

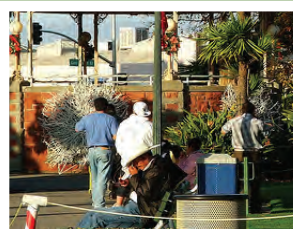
SEPTEMBER 2009



city of

WATSONVILLE

Parks and Recreation Facilities



master plan

FINAL

SEPTEMBER 2009

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Parks and Recreation Facilities
master plan
FINAL

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WATSONVILLE
Parks and Recreation Facilities
master plan



executive summary



executive summary

The City of Watsonville Parks and Recreational Facilities Master Plan is an overarching plan for the development and implementation of future parks and recreational opportunities. Carefully developed, the resulting document is the culmination of a comprehensive community outreach and involvement process.

Through a community survey, focus groups, questionnaires, and community workshops, the Department of Parks and Community Services engaged residents and stakeholders in order to learn about the community's needs with respect to the development of parks and recreational facilities.

The community's profile and existing parks and recreation resources were researched and analyzed. This information was compared to community feedback and reviewed for consistency with the City's Draft General Plan. The resulting document is the City of Watsonville's Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan, a plan that is addressed to the prioritization of possibilities within a cohesive vision.

VISION FOR PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES

Watsonville provides a system of well-designed parks and facilities that contribute to the vitality of the community and promote health, well-being and enjoyment for all residents.

The community's vision for the future, as well as the Department's mission and the community's core values, guides the goals and recommendations of this plan.

GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The following is a brief summary of the recommendations included in this plan.

1. Provide safe and well-maintained parks and facilities that meet the diverse needs of a growing community.
2. Expand and improve trail connections to parks, open spaces and community destinations.
3. Celebrate Watsonville's cultural heritage and encourage community building through provision of culturally sensitive and competent programs, services and events.
4. Develop and provide recreation facilities and programs that support health and wellness and personal development.
5. Develop and partner with other departments, schools, and public and private organizations to meet community needs.
6. Encourage and support public involvement in park and recreation planning, design and advocacy.
7. Promote stewardship of parks, facilities and natural areas.
8. Build an innovative, responsive and dynamic organization that is financially stable and employs best practices to achieve community needs.
9. Create and enhance a positive community image and be a key contributor to economic development activities.

Financial implementation and specific recommendations are explored in the plan.

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WATSONVILLE
Parks and Recreation Facilities
master plan



introduction



introduction

The Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan was developed in collaboration with staff, elected and agency officials, and community members, with assistance from, MIG, Inc., a consulting firm based in Berkeley, CA. The plan represents an update to the existing master plan developed for the Watsonville Department of Parks and Community Services in March 1992.

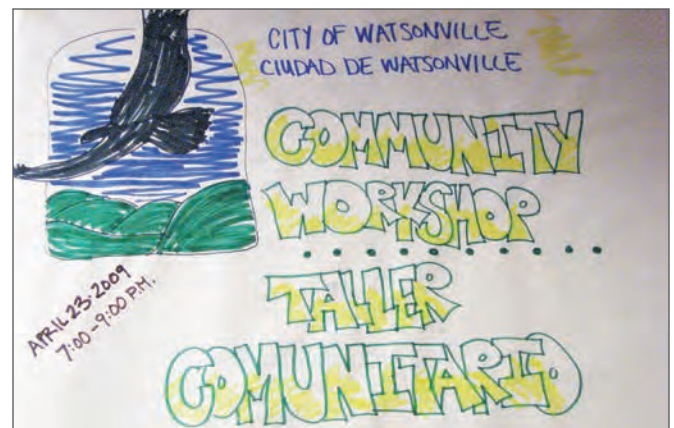
PLAN PURPOSE

The plan has three major purposes:

- Present a long-term vision and goals for the Department for the next 20 years;
- Describe current and future needs, interests and community preferences for parks, recreation, trails, and facilities; and
- Develop a process and priorities for managing the Department's commitments so that new requests and initiatives are considered in light of existing conditions.

HOW THE PLAN WAS DEVELOPED

The Plan was developed through the active participation of staff, community advisors, residents and elected officials through their participation in workshops, interviews, in-person and telephone surveys, and focus groups. More than 700 community members provided opinions and input that was used to develop this plan. The resulting master plan reflects current priorities and interests and provides the Department with flexibility to be responsive to the changing needs of this growing community.



Community members provided input in the community outreach process.

The Project Management Team consisted of staff from the Parks and Community Services Department and MIG staff. A Parks and Recreation Commission Parks Master Plan Sub-Committee played a significant role in developing and revising the Plan. Using trend analyses, data derived from the community outreach activities, and research on comparable communities, the Project Management Team worked with the Parks and Recreation Planning Commission and Parks Master Plan Sub-committee to develop the resultant plan and priorities. The group also reviewed several sources of information to identify strengths and opportunities, and benefits



Bicycle amenities in Kearney Street Park.

of parks and recreation. The Plan was presented to the Parks and Recreation Planning Commission and City Council prior to its review and approval.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PLANNING ACTIVITIES

During the development of this Plan, the City of Watsonville was in the process of updating its General Plan and developing a citywide Trails Master Plan. The master plan was developed in coordination with these efforts.

IMPLEMENTATION

This plan will serve as a framework for future decision-making, priority setting, and budgeting. The vision and goals included in the plan are intended to describe a desired future for the community while providing the Department the flexibility it needs to achieve its goals.

PLANNING DEFINITIONS

The Plan uses a number of key terms:

- **Vision:** The desired future state of Watsonville; the vision of success the organization strives to achieve.
- **Mission:** A description of why an organization exists.
- **Values:** The norms and qualities Watsonville community members and the organization value.
- **Goals:** The broad areas for improvement aligned to match the programs and services provided by the Department.

WATSONVILLE
Parks and Recreation Facilities
master plan

chapter

1



community profile



chapter 1: community profile

The first step in the master plan process was to create a community profile. The community profile includes a summary of current and future demographics and trends, and an analysis of existing parks, recreation facilities, programs and operations.

The purpose of the profile is to:

- Summarize current and future demographics in Watsonville;
- Provide an overview of the current park system, including an inventory of existing parks and definitions for each type of park in the proposed park classification system; and
- Initiate a discussion about these topics that will inform the final plan.

PLANNING CONTEXT

Watsonville is located in southern Santa Cruz County, immediately north of Monterey County. It is located in the fertile Pajaro Valley that is part of the crescent between the cities of Santa Cruz and Monterey. Watsonville is about 45 miles south of San Jose and 85 miles south of San Francisco and Oakland.

Watsonville serves as the urban center for southern Santa Cruz County. The city provides a wide range of opportunities for housing, employment, shopping, and recreation for south county residents. It is the second largest city in Santa Cruz County. Watsonville is also a leader in preservation of productive agricultural land and environmental resources.

In November 2002, residents passed the landmark “Watsonville Orderly Growth and Agricultural Protection” initiative, which established urban limit lines and designated planning areas for urban development over the next 20 to 25 years.

Geography and Climate

Watsonville has warm and dry summer days with temperatures in the lower 80s and cool nights with temperatures around 50. Winter high temperatures are in the upper 40s or 50s, while the nights can become quite chilly. The community is nestled among the hills and in close proximity to the Pacific Coast.

The City of Watsonville includes 6.4 square miles. The annual average precipitation around Watsonville is 22.41 inches, most of which occurs in the winter.

Key Demographic Findings

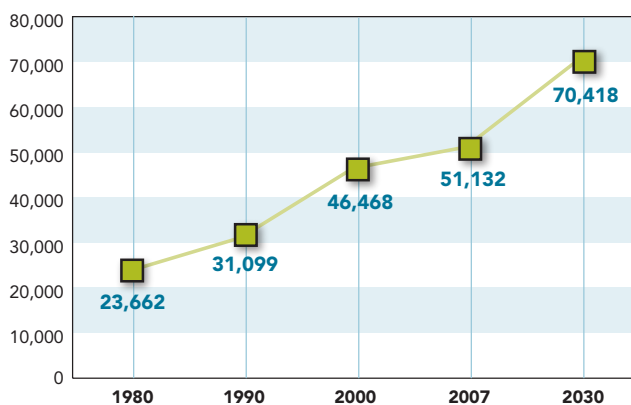
Demographic characteristics can influence recreational interests, health and fitness activities, and levels of participation in community programs. Factors such as age, household size and income can significantly affect an individual’s ability to pursue, participate in, and enjoy recreational activities. Employment status, education level, and ethnicity also influence a person’s choices and ability to engage in community activities.

Demographic information from 1980, 1990 and 2000 came from the US Census, while 2007 population estimates come from the California Department of Finance. Future population projections come from the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG) 2004. Additionally, the report cites the US Census American Community Survey (ACS) for key current (2005 to 2007) demographic information.

Population Growth

Watsonville's population has grown significantly in the last twenty years. The City increased from approximately 23,662 people in 1980 to 51,132 in 2007. In the next twenty years, the population is expected to continue to increase, but at a slower rate.

Figure 1-1. City of Watsonville Population Change 1980-2030



Source: Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG) 2004, US Census 2000, Department of Finance 2008.

Age

Generally, Watsonville's residents tend to be younger than Santa Cruz County and California residents as a whole. According to the ACS, the average age of residents in Watsonville is 28, while the average age of Santa Cruz County residents is 37 and 34 in California. Between 2005 and 2007, 37 percent of Watsonville's population was under age 19, 11 percent and 8 percent more than the same age group in the county and the state, respectively. Eight percent of the population was over age 65, a rate that was lower than the county and the state.

According to the Watsonville Vista 2030, the City's current draft general plan, the senior population is expected to grow significantly over the next 20 years and comprise 17 percent of the population in 2030. The growth of the senior population is due, in large part, to the gradual aging in place of long term residents. The percentage of youth in the community is expected to decrease by 2030, according to the draft General

Plan. Youth ages 0 to 17 years old comprise 34 percent of the population in 2000 and are projected to comprise 26 percent of the population in 2030, a difference of 8 percent.

Residents' Ethnicity

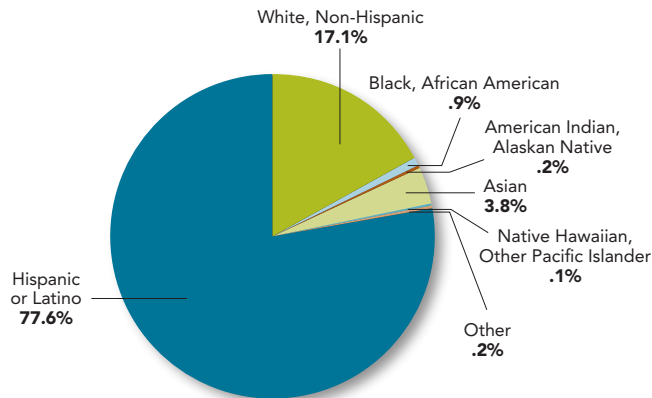
The ethnicity and cultural origin can be an important factor to consider when developing recreational programs and community services. Different ethnic groups may have interests in, and preferences for, civic celebrations, social gatherings, arts, and recreational activities currently not available in the community.

According to the 2005-2007 ACS estimates:

- 77 percent of the population consider themselves of Hispanic or Latino origin, an increase from 75 percent in 2000 and 60 percent in 1990.
- White, non-Hispanic population comprises 17 percent of the population, a decrease from 19 percent in 2000.
- Asian ethnic populations made up 4 percent, an increase from 3 percent in 2000.
- All other ethnic groups round out the remaining 4 percent.

The ethnic composition of Watsonville is not representative of the wider Santa Cruz County population. According to the 2005-2007 ACS, 64 percent of Santa Cruz County residents were white, non-Hispanic and 29 percent identify themselves as Hispanic or Latino.

Figure 1-2. 2005-2007 Watsonville Ethnicity Composition



Source: 2005-2007 American Community Survey

Households and Housing

According to the ACS, between 2005 and 2007, approximately 80 percent of Watsonville's households were families (two or more people related by birth, marriage, or adoption). The rate was 20 percent more than Santa Cruz County's rate. The remaining 20 percent of the households were either single or unmarried people living together. Approximately nine percent of households were seniors living alone, a rate one percent higher than the county.

Average household size increased from 3.24 persons in 1990 to 3.84 persons in 2000, but then decreased to 2.60 in 2005-2007 according to the US Census 1990 and 2000 and the ACS 2005-2007. Between 2005 and 2007, the home ownership rate in Watsonville was 49 percent. This was lower than both the state (58 percent) and county (60 percent). Approximately 49 percent of residences are owner-occupied and 51 percent are renter-occupied.

Median housing prices increased from \$224,700 to \$586,000 in the City between 2000 and 2007, according to the US Census 2000 and 2005-2007 ACS data. Since 2007, due to national economic conditions, housing prices have significantly decreased and high foreclosure rates have significantly reduced the value of residential units in the City, and across communities in the County. In June 2009, the median home price was \$483,000. According to neighborhood stabilization



Approximately 80 percent of Watsonville's households are defined by the US Census as families.

data provided by the California Department of Housing and Development, between January 2007 and July 2008, Watsonville had an estimated 347 foreclosures and an estimated foreclosure rate of 7.1%. The county had a foreclosure rate of 4.1% during the same period. Additionally, Watsonville appears to have a higher repurchasing rate of foreclosed homes when compared to other communities.

The City upholds an ordinance that requires new housing developments to include affordable housing that is available to families who live and work in Watsonville. More than 450 affordable units have been approved since 2001. Vista Montana, for example, includes 133 affordable units and 47 ownership units, which include mixed single family and townhomes. The City also offers Home Buyer Assistance programs and Infill Housing Loans to residents. Local business owners in Watsonville report that the availability of workforce affordable housing directly impacts the success of their business.

Income and Poverty

Median household income in Watsonville was \$46,531 in 2007, about 75 percent of the median household income countywide (\$63,333). According to the 2005-2007 ACS, 19 percent of Watsonville residents lived in poverty compared to 11 percent of Santa Cruz County residents. The poverty rate of children ages 18 and younger in Watsonville is 24 percent compared with 13 percent of children countywide. The



Watsonville's residents tend to be younger when compared to the county and California as a whole.

percentage of Watsonville residents over 65 years and living in poverty is 9 percent, slightly higher than Santa Cruz County. Approximately 11 percent of the Watsonville population received food stamp benefits in 2007.

Disability

In 2000, approximately 20 percent of residents in Watsonville had disability status according to the US Census. By 2007, the percent of residents with disabilities had decreased to 15 percent, compared to 11 and 12 percent in the county and state, respectively.

Education

In Watsonville, approximately 33 percent of the adult population received an education level below high school compared to 15 percent in the county, according to the US Census. Twenty-four percent of Watsonville residents had graduated from high school between 2005 and 2007 and 17 percent of county residents had the equivalent education. Approxi-

mately ten percent of Watsonville's population has a bachelor, graduate, or professional degree, which is significantly less than the number of people with higher education degrees in the county (38 percent).

The City of Watsonville supports and encourages education and skills development for local residents. The Department of Parks and Community Services provides class in computer skills, cooking, arts and crafts and homework help. The Center for Employment Training, a non-profit, is located in Watsonville and provides hands-on job training for youth and adults of all educational levels and backgrounds. Cabrillo College, a public California community college, is based in Santa Cruz County and provides classes in downtown Watsonville. Other nearby colleges and universities include: the University of California Santa Cruz, San Jose State University and California State University at Monterey Bay.

Employment

With an increasing population of residents age 18 to 64, Watsonville is projected to consist largely of working residents. The City strives to provide employment opportunities for residents within the community and to avoid becoming a bedroom community.

Between 2005 and 2007, the unemployment rate was ten percent in Watsonville and seven percent in Santa Cruz County, according to the ACS. In December 2004, the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was 17 percent, approximately double the countywide rate of 8.3 percent. According to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics, the unemployment rate was 13.1 in Watsonville in February 2009, a 0.6 increase from only a month earlier.

Agriculture-related business and manufacturing have historically comprised the majority of the employment base in Watsonville. The region is well known for its agricultural products. According to the Pajaro Valley Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture, technology, electronic companies, electrical products, aluminum extrusion, containers, eyeglass and lens fabricators, construction materials and heavy construction companies support Watsonville's agricultural base. The City's largest companies include Granite Construction, Inc., Titan Corp, Larse Farms Inc, and West Marine Inc. Currently,



Downtown Watsonville provides employment and retail opportunities for residents.

agriculture-related business industries provide over a third of the employment base in the City. These industries, though, provide low wages and, as the economic environment changes in the City, they will need to adapt to meet the needs of the Watsonville community.

Employment opportunities in the service sector have been growing in the past few years. Between 2005 and 2007, 37 percent of the population held management and service occupations in the City. The City's economic development program includes a heavy investment in growing the community's service sector. The City of Watsonville offers a number of incentives for businesses. Industrial development bonds and a loan guarantee program are available. Watsonville is also a designated State Enterprise Zone offering significant tax benefits to area employers.

One of the ways the Watsonville Parks and Community Services Department contributes towards economic development is by providing employment opportunities for individuals with special skills or talents. The Department recruits recreation leaders, sports officials, sports scorekeepers, and employs lifeguards, among other positions. The Department offers a multitude of classes in subjects ranging from computer skills to cooking. These learning opportunities and enrichment classes teach skills valuable for various employment opportunities.

Transportation and Travel

While most workers (71 percent) drove to work alone, a significant percentage carpooled (20 percent) and another 9 percent walked, biked, or took public transit, according to ACS data. Two percent of the workforce worked from home between 2005 and 2007. The mean travel time to work was 24 minutes. Santa Cruz Metro operates 43 routes throughout Santa Cruz County; five of these routes circulate within the City of Watsonville throughout the week. Monterey-Salinas Transit serves the greater Monterey and Salinas area, including Big Sur and Watsonville.

Highway 1 is the primary north-south corridor for vehicular transportation. The volume of cars has steadily increased over the years as people travel into the greater Bay Area for employment-related activities. Highway 152 is the primary east-west corridor through the City. The major arterial connects the community to Gilroy and Highway 101 in the east.

The City of Watsonville is expanding opportunities for walking and biking within and around town. The City of Watsonville Wetlands Trails Master Plan (2003) promotes the expansion and enhancement of the city's trail system. The Plan provides strategic direction to expand existing routes and strives to increase the opportunities for alternate travel.

Land Use and Growth

The City of Watsonville maintains an urban limit line. The urban limit line clearly defines rural and urban land uses. The City also maintains policies and programs that preserve surrounding agricultural land and underscore the City's goal to protect commercial agricultural lands and environmentally sensitive areas. Measure U, the Watsonville Urban Limit Line and Development Timing, helps direct where potential new growth should occur. Measure U established 20-year, 25-year, and westerly urban limit lines around the City and directed growth into several unincorporated areas. These areas include: Buena Vista, Manabe-Burgstrom, and Atkinson Lane areas.

