

Dear Envision 2040 Task Force Members:

Last month, Envision 2040 Task Force members asked many questions about San Jose's park acreage compared to other cities. Data mining of Strategic and General Plans from many cities allow for direct comparison. The following pages show the results of this analysis. Documents analyzed were up to ten years old; minor deviations in park acreage ratio between documents occurred due to increases in population or parkland.

Major points from the analysis:

- San Jose park acreage per thousand parkland is below average compared to the most dense cities, 9th among ten most populous cities, and last among west coast cities. This holds true when including lands from other agencies or not.
- San Jose's neighborhood serving parkland is average compared to most populous cities, and last among west coast cities. San Jose combines trails and portions of regional parks within neighborhood serving park acreage. Most cities report all of trails and regional parks separately.
- San Jose includes K-8 school grounds without MOUs within "neighborhood serving" park acreage figures. Among larger cities examined, only Sacramento also includes all school land as neighborhood serving. Some small local cities include school yards as neighborhood serving but at a level lower than San Jose; only Mountain View has a similar school yard acreage rate.
- San Jose's parkland dedication ordinance rate of 3.0 acres is modestly below the 3.8 acre average of eighteen Santa Clara and San Mateo County cities.
- San Jose's neighborhood serving parks acreage is unbalanced across the planning areas, with some areas heavily dependent on schools grounds without MOUs for "neighborhood serving" parks.
- All but Sacramento indicated a desire to address inequity and balance by providing neighborhood parks near residents. Only Sacramento's customer survey indicated a preference for regional and large urban parks.

Before making decisions about parks for the new General Plan, Task Force members should ask:

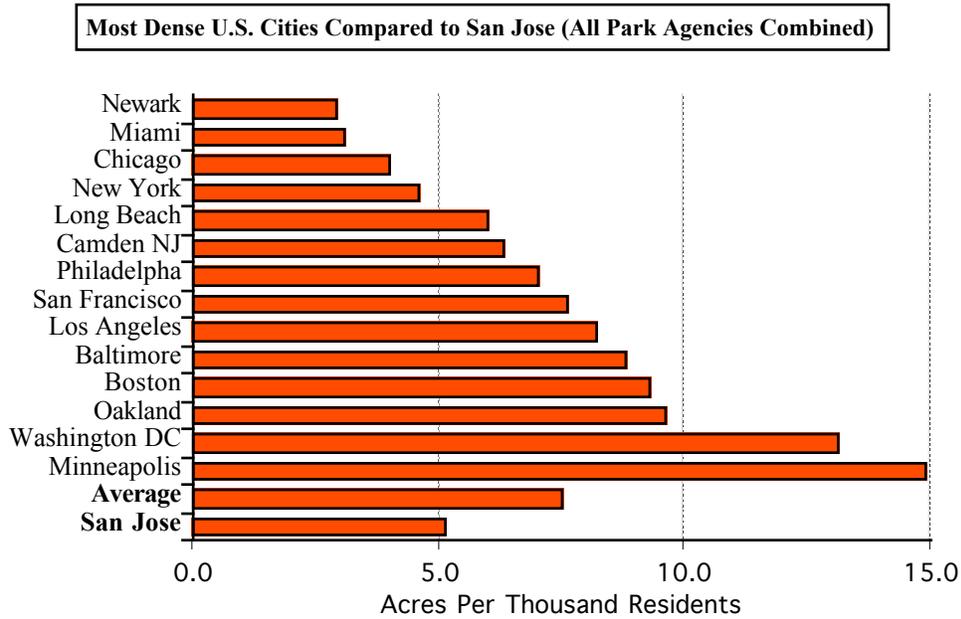
- With which cities does San Jose wish to be compared? Large cities? Small cities?
- With which cities will San Jose compete for knowledge workers and the employers that want them?
- How might ignoring environmental justice issues lead to difficulties in recruiting other workers in the key demographics needed for the City's financial health?
- How might a central park/regional park strategy affect those in neighborhoods not served by parks?
- What risks are associated with dependence upon schools grounds without MOUs? What social, health, and fiscal impacts might result?
- What environmental justice issues are raised when categories of persons cannot gain access?
- How does affordable housing park fee exemptions combined with private recreation credits for market rate complexes contribute to environmental justice concerns about socio-economic inequities?
- What strategies have other communities used to successfully increase neighborhood serving park acreage? What strategies are other large cities proposing?

