



DATE: October 28, 2014

CATEGORY: New Business

DEPT.: Community Services

TITLE: **Parks and Open Space Plan**

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt the 2014 Parks and Open Space Plan as recommended by the Parks and Recreation Commission.

BACKGROUND

The Parks and Open Space Plan (Plan) represents a review of open space needs within the community and within each neighborhood Planning Area. The Plan offers both a long-range vision and an evaluation of current needs based on new development and future parks and open space projects. The Plan also prioritizes Planning Areas that are most in need of additional open space. The last update of the Plan was adopted by the City Council on June 24, 2008. The current Plan revision is a periodic update and intended to ensure the Plan remains relevant and responsive to the changing needs of the community. Staff anticipates a more comprehensive review of the Plan in the next five years.

The Parks and Recreation Commission (Commission) has held two public hearings on the Commission's recommendations on May 8, 2013 and on January 15, 2014. The Commission also held a joint meeting with the Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee (B/PAC) and the City Council on March 12, 2014 and on April 22, 2014, respectively. The Commission has held 13 meetings over the last 18 months to update the Plan document and to make recommendations for future park and recreation projects and initiatives.

The proposed Plan is currently in text format and will be reformatted with graphics and pictures prior to publication.

DISCUSSION

While the City has an outstanding park and recreation system, its parks and open space needs have increased in response to population growth, more areas of the City zoned for residential use, higher residential density, and availability of open space resources within a safe walking distance. The City continues to search for land to develop parks in areas most in need of additional open space and to develop trail systems for greater pedestrian and bicycle mobility. However, with 98 percent of the City's available land already developed, new park land will most likely be developed as part of a redevelopment project or the City's purchase of residential lots, such as the property at 771 North Rengstorff Avenue or Mariposa and Del Medio Parks, which combined two adjacent properties.

Since the last Plan update, the City has added the following parks, trail extensions, and recreation facilities to serve the recreational need of its residents:

New Parks, Trail Extensions, and Recreation Facilities:

Parks:

- Mariposa Park (0.61 acre)
- Del Medio Park (0.38 acre)
- 771 North Rengstorff Avenue Park (1.22 acres) (purchased – to be developed)
- Pilot Program for Off-Leash Dog Areas at Six Park Sites

Trails:

Stevens Creek Trail

- El Camino Real to Sleeper Avenue – 0.52 mile
- Sleeper Avenue to Dale Avenue/Heatherstone Way – 0.30 mile

Permanente Creek Trail

- Highway 101 to Old Middlefield Way – 0.14 mile
- Old Middlefield Way to Rock Street – 0.13 mile
- Old Middlefield Way/Highway 101 Grade Separation

Bay Trail

- Improved Access and Signage of the Bay Trail to the Sunnyvale Baylands

Recreation Facilities:

- The View Teen Center (to be opened in November 2014)
- Bubb Park Restroom
- Fitness Cluster at Rengstorff Park
- Renovation of the Skate Park at Rengstorff Park

Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Projects Approved by the City Council:

- Design of Fayette Area Park (estimated at 1.29 acres)
- Permanente Creek Trail, Extension from Rock Street to West Middlefield Road
- Permanente Creek Trail, Amphitheatre Parkway Crossing, Construction
- 771 North Rengstorff Avenue Park, Design
- Rengstorff Park Lighting Improvements
- Rengstorff Park Community Center Renovation, Design
- Urban Forestry Master Plan update

Future CIP Projects:

- South Whisman Area Park, Design (estimated at 3.09 acres)
- Permanente Creek Trail, Extension From West Middlefield Road to McKelvey Park, Feasibility Study
- Community Garden

Public Input

Two public hearings have been held for community input on May 8, 2013 and January 15, 2014. Joint meetings have also been held with the B/PAC on March 12, 2014 and with the City Council on April 22, 2014. In summary, public comments focused primarily on the following topic areas:

- The need for additional parks;
- The need for additional garden space such as urban gardens, demonstration gardens, and/or edible gardens;
- The possibility of developing a community garden at 771 North Rengstorff Avenue;
- The need for an east-west trail corridor;
- The need to preserve the Hetch Hetchy right-of-way;
- The need to improve connectivity between trail systems;
- The need for dog parks; and
- The need to extend the Stevens Creek Trail and create an access point to the approximately 20 acres of open space located east of Highway 85.

Changes in Population and Open Space

Since the last Plan update, the City has added a total of 20.81 acres of open space. However, new park acreage has not kept up with the growing population and the City-wide acreage of open space per 1,000 residents has decreased slightly from 13.51 to 13.35 acres and from 2.61 to 2.58 acres when excluding the North Bayshore (NBS) Planning Area. The City needs an additional 30.85 acres of open space to meet the City's goal of 3.0 acres of open space per 1,000 residents when excluding the NBS.