TRENDS

The following trends in demographics and recreation influence community needs and parks and recreation planning and programming throughout Watsonville, and suggest implications for the Department's ability to deliver quality services. These trends are based on a review of materials prepared by the California Department of Parks and Recreation, the California Parks and Recreation Society, the National Parks and Recreation Association, and related leisure research.

Growing and Changing Population

Projected Growth

The City is anticipated to grow from a population of 51,132 in 2007 to 70,418 by 2030, an increase of 37 percent. Further, employment opportunities in the service sector are expected to increase in the future. Additional parks, facilities and recreation services may be needed in this area to meet increasing needs, which will likely create funding challenges. The City of Watsonville maintains a standard of 5 park acres per 1,000 population. The city presently has 2.8 acres of city-owned parkland per 1,000 residents. When City standards are applied to projected growth, the existing park land acreage does not meet future demand for parks. The City will need an additional 167.97 acres of park land by 2030 in order to address projected population growth.



Watsonville's senior population is expected to grow in the future.

Demographics

The City's senior population will grow in the future due to the aging in place of long term residents. However, aging baby boomers tend to remain active, both in physical and intellectual activities, and are likely to participate in recreation programs. Recreation activities will need to serve the older senior, who is less active and may have declining health, as well as the active older adult, who is retired, in good health and does not identify as a traditional "senior." The percentage of youth under the age of 18 has increased since 2000, but is projected to decrease by 8 percent by 2030. The number of adults age 19 to 65 is projected to grow.

Ethnicity

Watsonville's Hispanic and Latino population will continue to increase, while the City's white, non-Hispanic population will continue to decrease. The Latino culture and its generally larger and more familial household structure will continue to play a major role in the future of Watsonville. As the Department develops programs that are responsive to the needs and interests of its residents, it will need to continue to address potential barriers to participation, for example, by continuing



About 15 percent of Watsonville's population has some type of disability.

to provide program materials and support in both English and Spanish.

Disability

Around 15 percent of the population in Watsonville has some type of disability. It can be assumed that this percentage will increase as the population continues to age, however between 2000 and 2007 the number of people with disabilities decreased from 20 percent to 15 percent of the overall population. To serve this population, Watsonville should continue to provide accessible and inclusionary facilities and programs.

Shifting Economic Conditions

Income and Poverty

The average household income in Watsonville is 25 percent less than the surrounding region and 19 percent of residents are living in poverty. Median household income in Watsonville was \$46,531 in 2007, about 75 percent of the median household income countywide (\$63,333). High housing costs in Watsonville and the modest income of many residents has often resulted in "doubling up" or multiple families living together in one household. Local incomes impact the

ability of some residents to participate in fee based programs or in programs requiring transportation, and work schedules may limit participation during typical program hours. Residents may take advantage of free entertainment and recreation opportunities with a trend towards financial conservatism.

Current Economic Challenges

The 2009 US economic recession directly impacts the Watsonville economy and community. Unemployment in February 2009 was 13.1 percent in Watsonville. The Local Government Association analyzes the impact the current recession has on migrant laborers; migrant workers may leave the country to return home. After 20 years of business, the downtown, regionally-serving department store, Gottschalks, closed. The largest retailer in the City is Target. The City expects a growing service industry in the years to come. The current economic conditions challenge the social and economic fabric of the Watsonville community.

Parks and recreation facilities are increasingly valued for their role as catalysts in economic and community development. Animated public spaces, natural green space and special events serve as magnets for residents and out-of-town visitors. They also provide free or low-cost recreation and entertainment close to home.

Responsibilities of the Parks and Community Services Department

The City of Watsonville's Parks and Community Services Department oversees the parks and recreation facilities operations in addition to a variety of other programs the city. The Department's mission is "to create community through people, parks, and programs." The Department is managed by a Director who oversees the Parks Division, Neighborhood Services Division, the Recreation Division, volunteer and special events staff, and administrative staff.

Finances

Given shrinking federal, state, and local revenue, many park and recreation agencies are looking for new, creative sources of funding to continue to provide quality parks, programs and services. To manage rising construction costs, some cities

have required developers to construct new parks for them. The City of Watsonville's in-lieu park fees require developers to either dedicate land to parks and open space or pay an impact fee. Creative sources of funding include: facility-specific fees, grants and nonprofit foundation partners.

Partnerships and Organization Management

The growing use of partnerships in parks and recreation is a response to shrinking resources and increased competition for available funding, as well as public interest in better accountability and stewardship. The Parks and Community Services Department could explore relationships with potential partners, including school districts, non-profit agencies, business, grass-roots organizations, religious organizations and individuals.

Additionally, while resources appear to be dwindling, agencies place an increasing emphasis on mission-led or core businesses, better fiscal management and organization, and enhanced planning to provide services as efficiently as possible.

Park Design and Maintenance

The design and upkeep of parks increasingly reflects the needs and desires of an active community. A customized, community-based Master Plan Update process should be informed by public participation, redefined levels of service, adaptive use opportunities, and expectations for conveniently-located, safe, well maintained parks and facilities.

EXISTING PARKS AND RECREATION SYSTEM

Policy Background

The Watsonville 2005 General Plan is in the process of being updated. The updated Watsonville Vista 2030 General Plan is in the final stages of development and is in the process of being approved. The Recreation, Parks and Open Space chapter includes key goals and policies that, when approved, will guide the planning and development of the City of Watsonville Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan Update.

The goals of the draft Watsonville 2030 General Plan are as follows:

► **Goal 1. Meet Community Needs for Park, Open Space, and Recreational Facilities.**

Enhance the quality of life by assuring the provision of services, programs, and facilities that reflect the leisure needs and desires of the community.

► **Goal 2. Provide a Full Range of Well-Maintained Parks and Recreational Facilities Commensurate with Watsonville's Population and Park Standards.**

Parks, recreation facilities, trails and open space shall be developed in accordance with the Parks Master Plan. Parks shall be distributed throughout the City in accordance with Parks Master Plan policies with due regard for specific needs and available lands within the planning areas/neighborhoods.

► **Goal 3. Provide a Network for Trails Along Natural Areas to Promote Safe Travelways and Appreciation of Sloughs, Creeks, and the Pajaro River.**

The City shall develop and maintain a trail system that encourages both appreciation and respect for natural habit and provides safe, secure passageways in and around the community.

► **Goal 4. Provide Comprehensive Programs and Services.**

Recreation and community service programs shall promote human development, health and wellness, cultural unity, community problem-solving, community image and safety.

► **Other Goal Areas. Other Department Goal Areas include: protection of environmental resources, provision of recreation experiences, and promotion of economic development.**

Existing Parkland and Facilities

The City of Watsonville oversees 184.12 acres of park land, including opportunities for both active and passive recreation. The City's park system consists of a variety of recreation attractions, such as parks, playgrounds, sports fields, natural ar-



Seaview Ranch Park is a gathering spot for families and friends.

eas and open space, trails, recreation facilities, and access to the wetlands and levee trail system. In addition to parkland resources, the Parks and Community Services staff maintains various landscaped areas throughout the city including street medians in Vista Montana.

The Parks and Community Services Department provides recreation programs for both youth and adults including sports leagues and instruction, special interest classes, a

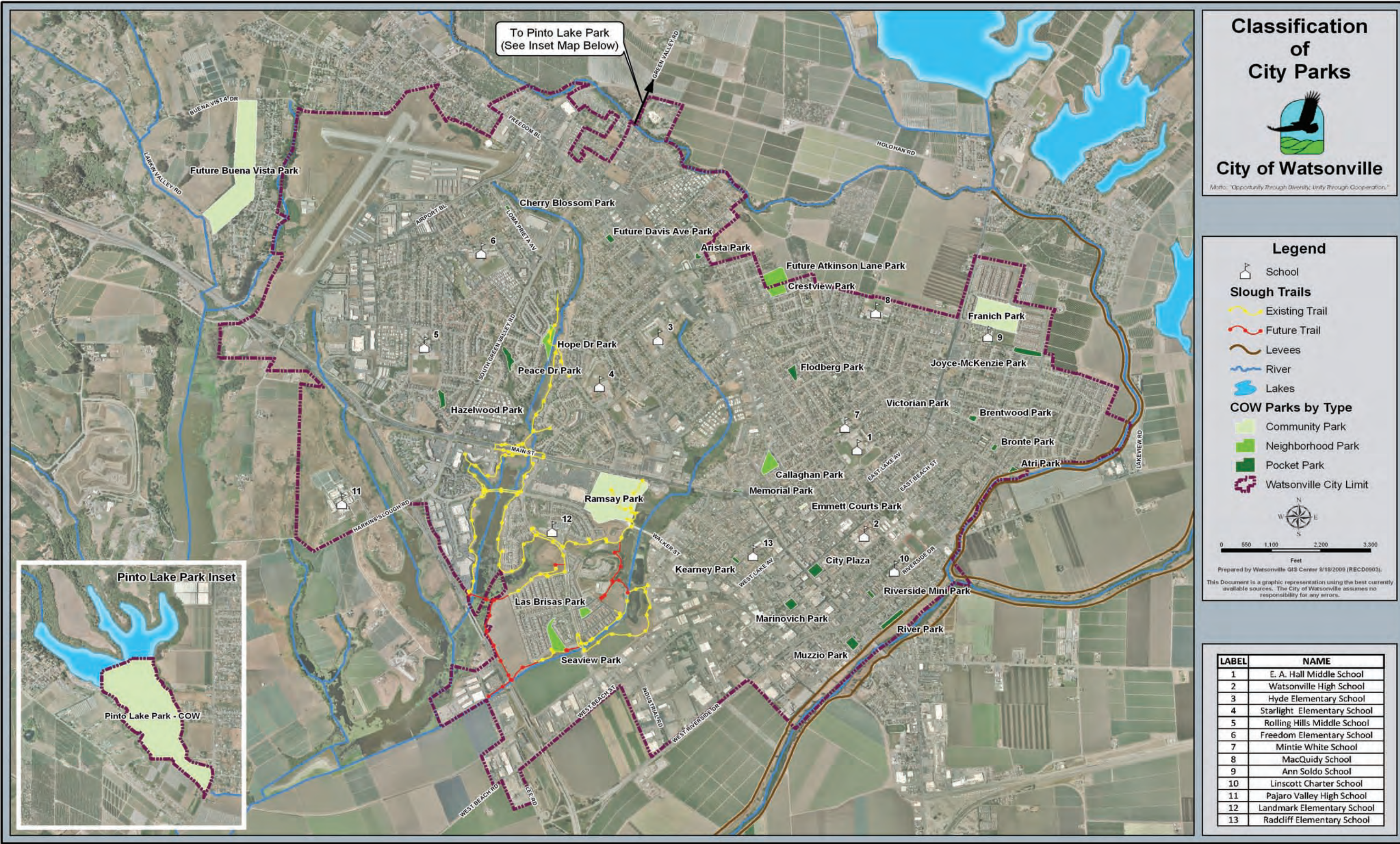
variety of recreational classes, and trips and excursions. In addition, the Department is responsible for operations and maintenance of five community centers located in different city parks.

Appendix A includes a complete inventory of existing parks and facilities.

Table 1-1. Existing and Planned Parks

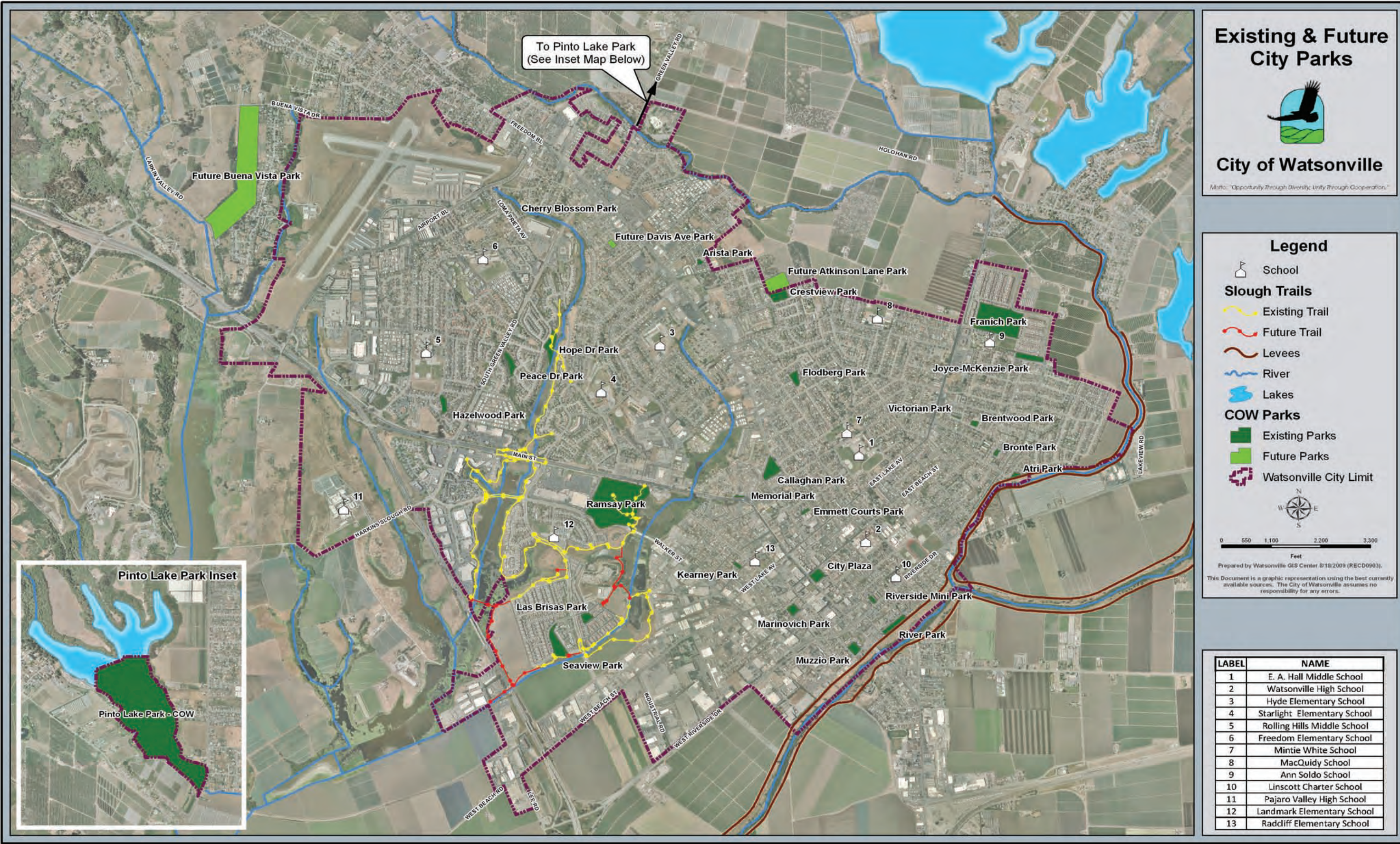
Parks	Address	Type	Acres
Pinto Lake Park	451 Green Valley Rd.	Community	78.50
Cherry Blossom Park	41 Loma Prieta Ave.	Pocket	0.15
Arista Park	52 Arista Ct.	Pocket	0.27
Crestview Park	301 Crestview Dr.	Neighborhood	2.01
Franich Park	795 Vista Montana Dr.	Community	14.02
Joyce-McKenzie Park	500 Joyce Dr.	Pocket	1.72
Victorian Park	106 Weeks Dr.	Pocket	0.13
Brentwood Park	320 Brentwood Dr.	Pocket	0.41
Bronte Park	615 Bronte Ave.	Pocket	0.28
Atri Park	602 Atri Ct.	Pocket	0.32
Flodberg Park	219 Alvarado St.	Pocket	1.07
Hope Drive Park	75 Hope Dr.	Neighborhood	2.46
Hazelwood Park	297 Herman	Pocket	1.07
Peace Dr. Park	62 Peace Dr.	Pocket	1.40
Ramsay Park	1302 Main St.	Community	25.91
Callaghan Park	225 Sudden St.	Neighborhood	2.64
Emmett Courts Park	37 Sudden St.	Pocket	0.15
Kearney Park	119 Kearney St.	Pocket	0.29
City Plaza	358 Main St.	Pocket	1.40
Marinovich Park	118 Second St.	Pocket	1.03
Riverside Mini Park	127 Riverside Dr.	Pocket	0.34
Muzzio Park	26 W. Front St.	Pocket	1.12
River Park	100 East Front St.	Pocket	1.43
Seaview Ranch Park	Lighthouse Ave.	Neighborhood	4.00
Memorial Park	Main St & Freedom Blvd	Pocket	0.22
Las Brisas Park	1028 Nueva Vista Ave.	Pocket	1.00
Future 37 Davis	37 Davis Street	Pocket	0.50
Future Buena Vista Park	617 Buena Vista Dr.	Community	35.28
Future Atkinson Park		Neighborhood	5.00
Total Facilities			184.12

Figure 1-1. Existing Parks by Type



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Figure 1-2. Existing and Planned Parks by Type



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Watsonville community members value their open space and natural resources.

Existing Parks

The City of Watsonville includes 26 existing parks and 1 planned pocket park, 1 planned neighborhood park, and 1 planned community park. The City supports 184.12 acres of park land. Table 1-1 on page 18 provides a listing of parks in the city.

The following park classification system is used for Watsonville parks:

- Pocket Parks;
- Neighborhood Parks; and
- Community Parks.

The existing Parks and Open Space Master Plan includes definitions for these three park types. The draft General Plan Update does not include parkland definitions. The Department's existing definitions have been updated and redefined (see Recommendations section). The following are general descriptions of pocket, neighborhood, and community parks.

Pocket Parks: Pocket parks are small parks that serve residents in immediately adjacent neighborhoods. Pocket parks provide basic recreation amenities, such as playgrounds, benches, and landscaping. Pocket parks generally are $\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 acres in size and have service areas of $\frac{1}{4}$ mile or less.

The Parks and Community Services Department currently provides 19 pocket parks such as River Park and City Plaza.

Neighborhood Parks: Located within walking and bicycling distance of most users, neighborhood parks provide close-to-home recreation opportunities for surrounding neighborhoods. These parks are designed primarily for non-supervised, non-organized recreation activities, supported by facilities such as playground equipment, outdoor courts, picnic tables, pathways, and multi-use open grass areas or small sports fields. Neighborhood parks provide access to recreation for nearby residents, enhance neighborhood identity, and preserve open space. These parks generally are 2 to

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10 acres in size and serve residents within a ¼- to ½-mile distance.