The Task Force should ask and receive answers to these questions before choosing the Park and Recreation Goals for 2040.

Sincerely,  
--Jean Dresden

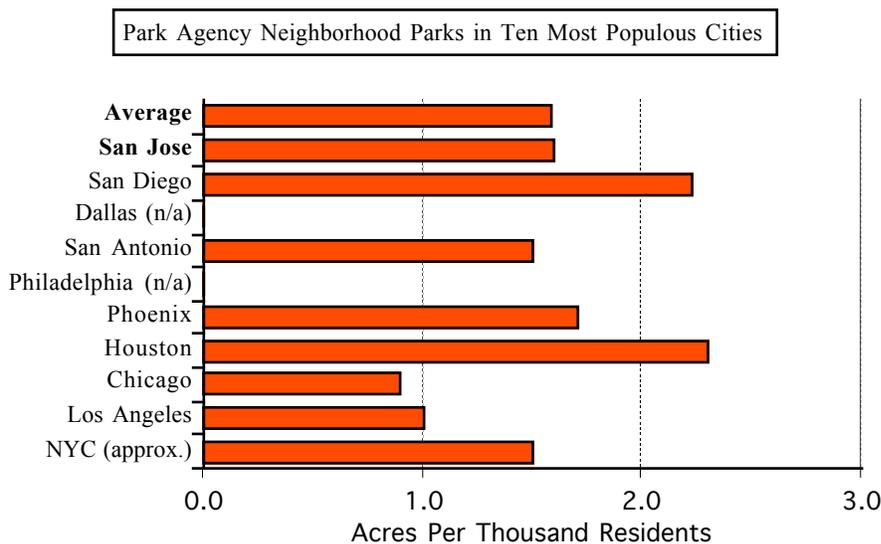
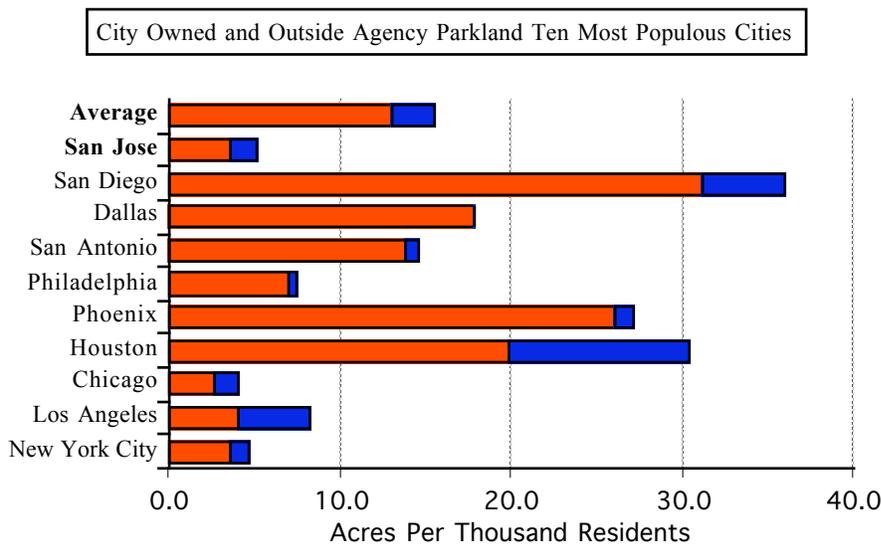
## Most Dense U.S. Cities: Park Acres Per Thousand Residents

When compared to the most dense cities in the United States, San Jose's park acreage is in the bottom third beating only New York, Chicago and Miami. San Jose is not a high density city; San Jose's acreage rate was appended to data from the original report. San's Jose's acreage rate includes County Parks and Open Space Authority lands bur not Don Edwards Wildlife Refuge.



## Ten Most Populous U.S. Cities: Park Acres Per Thousand Residents

Among the ten most populous cities, San Jose's overall city park acreage is tied for last with New York City - the most populous city. San Jose's neighborhood serving city-owned land acreage (including schools) is comparable to other large cities. San Jose is the only city that is highly dependent on school grounds for park space. Many agencies report joint use MOUs as a desired strategy to reduce duplication and provide more fields. Because cities may not consider schools with MOUs as park facilities, cities marked "0" for school land may have joint use agreements not reported in park plan documents. All cities reported plans to increase neighborhood serving parks. If park rates were not reported by agencies, data was constructed from adding individual park acreage. Goals were not found for some cities. School acreage was included only when a city reported it as park acreage.



