

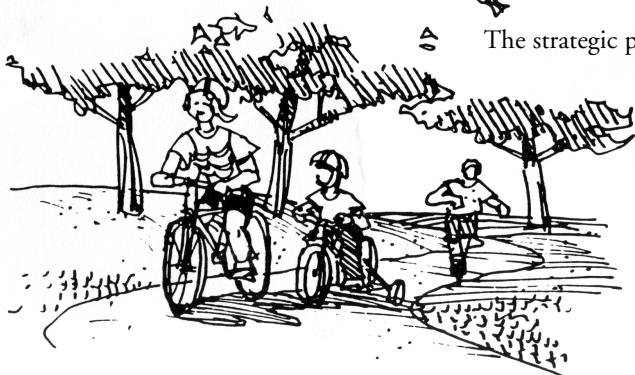
*"We need active parks and community centers for health and well-being, both for the individual and for the community."*

The City of San José maintains 3500 acres of parks and offers a wide array of programs and services to residents of all ages and interests. San Jose continues to support the livability of neighborhoods, offer opportunities for individuals to enjoy life, and strengthen communities of people. Sports and recreation programs are provided to support an active lifestyle. Neighborhood Services provides leadership training and funding to improve quality of life. Youth Services supports and enhances healthy behaviors and lifestyles. Recreation and Community Services offers programs and services at community centers, senior centers, youth centers, and aquatic facilities to serve San Jose neighborhoods. Citywide and regional facilities include golf courses, children's zoo, museum, botanical gardens, regional parks, and lakes. These services and resources provide opportunities for residents and visitors to play, learn, celebrate, and socialize.

The City began a strategic planning process in January 1999 to identify future needs and opportunities for parks, community facilities, recreation programs, and neighborhood services. To date, over 800 residents have provided input on community needs and preferences as well as goals and strategies for the future. A statistically valid telephone survey of one-thousand residents was assessed.

The strategic planning process included three phases:

- *Community needs assessment*
- *Strategy development*
- *Action plan development*



The plan consists of five core elements:

- *A vision* for the City of San José parks, recreation facilities, programs, and neighborhood services;
- *Core values* or qualities of parks, recreation, and neighborhood services that are most valued by the community;
- *Goals* that define the purpose of this interdepartmental strategic plan;
- *Strategies* that describe how the City will achieve its vision citywide and in each council district; and
- *Performance* measures to measure success at achieving this vision.

The strategic plan provides a specific, community-supported action plan for the future of parks, community facilities, and programs in San Jose.

*"We need stress reliever parks...places to relax, unwind, enjoy a sunset, walk and enjoy nature."*

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## Vision

San Jose's community values and aspirations for the future are guiding forces for this strategic plan. The community vision for San Jose's parks, community facilities, programs, and neighborhood services is:



## Core Values

Core values are qualities most valued by San Jose residents. These qualities will guide all actions and strategies. The values embodied in the goals and strategies for San Jose parks, community facilities, and programs are:

- *Accessibility*
- *Inclusivity*
- *Affordability*
- *Equity*
- *Diversity*

## Goals

Goals provide focus and direction to the action plan. Nine goals emerged during the strategic planning process, defining key directions for the future. These goals are:

- Provide safe, clean and renovated facilities.
- Increase parks and open space.
- Develop public gathering places.
- Expand trail connections to parks and recreation facilities.
- Build and improve community image and livability.
- Promote stewardship and volunteerism.
- Improve health and wellness.
- Expand fiscal resources and partnerships.
- Promote economic development.

## Strategies

Strategies are the means to achieve San Jose's goals and vision for parks, recreation facilities, recreation programs, and neighborhood services. Citywide and district strategies form an action plan to achieve the goals. These strategies address six categories:

- *Programs and Services* - Offer recreation programs and neighborhood and human services that respond to neighborhood needs, strengthen neighborhoods, and encourage healthy lifestyles.
- *Parks and Open Space* - Acquire, develop, renovate, modernize, and preserve parks and open space.
- *Citywide Trails* - Create a citywide trail network that encourages alternative transportation modes and provides



access to recreation.