The Parks and Community Services Department currently provides 11.11 acres of neighborhood parks at 4 sites.

Community Parks: Community parks are larger parks that provide both active and passive recreation opportunities that appeal to the entire community. Typically, these sites are designed for active recreation, supported by facilities such as sport fields, outdoor courts, skate parks, and recreation centers. Community parks can accommodate large numbers of people and offer a wider variety of facilities than neighborhood parks, such as disc golf, volleyball, tennis courts, dog parks, group picnic areas and shelters. These parks may also include significant natural areas and trails. For this reason, community parks require more support facilities, such as off-street parking and restrooms. The minimum size of community parks is generally between 15-20 acres.

The City of Watsonville has three community parks: Pinto Lake, Ramsay Park, and Franich Park, which altogether total 118.43 acres. Future Buena Vista Park is planned and totals 35.28 acres. The site was identified in the General Plan process as an area to be annexed.

Existing Natural Areas and Open Space

Natural Areas and Open Space are permanent, undeveloped spaces which are managed primarily for their natural resource value, and secondarily for recreational use. Natural Areas and Open Space may include wetlands, wildlife habitats, steep hillsides, or stream corridors. These parks may preserve or protect environmentally sensitive areas, such as unique or endangered plant species. These spaces can provide opportunities for nature-based recreation, such as trail use, bird watching, and environmental education. The size and shape of each natural area will vary depending on the resource it protects.

The City of Watsonville is surrounded by open spaces including agricultural land, the Pajaro River, Salsipuedes and Corralitos Creeks, and Struve and Watsonville Sloughs. The active recreational use of the majority of these open spaces is limited. However, these open spaces contribute to flood control and protect wildlife.



The Neighborhood Services Division provides valuable resources for local residents.

Trails

Trails are linear open spaces that provide trail corridors and/or green buffers within neighborhoods and communities. Trails typically follow features such as streets, abandoned railroad rights-of-way, power lines or waterways. These corridors often contain hard-surfaced or soft-surfaced trails, along with amenities such as trailheads, viewpoints, seating areas and interpretive displays. They provide public access to natural features, preserve open space, and can support trail-related recreation and transportation. These corridors may serve specific neighborhoods, the entire City, and the region as well.

The Wetlands Trails include 6.85 miles of trails and twenty-three trail entrances in Watsonville neighborhoods providing opportunities to walk, jog, or bicycle. Additionally, Watsonville residents use the city's levees for recreational purposes, which include 2.94 miles of developed trails.

Existing Recreation Facilities

The City of Watsonville provides a variety of unique facilities to encourage residents to participate in recreation activities. This section determines the types of facilities to be analyzed in the needs assessment phase of the planning process. It lists the current inventory of these facilities:

Community Center	Horseshoes
Dog park	Picnic tables
Skatepark	Group picnic tables
Environmental education opportunities	Water/lake amenity Water play feature
Trail/levee access	Children's playground
Soccer fields	Tot lot playground
Baseball fields	Barbeque
Tennis courts	Restrooms
Basketball courts	Shade structure
Sand volleyball courts	Additional information

Appendix A: Parks and Facilities Inventory provides a comprehensive list of the city's parks and the facilities and amenities located in each park.

Community Centers

The City maintains and operates five community centers, which include:

- Callaghan Park Cultural Center;
- Gene Hoularis and Waldo Rodriguez Youth Center;
- Marinovich Community Center;
- Muzzio Community Center; and
- Ramsay Park Family Center.

These recreation facilities host numerous recreation programs and classes, which are described in the following section.

Other Major Facility Providers

In addition to the Parks and Community Services Department, there are several other agencies and organizations that make a significant contribution to the number of recreation facilities in Watsonville. These are noted briefly below.

City of Watsonville Public Works and Utilities Department

The City of Watsonville Public Works and Utilities Department manages recreation facilities in the City including the Science Workshop at Marinovich Park and Nature Centers at Ramsay Park. The Department also manages the four miles of trails that extend through the Struve and Watsonville Sloughs.

Table 1-2 includes the recreation facilities operated and maintained by the Department, non-profit organizations, and groups.

Table 1-2. Other Community Facilities

Other Community Facilities	Address	Area
Corralitos Women's Club	33 Browns Valley Road	1,500 sq.ft.
Corralitos Community Center (Padre's Hall)	35 Browns Valley Road	3,000 sq.ft.
Grizzly Flat	Intersection of Eureka Canyon Road and Grizzly Flat Road	215 acres
Golf Range	101 Ranport Road	8 acres
Mello Center	215 East Beach Street	6,978 sq.ft.
Pajaro Valley Arts Building	37 Sudden Street	.12 acres
Senior Center	114 East Fifth Street	10,000 sq.ft.
Veterans Building Memorial Building	215 E. Beach Street	18,187 sq.ft.
YWCA Childcare Street	118 Second Street	2.670 sq.ft.

Source: City of Watsonville, March 2009.

The Senior Center is leased to a non-profit and the YWCA Childcare center at Marinovich Park is leased to the YWCA. The non-profit and YWCA, respectively, operate and maintain these facilities.

The Corralitos Women's Club and Community Center (Padres Hall) are also leased to non-profit groups. Thus, activities and services at these facilities are not provided by the City.

The Pajaro Valley Arts Building is owned by the City and leased to the Pajaro Valley Arts Council. The facility is in front of the Department-operated Emmett Courts.

The Veterans Memorial Building is a historic building owned by the County of Santa Cruz and leased to the City. The City leases it to various cultural groups, non-profits, and sports leagues. The Mello Center, across the street from the Veterans Memorial Building, is operated by the City and used by non-profits, independent theater programs, and the high school.

Pajaro Valley Unified School District

The Pajaro Valley Unified School District is located in the City of Watsonville. The City maintains a joint-use agreement with the school district. The following existing and planned schools are located in the City of Watsonville.

Table 1-3. Inventory of Existing and Planned Schools

Public Schools	Acreage
Rolling Hills Middle School*	18.58
Starlight Elementary School	9.24
Ann Soldo Elementary School*	8.1
Pajaro Valley High School	37.2
Landmark Elementary School	6.88
Watsonville High School	24.58
Mintie White Elementary School	4.93
Hyde Elementary School	9.33
Linscott Charter School	1.31
E.A. Hall Middle School*	14.3
MacQuiddy Elementary School	6.88
Radcliff Elementary School*	2.0
Freedom Elementary School	9.8
Total School Acreage	153.13

* The City has a current recreational use agreement with these schools.

In addition to public schools, there are several private schools in Watsonville including Green Valley Christian School, Mount Madonna School, and St. Francis Central Coast Catholic School, among others.

Park System Evaluation

In February 2009, a parks tour was completed to identify the overall condition of existing park amenities and facilities and to evaluate the park system according to its strengths and weaknesses. The Parks and Community Services Department provides a variety of parks and facilities that support diverse recreation experiences for many residents in the City.

Generally speaking, Watsonville’s park system offers an abundance of recreational opportunities for residents. Residents tend to frequent their local neighborhood parks. Parks are well-used by a variety of users during the day for a variety of passive and active recreational pursuits including:

- Basketball;
- Tennis;
- Volleyball;
- Fishing;
- Playground use;
- Relaxation;
- Skateboarding; and
- Gathering with friends.

The Department has benefited from the generosity of residents and interest groups. Several parks and recreation facilities in Watsonville have been donated or renovated by various organizations or residents including tennis court renovations at Ramsay Park and horseshoe pit facilities at Joyce-McKenzie Park.

Parks are generally well-maintained. The parks typically do not suffer from problems with excessive litter, water leakage and stagnation, and broken or unusable equipment and facilities. Graffiti is an on-going maintenance issue for the Department. City law requires that graffiti be removed within 48 hours. Consequentially, the parks maintenance staff spends a fair amount of time removing graffiti and tags. Additionally, there is public perception by some residents that some



The Department provides a variety of recreation opportunities for youth.

parks are unsafe. Marinovich, Muzzio, Flodberg, Emmett Courts, and River Parks have been gathering places for gangs and have been the scene of or are in close proximity to crime activity and gang-related violence. Maintenance staff, as a result, take steps to minimize crime and violence by maintaining communications with neighbors closest to the parks and searching for hidden weapons on park sites.

Parks could be enhanced with the following:

- Uniform signage.
- Established maintenance standards by park type.
- Weekend maintenance staffing.
- Updated or renovated amenities including: fybar ground cover, barbeques, additional and repaired shade structures, graffiti abatement and removal, and tree planting.
- Connecting trail system.

- Expanding joint use agreements with the Pajaro Valley School District.
- Addressing flooding and drainage issues in Crestview and Ramsay.
- Park system design guidelines.

A few facilities need minor improvements or modifications to ensure they meet American with Disabilities Act (ADA) guidelines. This might include modifications to the molding around the edge of the entrance to a children's play area. Park system design guidelines can be updated to guide future park development according to current ADA standards.

Department staff stated that, in the past, community members have suggested extending park hours, increasing the amount of security lighting in parks, and reducing the amount of litter in parks.

The Public Works and Utilities Department is conducting an audit of irrigation systems in parks. The audit will provide recommendations for parks and water conservation when complete.

Existing Recreation Programs

City Programs

The City of Watsonville has a variety of indoor and outdoor recreation facilities that allow the Parks and Community Services Department to offer a variety of recreation programs for diverse age groups and interests.

Eight major service areas have been identified for recreation programming. These are described briefly below:

- **Summer camps:** sport camps, etc. for school-age youth and teens.
- **Specialty classes:** enrichment classes for youth and adults in areas such as dance, cooking, video, guitar, computer classes, etc.
- **Youth sports:** dodgeball, soccer, baseball, and basketball.
- **Adult sports and fitness:** fitness classes, basketball, volleyball, softball, and golf.
- **Special events:** Family fun nights, youth entertainment nights, Day of the Child/Earth Day Celebration, Spirit of



The Fourth of July Parade is a highlight for community members.

Watsonville 4th of July Parade, the Farmer's Market, Watsonville Strawberry Festival, etc.

- **Child care/youth development:** After school enrichment programs such as homework help.
- **Day trips and excursions:** Field trips to cultural sites, sports, outdoor recreation, beach bonfire, etc.
- **Aquatics:** water safety, swimming lessons, recreational swim.

Ages Served

The Department's programs and events are designed to serve a variety of residents. Specific programs target various ages, including adults, teens, youth, and seniors. Age-related programming ranges from the Secret Valentine dance for middle school students to driver's education courses for teens to day trips for seniors. As stated earlier, the Department also provides events geared towards families, such as Day of the Child/Earth Day.

The Department has provided fitness or specialty classes for seniors on a limited basis. This may, in part, be due to the Department's lack of a senior-specific facility. Many seniors rely on the Watsonville Senior Center which is a city facility that works in partnership with several non-profit providers.

Program Format

The City of Watsonville's programs are offered in a variety of formats. These include specialty classes (weekdays, weekends, two-day workshops), field trips/tours, sport leagues, sport competitions, youth camps (half-day, day-long, week-long, school breaks), and drop in activities (e.g., computer classes, homework help, etc.). Special events are offered in a variety of formats depending on their content and location.

Program Registration and Fees

There are five options for registering for the Department's recreation programs: in person, on-line, by mail, by phone and by fax. A registration form is provided at the middle of the Recreation Guide. The Recreation Guide is bilingual in Spanish and English.

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community input



community input

The City of Watsonville placed a priority on engaging the community in the development of the master plan. Community input was solicited using a variety of methods to ensure broad participation from youth, adults and seniors.

Since Watsonville's multilingual population is relatively large (72 percent of the population in 2007 according to the American Community Survey), activities were conducted in both Spanish and English to ensure community members could respond in their preferred language.

Community members were consulted using a variety of methods including: a statistically valid Phone Survey of 300 residents, a Parks and Community Services Questionnaire, focus groups conducted with youth and seniors, community workshops, and intercept surveys. The Parks and Community Services Questionnaire was modeled after the Phone Survey and was distributed to interested groups and community members. The intercept survey questions were also modeled after the Phone Survey and abbreviated to form a one-page survey. The one-page survey was distributed at the city-sponsored Day of the Child/Earth Day event and participants provided written responses. One side was in Spanish, the other in English. In total, more than 700 residents and their families provided input for the Master Plan.



Community workshop participants exchanged ideas and shared their opinions on a weeknight.

PARKS AND COMMUNITY SERVICES PHONE SURVEY AND QUESTIONNAIRE

Phone Survey Methodology

Godbe Research conducted a Parks and Community Services Survey in April, 2009. The survey was administered by phone in English and Spanish, and designed to obtain statistically valid results representative of households throughout the Watsonville city limits. A statistically valid sample of 300

residents participated in the survey, and the method provides a 94.4 percent level of confidence with a margin of error of +/- 5.6 percent. Over one-third of participants responded in Spanish.

The survey was designed to achieve the following research objectives:

- Identify the current usage of city parks and recreation facilities, and the barriers preventing their use;
- Gauge resident satisfaction with city parks; recreation programs, events, and facilities; and neighborhood services;
- Survey participation in sports and athletic activities; and
- Assess the importance of the following:
 - Sports and recreational activities
 - Availability of facilities and sites for sports and recreational activities
 - Availability of recreational programs and classes

Cross tabbing of survey results allowed the project team to determine which factors were influenced by age, family size, ethnic or cultural identity and general area of residence.

Questionnaire Methodology

The City of Watsonville Park and Community Services Questionnaire was printed and distributed to interested groups and community members at the Farmer's Market, local health clinic, community resource center, and school associations. The questionnaire was offered in Spanish and English and over half of participants chose to respond in Spanish. A total of 65 residents completed the questionnaire.

The questionnaire was modeled after the Phone Survey so there could be some comparability with the statistically valid results of the Phone Survey. However, due to the difference in methodology, the results cannot be combined with the Phone Survey results.

Key Findings

Key findings from the Parks and Community Services Phone Survey and Questionnaire are listed below. Complete findings and the survey instrument are available under separate cover as the Parks and Community Services Survey Report, May 2009.



Adult sport programs are popular among community members.

Parks and Community Services Phone Survey

Percentages given in this section reference the 300-person statistically valid sample used in the Phone Survey.

Quality of Life

- Phone Survey respondents are quite satisfied with the sense of community in their neighborhood (85 percent very/somewhat satisfied), and satisfaction is particularly high among monolingual Spanish-speaking residents.

Sports and Recreational Activities

- More than half of the surveyed residents reported participation in sports, athletic or fitness activities (55 percent); soccer was the most popular athletic activity followed by basketball, running or jogging, and baseball.
- The availability of sports and recreational activities is highly important to Watsonville residents including:
 - Walking, hiking or running (87 percent very/somewhat important)
 - Biking (80 percent very/somewhat important)
 - Basketball (75 percent very/somewhat important)
 - Soccer and Swimming (74 percent very/somewhat important)
 - Baseball (72 percent very/somewhat important)



The Strawberry Festival is a well-attended special event sponsored by the Department.

Parks and Recreation Facilities

- About 71 percent of survey respondents had visited a city park or recreation facility during the last 12 months, and close to three-quarters of these households are most likely to visit in the afternoons.
- Approximately 25% of survey respondents do not visit city parks or recreation facilities. Survey results indicate that the main barriers to use of city parks or recreation facilities largely reflect residents' personal preferences, rather than a defect or problem with the facilities; these respondents most frequently cited that they have "no time" (41 percent) or "no interest" (22 percent).
- Residents reported more frequent use of city parks and recreation facilities located within their neighborhood than those located outside their neighborhood.
- Residents rated the availability of facilities and sites for sports and recreation as highly important to households. Approximately 4 out of 5 residents rated the following facilities and sites for sports and recreation as "very important:"
 - Trails for walking and biking
 - Community center with shared space for youth, adult, and senior programs
 - Children's play areas and play equipment

Programs and Events

- About 25 percent of the Phone Survey respondents indicated they attended a city recreation program or event sponsored by the Watsonville Parks and Community Services Department.
- Watsonville residents are highly satisfied with the services provided by the Parks and Community Services Department. Services rated as highly satisfying include:
 - Registration system for recreation programs and classes
 - Availability of city-wide events and festivals
 - Quality of service provided by parks and recreation department staff
- Residents rated the availability of recreation programs and classes as highly important to their household. Priority programs include:
 - Health and fitness programs (92 percent very/somewhat important)
 - After-school programs for children and teens (91 percent very/somewhat important)
 - Children's programs (91 percent very/somewhat important)
 - Teen programs (89 percent very/somewhat important)
- The availability of recreation activities and programs was more important to residents ages 18 to 44, households with children, monolingual Spanish-speaking residents, and the residents who had visited city parks and recreation facilities in the past 12-month period.

Parks and Community Services Questionnaire

The 65 questionnaire respondents had many opinions similar to Phone Survey respondents. The results of the questionnaire were generally found to be similar to or supportive of survey findings.

Quality of Life

Eighty percent of questionnaire respondents reported satisfaction with the sense of community in their neighborhood.

Sports and Recreational Activities

- Participating in swimming, basketball, soccer, and walking, hiking or running are important to questionnaire respondents.



The Youth Center, located in downtown, offers recreation facilities and programs for Watsonville youth.

Parks and Recreation Facilities

- A majority of questionnaire respondents visit city parks or recreation facilities.
- The availability of children's play areas and play equipment, gymnasium with space for dance, gymnastics, and indoor sports courts, swimming pools, and trails for walking and biking were most important to questionnaire respondents.

Programs and Events

- Questionnaire respondents cited program participation costs and fees, a lack of information, and time constraints

as barriers to participating in city recreation programs or events.

- Questionnaire results, similar to Phone Survey results, suggest the department's use of multiple methods would be most effective in informing residents about programs and events.
- Questionnaire participants are most satisfied with the availability of city-wide events and festivals.
- Consistent with the Phone Survey, questionnaire respondents find children's programs to be the most important



Senior Focus Group members gathered after lunch at the Senior Center to discuss parks and recreation.

recreational program or class, followed by after-school programs for children and teens.

FOCUS GROUPS FOR YOUTH AND SENIORS

Methodology

Focus groups were conducted in April 2009 for youth and senior residents of Watsonville. Due to positive response to the Department's recruitment efforts, approximately 30 Watsonville youth ages nine to eighteen participated. The 30 youth were split into two groups and two focus groups were conducted concurrently. The senior focus group met after lunch in the Senior Center and approximately 15 people participated. A series of questions were asked based on the interests of each group. Focus groups lasted approximately one hour.

