

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR
AND CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Jon Cicirelli

SUBJECT: 2024 Summer Program
Status Report

DATE: October 29, 2024

Approved



Date:

11/1/2024

INFORMATION

This information memorandum provides the City Council with the status of the summer 2024 programs for children, youth, and families delivered by the Department of Parks, Recreation, and Neighborhood Services.

BACKGROUND

The Department of Parks, Recreation, and Neighborhood Services (PRNS) is a leader in the administration and facilitation of programming for youth and families throughout the year, including the summer months. For working families, affordable childcare and quality programming during the summer are essential for parents and caregivers to maintain their employment until school is back in session. In a survey of parents and caregivers, responses indicated that the top three reasons for attending PRNS programs were convenient location (63%), fun/entertaining activities (62.5%), and safe environment (58%.)

ANALYSIS

Youth recreation programs are a key part of ongoing efforts to implement PRNS' long term strategic plan, ActivateSJ, and the guiding principles of stewardship, nature, equity and access, identity, and public life.

Staff from PRNS' Recreation and Park Divisions devised and implemented a comprehensive outreach plan that resulted in the operation of 94 programs that served approximately 23,707* youth during the summer 2024 season, as illustrated in **Table 1** below. This informational memorandum provides updates on the operations, enrollment, and outreach efforts of the PRNS summer season.

Table 1: PRNS Summer Programs

PRNS Summer Programs	Ages Served	Number of Locations	Total Enrolled
Camp San José	5 - 12	17	1,523
Outdoor Adventure Camp	5 - 12	2	407
Camp San José Jr.	3 - 5	11	362
F.I.T. Camp	7 - 12	9	354
Teen Center* (Drop-In)	11 - 18	8	763
Teen Leadership Camp	12 - 15	1	92
Leisure Specialty Camps (Vendor Lead)	5 - 12	36	1,643
Leisure Specialty Classes (Vendor Lead)	5 - 14		952
Swim San José (Lessons)	6 months – 12	4	519
Swim San José (Recreation Swim)	All ages	4	16,645 (Drop-ins)
Happy Hollow Park and Zoo (HHPZ) Camps	4 - 14	1	366
Lake Cunningham Action Sports Park	6 – 13	1	81
TOTALS		94	23,707

*Data source for enrollments: ActiveNet Registration System unduplicated enrollment data.

Rooted in the ActivateSJ guiding principle of Equity and Access, PRNS staff were intentional in outreach efforts for the summer programs and scholarships available in priority neighborhoods. In preparation for the summer 2024 season, PRNS participated in various activities and events to increase community awareness, participation, and registration in recreation programming. To support these families in priority neighborhoods and citywide, PRNS continues to encourage the utilization of the priority registration window, which allowed residents to enroll 10 days prior to the start of general registration, which was from February 14 through February 24, 2024.

This period is designated specifically for families to utilize limited scholarship funding. In partnership with Project Hope, mobile outreach efforts took place in areas such as the Santee, Hoffman Via Monte, Foxdale, and Roundtable neighborhoods. PRNS staff engaged with families and completed registrations during planned community events for summer programming with the use of available scholarship funds. During this exclusive window, PRNS distributed \$691,376 in scholarship funding to support the registration of 562 unduplicated youth in popular summer programs.

Scholarships

In summer 2024, PRNS continued to fully subsidize registration fees by dedicating a total of \$1,067,460 (\$780,085 in PRNS funds and \$287,375 in American Rescue Plan funds) to families who qualify for scholarships. Since the addition of federal funds to PRNS during the pandemic, the number of children and youth with scholarship access increased from 645 in 2021 to 701 in 2023. With the end of federal funding allocations as of June 2024, scholarship access dropped to 362.

Prior to 2020, registration fees for Camp San José were subsidized at 75%, with families responsible for paying the remaining 25%. PRNS has long used General Fund resources to provide a 75% discount to eligible families. Federal funds allowed for eliminating barriers and allowed for free participation which was last available by PRNS over 15 years ago, before the Great Recession changed the recreation model to a cost recovery model.

Between 2020-2023, qualified families were completely subsidized at 100% level by scholarship funds when available. For 2024, PRNS committed to supporting families most in need with full 100% scholarship amount. With federal funds exhausted, the impact decreased the total scholarship support by 55% from summer 2023.

Table 2 below illustrates a breakdown of pandemic and post-pandemic scholarship usage, specifically for Camp San José operations. Camp San José is the most popular summer childcare recreational model, as it offers families 10 hours of care from 8 a.m. – 6 p.m. for eight weeks and is crucial to working families.