- *Recreation Facilities* - Provide access to various types of recreational facilities for all residents.
- *Public Outreach* - Increase public awareness of parks, recreational facilities, programs, and services.
- *Resource Development* - Develop resources necessary to implement the community vision.

## Strategy Overview

This chapter provides an overview of strategies to enhance San Jose's parks, recreation facilities, and programs. These strategies include:

## Programs and Services

- *Recreation Programs and Neighborhood Services* - Provide community-driven recreation and neighborhood services that:
  - Promote neighborhood development;
  - Improve health and wellness;
  - Promote youth development; and
  - Support the well-being of persons with disabilities and seniors.
- *Inclusive Programs* - Provide a therapeutic recreation specialist at each multi-service community center to plan and implement inclusive programs in each council district.
- *Special Events* - Increase special events that bring neighborhoods together, such as street festivals and concerts.
- *Results Based Management* - Continue to establish annual goals and document the results of each program and service through the City's Investing in Results program.

## Park and Open Space

- *Neighborhood/Community Parks* - Collaborate with schools and other public entities to strive to provide 3.5 acres per 1000 population of neighborhood/community serving parkland.
- *Open Space* - Work with all involved agencies to acquire and preserve San Jose's open space for present and future generations.
- *Facility Location* - Co-locate parks and recreation facilities, where feasible, with schools, libraries, and other public facilities to improve service.
- *Citywide/Regional Parks* - Acquire and develop additional citywide/regional parks, and implement existing park master plans.
- *Public/Private Partnerships* - Encourage private provision of parks, urban plazas, trails, linear parks and greenways, roof top open space, and other amenities in high density, park-deficient areas.
- *Industrial Campus Areas* - Consider revising General Plan policies to encourage the development of recreation facilities in industrial campus-type developments.
- *Collaboration with Redevelopment Agency* - Continue to work with the City's Strong Neighborhoods Initiative to expand parks and recreation facilities in redevelopment areas.
- *Collaboration with Schools* - Expand cooperation with schools to enhance recreation facilities at school sites and to use schools as sites for programs and services.

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- *Transit Partnerships* - Develop parks, recreation facilities, and trails in conjunction with mass transit projects.

## Citywide Trails

- *Trails* - Collaborate with other agencies to establish a connected regional trail system that provides over 100 miles of trails.

## Recreation Facilities

- *Citywide Sports Complexes* - Develop specific sports complexes for softball, soccer, tennis, and aquatics.
- *District Sports* - Provide softball fields, soccer fields, and other sports opportunities for youth at parks and schools throughout each council district. Where a cluster of facilities exists, enhance these facilities for youth sports.
- *Festival Sites* - Expand and improve sites for festivals throughout the City.

## Community Centers

A three-tiered concept for community centers has been developed with the goal of providing access to programs and services for all residents.

- *Multi-Service Community Center* - Develop one multi-service community center per council district to increase access to recreation programs and neighborhood services. Create partnerships for facility development, programming and operations.

- *Satellite Community Centers* - Develop additional satellite community centers as needed to provide a community center within 2 miles of each resident, or to provide additional services to youth or seniors. Create partnerships for facility development, programming, and operations.
- *Neighborhood Centers* - In cases of high neighborhood need, smaller recreation buildings (1,000 to 10,000 square feet) may be provided.
- *Recreation and Wellness Center for Persons with Disabilities* - Develop a centralized aquatic and sports center, which will serve as a focal point for the delivery of services for people with disabilities.

## Public Outreach

- *Public Outreach* - Expand community involvement and oversight in facility and program planning.

Additional strategies are included in the overview presented in Chapter 3.