Key Findings

Youth Focus Group

The Youth Focus Group participants were eager to share their ideas and recreation preferences. Participants spoke favorably of Department staff and the quality and variety of programs offered. These findings reflect the opinions of youth who are actively engaged in using Departmental programs and services.

Sports and Recreational Activities

- Youth participants noted they spend their free time participating in the following recreation activities: soccer, flag football, miniature golf, video games, hanging out with friends, dodge ball, handball, wrestling, sewing and knitting, bench press and weights, skateboarding, and drawing.

Parks and Recreation Facilities

- Youth participants go to the Youth Center to meet with their friends; play pool, basketball, and video games; lift weights; attend band nights; and use the library.
- Youth participants described their favorite park features as skate parks, wildlife, the slide and frogs at Ramsay Park; basketball courts and swings at Kearney Park; rock climbing, space net, and swings at Franich Park; and the central location of Callaghan Park.
- Youth participants expressed interest in longer hours at the youth centers, nutritious food for purchase, additional places to hang out, a round table, a skate zone, an outdoor area with grass, and computers.
- Youth participants were in favor of a swimming pool, more open space, safer trails, a bigger skate park, more basketball courts, and a paintball facility.

Programs and Events

- Youth participants suggested the following recreation classes: surfing, cooking, free-style, paintball, dancing and singing.
- Youth participants enjoyed city-sponsored dances, and requested that the event be free and feature high quality DJs.
- Youth participants expressed interest in participating in day trips to Oakland, San Francisco, the zoo, San Jose, Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk, Six Flags amusement park and overnight camping trips to Yosemite.
- Youth participants are discouraged from visiting parks on their own due to the presence of potential gang activity on their way to and from parks.
- When asked for advice on how to reach youth who were not currently participating in Department programs, they suggested reaching out to youth via schools and the

internet. The Department currently maintains social networking sites for interested community members including a MySpace and Facebook page, as well as a Twitter account.

Senior Focus Group

Senior focus group participants were contacted at the Watsonville Senior Center. They were enthusiastic about sharing their opinions about and preferences for recreation activities. Their opinions reflect those of seniors actively using City programs and services.

Sports and Recreational Activities

- Senior participants shared that they enjoy dancing, gathering with their friends, crocheting, cooking, walking, playing with their grandchildren, Tai Chi, and line dancing.

Parks and Recreation Facilities

The majority of senior participants visit city parks, including Ramsay, Pinto Lake and Las Brisas, to walk, take their grandchildren to play, and volunteer.

- Senior participants expressed interest in the inclusion of more barbeques, shade trees, campfire pits, benches, and flowers in city parks.
- Senior participants identified the following barriers to visiting city parks: a lack of transportation and parking, child care needs, and limited space in parks to have large family gatherings.
- Senior participants expressed appreciation for the Senior Center and the benefits it provides them including: new friends, a safe gathering space, nutritious meals, and activities. They requested speed bumps in front of the center to slow traffic and adjacent parking.
- Senior participants were in favor of a multi-generational community center with a dedicated area for seniors.
- Senior participants expressed interest in the inclusion of day care in parks and facilities (such as the Senior Center) and a swimming pool.

Programs and Events

- Senior participants were in favor of more classes and programs including exercise classes such as chair fitness, crocheting programs, arts and crafts, baking classes, line



Community members value trees and shade in their public and open spaces.

dancing, Tai Chi, jazzercise, and music opportunities.

Seniors identified the Senior Circle program, hosted at the Watsonville Community Hospital, as a model. Senior Circle is a national, nonprofit organization that provides its members, age 50 years old and up, with free activities, events, classes, and in-hospital privileges.

- Senior participants expressed interest in participating in excursions including walking trips, and day trips to San Francisco, Carmel, San Jose's performance center and the opera. They suggested providing at least one-month advance program notice.
- Senior participants recommended that the department provide information and advertise city senior programs and activities at the Senior Center.

COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS

Methodology

Approximately 17 residents attended one of two community workshops hosted by the City to inform residents about the master plan process and invite them to identify vision concepts, community needs and priorities. Workshops were held at two different locations and at different times of the week to allow maximum opportunity for community members to provide feedback and input in the Master Plan Update process.



Community workshops provided an opportunity for residents to speak directly with Department staff.

Each meeting featured a brief presentation by MIG that provided an overview of the master plan update process, a profile of the community, and the existing condition of parks and recreation facilities in Watsonville.

Participants were asked to share their opinions about what they liked best about the City's parks and recreation facilities. They were asked to share any issues and concerns they had about the parks and to suggest park and facility improvements and additions. The size of the group allowed for extended, informal discussion.

Participants spoke positively and expressed appreciation for the city parks, recreation facilities, programs, and events. Participants described the parks and facilities as well-tended and well-distributed throughout the city such that most neighborhoods had a park in close proximity. Participants

also highlighted the quality of park amenities and the variety of recreation opportunities in the city. Some participants were supportive of improving and increasing trail connections throughout the City and surrounding region. While the Department does not have responsibility for trails in the City, meeting participants noted it was important that the Departments of Parks and Community Services and Public Works and Utilities collaborate to ensure that residents are able to use and enjoy trails in their City.

When asked to share their issues and concerns, no significant deficiencies were identified. Some participants expressed concern about safety in and near some parks, along portions of trails, and traveling to and from recreation facilities. For example, some participants commented that on some sections of slough trails they felt isolated or vulnerable to potentially negative interactions with transients or gang members.

Participants suggested that there were some actions the Department could take to improve safety within its area of responsibility. For example, participants noted they felt safe when there was a staff presence in the parks. They also noted that some minor improvements in some parks, such as lighting, fencing, or strategic changes to the landscaping that minimize hiding and trouble spots might have a positive impact on park safety. It was suggested that safety along trails, in the slough, for example, might be improved by providing guided walks led by volunteer docents. Participants expressed that establishing a regular presence of trail users might help to reduce or redirect negative activities in these areas.

They also identified some barriers to participation such as transportation, especially for residents seeking to use facilities that are not located in their immediate neighborhood.

Key Findings

Sports and Recreational Activities

- Community workshop participants identified walking, hiking and jogging; birding; playing with their children on the playground equipment; attending City festivals and events; and playing tennis, baseball, and volleyball as activities they enjoy in Watsonville parks. Few of the meeting participants expressed that they were active in league sports.

Parks and Recreation Facilities

- Community workshop participants expressed strong appreciation for their parks and recreation system; they value existing amenities and facilities.
- Areas west of Green Valley, near Freedom School, near Davis Avenue, and Rolling Hills were identified as parts of the city that are underserved by parks.
- There is a strong interest in more parks including: open space, passive space, neighborhood parks and a community park similar to Franich Park.
- Community workshop participants were in favor of additional park amenities in parks including: trees for shade and piñatas, barbecues, more lighting near children's playgrounds, more space for sports, community gardens, and restrooms (e.g. Seaview Ranch Park).
- Community workshop participants expressed interest in more recreation facilities including: tennis courts, basketball courts for younger children, dog-friendly parks near the airport, bigger skate park, and more space for sports.
- The availability of affordable and safe transportation was identified as a barrier to park and recreation participation.
- Restoring and expanding the trail system using greenway and bikeway strategies was highlighted as a priority for participants.

Programs and Events

- Community members were in favor of additional recreation activities including: cultural activities, Aztec and folklórico dance, a wetlands walk, and programs for seniors and youth such as after-school activities and competitive sports leagues.
- Participants suggested partnering with schools to host programs and to develop joint use agreements.
- Participants suggested outreach to schools and mobile home parks.



Over 240 community members completed a one-page survey at the Day of the Child/Earth Day Celebration.

COMMUNITY EVENTS – DAY OF THE CHILD/EARTH DAY SURVEY

Methodology

Two hundred and forty community members completed a one-page survey while attending the Day of the Child/Earth Day Festival in April 2009. MIG and City staff invited attendees to complete the survey, which was available in both English and Spanish. As an incentive to complete the survey, participants were eligible for a ticket in a raffle for prizes that included two baskets of various toys and fitness items. Approximately one half of the 240 respondents chose to complete the questionnaire in Spanish.

Key Findings

Sports and Recreational Activities

- Survey respondents predominantly recreate by playing soccer and walking, hiking, or running.

Parks and Recreation Facilities

- Survey participants value their parks and recreation opportunities, including City-sponsored special events.
- Nearly all survey participants visit city parks at least once a month.



Department staff work with youth to learn and explore.

- Survey participants visit the city parks to use the children's play areas and to walk and run; Spanish-speaking adults generally visit city parks to walk and run.
- Overwhelmingly, children's play equipment and play areas are most important to survey participants.
- Consistent with the Phone Survey and questionnaire, Day of the Child/Earth Day survey participants do not visit parks because they feel unsafe or have no time. Spanish-speaking adults are less likely to feel unsafe in parks than other respondents.
- Survey respondents are in favor of a city facility that services seniors, teens, youth and adults in one location.

Programs and Events

- After-school and children's programs are most important to survey participants.

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needs assessment



needs assessment

A Needs Assessment for Watsonville's parks and facilities was developed based on the background research, public involvement results, and technical analysis described in the previous chapters.

The Needs Assessment:

- Identifies parks and recreation trends;
- Describes opportunities and constraints to parks and recreation in the City of Watsonville;
- Identifies parks and recreation current and future needs;
- Assesses the need for parks and recreation programs and facilities in the Watsonville planning area; and
- Includes a high level estimated budget for both capital and operating expenses.

STRENGTHS AND OPPORTUNITIES

A Changing Population

The community needs presented in this document must be viewed against the backdrop of the people that make up Watsonville. Like many cities in California, Watsonville is growing and experiencing shifts in the ages and ethnic makeup of its residents. Trends suggest that Watsonville will continue to experience population growth, an increasing senior population, and a decreasing youth population. Between 2007 and 2030, Watsonville's senior population will increase from 9 to 17 percent of the population and youth population will decrease from 37 to 26 percent of the population. Watsonville adult population ages 18 to 64 will remain steady at 57 percent of the population between 2000 and 2030.



The Environmental Science Workshop is located in Marinovich Park and is open after school and on weekends.

Additionally, Watsonville is required by the state to provide the opportunity for affordable housing development of up to 923 new housing units by 2014, according to 2007 Association of Bay Area Government (ABAG) data. An increase in Watsonville's total population will likely impact the need for parklands and close to home recreation opportunities.

Outdoor, Active Lifestyle

Watsonville's climate, geography and proximity to the coast offer many opportunities for outdoor recreation activities. The most popular and preferred activities statewide, according to a trends report produced by California State Parks,

remain those that are relatively easy to do, require little skill and are not expensive, e.g., walking, picnicking, attending outdoor events, using sports fields, and visiting cultural sites and museums. However, research also indicates a growing interest in such sports as skateboarding and rock climbing. Trail-related and open space recreation is becoming increasingly important, locally, regionally and statewide.

Parks and recreation facilities are well-used throughout the day, after school and on weekends and people tend to bike and walk to destinations and services within the community.

Statewide trends indicate levels of inactivity differ among ethnic groups. Latino, Asian, and African American teens reported lower rates of physical activity than white teens. Teens from low-income families are less active than affluent teens.

Watsonville appears to defy statewide trends; residents of all ethnic groups and socio-economic backgrounds recreate and use the parks. Parks, plazas, and other recreation facilities are well-used and become of increasing importance during difficult economic times as residents seek affordable recreation opportunities. Residents walk trails and bike throughout the city, gather with family members and friends, and host celebrations in city parks and facilities.

Connections to People and Places

Connections between parks and the community are important in Watsonville. Parks are well-used and residents tend to frequent the parks within their neighborhood. Many residents bike, walk, or take public transportation to destinations within the community. Community outreach participants frequently cited the potential to increase connections between parks, neighborhoods, and key destinations. Building on the existing slough and levee trail system is of interest to community outreach participants.

Community outreach participants want more information about what is happening in the community. Events, classes, field trips, and recreational activities are important to participants. Accessibility to these opportunities is encouraged by the Department by supporting a diverse and bilingual staff, and by providing a seasonal recreation guide in English and Spanish. Additionally, the City's successful effort to promote the previous US Census count and participation in the upcoming



Levee trails border the flood plain in Watsonville.

ing US Census 2010 has resulted in a community that is willing to share their opinions. Residents were more than willing to participate in surveys and share their feedback about parks and recreation facility needs in their community.

Safety

Safety is important to community outreach participants. Some participants shared their opinions at the community workshops and during focus group discussions that decreasing gang violence and improving the perception of safety in specific parks in the community are of great importance to residents and the Department.

The Department has promoted safety in parks and recreation facilities by considering user safety and implementing strategies to minimize crime and vandalism, such as increased lighting, fence repairs, and park surveillance strategies. Community outreach participants suggested communicating the opportunity for programs at recreational facilities to lower juvenile crime.

Age-Specific Programming

Community outreach participants of all ages consistently voiced the need to develop more opportunities for Watsonville's children and teens. Examples of identified needs for youth included after-school programs, recreation classes, and



Pocket parks offer spaces to play within neighborhoods, serving as a backyard to many.

sports activities, all which need to be affordable, high-quality, and varied.

While youth needs were clearly a priority to community outreach participants, serving the senior population was also emphasized. The senior population is expected to increase by 2030. While participants in the Senior focus group indicated a high level of satisfaction with existing programs and activities offered at the Senior Center, it is also clear that as the senior population increases, additional programs and facilities of similar quality will be needed.

Partnerships

Community workshop participants acknowledged that it is unrealistic to expect one Department to meet the needs of the growing community. Community outreach participants were supportive of partnerships and joint-use agreements that would expand the parklands and trail system and increase facilities for parks and recreation.

Environmental Awareness

Watsonville has been a leader in environmental awareness and conservation through its efforts to preserve and protect the city's wetlands with numerous conservation and enhance-

ment projects. The City's Nature Center, Environmental Education Workshop, and various programs demonstrate the City's emphasis on environmental education and awareness. A few community workshop participants expressed an interest in interpretive walks and bird watching activities in the wetlands. The existing trail system in the slough provides an opportunity for residents to experience nature in the heart of the city.

Department Services and Maintenance of Existing Facilities

Watsonville community outreach participants are highly satisfied with the services provided by the Parks and Community Services Department. The registration system and quality of service provided by the Department received top marks from participants. The Department's park maintenance is valued and recognized by the community's high level of satisfaction with park and facilities maintenance and the condition of fields and courts. Community outreach participants stressed the importance of continuing the level of maintenance while upgrading existing parks.

BENEFITS

Parks and recreation facilities play an important role in people's lives. This section explores the benefits of parks and recreation facilities and is based on academic and agency research conducted by the California Parks and Recreation Society (CPRS), National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) and examples from other California cities.

A recent study conducted by CPRS indicates that parks and facilities are an essential component of the everyday lives of Californians. Virtually every California household (98 percent) visited a park or participated in a program during the past year and 67 percent did so at least once in the past month. Residents statewide see parks as making their communities better places to live. Watsonville residents use their parks regularly and visit parks for a variety of reasons including: to walk, bike and run; to play active sports; to relax; and to gather and play with loved ones.

Parks and recreation facilities benefit the community personally, environmentally, socially, and economically.



Community members in Watsonville value opportunities to swim.

Personal

Watsonville's parks and recreation facilities promote and provide health and wellness, life-long learning, community-wide connections, and enjoyable play. Community outreach indicates that many residents visit parks to experience personal benefits that are gained from participating in health and fitness activities, learning new skills, expressing themselves creatively and meeting with friends and family. Playgrounds, natural spaces, recreation programs, sports leagues, and trails are just some of the recreational options the Department provides for people of all ages and abilities to experience these benefits throughout their lives.

Environmental

Parks and natural spaces present an opportunity for communities to preserve existing environmental resources and to restore native habitats, natural areas and gardens. Protecting natural resources improves the quality of life in communities, enables ecosystem conservation, connects a community with its landscape, and promotes environmental education. These public spaces help connect the urban and natural environment, creating greenways and improving air and water quality.

Recent scientific studies demonstrate that there is a need for natural spaces within urban environments, as these spaces promote health and wellness of residents and natural



Commemorative Tree and Bench Program participants.

resources. Children, especially, benefit from connecting with nature. Recent studies documented by the Children in Nature Network describe youth who spend time outdoors as performing better in school and having higher fitness levels.

Social

Public spaces, such as parks and recreation facilities, encourage community gathering and interaction. They can serve as front yards or backyards for residents, visitors, and employees to meet, play, and socialize. Green, public spaces encourage community participation and responsibility, offer safe and accessible places, support neighborhood identity, and encourage partnerships.

Public recreational spaces present a fairly neutral opportunity for people to gather for a variety of reasons and interests. The Department plays an important role providing places to celebrate, to convene, and to play.

Economic

A parks and recreation system is multi-faceted and contributes to the economy of a community in a variety of ways. The Department hosts events and league play that encourage community re-investment and attract out-of-town visitors. The City enjoys the preventive benefits of reduced health care costs for those who choose to participate in health and fitness activities. Trails and pathways provide low cost transportation alternatives. Watsonville parks also contribute positively

to property values in the neighborhood and contribute to quality of life benefits that help attract and retain business.

METHODS

A variety of tools and reference materials were used to conduct the analysis for the community needs assessment. These materials include findings from the following sources:

- **Community Outreach Process.** Surveys, interviews, focus groups, events, and workshops.
- **Research on Emerging Recreation Trends.** Analysis of current parks and recreation studies.
- **Inventories and Population Research.** Analysis of levels of service in Watsonville.

The methods employed are described in the following section.

Community Outreach Process

As detailed in Chapter 2, an extensive community outreach process involving more than 700 residents and their families was conducted to identify community perceptions and needs concerning Watsonville's parks and recreation facilities.

In summary, over 700 community members were consulted using a variety of methods including: a statistically valid phone survey of 300 residents, focus groups conducted with youth and seniors, community workshops, and intercept surveys. The intercept surveys used included a questionnaire that was modeled after the Phone Survey and an abbreviated one-page survey distributed at large community events. Public involvement activities and methods were planned to ensure the participation of a diverse cross-section of the city's population. Since Watsonville's multilingual population is relatively large (72 percent), activities were conducted in both Spanish and English to ensure community members could respond in their preferred language.

Emerging Recreation Trends

Research on recreation trends and benefits was referenced to examine what may affect service level needs. Materials reviewed include resources prepared by the California Department of Parks and Recreation, the California Parks and Recreation Society, the National Parks and Recreation Association, and related leisure research.

Inventories and Population Research

The City of Watsonville's park standards and projected population increase was compared to determine if the number of existing parks would meet the needs of the projected population.

