would require approximately 11,028 square feet of demolition, including the removal of 11 existing portable classrooms (B1 through B11) and one restroom building located on the playground. Removal of the 11 portable classroom buildings would result in new playground areas located on the southern portion of the campus, in the location of the former portable buildings (B1 through B11). Additionally, Phase 1 of the Proposed Project would implement an interim parking lot near the intersection of Chelsea Avenue and Arizona Avenue (see Figure 5.11-2). Implementation of Phase 1 of the Proposed Project would reduce the existing playground by approximately 15,012 square feet. At completion of Phase 1, the campus would contain a total of 181,986 square feet of open space, including 108,263 square feet of playfields and playgrounds, 68,987 square feet of landscaped areas, and 4,736 square feet of outdoor classroom space (see Table 5.11-1).

Phase 2 and Phase 3

Phase 2 of the Proposed Project would also centralize the elementary playground areas and concentrate them closer to the core of the campus, which would result in a safe and visible play area. The field would be reconfigured to a standard rectangular play field centrally located in the southern portion of the campus (see Figure 5.11-3). Additionally, Phase 3 of the Project would include the implementation of a new parking lot located along 23rd Court, near the intersection with Arizona Avenue. Construction of the new parking lot would remove the existing garden located at the intersection of 23rd Court and Arizona Avenue, and would remove a portion of the hardtop playground in the location of the former portable classroom buildings.

At completion of Phases 2 and 3, the campus would contain a total of 173,878 square feet of open space, including 93,169 square feet of playfields and playgrounds, 72,605 square feet of landscaped areas, and 8,104 square feet of outdoor classroom space (see Table 5.11-1).

Although playgrounds and play fields on the campus would be reduced by approximately 30,106 square feet at completion of the Proposed Project, compared to existing conditions, landscaped and open space areas on the campus would increase by approximately 29,481 square feet, and outdoor classroom space would increase by approximately 8,104 square feet, in compliance with Policy LU-4.6 of the Santa Monica General Plan, to

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provide open space near residences that are part of an expanding and comprehensive system of passive and active open space

Table 5.11-1 McKinley ES Campus Open Space

	Square Footage	Acres
Existing Campus		
Playfields and Playgrounds	123,275	2.83
Landscaped Areas (includes shelter and learning garden)	43,124	0.99
Outdoor Classrooms	0	0
Total- Existing Campus	166,399	3.82
Campus at Completion of Phase 1		
Playfields and Playgrounds	108,263	2.49
Landscape and Open Space (includes shelter and learning garden)	68,987	1.58
Outdoor Classrooms	4,736	0.11
Total – At Completion of Phase 1	181,986	4.18
Campus at Completion of Phase 2 and 3		
Playfields and Playgrounds	93,169	2.14
Landscape and Open Space (includes shelter and learning garden)	72,605	1.67
Outdoor Classrooms	8,104	0.19
Total – At Completion of Phases 2 and 3	173,878	3.99

As described above, construction activities would restrict partial use of the campus playground, primarily during Phase 2 of the Proposed Project; however, the athletic fields and facilities at other campuses throughout the District would be available for permit use by the community. Following completion of the Proposed Project, the athletic facilities at the school would continue to be available for community use through the Civic Center Act and joint use agreement between the District and the City. When the school facilities are not in use and are not scheduled for school-sponsored or other District-related events, certain community organizations and members would continue to be permitted to use school facilities for their events by obtaining a Civic Center Permit from the SMMUSD, as described above consistent with current operation.

The modernization of the campus would accommodate current and planned future student enrollment in accordance with the District's educational specifications. The proposed facilities and upgrades would be adequate to serve the existing and future student population; thus, the Proposed Project would not result in increased demand for off-site recreational resources, parks, or other facilities within the City. Therefore, implementation of the Proposed Project would result in **less than significant impacts** related to new and/or expanded recreational facilities.

5.11.4 Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

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5.11.5 Level of Significance After Mitigation

All impacts are **less than significant**.

5.11.6 Cumulative Impacts

Cumulative development growth within the City of Santa Monica would result in residential development and result in an increase in residential population. This growth is anticipated to increase the use of existing parks and recreational facilities to a level that could require additional facilities to be developed. As a result, cumulative growth could result in significant deterioration of existing facilities or accelerate deterioration, and thus, result in a significant cumulative impact. As identified above, the implementation of the Proposed Project would not result in an increase in student capacity, new residential uses or residential population that could result in the use of surrounding existing parks and recreational facilities. During construction, students and community programs may require the use of other District facilities or other recreational facilities in the City. However, this use is anticipated to be temporary less than a year, and therefore, the project's contribution to the cumulative deterioration of the existing facilities would be less than cumulatively considerable. Cumulative impacts related to recreational facilities would be **less-than-significant**.

5.11.7 References

Santa Monica, City of. 2015, July 24. Santa Monica Land Use and Circulation Element. Accessed December 1, 2022. https://learn.sharedusemobilitycenter.org/wp-content/uploads/policy-documents-4/Santa%20Monica_Revised%20LUCE%207.24.15_web.pdf.

———. Santa Monica Municipal Code. https://library.qcode.us/lib/santa_monica_ca/pub/municipal_code

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