Table 2: Camp San José

<u>Camp San José ONLY</u>						
	PRNS Scholarship (General Fund)	Federal Funding (CRF, CDBG, ARP)	Total Scholarship Available	Unduplicated Scholarship Enrollments	Unduplicated Youth Enrollments	Percentage of Scholarship
2021	\$517,720	\$586,428	\$1,104,148	645	1,095	59%
2022	\$628,764	\$748,223	\$1,376,987	846	1,495	57%
2023	\$512,184	\$720,000	\$1,232,184	701	1,185	59%
2024	\$399,698	\$152,410	\$552,108	362	1,523	24%

*Data source for enrollments: ActiveNet Registration System

Note: Federal Funding Sources: CRF-Coronavirus Rescue Funds, CDBG-Community Development Block Grant, ARP- American Rescue Plan

Summer Camps

PRNS offered a variety of programs during the summer of 2024 at 10 hub community centers and six regional parks, including Emma Prusch Farm Park and HHPZ. PRNS provided a variety of options for working families for their youth to participate in full-day or half-day camps, such as Camp San José, Fundamentals in Training Camp, and Outdoor Adventure Camp. These camps had a low leader-to-child ratio of 1:10 and included weekly field trips, skill building, and enrichment activities throughout the day. Over the course of the summer season, these camps served 3,185 youth ranging in ages from 5-12. Camp San José Jr. targeted early learners who are 3-5 years old. Both HHPZ and Lake Cunningham Action Sport Park offered specialty camps for children ages 4-13.

Survey results completed by parents and caregivers reflect the positive impact PRNS camps have on children and families. Ninety-five percent responded that they were satisfied and that their child enjoyed their time during the summer. Additionally, 98% stated that their children were well supervised and kept safe. Within the same survey, 93% rated the camps as good or excellent.

PRNS staff also operated 10 Teen Centers with the support of a grant partnership with the County of Santa Clara Probation Department. PRNS provided a safe and fun place for approximately 763 youth, which included field trips and experiences for the teens.

Leisure Camps and Classes

Leisure camps and classes were conducted by contracted industry experts in the areas of arts and crafts, dance, education and enrichment, exercise, health and fitness, music and theater arts, and sports as well as specialty programs that are based around STEM¹. These programs were offered at various community center and park locations. PRNS offered 494 leisure camps and 313 leisure classes serving approximately 3,775 youth from ages 5-14 years.

Parks Programming

Aligned with the ActivateSJ guiding principle of nature, summer camps are incorporated into regional parks and Family Camp located near Yosemite National Park. Family Camp at Yosemite welcomed 2,943 visitors and offered 524 activities. Family Camp also offered various scholarship opportunities, supported by the General Fund and the state's Outdoor Equity Grant, and partners with other PRNS programs, such as Youth Intervention Services and Project Hope, to provide youth and families from San José free and unique opportunities to experience camping near Yosemite.

¹ STEM refers to science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

HHPZ is dedicated to serving local community members by providing more equal access to conservation, education, and play. During the 2024 summer season, HHPZ had a total attendance of 109,636 visitors from June through mid-August. A portion of every admission ticket goes towards developing new events, activities, play areas, and tools, ensuring that everyone in the community can enjoy HHPZ. Of the 109,636 attendees, 5,166 benefitted from the Access for All program, a program that allows individuals and families with financial or special needs to purchase tickets to HHPZ at a 75% discount.

Golf Course Youth Programming and Scholarships

The City's three municipal golf courses are operated under a lease agreement with San José Municipal Golf, LLC. These golf courses serve as one of many opportunities that connect people to recreation for an active San José. The City's golf courses hosted both golf and non-golf related activities for the community to enjoy, including social events, fundraisers, and community meetings. The courses also served as practice facilities for high school golf teams and partners with youth development programs. During the 2024 summer season, when schools were generally out of session, the three golf courses recorded a total of 58,388 rounds of golf with 4,273 rounds played by youth participants, equaling 13.6%.

The summer of 2024 was also the first year the City's golf courses offered a summer scholarship program, which awarded a total of 25 scholarships. These summer scholarships provided recipients free access to either the driving range, golf course, or golf camp. Additionally, First Tee of Silicon Valley provided youth programming at the Rancho del Pueblo Golf Course. First Tee of Silicon Valley is a youth development organization that uses golf to foster growth and skills in youth. First Tee of Silicon Valley had a total of 305 youth for its summer season.