This report presents an assessment of the overall community need for park land and recreation facilities. It examines the Watsonville park system in terms of park access, park acreage and the number of park facilities serving city residents. The park and facility needs are based on needs identified for the park system through the year 2030. The population in Watsonville is anticipated to grow by this time. As a result, the need for some park types and facilities will have increased by then as well.

This analysis addresses the need for additional parks and facilities over the next 20 years. Renovations to existing parks and facilities will be addressed as part of the development of the Master Plan's capital improvement plan later in the project.

The following terms are used in this section of the report:

- **Level of Service (LOS):** LOS is a measure of the minimum amount of land or number of facilities needed to provide all of the recreation activities desired in a community. LOS is expressed as a ratio of acres or facilities per population.
- **Local parks:** These terms are used collectively to describe classified pocket parks, neighborhood parks and community parks that help meet local park needs.

Level of service is determined using the following data:

- The most current population is estimated to be 51,132 from 2005-2007 American Survey data.
- The future population at the 20-year planning horizon has been taken from projections in Watsonville Vista 2030 (the draft General Plan). The 2030 population is estimated to be 70,418 for the City of Watsonville.

THE PEOPLE OF WATSONVILLE

Based on the demographic projections for Watsonville, these key population trends will likely impact future parks and recreation facilities and program needs:



Slough trails provide opportunities to enjoy the natural environment.

- Between 2007 and 2030, Watsonville is expected to increase by 37 percent, or 19,286 residents.
- The percentage of youth is expected to decrease 8 percent, the percentage of seniors is expected to increase 8 percent, and the percentage of adults 18 to 64 is expected to remain at 57 percent of the population between 2000 and 2030.
- Watsonville's Hispanic and Latino population will continue to increase, while the City's white, non-Hispanic population will continue to decrease.
- The average household income in Watsonville is 25 percent less than the surrounding region and 19 percent of residents are living in poverty.

Current standards require Watsonville to provide 5 acres of parkland for every additional 1,000 residents. The related increase in the number of residents in the city suggests that the amount of parkland, recreation facilities and programs must increase to meet the growing needs.

Watsonville's existing parkland and recreation facilities are generally well distributed and accessible to residents. Certain areas in the city, however, are underserved by parkland. The existing parks and recreation system could be enhanced, in combination with the establishment of public-private partnerships or joint-use agreements, to meet needs in 2030.



Community outreach results indicate that community members value playgrounds highly.

The Needs Assessment draws from the level of service information outlined in the Community Profile, and calls out community needs and trends and identifies emerging opportunities for three areas of service: A) Parklands and Trails; B) Recreation Facilities; and C) Recreation Programs. The emerging opportunities form the basis for the policies, recommendations and actions that appear later in this document.

PARKLANDS AND TRAILS

Watsonville's parklands and trails are highly used and valued by most residents. Phone Survey results indicate that nearly three-quarters (71 percent) of all respondents visited or used city parks or recreation facilities during the last 12 month time period. Survey data indicates residents enjoy the variety of active recreation opportunities available at these developed parks.

Trails support connections to local parks and destinations, as well as support health lifestyles through designated space for walking, running/jogging and bicycling. Community outreach participants value Watsonville's slough and levee trails for fitness opportunities, wildlife observation, and for connecting the community.

Watsonville's current level of service standard for parkland is 5.0 acres per 1,000 residents. The actual current level of service for all parklands and trails is 2.81 acres per 1,000

residents based on 2007 population statistics (51,132 residents). The additional acreage needed to meet 2030 demand is 167.97 acres, which does not include proposed parks and trails and is based on 2030 population statistics (70,418 residents). The Master Plan identifies the actions the Department will take to extend its resources to meet this standard in the coming years as the city population continues to grow. Tables 3-1 and 3-2 provide the level of service analysis, park supply, and project demand.

To achieve the 5 acres per 1,000 persons standard, the City will need to creatively and opportunistically acquire and develop parkland. Partnerships and joint efforts will be key to meeting the city's park acreage standard. For example, the Department currently holds joint use agreements with four schools. Additional agreements could be negotiated with other schools in the City to share maintenance and programming responsibilities and increase access to school lands for community recreational use. Also, the Redevelopment Agency's recent collaboration with a private landowner to provide privately owned public space in the downtown provides a creative example of how this acreage goal can be reached. While the assignment of maintenance responsibilities may tend to dissuade joint-use agreements, the Department could work with partners to establish clear agreements that outline individual and shared responsibilities.

The city is currently well below its neighborhood park acreage standard. There are currently 0.22 acres of neighborhood parkland for every 1,000 persons in Watsonville, which is significantly below the city standard of 2 acres/1,000 persons. In order to meet the city standard, the Department needs 91.15 additional neighborhood acres.

Community park level of service is significantly higher than neighborhood park level of service in Watsonville. There are currently 2.32 acres of community park land for every 1,000 residents; the city needs an additional 34.97 acres of community parkland to meet city standards.

When included in the level of service calculation, trails and pocket parks contribute additional acres; all existing parks and trails contribute 3.08 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents, necessitating 98.1 additional acres to meet the city's standard.

Table 3-1. Existing Level of Service

Park Type	Existing Acreage	City Standard (Per 1,000)	Level of Service*	Additional Park Acreage Needed**
Neighborhood	11.11	2 acres	0.22/1,000	91.15 acres
Planned Neighborhood Parks (undeveloped)	5.00		0.32/1,000	
Community	118.43	3 acres	2.32/1,000	34.97 acres
Planned Parks (undeveloped)	35.28			
Other Parks	13.8	-	-	-
Planned Other Parks	0.5			
All Existing Parks	143.34	5 acres	2.80/1,000	112.32
All Existing and Proposed Parks	184.12	5 acres	3.6/1,000	71.54
Trails***	14.24	-	-	-
Planned Trails	35.3	-	-	-
All Parks and Trails	157.58	5 acres	3.08/1,000	98.1
All Existing and Proposed Parks and Trails	233.66	5 acres	4.57/1,000	22.0

* Level of Service is determined based on the number of park acres per 1,000 persons in Watsonville (51,132 total residents). The formula is as follows: level of service = number of parkland acres/Watsonville population x 1,000.

** Additional park acreage needed is calculated by determining the number of park acres to meet each park type standard and subtracting the number of existing park type acres. The formula is as follows: level of service = 5 acres/1,000 persons x Watsonville population (51,132 total residents).

*** Trail acreage needed is calculated based on the following formula: width of trail (assumed to be 12 feet) x trail mileage.

Table 3-2. Existing and Proposed Park Supply and Projected Demand

Park Type	Existing City Standard (Per 1,000)	Existing Acreage	Current Acreage Demand (2009)*	Existing and Proposed Park Acreage	Future Acreage Demand (2030)***
Neighborhood	2 acres	11.11	91.15	16.11	124.73
Community	3 acres	118.43	34.97	153.71	57.54
All Parks	5 acres	143.34	112.26	184.12	167.97
All Parks and Trails	-	157.58	-	233.66	118.43
Public Schools		153.13	-153.13	153.13	-
Net Demand			112.26**		-34.7****

* Current demand assumes 51,132 residents.

** 153.13 additional acres of school areas have not been included in net demand calculation.

*** Future demand assumes 70,418 residents.

**** Future Net Demand includes all existing and proposed parks and trails, and assumes joint-use agreements at all public school sites.

Existing park acreage demand is calculated using existing park and trails. In order to meet current population needs based on this calculation, the City must gain 112.26 acres of parkland and open space.

Future park acreage demand is calculated using existing parks and trails, proposed parks and trails, and public school sites. It includes the assumption that the Department maintains joint-use agreements at all public school sites. Based on this calculation that includes all existing and proposed parks and trails, as well as all school facilities within the city limits, the City will exceed its parkland and open space acreage standard and will meet 2030 population needs.

The City of Watsonville currently supports 9.79 miles of 12-foot wide slough and levee trails, comprising 14.24 acres. Proposed future trails are planned to provide an additional 24.27 miles, or 35.3 acres of trails. Table 3-3 provides mileage and acreage information regarding Watsonville's existing and planned trails.

Table 3-3. City of Watsonville Slough and Levee Trails*

Trail Type	Mileage	Acreage**
Slough Trails	6.85 miles	9.96 acres
<i>Planned Slough Trails</i>	1.38 miles	2.0 acres
Levee Trails	2.94 miles	4.28 acres
<i>Planned Levee Trails</i>	14.19 miles	20.64 acres
Monterey Bay Sanctuary Trail	0 miles	0 acres
<i>Proposed Monterey Bay Sanctuary Trail</i>	8.7 miles	12.66 acres
EMOS***		479.35 acres
Total Existing Trails	9.79 miles	14.24 acres
Total Planned Trails	24.27 miles	35.3 acres

* This table reflects only trails and sloughs within the boundaries of the City limits.

** Acreage calculation assumes that slough and levee trail width is 12 feet.

*** Environmental Management Open Space



City Plaza offers respite for community members in downtown.

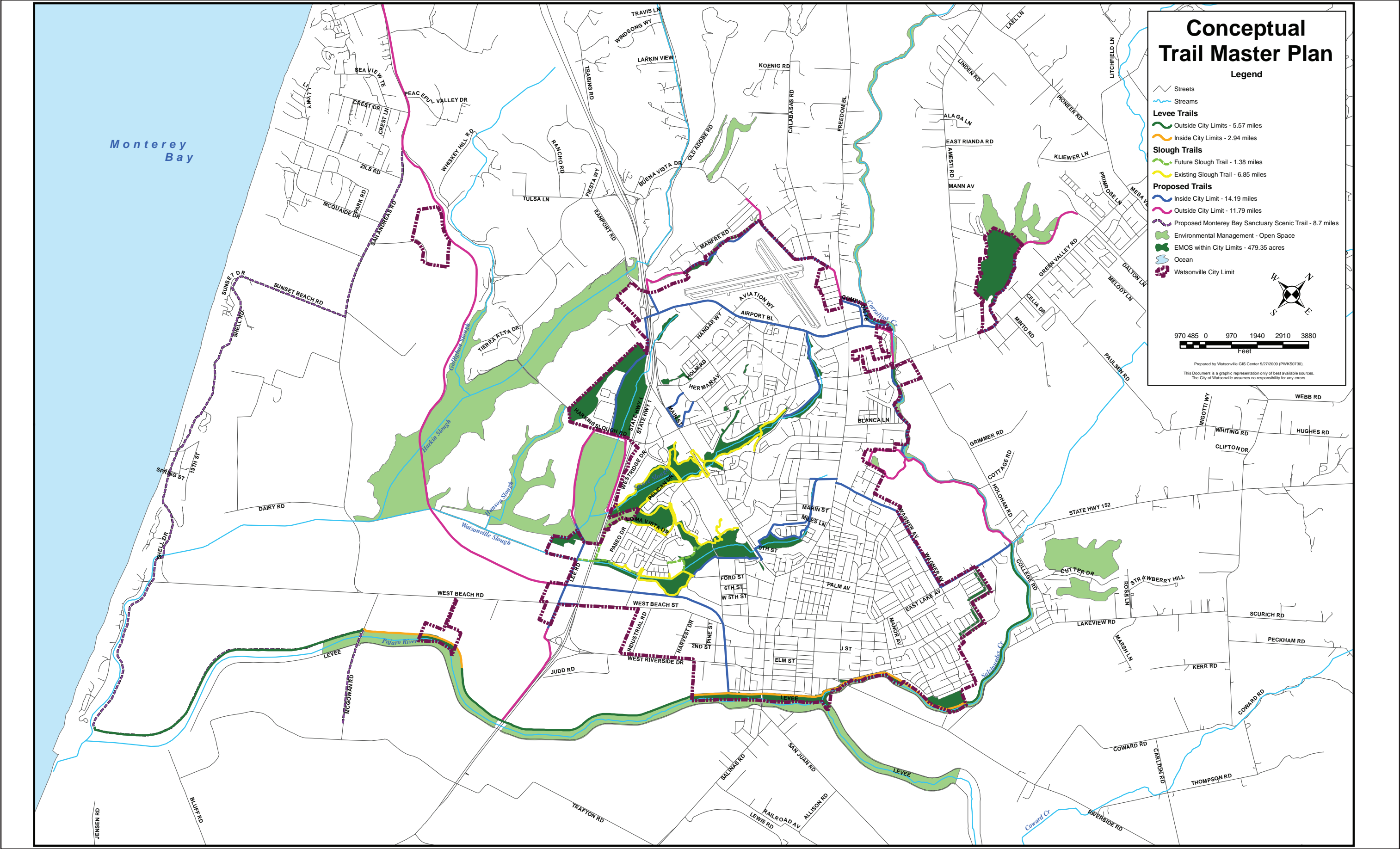
The Public Works and Utilities Department is responsible for trail amenities and restoring native vegetation.

The Public Works and Utilities Department developed a Conceptual Trail Master Plan that indicates existing trails and potential trail linkages. This stand-alone document, to be completed by the Public Works and Utilities Department, will serve as a guide for incorporating new and completed slough and levee trails that will help meet park acreage standards. Figure 3-1 illustrates the location of future trails in the City of Watsonville according to the Conceptual Trail Master Plan.

Recent legislation emphasizes improved land use and transportation planning and activities' that reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Parks and trails play an important role in improved mobility for bicyclists and pedestrians. The Department is well positioned to contribute to strategies that provide alternative transit options for bicyclists and pedestrians.

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Figure 3-1. Conceptual Trail Master Plan



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The Department is responsible for public grounds throughout the city.

Using the new park classification system outlined in the Recommendations Section 3, the Department operates five types of parks and trails:

- **Pocket Parks.** Pocket parks are small parks that serve residents in immediately adjacent neighborhoods and generally are one-half to two acres in size.
- **Neighborhood Parks.** Neighborhood parks provide close-to-home recreation opportunities for surrounding neighborhoods and generally are two to ten acres in size.
- **Community Parks.** Community parks are larger parks that provide both active and passive recreation opportunities and serve multiple neighborhoods. The minimum size of community parks is generally between 14-20 acres.
- **Urban Plazas.** Urban plazas include small landscaped spaces and gathering areas and are typically smaller than one acre in size.
- **Greenbelts and Trails.** Greenbelts and trails are linear open spaces that provide trail corridors and/or green buffers within neighborhoods and communities. Greenbelts and trails typically follow features such as streets, abandoned railroad rights-of-way, power lines, or waterways. These corridors often contain hard-surfaced or soft-surfaced trails, along with amenities such as trailheads, viewpoints, seating areas, and interpretive displays. They provide public access to natural features, preserve open

space, and can support trail-related recreation and transportation. These corridors may serve specific neighborhoods, the entire City, and the region as well.

Public Involvement Findings/Trends

Parks

- Community input indicates that Watsonville residents value their parkland. In the Parks and Community Services Phone Survey (Phone Survey), residents rated the availability of facilities and sites for sports and recreation as highly important.
- The majority of Phone Survey respondents frequent parks in the afternoon.
- Community workshop participants identified areas of the city that are underserved by parks, including areas west of Green Valley, near Freedom School, near Davis Avenue, and near Rolling Hills. They expressed strong interest in more parks including: open space, passive space, neighborhood parks and a community park.
- Cities statewide are moving away from developing pocket parks as they require regular resources and maintenance, while not serving a significant parkland need. However, pocket parks can provide a unique role by including basic recreation amenities for adjacent neighborhoods.
- Community outreach results indicate there are barriers getting to and from parks.
- Current park improvements are well-informed by staff expertise.
- Community outreach participants highlighted Ramsay, Franich, and Callaghan Parks as valued public spaces in the City.

Amenities and Maintenance

- The Department faces increasing challenges with its existing resources to maintain, repair, and renovate existing parks, recreation facilities, planters, entrance ways and parking lots.
- Upwards of 30 percent of park maintenance time is spent picking up trash and emptying trash bins. If park users



Trails weave through the Watsonville Slough.

littered less, the Department would be able to extend its maintenance resources further.

- Phone Survey respondents rate children's play equipment and areas, picnic areas, and barbeque sites as very important, according to the Phone Survey.
- Community outreach activities indicated an interest among residents in more children's equipment, picnic areas, and barbeque sites in city-owned parks.
- While community outreach participants are generally satisfied with the maintenance and cleanliness of parks and

facilities, parks are well-used on weekends when maintenance staff is not available to uphold park cleanliness.

- Graffiti in parks is a significant maintenance challenge.

Trails

- The availability of walking, hiking, or running activities is highly important to Watsonville residents. Approximately 80 percent of Phone Survey respondents rated trails for walking and biking as very important.
- Senior focus group participants expressed a strong interest in trail facilities that connect neighborhoods to public services and facilities.



Indoor basketball facilities are available to community members at the Youth Center.

- Community workshop participants highlighted restoring and expanding the trail system using greenway and bike-way strategies as a priority.
- Alternative transportation is limited in the community. The primary public transportation option in Watsonville is the Santa Cruz Metro bus system, which operates on limited routes. Watsonville's trail system provides one alternative transportation option, yet does not currently connect all residents with community services.
- Trail safety is also an important concern as indicated by participants in the Community Workshops, at the Earth Day/Day of the Child community event, and the youth focus group.

Emerging Opportunities

Parks

- A neighborhood park located within ½ mile of each Watsonville resident.
- Maximize the use of school facilities with increased access to school sites, including private school sites, during after-school hours and on weekends.
- Develop open space in planned park areas including Buena Vista and Atkinson Lane.

- Partner with local transportation agencies to provide accessible transportation options for underserved residents, low-income families, youth and seniors.
- Increase and enhance indoor facilities and shaded outdoor recreation areas to provide for year-round recreation opportunities.
- Work with private land owners to transform an undeveloped lot into a public park.

Amenities and Maintenance

- Specific maintenance standards and guidelines to ensure all parks meet the Department's standard for quality and long-term management.
- Specific development standards and guidelines to ensure each park type includes the appropriate amenities and recreational features.

Trails

- Enhance and expand the existing trail system to link parks, services and neighborhoods, and provide greenways that weave throughout the community.
- Coordinated efforts between City Departments and organizations to operate and maintain trails in Watsonville, in the region, and along the coast, including the Pajaro River trails.
- A well-signed, well-lit trail system that provides for all community members' active and passive recreation interests.

FACILITIES

Like the city's parklands and trails, community outreach participants frequently recreate at the city's outdoor and indoor facilities. Phone Survey results indicate that nearly three-quarters (71 percent) of all respondents visited or used city parks or recreation facilities during the last 12 month time period. Community outreach results indicate that the availability of facilities and sites for sports and recreation are important.

The Department currently operates a variety of parks and recreation facilities. Department facilities that are reviewed here include:

- Sports fields and courts;
- Indoor facilities; and
- Other facilities.