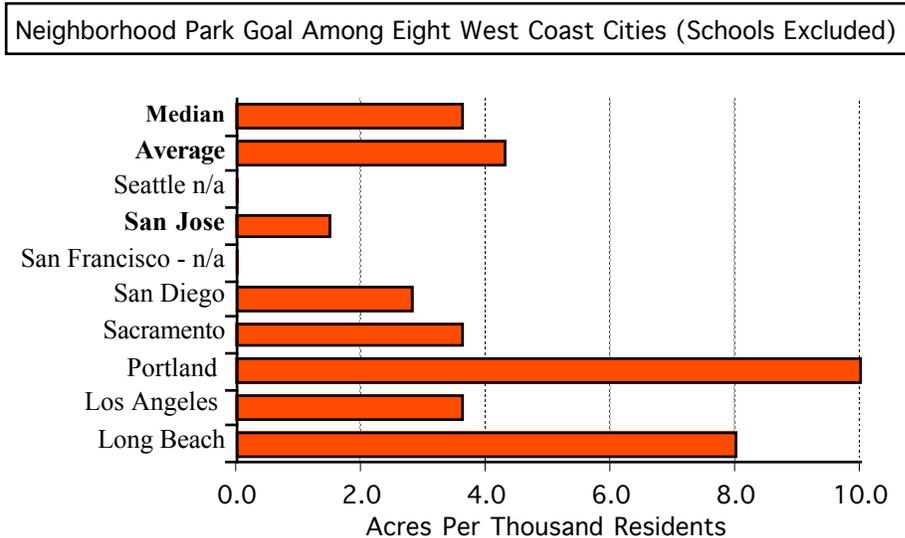
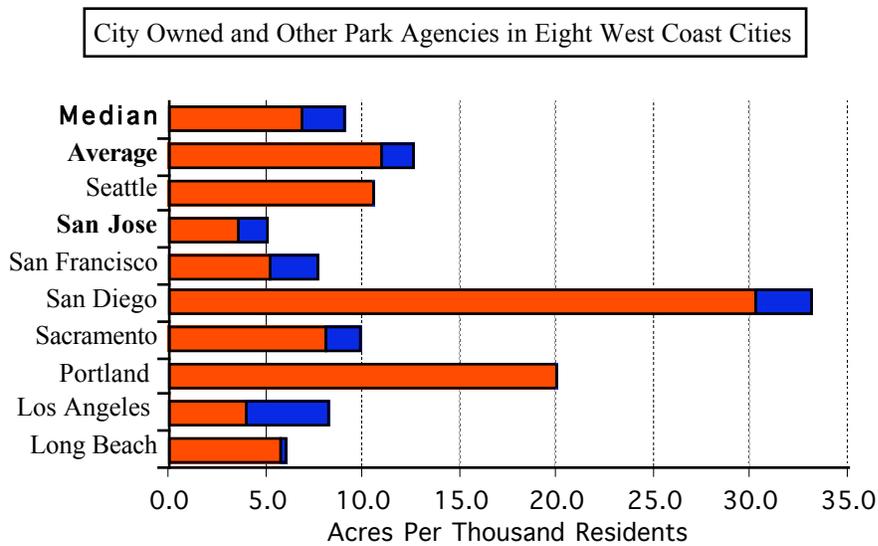
## Eight Major West Coast Cities: Acres Per Thousand Residents

Among eight major west coast cities, San Jose's city-owned and total parkland from all agencies is lowest and about half of median. San Jose has the lowest goal of city-owned neighborhood parkland--below half of the median. Only Sacramento and San Jose report school acreage as park land. Both report using portions of regional parks and trails in calculations of neighborhood serving parklands. Other cities either do not include or do not report. Nearly all cities report the importance of parks nearby. Sacramento reports preference for adding to existing parks. San Francisco reports land acquisition goals as part of specific plans, connectivity and wildlife corridors and walking time: 5 minutes to a tot lot and 10 minutes to other amenities. Seattle's goals are village specific and related to density formulas.

**Table 4: Eight Major West Coast Cities: Acres Per Thousand Residents**

School Acres reported when city claims neighborhood serving park credit for schools.

Sources: General and/or Strategic Plans for each City.