## Highlights of Improvements

Chapter 4 highlights strategic improvements to increase community livability in San Jose through parks, community facilities, and programs. These include:

- *San Jose School/City Collaborative* - The City of San José depends on its partnerships with schools to meet community recreation needs. Many school recreation facilities



serve an additional function as neighborhood/community parks, and provide both indoor and outdoor recreation space. The Collaborative focuses upon enhancing partnerships with the City's 19 school districts and all youth serving agencies to achieve shared goals, including enhancing parks, recreation, and neighborhood services.

- *Services for Persons with Disabilities* - The *City of San José Strategic Plan, Services for Persons with Disabilities*, presents a twenty-year plan for the City's Office of Therapeutic Services and its collaborating agencies to expand and improve services for persons with disabilities. Services will be provided throughout San Jose and at the proposed Recreation and Wellness Center. This report is a separate document. This strategic plan includes an overview of key elements.
  - *Youth Services* - The Youth Services Division, in collaboration with other agencies, provides comprehensive services to San Jose youth. These include: homework centers, youth diversion from crime, gang prevention and intervention, youth employment, and childcare.
  - *City-wide and District Sports* - The demand for additional sports facilities has been well established during the strategic plan's community needs assessment. City-wide sport complexes and enhanced neighborhood sports facilities are recommended in this plan.
  - *Neighborhood-based Multi-service Delivery Concept and Community Centers* - San Jose residents of all ages and abilities will have access to core services at a central location, such as health and fitness, recreation, socializa-
- tion, education, health, and neighborhood services. Services will be provided through a three-tiered network of community facilities, at schools, and at facilities operated by community-based organizations in each of the City's ten council districts.
- *Park Renovations* - The strategic plan provides the City of San José with an opportunity to reevaluate its existing neighborhood and community parks. Targeted renovation of neighborhood/community parks responds to community priorities and is more cost effective than the acquisition of new parkland, given the cost of land in San Jose.
  - *Public/Private Partnerships* - Overcoming San Jose's parkland deficit will require innovative strategies, such as public/private partnerships to develop pocket parks and plazas, and other small-scale recreation facilities.
  - *Senior Centers* - Within 10 years, more than 20% of the City's population will be eligible for senior services. To respond to this dramatic demographic shift, the City and its collaborative agencies will utilize a "continuum of service model" that addresses the full range of senior needs. Services are provided at senior centers, community centers, and at facilities operated by other agencies to support independent living for San Jose's senior population.
  - *Innovative Collaborations* - Continue to create innovative collaborations. Partner with San Jose's transit agencies to develop trails along future transit corridors and collaborate with private entities to create Monopoly in the Park, a world class visitor attraction. These are two examples of innovative ways to enhance parks and recreation in San Jose.

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- *Open Space* - Open space preservation is a high priority for the San Jose community. The City will work with all involved agencies to acquire and preserve open space surrounding San Jose.
- *Strong Neighborhoods Initiative* - The City of San Jose's Strong Neighborhoods Initiative involves the coordination of programs offered by the City, County, schools, and community-based organizations. The Initiative will create an integrated approach to strengthening neighborhoods and increasing neighborhood involvement in decision-making.
- *Trails* - Completing San Jose's trail system will provide residents with access to natural areas and recreation opportunities, such as walking, biking, and horseback riding, that are rare in urban settings.
- *Citywide/Regional Parks and Gardens* - San Jose's city-wide and regional parks and gardens are special places that attract people from throughout the City and the region.

## Citywide and Regional Strategies

San Jose's citywide and regional parks protect and interpret the City's natural and cultural resources for the enjoyment of all residents. Citywide/regional facilities have unique features that attract visitors from throughout the City and region. These facilities are managed, operated and maintained by Conventions, Arts and Entertainment's Visitor Services & Facilities Division.

Citywide and regional strategies are introduced in Chapter 5. These include:

### Programs and Services

- Increase Park Ranger services and regional park programs and services.
- Expand the reservations program.
- Continue to support and expand special events.