Sports Fields and Courts

Sports fields and courts serve a variety of purposes in a community, from organized league sports to informal recreational play. Watsonville's soccer and baseball fields are often programmed with league play. City-owned and operated sports fields and courts include:

- Baseball fields;
- Soccer fields;
- Tennis courts;
- Basketball courts; and
- Sand volleyball courts.

The majority of these sports fields and courts are located in city-owned parks. Only city soccer junior and adult leagues use the soccer fields at Ramsay and Franich Parks. The Little League primarily uses the baseball field at Pinto Lake. Seaview Ranch Park is used for recreational soccer practice and play. Several of the Department-owned sports fields and courts are operated by private entities, such as sports leagues. Ramsay Park, for example, includes a private-entity owned and operated indoor soccer field complex and a city-owned and operated outdoor soccer field area.

The Department is responsible for the maintenance of all basketball courts, outdoor hard court volleyball courts, indoor volleyball courts, and sand volleyball courts on city-owned properties. Soccer and baseball fields are owned and maintained by both the Department and sports leagues and groups, depending on the facility. The Department maintains written agreements with sports leagues, as well as agreements with various community groups. These entities use these facilities and provide resources to enhance and maintain them. At Pinto Lake and Franich Park, little league partners operate baseball programs and maintain the baseball field. The City is responsible for the maintenance of basketball courts at Franich and Floodberg Parks, and the softball field at Ramsay Park.



Franich Park, a community park, attracts residents and visitors alike.

Table 3-4 includes the type of use and responsible entity for soccer and baseball fields and tennis, basketball and sand volleyball courts in Watsonville.

Other providers in Watsonville offer additional fields and courts to those included in city parks and recreation facilities. Soccer Central Indoor Sports operates a facility in Ramsay Park that provides recreational soccer leagues and programs and softball batting cages. The facility includes two soccer playing fields. Additional sport fields and courts are located at school facilities. The City currently has use agreements with Ann Soldo School for soccer field use, Radcliff School for field use, E.A. Hall for field use, and Rolling Hills for field use. Existing and planned schools in the District include 153.13 acres of outdoor land, a portion of which includes sports fields and courts.

The Pajaro Valley School District school sites contain numerous sports fields and courts. The Department maintains use agreements with several of the schools in the districts. Feasibility of field and court use, maintenance responsibility, and local community support are challenges to developing joint-use agreements.

The Pajaro Valley School District, organized sports teams and soccer clubs, and private operations provide good potential partners for the continuing maintenance and development of fields and courts in Watsonville.

Table 3-4. Sports Fields and Court Facilities - Use and Ownership

Parks	Soccer Fields			Baseball			Tennis			Basketball			Sand Volleyball		
	League Play	Informal	Responsible Entity*	League Play	Informal	Responsible Entity*	League Play	Informal	Responsible Entity*	League Play	Informal	Responsible Entity	League Play	Informal	Responsible Entity*
Pinto Lake Park				X										X	C
Cherry Blossom Park															
Arista Park															
Crestview Park								X	C			C			
Franich Park				P							X			X	C
Joyce-McKenzie Park							X	X	C			C		X	C
Victorian Park															
Brentwood Park															
Bronte Park															
Atri Park															
Flodberg Park											X				
Hope Drive Park															
Hazelwood Park															
Peace Dr. Park											X	C			
Ramsay Park	X	X	C/P	X			X	X	C		X	C		X	C
Callaghan Park								X	C		X	C			
Emmett Courts Park															
Kearney Park											X	C			
City Plaza															
Marinovich Park											X	C			
Riverside Mini Park											X	C			
Muzzio Park											X	C			
River Park											X	C			
Seaview Ranch Park	X	X	C												
Memorial Park															
Las Brisas Park											X	C			
Future 37 Davis											X	C			

* “X” means that a feature is present in the park; “C” identifies fields and courts that the city is responsible to keep and maintain; “P” identifies a partner organization as the responsible party; “C/P” identifies fields and courts kept and maintained jointly.

Public Involvement Findings/Trends

- Community outreach participants indicated a strong interest in sports fields and courts.
- The availability of basketball, soccer, and baseball fields and courts are highly important to Phone Survey participants.
- Phone Survey participants determined the availability of basketball (identified by 75 percent of participants), soccer (74 percent), and baseball fields (72 percent) as highly important.
- Eight percent of respondents to the Phone Survey reported that they or a member of their household participates in tennis activities. Similarly, six percent of Phone Survey respondents reported that they or a member of their household participates in volleyball activities.
- There is a dedicated and organized contingent of tennis players in Watsonville. Overall community input, though, suggests that there is not a high enough level of interest in tennis to prioritize building additional courts.
- Community input revealed that there is a perception among some community members that some baseball fields are inaccessible for general use since they are frequently reserved for league play.
- Park visits indicated that basketball, tennis and volleyball facilities are used by park visitors during the weekday and weekend. Baseball and soccer facilities tend to be used mostly on weekends and weekday evenings. School field and court facilities are well-used on weekends by sports leagues and for casual recreation.

Emerging Opportunities

- Public baseball fields that meet future population recreational interests and usage.
- Indoor and outdoor soccer fields that meet future population recreational interests and usage.
- Full or half basketball courts in neighborhood and community parks, where feasible.
- Outdoor and indoor basketball courts that meet future population needs.



Special events provide opportunities for residents of all ages to recreate.

- Expand facilities for active sports including fields and courts in the Green Valley, near Freedom School, near Davis Avenue, and Rolling Hills, as well as proposed parks including Buena Vista and Atkinson Lane.
- Increase use of existing sports fields and courts by adding lighting and efficient field scheduling.
- Reevaluate the public use of the private sports complex in Ramsay Park.

Indoor Facilities

The Department provides five indoor facilities that can be used for recreation and arts programming. These community centers are facilities which provide a focus for recreational, social, educational and cultural activities within a neighborhood or community. Watsonville community centers contain gymnasiums, fitness areas, meeting rooms, teen spaces, office space and other community amenities. Several community centers in Watsonville include computer centers. These centers are used for after-school programs and computer classes.

Public Involvement Findings/Trends

- Approximately four out of five Phone Survey participants rated a community center with shared space for youth, adult, and senior programs as very important in the City of Watsonville.
- Youth and senior focus group participants are open to a multi-generational community center with a distinct



Soccer is popular among residents of all ages in Watsonville.

space for each age group. Youth participants expressed a desire for longer hours at the Youth Center.

- Community outreach activities enforced the importance of community centers for children, youth, adult, and senior programming.
- Phone Survey respondents confirmed the importance of computer centers and a club venue for concerts to community members with 81 and 83 percent (respectively) of participants identifying these facilities as important.
- Professional observation indicates that the Youth Center and community centers at Marinovich Park, Callaghan Park, and Ramsay Park are well-used by young residents.
- Indoor recreation centers and gymnasiums are expensive to develop and operate. In fact, costs for site acquisition, development and operations are often the major factor in determining whether a city can meet the community's demand for indoor recreation space.
- Youth and senior focus group participants expressed a strong appreciation for facility staff.

Emerging Opportunities

- A multi-generational, joint multi-purpose facility for all community members.

- A multi-generational facility provides an opportunity for community members of different cultural backgrounds to convene and recreate. The design might take a modest approach that emphasizes multi-purpose space with some dedicated areas for age specific activities and program storage. The facility could also be more elaborate and include a large community gathering and events area and dedicated space and equipment for age specific programming, such as computer labs and fitness activities.
- A stronger partnership between the city and the Senior Center could ensure senior participation in city-sponsored recreation programming and use of city-owned parks and facilities.

Other Facilities

In addition to the facilities noted previously, several other types of facilities are provided in Watsonville to increase the variety of recreation opportunities available to city residents. Other recreation facilities in Watsonville, both city-owned and operated, and private, include:

- Aquatic facilities;
- Skate park;
- Horseshoe pits;
- Dog park;
- Community theater/performing arts center; and
- Boat launch.

Pools can support a number of activities, including lap swimming, swimming lessons, water aerobics, and general community use. The size, depth, and features of pools will determine the intended users and programs. The city does not own or operate any aquatic facilities. Community members use the YMCA and Watsonville High School's aquatic facility for recreation, programs, classes, gym, and spa fitness. Without the current partnership with Watsonville High School, city residents would not have any access to public aquatics programs. The Department provides all Summer Aquatics programming at the High School pool.

Skate parks appeal to youth, who typically have significantly higher participation rates in both skateboarding and

rollerblading. Nearby parks are more accessible to youth, because of the difficulty in their finding transportation to more distant sites. The City of Watsonville currently has one skate park, located at Ramsay Park, which is lit during the evenings. There are no other providers of skate parks.

The City of Watsonville currently has horseshoe pits located in two of its parks.

In early 2009, the City of Watsonville opened its first dog park in Franich Park that includes separate facilities for small and large dogs. The Department will assess the success of the facility to inform future planning efforts.

Providing facilities for the visual and performing arts ensures access to cultural experiences to all members of the community. These spaces can offer both experiential and social opportunities, increase cultural diversity and understanding and challenge residents to expand their perception of the world.

The City of Watsonville has one existing boat ramp at Pinto Lake. The ramp provides motorized and non-motorized boat access to Pinto Lake. It is used as a fishing and recreation area.

Public Involvement Findings/Trends

- Aquatic facilities are expensive to operate and own. Costs for site acquisition, pool development and operations are usually the major consideration in determining whether a city can meet the community's demand for swimming opportunities.
- Community outreach participants expressed a strong interest in swimming and aquatic facilities.
- Youth and senior focus group and community workshop participants value swimming opportunities for fitness and recreation.
- The ability to swim is an important life skill for youth and adults, especially in communities with water resources such as Pinto Lake and the Watsonville Slough.
- Youth focus group participants expressed an interest in a larger skate park facility in comparison to the existing skate park at Ramsay Park, as well as an additional skate board park to serve residents who live in the northeastern portion of the city.



Day of the Child/Earth Day is widely attended by community members.

- Recreation providers are supplementing major event-type facilities with smaller skate spots as a new method in skateboard development.
- Professional observation reveals that horseshoe pits do not appear to be popular among community members.
- Dog parks rated less important than other recreation facilities among Phone Survey participants. However, community outreach activities demonstrated a desire for an additional dog park and off-leash dog areas.
- Community outreach activities demonstrated a strong desire among community members for a community theater or performing arts space. Ninety-one percent of Phone Survey participants ranked a community theater as very important.
- Fishing is popular off the Pinto Lake boat ramp when the lake is freshly stocked with fish.

Emerging Opportunities

- A concert venue or performing arts space that offers both experiential and social opportunities, and increases cultural diversity and understanding.
- Aquatic facilities that vary in size and depth, and include water features designed for use by different age groups, such as slides or spray elements.



Neighborhood parks provide respite and opportunities to play.

- Development of an additional dog park in the southwestern portion of town to provide for dog owners who live in neighborhoods in the south and west areas of the city.
- Accessible skateboard facilities that meet the needs of Watsonville's youth population.

PROGRAMS

While approximately three-fourths of Phone Survey participants have visited Watsonville parks for informal use or league play, it is less likely they participated in a City-sponsored recreation program. Twenty-six percent of Phone Survey and 55 percent of Park and Community Services Questionnaire participants reported that they, or a member of their household, had attended a city-sponsored recreation program or event. Community outreach participants value services, programs, and city-sponsored events offered by the Department. The City of Watsonville provides recreation programming for children, youth, adults, and seniors, as well as events throughout the year for community members.

Seniors are a population group with distinct park and recreation needs. The Senior Center and Senior Circle host senior oriented programs including: meals, dance classes, arts and crafts, and fitness programs. Since the City of Watsonville does not own and maintain a senior-oriented facility, most

city-sponsored programs include day trips to regional attractions.

Adult programs in Watsonville include fitness training, excursions, discussion groups, and various adult sports leagues. Programs are hosted by the Youth Center, Veterans Building, Ramsay Park Family Center, and Muzzio Park Community Center. The YMCA also provides recreational programs and facilities for adults including a fitness center, and yoga and karate classes. The Department does not provide recreation programs specific to families.

The Department currently offers a number of children's, youth, and teen programs and after-school programs at the Youth Center, the community centers in Marinovich and Muzzio Parks, Ramsay Park Family Center, and Callaghan Park Cultural Center. The Youth Center currently offers after-school programs that target selected middle schools where students may be underserved.

The Department provides adult sports leagues in volleyball, softball and basketball. There are a number of organizations that provide competitive sports activities with a primary focus on youth. In addition, a private-entity owned and operated indoor soccer field complex in Ramsay Park provides soccer programs for adults and youth.

The City of Watsonville currently does not own a pool, but the Department hosts aquatics programming at the Watsonville High School aquatics facility. Programming includes lap swim, recreational swim, pool parties, and swimming lessons during the summer.

Community outreach participants of all ages enjoy a variety of special events such as family fun nights, youth entertainment nights, Day of the Child/Earth Day Celebration, the Spirit of Watsonville 4th of July Parade, the Farmer's Market, and other fairs and festivals offered in city parks and recreation facilities.

The City of Watsonville offers some programming through the Volunteer Program, a collaborative effort between the Parks and Community Services, Public Works and Utilities, and Public Library Departments. Volunteers play a pivotal role in the Department's program operation.

The Public Works and Utilities Department is responsible for organizing all environmental education programs in the City of Watsonville. These programs are based in the Nature Center in Ramsay Park and the Science Workshop in Marinovich.

In addition to providing parks and recreation facilities and programs, the Department's Neighborhood Services Division manages the Neighborhood Action Program, Graffiti and Litter Abatement Program, Neighborhood Mediation Program, and other programs. These programs are designed to increase communication between residents and city government, enhance community pride, encourage civic awareness and participation, and provide more effective coordination among City departments to address neighborhood needs.

Public Involvement Findings/Trends

City-wide

- About 25 percent of Phone Survey respondents indicated they attended a city recreation program or event sponsored by the Watsonville Parks and Community Services Department.
- Phone Survey respondents rated the availability of recreation programs and classes as highly important to their household. Priority programs include: health and fitness programs, after-school programs for children and teens, children's programs, and teen programs.
- Time constraints, a lack of interest, a lack of information, and costs of programs prevent Phone Survey respondents from participating in city recreation programs or events.
- Phone Survey participants typically get information about local parks, recreation programs, events, facilities, and neighborhood services from a newspaper (29 percent of Phone Survey participants), City newsletter (24 percent), City recreation guide (19 percent), word of mouth, friends or family (17 percent), television (14 percent) and flyers (13 percent). Department website usage is low.
- Free or low-cost programming is offered by the Department and scholarships through Watsonville Advocates, a local youth non-profit organization.



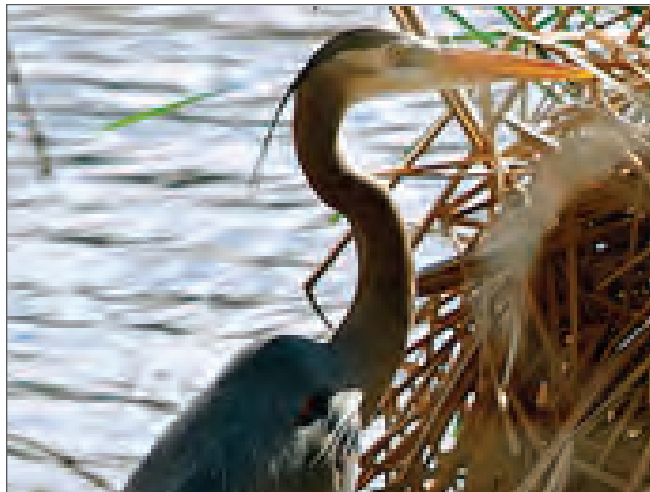
Watsonville youth appreciate the skate park at Ramsay Park.

Senior Programs

- Senior focus group participants were in favor of more classes and programs including exercise classes such as chair fitness, crocheting programs, arts and crafts, baking classes, line dancing, Tai Chi, jazzercise, and music opportunities. Seniors identified Senior Circle programs as a model.
- Senior focus group participants enjoy and value the Senior Center and appreciate the senior programs provided by Senior Circle.
- Ninety-two percent of Phone Survey participants rated the availability of health and fitness programs as important.
- Community outreach participants also suggested additional adult programs including cultural activities and dancing.

Youth Programs

- Community outreach participants value the availability of children's programs, after-school programs for youth and teens, and teen programs.
- Youth focus group participants requested the following recreation classes: surfing, cooking, free-style, paintball, dancing and singing.
- Youth focus group participants are enthusiastic about recreation and sports, and expressed the need for programming geared toward their age group and recreation interests.



The Watsonville Slough is home to a variety of wildlife.

Sports Programs

- More than half of the Phone Survey participants reported participation in sports, athletic or fitness activities.
- Youth focus group participants spend their free time participating in sports activities including soccer and basketball and indicated a need for additional youth sports programming.
- Seventy-two to 80 percent of Phone Survey participants rated biking, basketball, swimming, soccer and baseball as at least somewhat important.

Aquatics Programs

- Phone Survey participants rated swimming activities (74 percent) and swimming pools (85 percent) as very or somewhat important.
- The availability of swimming pools was significantly more important to Phone Survey participants who are younger residents (18 to 44 years) and residents living in the south region of the city than older residents and residents who live in the northwest region of the city.

Special Events

- Community outreach activities demonstrate that residents are generally satisfied and thoroughly enjoy and value these special events.

- Maintenance resources are not available on weekend event days when most special events are held in the city.

Volunteer Opportunities

- Phone Survey participants rated volunteer opportunities with the Department as very or somewhat important (90 percent).
- Community workshop participants suggested providing an opportunity for volunteers to steward trails to promote safety along the city's sloughs and trails.
- As government budgets tighten and resources are limited, volunteer opportunities provide capacity for the Department staff and provide community members with professional development and training.

Environmental Programs

- Community outreach participants placed a priority on learning more about their environment, and indicated that they spend time in the outdoors in a variety of both active and passive activities. Several community workshop participants expressed a passion for bird watching and nature activities.
- Community outreach participants requested more environmental programs that would capitalize on Watsonville's location and natural resources.

Neighborhood Services

- When given a list of eight different parks and recreation services and asked to rate their satisfaction with the department's performance in each of these areas, Phone Survey participants expressed that they are somewhat satisfied with the availability of neighborhood services.
- Sixty-seven percent of questionnaire respondents shared that they are very or somewhat satisfied with the Neighborhood Services Division.

Emerging Opportunities

- Coordinated senior programs and field trips across senior service providers in Watsonville.
- Health and fitness programs for adults in a variety of locations and time slots.