# Park Acres Standards Used for Fees in Local Communities

Among 18 Santa Clara and San Mateo County cities, San Jose’s PDO/PIO fee standard is below average with 3.0 acres (vs. 3.8). San Jose’s fee level is below San Jose's goal of 3.5 acres per 1000 for neighborhood serving parkland. Park staff shared at July Envision 2040 Task Force meeting that San Jose’s current fee level usually achieves a net rate of 1.5 acres per thousand due to the cost of developing the parks.

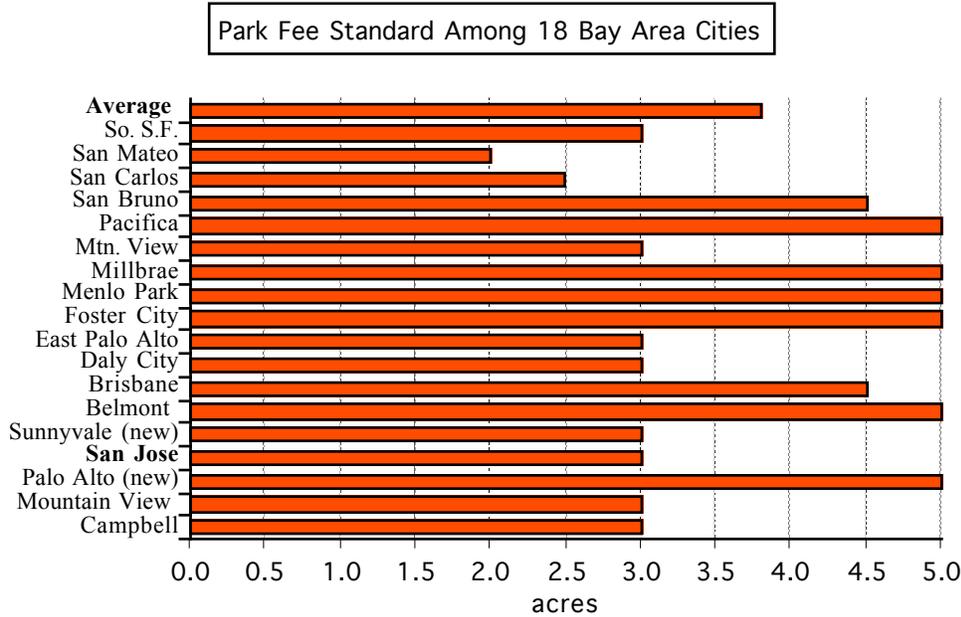


Table 1: Park Acres Standards Used for Fees in Local Communities

Santa Clara County		San Mateo County (cont.)	
Campbell <sup>a</sup>	3.0	Foster City <sup>a</sup>	5.0
Mountain View <sup>a</sup>	3.0	Menlo Park <sup>a</sup>	5.0
Palo Alto (new) <sup>b</sup>	5.0	Millbrae <sup>a</sup>	5.0
<b>San Jose</b> <sup>c</sup>	<b>3.0</b>	Mtn. View <sup>a</sup>	3.0
Sunnyvale (new) <sup>d</sup>	3.0	Pacifica <sup>a</sup>	5.0
<b>San Mateo County</b>		San Bruno <sup>a</sup>	4.5
Belmont <sup>a</sup>	5.0	San Carlos <sup>a</sup>	2.5
Brisbane <sup>a</sup>	4.5	San Mateo <sup>a</sup>	2.0
Daly City <sup>a</sup>	3.0	So. S.F. <sup>a</sup>	3.0
East Palo Alto <sup>a</sup>	3.0	<b>Average</b>	<b>3.8</b>

<sup>a</sup> Sunnyvale Baseline Financial Analysis July 2008

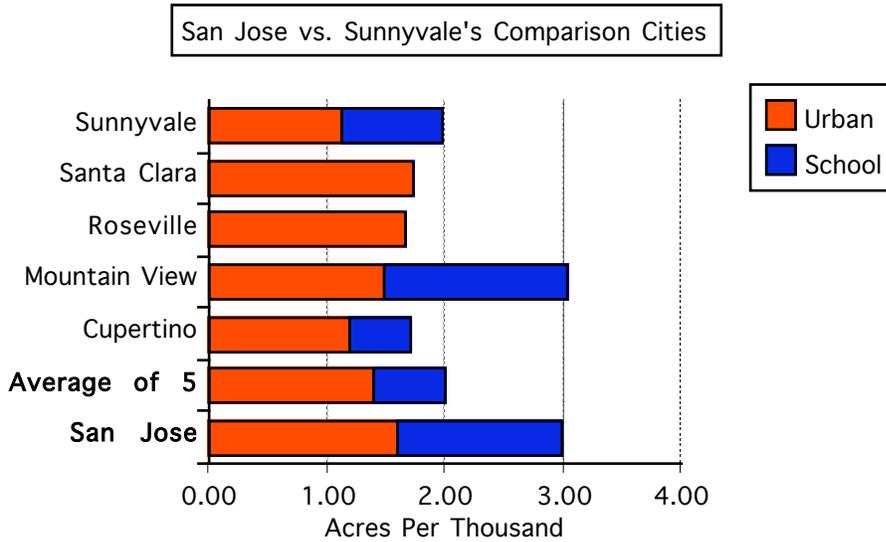
<sup>b</sup> Palo Alto Council minutes 6-2-08