### Parks and Open Space

- Complete existing citywide/regional park Master Plans.
- Add additional citywide/regional parks.

### Citywide Trails

- Work with other agencies to establish a connected regional trail system that provides over 100 miles of trails.

### Recreation Facilities

- Enhance recreation facilities at existing regional parks.
- Partner with other agencies, such as Santa Clara County, Santa Clara Valley Water District, and colleges and universities to enhance recreation facilities.

### Public Outreach

- Increase ranger and zoo interpretive outreach programs at schools and neighborhood centers to provide environmental education and promote regional facilities.



## Resource Development

- Form collaborations for citywide and regional strategies with non-profit organizations to enhance citywide/regional park resources.
- Raise funds to repair the large inventory of historic structures within the regional park system.
- Establish a grant writer staff position for regional parks and special facilities.
- Encourage private development and operation of new facility types, such as an extreme sports center, water recreation facility, etc.
- Update the business plan for special use facilities to determine how to enhance revenue streams.

## Neighborhood District Strategies

Chapter 6 describes each council district and key strategies for addressing district needs. It analyzes the quantity and distribution of neighborhood/community serving parkland and community centers in each district. It identifies future parkland needs and describes strategies for increasing access to park and recreation facilities for San Jose's underserved neighborhoods.

## Financing Strategy

Chapter 7 identifies possible options for funding park and recreation facility development and renovation. Providing ongoing funding for programs, operations, and maintenance is also addressed. The City is facing a significant challenge in

its efforts to provide funding to enhance its parks, community facilities and programs over the next twenty years. Strategic plan improvements will produce additional costs in development, renovations, maintenance, and operations. The financing strategy identifies funding needs and potential sources to meet these needs.

The strategic plan financing strategy follows seven principles:

1. *The improvement program that is ultimately adopted must be financially feasible, i.e., funding sources must be identified and quantified that match programmed expenditures.* Strategic plan recommendations may need to be scaled back or phased in more slowly.
2. *Program requirements should define facility needs.* Program expansion will determine the need for new facilities. Facilities should not be constructed if they cannot be fully programmed.
3. *Maintenance, operations, and depreciation must be considered.* The cost of operations, maintenance, and replacement of parks and community facilities may equal or even exceed the initial capital investment to build the facility. Capital investment must be accompanied by sufficient funding to operate the facility long-term.
4. *Renovation and maintenance of existing facilities should receive top funding priority.* The City currently has a

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number of facilities that need renovation. These facilities should be brought up to a more functional condition.

5. *Park and recreation goals provide overall guidance for the quality, quantity, and location of park and recreation facilities.* These goals are relevant even though it may take many years to achieve them.
6. *New development should be required to provide its fair share of park and recreation facilities.* The Parkland Dedication and Parkland Impact Ordinances (PDO/PIO) will continue to be critical funding sources for land acquisitions and improvements.
7. *Innovative ways of meeting park and recreation needs and goals should be pursued.* Overcoming the cost of achieving park and recreation facility goals and needs will require more than standard funding techniques. Collaboration with the City's school districts is an example of such an innovation. Other public and private partnerships should also be explored.

The financing strategy recommends consideration of a broad variety of future funding sources in addition to those already in use. General obligation bond funding is one of the most important potential funding sources recommended in this strategy. Other potential sources may include amendments to Parkland Dedication and Park Impact Ordinances to increase revenues and/or land dedication; increases to the C&C taxes; collaboration with the Redevelopment Agency;

joint use projects with public and private organizations; expanding the use of general plan and zoning requirements; grants; establishment of a foundation; and voter-approved operations and maintenance funding sources.

## **Performance Measures**

To help the City of San José assess progress toward goals, Investing in Results performance measures will continue to be used. Current measures and additional measures suggested in this plan will be linked to each of the nine goals in the strategic plan and will be used to evaluate successful plan implementation. Recommended performance measures are described in Chapter 8.