Flag football is popular among Watsonville's youth.

- Children's and teen programs, including after-school opportunities.
- Adequate sports facilities and fields to accommodate community interest in sports programs.
- Year-round aquatic facility and programs for community members.
- Maintenance and operation resources for city-sponsored weekend events.
- Expanded volunteer program that accommodates the resource needs of the Department and the interest of the community members, including coordination with Neighborhood Services and other City departments.
- Environmental programs and opportunities that benefit from the natural resources in the community and provide opportunities for people to learn about and care for their natural environment.
- Comprehensive survey of community members to develop awareness of Neighborhood Services Division programs and elicit feedback on opportunities for improvement.
- Enhance the amount and variety of free or low-cost programming opportunities for Watsonville residents, especially for youth and older adults.
- Inform residents of programs, events, facilities, and services using multiple sources to be most effective.

WATSONVILLE
Parks and Recreation Facilities
master plan

chapter
4



recommendations



recommendations

Following are recommendations for Watsonville's parks and recreation facilities based on the Community Profile, Community Outreach process, and Needs Assessment.

MASTER PLAN FRAMEWORK

Mission

"We create community through people, parks and programs"

Vision

Watsonville provides a system of well-designed parks and facilities that contribute to the vitality of the community and promote health, well-being and enjoyment for all residents.

Values

- **Quality**

The Department provides the highest quality parks, facilities and programs.

- **Accessible and Inclusive**

Parks, facilities and programs are physically and economically accessible to all community members. Residents are involved and contribute to decision making and determining the future of their community.

- **Partnerships**

City staff from all departments work collaboratively and with community members to use resources efficiently to maintain and enhance parks and facilities.

- **Sustainability**

Department practices emphasize wise use of natural resources, water and energy conservation, recycling and green building and maintenance techniques.



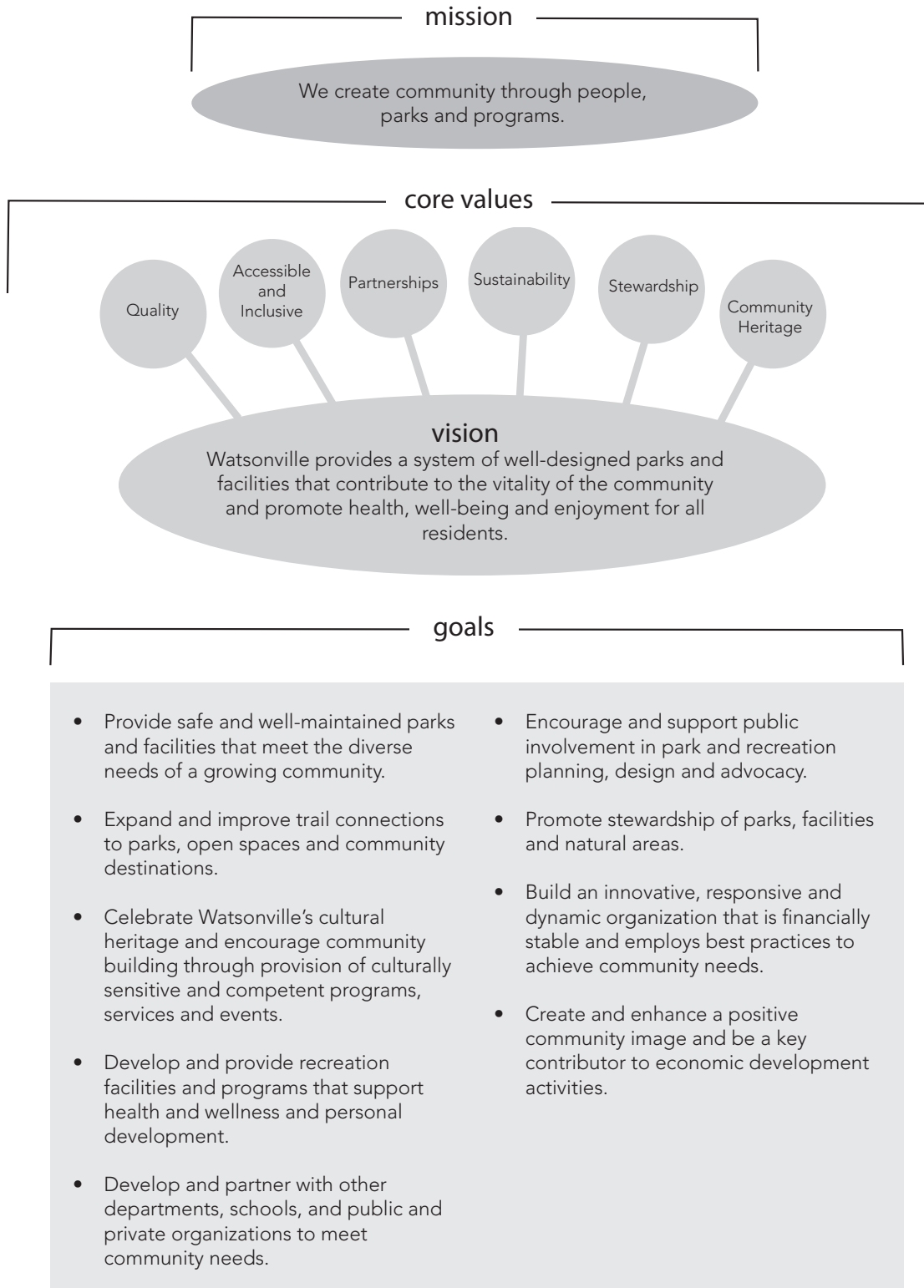
Community members play volleyball and gather at Pinto Lake.

- **Stewardship**

Staff and residents value the built and natural park environment and work actively to protect and maintain these community assets.

- **Community Heritage**

Residents support and honor Watsonville's historical and cultural heritage.





Parks provide an opportunity to gather and recreate.

GOALS

1. Provide safe and well-maintained parks and facilities that meet the diverse needs of a growing community.
 - 1-1 Prioritize on-going maintenance efforts of existing parks and facilities.
 - 1-2 Develop parks and recreation facilities consistent with the park standards and guidelines described in the plan in Section 3 of this chapter.
 - 1-3 Achieve a standard of five (5) acres of parkland per 1,000 residents.
 - 1-4 Include acreage provided by other departments and public schools that is formally designated for public recreation when calculating City standards.
 - 1-5 Ensure that year-round recreation facilities are available in the community.
 - 1-6 Expand facilities for active sports including fields, courts and skate parks.
 - 1-7 Reevaluate the use of City-owned properties, such as the private sports complex in Ramsay Park, to maximize public use.
 - 1-8 Actively seek funds to acquire and develop parks and recreation facilities to meet community needs.
 - 1-9 Complete the evaluation of the safety and accessibility of all parks by conducting a safety and accessibility study of City parks and recreation facilities using industry and state guidelines.
 - 1-10 Complete state disabled access recommendations for parks and recreation facilities included in the Watsonville ADA Survey 2004.
 - 1-11 Improve park access by addressing natural and man-made barriers.
 - 1-12 Implement a public education campaign to reduce littering and trash in the parks through partnership with other City Departments and Neighborhood Watch Program volunteers.
 - 1-13 Continue to work closely with the Department of Public Works and Utilities, Watsonville Police Departments and Neighborhood Services and partner with Neighborhood Watch Program volunteers to implement proven and innovative ways to combat graffiti.
 - 1-14 Seek out partnerships with the Redevelopment Agency, other departments, and private land owners to provide parks and facilities on available land.
2. Expand and improve trail connections to parks, open spaces and community destinations.
 - 2-1 Actively participate in the development of the Trails Master Plan to accomplish the goals of the plan and meet park standards.
 - 2-2 Plan and develop public access via trails that connect parks to natural assets such as a proposed regional network of trails, including the Watsonville Slough System, the Pajaro River and along the coast.
 - 2-3 Provide amenities such as interpretive signage, mileage markers, lighting, and benches to encourage broader use of trails.



Franich Park, Watsonville's newest community park.

3. Celebrate Watsonville's cultural heritage and encourage community building through provision of culturally sensitive and competent programs, services and events.
 - 3-1 Continue to host programs and events that celebrate the City's rich agricultural history, cultural heritage and natural resources.
 - 3-2 Consider Watsonville's cultural heritage in all parks and recreation planning including design concepts, park and facility names, and facility development.
 - 3-3 Expand indoor venues that provide space for community theater, dances, music and other entertainment.
4. Develop and provide recreation facilities and programs that support health and wellness and personal development.
 - 4-1 Provide neighborhood parks within one-half mile of most residents.
 - 4-2 Increase activities for youth and teens, especially those provided during after-school hours.
 - 4-3 Provide a safe, fun place for teens to hang-out and recreate informally.
 - 4-4 Develop programs for teens and adults that support skill building and career development.
 - 4-5 Develop age specific fitness oriented programming.
 - 4-6 Partner with health-care agencies and community organizations to facilitate and provide health-oriented programs.
 - 4-7 Provide programs on nutrition and healthy living.
 - 4-8 Provide healthy food and beverage choices at City-sponsored activities.

5. Develop and partner with other departments, schools, and public and private organizations to meet community needs.
 - 5-1 Increase collaboration with school districts in the development and design phase of neighborhood and community school parks to meet community needs and ensure quality and innovation in design.
 - 5-2 Preserve partnership with Watsonville High School to ensure public pool access so that residents have aquatics programs that support personal safety and fitness.
 - 5-3 Conduct a comprehensive citywide inventory of parks, fields and courts not provided by the Department that are available for public use.
 - 5-4 Work with sports leagues and related local organizations to maintain affordability for participants and to maximize participation and use of fields.
 - 5-5 Create opportunities for youth and adults not involved in established organizations to use fields for informal play.
 - 5-6 Expand programs that provide discounts and free admission for low-income residents.
6. Encourage and support public involvement in park and recreation planning, design and advocacy.
 - 6-1 Provide opportunities for residents to provide input on proposed parks and facilities, amenities and improvements.
 - 6-2 Conduct statistically valid opinion surveys every five years; supplement as needed with community surveys, polls, and other research tools to maintain current information about community recreation preferences.
 - 6-3 Increase usage of a wide range of outreach methods to ensure residents are fully informed about programs, services and opportunities to provide public input.
7. Promote stewardship of parks, facilities and natural areas.
 - 7-1 Partner with the Public Works and Utilities Department to expand community and youth education programs at the Nature Center, Watsonville Slough and other natural areas in Watsonville.
 - 7-2 Expand opportunities for volunteers to participate in activities that support parks and recreation facilities and programs.
 - 7-3 Expand current volunteer recruitment activities.
 - 7-4 Enhance supervision and training to recruit and retain volunteers.
 - 7-5 Work with Neighborhood Services Division to promote a “good neighbor” relationship with residents located adjacent to parks and recreation facilities.
 - 7-6 Work with partners, other City Departments and the Neighborhood Services Division to implement a public education campaign to reduce littering and trash in the parks.
8. Build an innovative, responsive and dynamic organization that is financially stable and employs best practices to achieve community needs.
 - 8-1 Develop internal procedures that help retain and share institutional knowledge of parks and recreation facilities operations, maintenances and program practices.
 - 8-2 Provide leadership on the Department’s role in practices to address climate change, water conservation and other significant issues.
 - 8-3 Formalize maintenance standards and protocols to capture best practices and retain institutional knowledge.
 - 8-4 Consider maintenance and staffing costs and adjust resources accordingly as new parks and facilities are added to the system.
 - 8-5 Continue to conduct staff development by encouraging cross-training with other departments or agencies

and participation in education classes and training seminars.

- 8-6 Emphasize Department's role in demonstrating the City's commitment to an accurate US Census 2010 count.

9. Create and enhance a positive community image and be a key contributor to economic development activities.

- 9-1 Work with the Redevelopment Agency, local businesses, and partner organizations to host events and activities downtown and at suitable park locations throughout the City.
- 9-2 Encourage activities, including festivals, that provide appropriate parks and recreation related services and generate revenue.
- 9-3 Actively participate in meetings and events to expand and enhance the City's profile within the tourism community and expand the City's economic base.
- 9-4 Continue to work with the Redevelopment Agency and the Department of Public Works and Utilities to develop guidelines for signage and other public amenities to help strengthen community identity and foster a sense of place.
- 9-5 Complete the city park signage program.

PARK DEFINITIONS AND STANDARDS

Park Definitions

The City of Watsonville currently classifies its parks and open space system as follows:

- Pocket Parks;
- Neighborhood Parks;
- Community Parks;
- Urban Open Space;
- Environmental Open Space;
- Trails; and
- Special Use Facilities.

The 1992 Parks and Open Space Master Plan includes standard definitions for these parks and recreation facilities. A



The Levee is a popular recreational and social space in the city.

review of recreation opportunities in the City suggests the Department should include public lands managed by the Public Works and Utilities Department or local schools in its inventory of park acreage. The inclusion of these lands may provide a more accurate picture of the City's overall efforts to achieve its Level of Service standard of 5 acres/1,000.

Through the Master Plan process, the following definitions and park standards are proposed for the City of Watsonville parks system.

Pocket Parks: Pocket parks are small parks that serve residents in immediately adjacent neighborhoods. Pocket parks provide basic recreation amenities, such as totlots, playgrounds, benches, and landscaping. Pocket parks generally are ½ to 2 acres in size and have service areas of ¼ mile or less.

Neighborhood Parks: Located within walking and bicycling distance of most users, neighborhood parks provide close-to-home recreation opportunities for surrounding neighborhoods. These parks are designed primarily for non-supervised, non-organized recreation activities, and are supported by facilities such as playground equipment, outdoor courts, picnic tables, pathways, and multi-use open grass areas or small sport fields. Neighborhood parks provide access to recreation for nearby residents, enhance neighborhood identity, and preserve open space. These parks generally are 2 to 10 acres in size and serve residents within a ¼- to ½-mile distance.



Murals in parks offer a reminder of the community's history and values.

Community Parks: Community parks are larger parks that provide both active and passive recreation opportunities and serve multiple neighborhoods. Typically, these sites are designed for active recreation and are supported by facilities such as sport fields, outdoor courts, skate parks, and recreation centers. Community parks can accommodate large numbers of people and offer a wider variety of facilities and amenities than neighborhood parks, such as disc golf, volleyball, tennis courts, dog parks, group picnic areas and shelters. These parks may also include significant natural areas and trails. For these reasons, community parks require more support facilities, such as off-street parking and restrooms. The minimum size of community parks is generally between 14-20 acres.

Urban Plazas: Urban plazas include small landscaped spaces and gathering areas. Urban plazas are typically smaller than one acre in size and are easily traversed on foot. Urban plazas provide social space—often supported by amenities such as benches, tables, landscaping, public art, water features, or other amenities to support community events. These plazas are typically located within downtown districts, high density urban areas, and transit stations. Urban plazas can provide gathering spaces and respite for nearby residents

and employees, as well as shoppers, transit-users, and people attending community events. They help balance high density development and communicate neighborhood character.

Special Use Areas: Special use areas are freestanding specialized facilities that are not incorporated into a park of another type. Special use areas may include, for example, stand-alone community centers, sports complexes, golf courses, skate parks, swimming pools, and community gardens. Since special use areas vary widely in function, there is no minimum size for these sites. However, special use areas must be large enough to accommodate the intended use and should include support facilities, such as parking and restrooms, as needed.

School Parks: School parks are parks that are designed, developed, and maintained at school sites to provide enhanced opportunities for recreation and outdoor education. These parks are the result of a collaborative effort between the City and the Pajaro Valley School District to augment learning environments, help meet community needs for close-to-home recreation opportunities in underserved neighborhoods, and use the full capacity of school facilities. School parks may include: courts, fields and children's play areas. This type of arrangement includes joint use and maintenance agreements. The agreements may cover all or portions of the school park site and provide public access according to a specific schedule.

The City currently has agreements with four schools. In addition, since 1984, the City has allocated approximately \$305,000 in funding towards improvement of school playgrounds and fields, which includes grants from Federal Land and Water Conservation Funds. The school sites are:

- Starlight Elementary (\$80,000)
- Rolling Hills Middle School (\$50,000)
- E.A. Hall Middle School (\$100,000 from FLWCF)
- Freedom Elementary School (\$75,000)

The Department would like to continue to partner with the District to enhance existing joint use agreements for recreational use of school sites and expand the partnership over time to include additional schools. The agreement will be mutually beneficial to both the City and the District in regards



River Park, a neighborhood park in the city.

to maintenance cost sharing. While it is recognized that both the City and the District face challenges in meeting ongoing maintenance and operational costs, the City would like to work with the District in the future to identify and secure funding to meet these challenges.

Regional Open Space: Regional open space areas are large sites that support a wide range of recreation interests and attract residents from throughout the region. These may include developed recreation areas, as well as wetlands, wildlife habitats, or stream corridors. For this reason, these sites are managed for their natural resource value as well as for recreational use. These sites also provide opportunities for nature-based recreation, such as fishing, bird-watching and environmental education.

Greenbelts and Trails: Greenbelts and trails are linear open spaces that provide trail corridors and/or green buffers within neighborhoods and communities. Greenbelts and trails typically follow features such as streets, abandoned railroad rights-of-way, power lines, or waterways. These

corridors often contain hard-surfaced or soft-surfaced trails, along with amenities such as trailheads, viewpoints, seating areas, and interpretive displays. They provide public access to natural features, preserve open space, and can support trail-related recreation and transportation. These corridors may serve specific neighborhoods, the entire City, and the region as well.

Public Grounds: Public grounds include non-recreational open space surrounding City-owned buildings. Maintained by the Department of Parks and Community Services, public grounds provide landscaped social spaces that may include benches, public art, planter strips, or parking lots. Since public grounds function predominately as beautification areas, they are not considered part of the inventory of active recreation lands. Since they require maintenance support, City standards should acknowledge and account for these lands.

Park Standards

Recommended Park Design Guidelines are included in Appendix B.