<sup>c</sup> San Jose PDO/PIO ordinance

<sup>d</sup> San Jose Mercury, July 29, 2009

## Level of Sevice Among Sunnyvale's Comparable Cities: Acres per 1000

San Jose’s Neighborhood Serving park acreage is similar to five small cities selected by Sunnyvale for a comparison study. San Jose was not in the original study and has been appended to this table. Sunnyvale City Council used these results to support an increase of their park fees to 3.0 acres per thousand. San Jose and Mountain View both report similar levels of dependence of school land. Sunnyvale reports about half as much school land; Sunnyvale maintains the school lands that it reports.



**Table 5: Level of Service Among Sunnyvale's Comparable Cities**

City	Urban <sup>a</sup>	School	MOU
Cupertino <sup>b</sup>	1.2	0.5	
Mountain View <sup>b</sup>	1.5	1.5	
Roseville <sup>b</sup>	1.7	0.0	
Santa Clara <sup>b</sup>	1.7	0.0	
Sunnyvale <sup>b</sup>	1.1	0.9	include only if use agreement <sup>c</sup>
<b>San Jose</b> <sup>d</sup>	<b>1.6</b>	<b>1.4</b>	a few; schools without MOU included

<sup>a</sup> Urban definition invented by Sunnyvale consultant. Appears similar to San Jose neighborhood serving.

<sup>b</sup> Sunnyvale Open Space and Recreation Sub-Element Executive summary

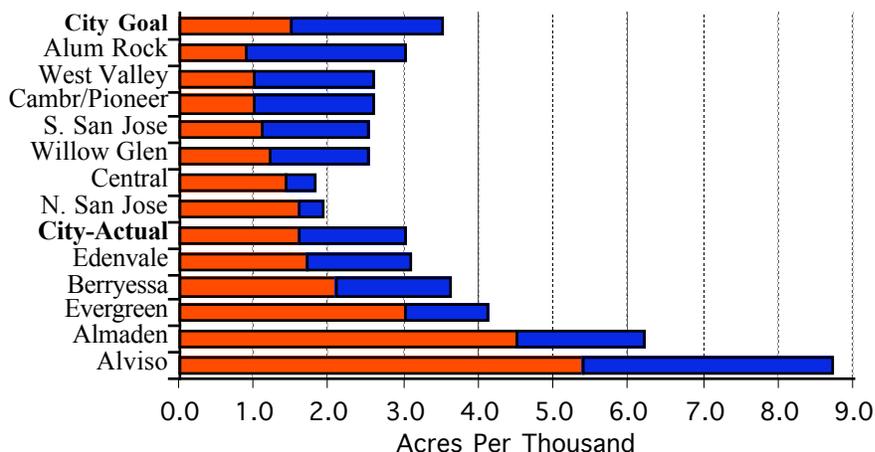
<sup>c</sup> Sunnyvale Parks of the Future Plan Level of Service Analysis Appendix C. 2008

<sup>d</sup> San Jose General Plan

## Parkland by Planning Area

The current General Plan goal is 3.5 acres per thousand of neighborhood serving park land, with School grounds limited to 2.0 acres per thousand. There are wide disparities by planning area.