The following is a summary of changes to population and open space acres since the last Plan update. A more comprehensive analysis of population growth, park acres, and open space needs can be found in the Plan document (Attachment 1, Appendix 1).

Planning Area	Population			Open Space		
	2006	2010	% Change	2006 Open Space per 1,000 Persons	New Open Space Acres	2010 Open Space per 1,000 Persons
Central	11,201	11,318	1.0%	2.00	0.61	2.03
Grant	5,334	5,424	1.69%	6.48	0	6.34
Miramonte	9,395	9,657	2.79%	6.60	0	6.42
North Bayshore	738	817	10.70%	1,063.14	18.60	983.1
Rengstorff	6,153	6,577	6.89%	0.13	1.22	0.31
San Antonio	13,689	13,951	1.91%	1.34	0.38	1.34
Stierlin	8,878	9,083	2.31%	2.20	0	2.15
Sylvan-Dale	5,634	6,396	13.53%	1.49	0	1.31
Thompson	2,540	2,541	0.00%	2.56	0	2.56
Whisman	8,393	8,627	2.79%	1.84	0	1.79
TOTAL	71,955	74,391	3.39%	13.51	20.81	13.35
Total Without NBS	71,217	73,574	3.31%	2.61	2.21	2.58

Parks and Open Space Plan

Staff has updated the 2014 Plan (Attachment 1) based on the Commission’s recommendations for future parks and open space projects, and updated demographics, park acreage, and new and proposed CIP projects. The following is a list of Plan highlights:

- Total City-wide acreage of open space per 1,000 residents decreased from 13.51 to 13.35 acres.
- Acreage of open space per 1,000 residents, excluding the North Bayshore Planning Area, decreased slightly from 2.61 to 2.58 acres. The number of acres needed to meet the City’s goal of 3.0 acres per 1,000 residents is 30.85 acres.
- The City added a total of 20.81 acres of open space since the last Plan update, which includes three mini-parks and the acreage associated with the recent extensions of the Stevens Creek Trail.

- Three new mini-parks have been added (one undeveloped) and trail extensions have been completed on the Permanente Creek Trail to Rock Street and the Stevens Creek Trail to Dale Avenue/Heatherstone Way.
- The Open Space Needs Analysis (Attachment 1, Appendix 3) resulting in the ranking of Planning Areas based on the need for additional open space remains unchanged from the 2008 Plan update. The San Antonio Planning Area remains the neighborhood most in need of additional open space and the Grant Planning Area ranks the lowest in need of additional open space.
- There are an estimated 2,844 potential future housing units that are in the Community Development Department pipeline, primarily in the San Antonio and the Whisman Planning Areas (Attachment 1, Appendix 5). Both Planning Areas have less than 2.0 acres of open space per 1,000 residents. New park projects for these Planning Areas include Fayette Area Park (San Antonio Planning Area) and Whisman Area Park (Whisman Planning Area).
- The City Council has approved the commitment of approximately \$31 million in Park Land Dedication funds to park-related projects over the last five years (Attachment 1, Appendix 4).

Key Recommendations

The following is a summary of key Plan recommendations.

- Acquire land for parks, trails, and open space areas, especially in Planning Areas deemed most deficient in open space.
- Review and update the Urban Forestry Management Plan.
- Look for opportunities to add a community garden.
- Look for opportunities to add off-leash dog areas to existing open space.
- Work with the Mountain View Whisman School District to construct joint-use restrooms at Castro, Landels, and Huff Elementary Schools/Parks.
- Work with school districts, utility companies, private owners, government agencies, etc., to preserve and protect existing open space.

- Preserve the City's urban forest and canopy in accordance with the Urban Forestry Management Plan in order to retain neighborhood character and ensure the greening of the increasingly urbanized environment.
- Improve access to parks, trails, and pathways through safe street crossings and other techniques.
- Continue developing a City-wide network of trails and pathways to connect neighborhoods to each other and to open space resources, trails, and transit centers.
- Look for opportunities to add hydration systems and drinking fountains along trails and pathways.
- Look for opportunities to develop an east-west trail corridor.

A comprehensive list of the Commission's recommendations for new parks and open space projects can be found in Attachment 1, Chapter 4 – Recommendations.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact to the approval of the Parks and Open Space Plan.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Revise the 2014 Parks and Open Space Plan as directed by the City Council.
2. Direct staff to return to the Commission for additional work as noted by Council analysis.
3. Provide other direction.

PUBLIC NOTICING

Agenda posting and notification sent to the Parks and Recreation Commission, Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee, and interested parties.

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Attachment: 1. 2014 Parks and Open Space Plan

cc: CDD, ACDD/PM, ZA, PWD, APWD – Solomon