



Sur La Brea Park is a large neighborhood park in the Southeast area of Torrance and is situated on 7.5 acres at 23610 Cabrillo Avenue in Southeast Torrance. The actual land acquisition began in 1965. The park was officially named in that same year. Although, the presence of oil wells caused many long delays in the park construction, they were also a main factor in saving this land for a park site. A literal translation of the park name is "south of the tar".

The search for a park site started in the mid-1950's. Lack of funds prevented the City from purchasing any of the early sites that had been considered. As the years went by, each and every one of these sites was subdivided either for residential purposes, school construction, or for commercial development. Finally, in 1965, the Recreation Department, the Park and Recreation Commission, and the Planning Department decided on a strategy to search out a site that was so "checker boarded" with oil well leases and pipeline easements, that there would be little chance that a developer would purchase the land and put together a subdivision. This strategy was accepted by the City Council and was put into effect. For the next 19 years, the City Council, City Attorneys, City Manager's Office, Planning Department, Recreation Department, and the Southeast Torrance Homeowners Association worked together to turn this land into a park. An additional 4 acres on the east end were acquired in 1970. Construction was started in 1973 and the park was dedicated on June 1, 1974. The 1984 re-dedication of this park was led by the Mayor and was marked as a major victory and the end of a long struggle for Sur La Brea Park.

This park's special feature is a recreation building named the "La Casita" Community Building (with meeting room) is located at the top of the hill. This building was donated to the City from "The Torrance Company". Because the children's play area has a tot lot and is adjacent to "La Casita", it is often used in conjunction with children's parties. Another one of the parks most used areas is the gazebo which is also popular for birthday parties. The park also features a picnic area that is shaded by a grove of tall trees, a softball diamond, a fenced

lighted basketball court, two lighted tennis courts, and a walking/jogging path which is .31 miles.

Located in an area once rich with the oil reserves that helped give the City of Torrance its start, this haven "South of the Tar" developed into another fine park, promising a multitude of recreational experiences for the community.