Placemaking and Public Life

The PRNS' Placemaking and Special Park Use team supported 772 picnic reservations, 57 park activations, 263 permitted events, and the summer Viva CalleSJ on June 9, 2024, ensuring a vibrant, accessible, safe, and inclusive public place for an estimated 460,542 people to enjoy. Viva Parks is a free program that temporarily closes miles of San Jose streets to bring communities together to walk, bike, skate, play, and explore the city like never before and are held across all 10 City Council districts. These activities provide a safe space for youth and their families to engage in positive recreational opportunities alongside their community members.

Aquatics

The City's six pool locations were busy this summer with swim lessons and open recreational hours. Four public pools are operated by PRNS Swim San José employees (Camden, Fair Swim Center, Mayfair, and Ryland), and two pools are operated by AnT

Swim School (Alviso and Biebrach.) During the summer 2024 operation, Swim San José staff facilitated 519 swim lessons serving children ages six months to 12 years. In addition to swim lessons, 16,645 residents were also able to participate in free recreation swim.

The summer aquatic season was a success because of the ability to effectively hire and train staff. PRNS led an extensive recruitment for lifeguards and interviewed a total of 47 candidates. From those interviews, 26 candidates were offered employment. All lifeguards went through 35 hours of training in June 2024.

Safe Summer Initiative Grant Program Funding

The Safe Summer Initiative Grant Program supports the efforts of the San José Youth Empowerment Alliance by funding nonprofit organizations to enhance recreational or educational opportunities not normally accessible to the San José Youth Empowerment Alliance's target population, thereby providing them a safe environment while keeping them active and engaged in positive activities. Recreation activities provided fall within three program areas: 1) Youth Development, 2) Education, and 3) Recreation, Health, and Fitness.

In summer 2024, PRNS funded 30 nonprofit partners a total of \$450,000 to provide services to approximately 2,075 participants. Services were delivered in seven Priority Neighborhoods² and served as a bridge between school years, which provided the opportunity to engage in safe, fun, and pro-social activities and enhanced the continuation of positive adult engagement throughout the summer. The Safe Summer 2024 program year closed on August 31, 2024.

Summer Food Service Program

Second Harvest Food Bank reports that one in three children in Santa Clara County are at risk of facing food insecurity. PRNS strives to minimize this issue by providing free summer meals through the federal United States Department of Agriculture's reimbursable grant-funded Summer Food Service Program provided through a vendor, The LunchMaster – Nob Hill Catering, and served to youth by trained PRNS staff. For summer 2024, PRNS provided 21,089 meals served through the Summer Food Service Program at nine locations (Bascom Community Center, Emma Prusch Farm Park, Gardner Community Center, Marijane Hamann Park, Mayfair Community Center, Roosevelt Community Center, Seven Trees Community Center, Starbird Youth Center, and Welch Park.)

² Priority Neighborhoods are areas that have experienced the most youth crime, including gang-related activity and other crimes.

PRNS is monitoring the sustainability of this grant program due to rising costs with the increased fees, taxes, and vendor costs impacting the level of reimbursement.

Staffing

Annually, PRNS provides 300+ local young people with supportive and meaningful employment experiences in the recreation field to build valuable life skills. PRNS strives to hire dynamic individuals that represent the ethnic diversity of the community we serve. To fill seasonal jobs on time, PRNS starts promotion of hiring process in January. Summer employment opportunities include Community Service Aides (minimum age is 14 years old), Recreation Leaders (minimum high school degree or GED required), Pool Aides, Lifeguards, Instructor Lifeguards, Assistant Pool Managers, and Pool Managers. Each of these positions are vital to the day-to-day operations and success of our community centers, regional parks, and public pools.

On June 6, 2024, PRNS hosted the annual Citywide Summer Recreation Leader Training which includes alignment with the City Council adopted Expanded Learning Quality Standards. The training supported nearly 245 part-time unbenefited staff with eight hours of professional development training, which included new and returning employees. The training allows for the continued development of new and existing staff and is vital to the successful operation of programs during the summer and throughout the year.

While the summer season has the most robust programming and attendance, as detailed throughout this memorandum, PRNS continues to provide a wide array of programs that are designed to meet the needs of children and families throughout the year.

COORDINATION

This memorandum had been coordinated with the City Attorney's Office and the City Manager's Budget Office.

/s/
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