"Neighborhood Serving" and School Grounds by Planning Area



			Current Neighborhood Serving									Neighborhood and Regional	
2020	2007	2007		2009 Acres		2009 Ratios			New	2020	Regional acres	2009 ratio	2020 ratio
Pop. (000s)	Pop. (000s)	Density (000s)		CSJ	School	CSJ only	School	CSJ + School	CSJ acres	CSJ only			
39.9	36.6	5.7	<b>Almaden</b>	164	62	4.5	1.7	6.2	1	4.1	62	6.2	5.7
155.5	146.4	14.7	<b>Alum Rock</b>	135	301	0.9	2.1	3.0	8	0.9	1020	7.9	7.5
2.9	2.4	0.8	<b>Alviso</b>	13	8	5.4	3.3	8.8	16	10.0	0	5.4	10.0
93	72.3	11.6	<b>Berryessa</b>	150	106	2.1	1.5	3.5	12	1.7	158	4.3	3.4
68.7	59.8	10.8	<b>Cambr/Pioneer</b>	62	95	1.0	1.6	2.6	1	0.9	0	1.0	0.9
150.9	114.8	15.2	<b>Central</b>	159	45	1.4	0.4	1.8	21	1.2	276	3.8	3.0
156.1	143.3	10.9	<b>Edenvale</b>	244	205	1.7	1.4	3.1	1	1.6	15	1.8	1.7
110.9	92.8	9.6	<b>Evergreen</b>	282	105	3.0	1.1	4.2	1	2.6	0	3.0	2.6
53.7	20.5	3.6	<b>N. San Jose</b>	32	6	1.6	0.3	1.9	25	1.1	0	1.6	1.1
129.2	106.3	14.6	<b>S. San Jose</b>	120	146	1.1	1.4	2.5	21	1.1	358	4.5	3.9
104.3	102.1	14.7	<b>West Valley</b>	107	160	1.0	1.6	2.6	2	1.0	0	1.0	1.0
82.8	75.9	11.4	<b>Willow Glen</b>	93	97	1.2	1.3	2.5	1	1.1	0	1.2	1.1
<b>1147.9</b>	<b>973.2</b>		<b>Total</b>	<b>1560</b>	<b>1336</b>	<b>1.6</b>	<b>1.4</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>1.5</b>	<b>1889</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>3.1</b>

Source: Draft Greenprint 2009 Update for Parks, Recreation Facilities and Trails

Existing Neighborhood Serving = developed, undeveloped, or open space a portion of regional parks are allocated to neighborhood serving

New CSJ acres = lands secured or potential parks noted on area plans or likely

Regional Acres = acres that are not neighborhood serving; includes mountains and fee access

School acreage = public elementary and middle, plus high schools with MOU.

School acreage and ratio in 2020 not posted. Unclear acreage impacts due to increased enrollment with new buildings shrinking playgrounds, increased charters, limited access due to school budget pressures, increased/decreased MOUs, new schools, closed schools.

2020 Ratio calculations use new and planned parkland known at this time

## Major U.S. Cities: Park Acres Per Thousand Residents.

San Jose is 47th of 54 Cities for city-owned park acres per thousand. Some other low acreage cities are strongly served by other agencies, such as Washington DC. When other agencies acreage is added to San Jose's city-owned lands and compared to city-owned land of other cities, San Jose moves to 44th place. Since the largest acreage rates are much different from the smallest, the median is a better measure than average. The median city-owned acreage is 9.7 acres per thousand.

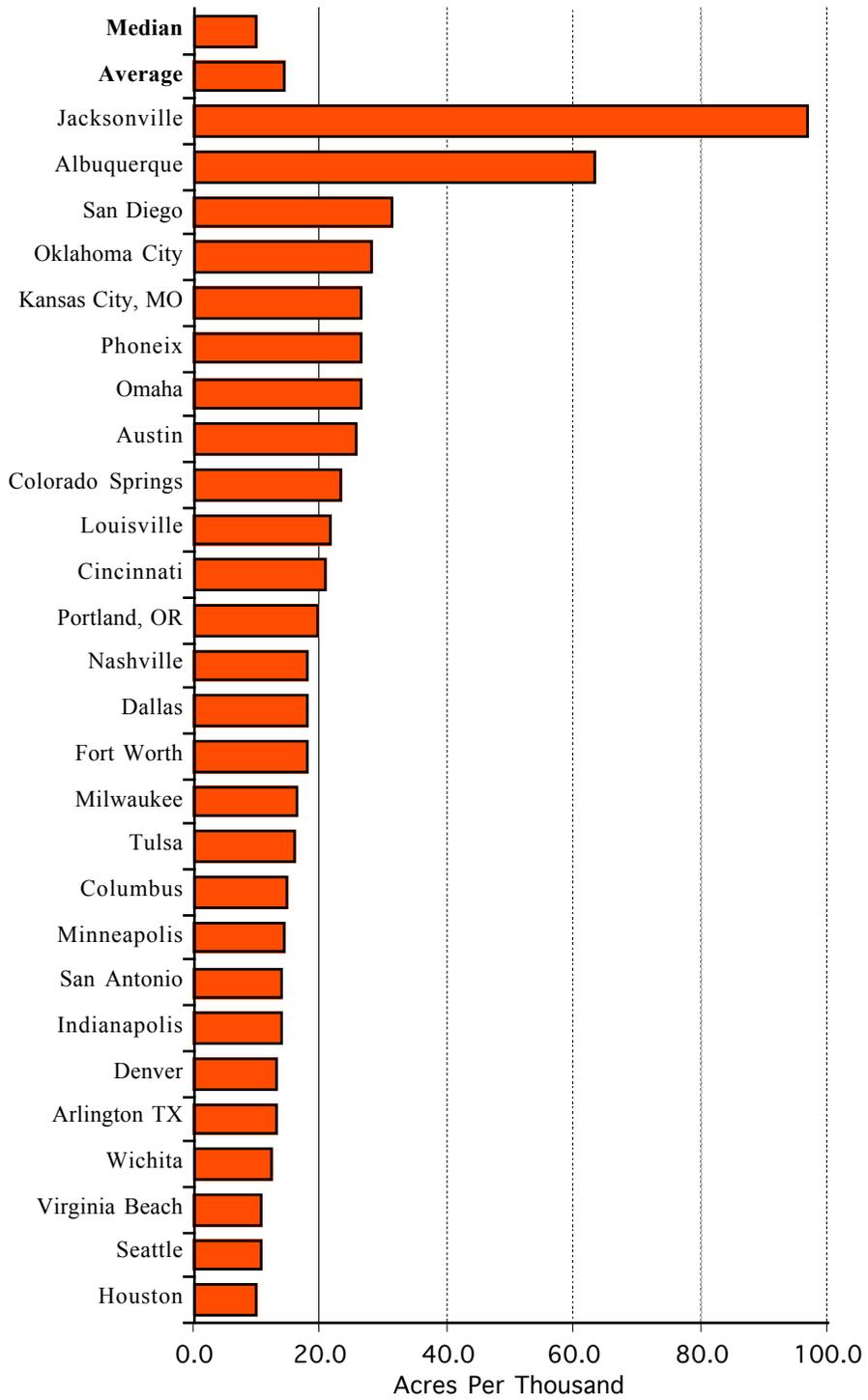
**Table 6: Major U.S. Cities: Park Acres Per Thousand Residents.**

City owned lands only. Includes Major Parks.

City	Acres/1000	City	Acres/1000
Albuquerque	63.0	Mesa, AZ	5.9
Arlington TX	12.9	Miami	3.1
Atlanta	8.8	Milwaukee	16.3
Austin	25.4	Minneapolis	14.3
Baltimore	7.6	Nashville	18.0
Boston	4.0	New York	3.6
Chicago	2.7	Oakland	5.2
Cincinnati	20.5	Oklahoma City	27.8
Cleveland	5.4	Omaha	26.2
Colorado Springs	23.1	Philadelphia	7.3
Columbus	14.5	Phoenix	26.2
Dallas	17.9	Pittsburgh	8.7
Denver	13.1	Portland, OR	19.6
Detroit	6.5	Sacramento	8.0
El Paso	3.1	San Antonio	13.8
Fort Worth	17.8	San Diego	31.1
Fresno	3.5	San Francisco	5.2
Honolulu	5.9	<b>San Jose</b>	<b>3.7</b>
Houston	9.9	Seattle	10.5
Indianapolis	13.7	St. Louis	8.7
Jacksonville	96.7	Tampa	9.4
Kansas City, MO	26.5	Toledo	7.2
Las Vegas	5.7	Tucson	5.5
Long Beach	5.8	Tulsa	15.6
Los Angeles	4.0	Virginia Beach	10.5
Louisville	21.3	Washington DC	1.7
Memphis	7.2	Wichita	12.2
<b>Average = 14.3</b>		<b>Median = 9.7</b>	

Source: Center for Park Excellence, Trust for Public Land, FY 2005

Cities Above Median Of City Owned Acres Per Thousand



Note scale change for cities below the median.

Cities Below Median of City Owned Park Acres Per Thousand