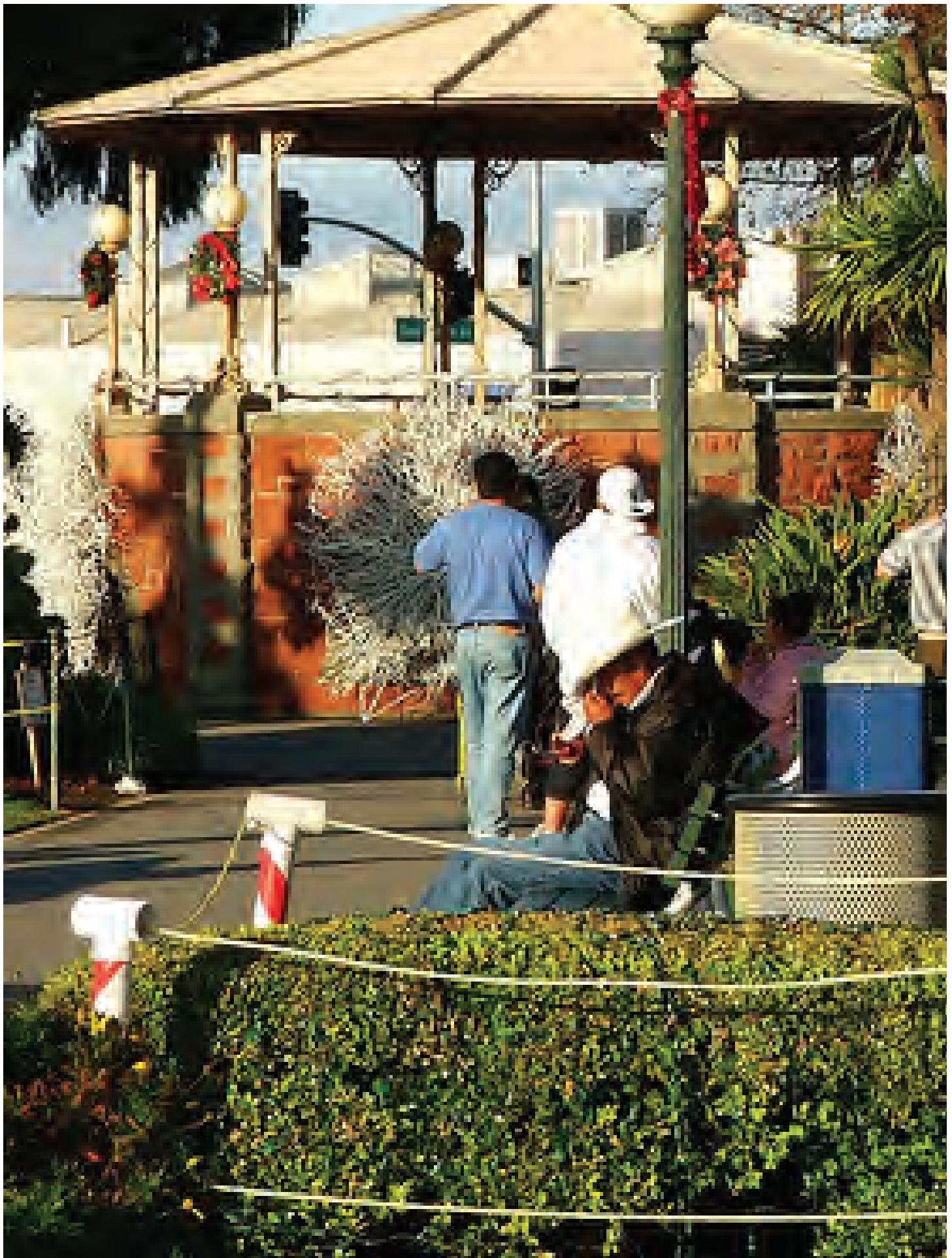
WATSONVILLE
Parks and Recreation Facilities
master plan

chapter

5



financial implementation



financial implementation

Chapter 4 describes all of the actions and improvements needed to meet the long range park and recreation goals of the City. This chapter (Chapter 5) provides the financial implementation strategy for these actions and improvements.

Since the needs exceed the current financial capability of the city, a short term (5-year) financing plan is presented to fund the projects of highest priority. Two financing plans are presented. Option A is designed on a pay-as-you-go basis and is intended to fund basic improvements to the existing park system. Option B is a more aggressive plan designed to also fund a new multi-purpose community center.

This chapter addresses capital improvements. This includes new facilities, improvements, and upgrades to existing facilities. A section of this chapter also forecasts expected additional maintenance money needed once the improvements are made.



Crestview Park, a neighborhood park on the edge of the city, includes both tennis courts and open green space.

STORY OF CAPITAL PROJECT FUNDING

For the past six years, the City has funded minor capital improvements through a number of sources. Table 5-1 lists these sources for the past five years.

Between 2003 and 2009, the Department spent an estimated \$5.4 million on capital projects. The majority of these funds are from the Parks Development Fund (\$2 million) and Grants/Donations (\$3 million). Other funding sources include the General Fund (\$282,769) and the Public Works and Utilities Department Funds (\$50,000). The average annual funding by source was determined by calculating the average of each total over the six-year time period.

CRITERIA FOR PROJECT PRIORITIZATION

Since the project needs exceeds the revenue potential, projects of highest priority were selected for the first six-year funding cycle. The draft General Plan includes prioritized policies for parks, recreation and open space in Watsonville. The priority of each policy in the draft General Plan was used as criteria and is identified as follows:

- High Priority** (as described in Draft General Plan)
The following policies are high priority:
- Joint use of school facilities.
 - 2 acres of neighborhood or pocket parks per 1,000 residents.
 - 3 acres of community parkland per 1,000 residents.
 - 5 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents.
 - Park, facility, and trail maintenance in accordance with standards.
 - Periodic reviews of recreation and community service programs.
 - New parks in future growth areas (Atkinson and Buena Vista)

Table 5-1. Sources of Funding for Capital Projects – Average per Fiscal Year

Sources of Funding	Amount Expended	Average Funding per Year
General Fund	\$282,769	\$47,128.17
Parks Development Fund	\$2,022,475	\$337,079.16
Grants/ Donations	\$3,054,891	\$509,148.50
Public Works and Utilities Department	\$50,000	\$8,333.33
TOTAL	\$5,410,135	



Protection for environmentally sensitive areas is a priority for the city.

Medium Priority (as described in Draft General Plan)

The following policies are medium priority:

- Accessible parks for all residential areas.*
- Protection for slough, riparian corridors, and other environmentally sensitive areas.
- Community awareness of programs and community services.
- Youth recreation programs, services, and opportunities.*
- Special events, cultural and educational opportunities.
- Art in public spaces and arts festivals.

Low Priority (as described in Draft General Plan)

The following policies are low priority:

- New parkland outside of the Urban Limit Line.
- Regional trail system.*
- Murals in public places.

***Note:** The Master Plan process updates these priorities to reflect current opinion. Parks and Recreation Commissioners recommend the starred items be high priority.

Table 5-2. Cost of Projects and Actions Recommended in the Plan

Project	Cost
System-wide Improvements	
<i>Subtotal</i>	\$579,300
Park Development and Improvements	
Cherry Blossom	\$25,000
Arista Park	\$50,000
Crestview Park	\$11,250
Joyce-McKenzie Park	\$91,600
Bronte Park	\$6,400
Flodberg Park	\$32,700
Hope Drive Park	\$250,000
Peace Drive Park	\$35,500
Ramsay Park	\$93,350
Callaghan	\$500
City Plaza	\$250,600
Riverside Mini Park	\$1,200
Seaview Ranch Park	\$250,500
Las Brisas	\$26,200
Future 37 Davis	\$400
<i>Subtotal</i>	\$1,125,200
Specialized Facilities	
Muzzio Community Center Improvements	\$15,000
Sports Field Improvements	\$10,000
New Sport field development	\$1,038,000
Sports Courts Improvements	\$10,500
Levee Trails Improvements	\$103,000
New Dog Park	\$125,000
New Skate Park	\$500,000
<i>Subtotal</i>	\$1,801,500
New Multi-generational Community Center	\$5,000,000
Outdoor Swimming Pool	\$4,000,000
New Community Theater	\$1,200,000
New Stand-Alone Gymnasium	\$1,500,000
<i>Subtotal</i>	\$11,700,000
Total	\$15,206,000



Recreation amenities require improvements throughout the city.

PROJECT COSTS

Using cost assumptions based on comparable agency and California Recreation and Park Department data, projected costs for capital projects were developed. Park and facility improvements recommended in the Plan are provided in Table C-1.

Funding opportunities and an explanation of projects and actions recommended in the plan are included in Appendix C.

FINANCING STRATEGY

Since the City of Watsonville does not have access to adequate funding to pay for all of the improvements shown in the above table, a short-term five-year plan is presented to fund projects of highest priority. Because of the desire for a multi-generational community center, two strategy options are presented.

Option A: Pay-As-You-Go Strategy

This option is intended to fund minor improvements and upgrades to existing parks and facilities. Funding will rely primarily on past sources such as the General Fund, Park Development Fund Grants, etc. No tax supported measures are proposed in this option.

Projected Capital Funding Sources – Option A (2009-2014)

Total projected capital funding sources for 2009 through 2014 was determined by calculating the average annual funding by source. This annual average was multiplied by five to assess the amount of funding over the five-year period. Table 5-3 identifies the project capital funding sources between 2009 and 2014.

Based on the revenue sources listed in Table 5-3, approximately \$4.5 million worth of projects are fundable over the next five years. With this budget restriction, it is recommended the park and special facility improvements occur. Specific projects are listed in Table 5-4.

Table 5-3. Projected Capital Funding Sources - Option A (2009-2014)*

Sources of Funding	Total Projected Funding
General Fund	\$235,000
Parks Development Fund	\$1,685,000
Grants/ Donations	\$2,545,000
Public Works and Utilities Department	\$41,000
TOTAL	\$4,506,000

* Projected capital funding source amounts were determined by calculating the average amount of funding per year (2003-2009) and projecting this amount through 2014 and by taking inflation into account in the overall total estimated.

Table 5-4. Projects Funded Under Option A

Project	Cost
System-wide Improvements	
<i>Subtotal</i>	\$579,300
Park Development and Improvements	
Cherry Blossom	\$25,000
Arista Park	\$50,000
Crestview Park	\$11,250
Joyce-McKenzie Park	\$91,600
Bronte Park	\$6,400
Flodberg Park	\$32,700
Hope Drive Park	\$250,000
Peace Drive Park	\$35,500
Ramsay Park	\$93,350
Callaghan	\$500
City Plaza	\$250,600
Riverside Mini Park	\$1,200
Seaview Ranch Park	\$250,500
Las Brisas	\$26,200
Future 37 Davis	\$400
<i>Subtotal</i>	\$1,125,200
Specialized Facilities	
Muzzio Community Center Improvements	\$15,000
Sports Field Improvements	\$10,000
New Sport field development	\$1,038,000
Sports Courts Improvements	\$10,500
Levee Trails Improvements	\$103,000
New Dog Park	\$125,000
New Skate Park	\$500,000
<i>Subtotal</i>	\$1,801,500
Total	\$3,506,000

Option B: Multi-Generational Community Center Option

This option is intended to fund all of the projects listed in Option A plus a community center. Due to the cost of the community center, an outside source of money will be required. While several options exist, the formation of a community-wide Landscape and Lighting District is recommended. The reason for this funding mechanism option over a general obligation bond (see Appendix C) is that the approval requirement is less for a Landscape and Lighting District and a portion of the assessment district can be applied towards maintenance and operation.

A \$4 million bond, financed by a community-wide Landscape and Lighting District, would cost each property owner an annual fee. Most bonds extend 20 years and maintain a 4 percent interest rate.

Table 5-5. Projected Capital Funding Sources – Option B (2009-2014)*

Sources of Funding	Total Projected Funding
General Fund	\$235,000
Parks Development Fund	\$1,685,000
Grants/ Donations	\$2,545,000
Public Works and Utilities Department	\$41,000
Landscape and Lighting District	\$4,000,000
TOTAL	\$8,506,000

* Projected capital funding source amounts were determined by calculating the average amount of funding per year (2003-2009) and projecting this amount through 2014 and by taking inflation into account in the overall total estimated.

Table 5-6. Projects Funded Under Option B

Project	Cost
System-wide Improvements	
Subtotal	\$579,300
Park Development and Improvements	
Cherry Blossom	\$25,000
Arista Park	\$50,000
Crestview Park	\$11,250
Joyce-McKenzie Park	\$91,600
Bronte Park	\$6,400
Flodberg Park	\$32,700
Hope Drive Park	\$250,000
Peace Drive Park	\$35,500
Ramsay Park	\$93,350
Callaghan	\$500
City Plaza	\$250,600
Riverside Mini Park	\$1,200
Seaview Ranch Park	\$250,500
Las Brisas	\$26,200
Future 37 Davis	\$400
Subtotal	\$1,125,200
Specialized Facilities	
Muzzio Community Center Improvements	\$15,000
Sports Field Improvements	\$10,000
New Sport field development	\$1,038,000
Sports Courts Improvements	\$10,500
Levee Trails Improvements	\$103,000
New Dog Park	\$125,000
New Skate Park	\$500,000
Subtotal	\$1,801,500
New Multi-generational Community Center	\$5,000,000
Subtotal	\$5,000,000
Total	\$8,506,000



Watsonville residents expressed a need for recreation opportunities for all ages and abilities.

Types of Community Centers

The development of the Master Plan revealed the community's interest in the development of a multi-generational community center. There are several different types of community centers that could serve the needs of Watsonville residents. The type of community center to develop in the near future will require additional investigation and research regarding the needs and resources available.

Table 5-7. Types of Community Centers

Type of Facility	Cost	Additional Information
New basic community center	\$1,600,000	No gym; 10,000 sq. ft.
New multi-generational center	\$5,000,000	15,000 - 20,000 sq. ft.; gym, showers, meeting rooms
New recreation center	\$7,350,000	35,000 sq. ft.; gym, showers, meeting rooms
New recreation/aquatic center	\$25,000,000	

MAINTENANCE AND OPERATIONS

During the 2008-2009 Fiscal Year, the Department spent a total of \$1.1 million, nearly one quarter of the total budget, on keeping up and preserving city-owned parks and facilities. Of this amount, \$97,100 was invested in recreation facilities and \$1,102,898 was invested in parks.

Park and facility improvements and development shown in Table 5-4 and 5-6 require some additional maintenance care whereas other projects will reduce maintenance requirements. Under Option A and B, the net cost of additional maintenance to park and facility improvements and developments will be approximately \$51,000 annually. Maintenance and operation costs were determined by taking the following factors into account: hourly wage, the number and type of required maintenance tasks, and frequency of maintenance tasks.

The new multi-generational community center will cost approximately \$420,000 per year to operate. The community center will probably generate about 30 percent of this total operating cost (\$126,000) as revenue.

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WATSONVILLE
Parks and Recreation Facilities
master plan

appendix

A



parks and facilities
inventory

City of Watsonville - Parks and Facilities Inventory

				Community Facilities						Sports Facilities						Park Amenities										Additional Information		
				Community Center	Pool	Dog Park	Skatepark	Environmental Education opportunities	Trail/Levee Access	Soccer Fields	Baseball	Tennis	Basketball	Volleyball	Horseshoes	Picnic Tables	Group Picnic Areas	Water / Lake Amenity	Water Play Feature	Children's Playground	Tot Lot Playground	Barbeque	Restrooms	Shade Structure	Parking Lot (PL) or Street Parking (S)	Adjacent to School Facilities	Reserved Use requires Special Event Application	Observation Tower
Communitywide Facilities	Locations	Type	Acres / Square Feet																									
Pinto Lake Park	451 Green Valley Rd.	Community	78.50								*			*		*		*		*		*	*		PL		*	
Cherry Blossom Park	41 Loma Prieta Ave.	Pocket	0.15																		*							
Arista Park	52 Arista Ct.	Pocket	0.27																	*					S			
Crestview Park	301 Crestview Dr.	Neighborhood	2.01									*																
Franich Park	795 Vista Montana Dr.	Community	14.02			*			*		*		*	*		*			*	*		*	*		PL	*		
Joyce-McKenzie Park	500 Joyce Dr.	Pocket	1.72						*			*		*	*					*					S			
Victorian Park	106 Weeks Dr.	Pocket	0.13																									
Brentwood Park	320 Brentwood Dr.	Pocket	0.41																									
Bronte Park	615 Bronte Ave.	Pocket	0.28													*									S			
Atri Park	602 Atri Ct.	Pocket	0.32						*							*									S			
Flodberg Park	219 Alvarado St.	Pocket	1.07										*		*	*				*					S			
Hope Drive Park	75 Hope Dr.	Neighborhood	2.46						*							*				*					S			
Hazelwood Park	297 Herman Ave.	Pocket	1.07																									
Peace Dr. Park	62 Peace Dr.	Pocket	1.40										*			*				*					S			*
Ramsay Park	1302 Main St.	Community	25.91	*				*		*	*	*	*	*		*				*		*	*		PL			
Callaghan Park	225 Sudden St.	Neighborhood	2.64	*								*	*			*				*			*		S			
Emmett Courts Park	37 Sudden St.	Pocket	0.15																									
Kearney Park	119 Kearney St.	Pocket	0.29										*							*				*	S			
City Plaza	358 Main St.	Pocket	1.40																				*		S			
Marinovich Park	118 Second St.	Pocket	1.03	*				*					*			*				*			*		S			
Riverside Mini Park	127 Riverside Dr.	Pocket	0.34										*			*				*					S			
Muzzio Park	26 W. Front St.	Pocket	1.12	*									*							*			*		S			
River Park	100 East Front St.	Pocket	1.43										*			*		*		*		*	*		S			
Seaview Ranch Park	Lighthouse Ave.	Neighborhood	4.00							*						*				*	*	*		*	S			
Memorial Park	Main St. & Freedom Blvd.	Pocket	0.22																									
Las Brisas Park	1028 Nueva Vista Ave.	Pocket	1.00										*			*				*					S			
Future 37 Davis	37 Davis Street	Pocket	0.50										*			*									PL			
Future Buena Vista Park	617 Buena Vista Dr.	Community	35.28																									
Future Atkinson Park		Neighborhood	5.00																									
Total			184.12																									

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WATSONVILLE
Parks and Recreation Facilities
master plan

appendix

B



park design guidelines

Park Design Guidelines

CLASSIFICATION	DEFINITION	BENEFITS	SIZE AND ACCESS	EXAMPLES	MINIMUM RESOURCES	MAY INCLUDE ADDITIONAL RESOURCES	DOES NOT INCLUDE CONFLICTING RESOURCES
POCKET PARK & NEIGHBORHOOD PARK DESIGN GUIDELINES							
Pocket Parks	Pocket parks are small parks that provide residents with nearby opportunities for recreation activities. Up to 2 acres in size, these parks are designed to serve residents within a ¼-mile walking radius or in the immediately adjacent neighborhoods. Pocket parks provide basic neighborhood recreation amenities, like playgrounds, benches, and landscaping.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide access to basic recreation opportunities for nearby residents of all ages• Contribute to neighborhood identity• Provide green space within neighborhoods• Contribute to health and wellness• Provide opportunities for outdoor recreation in built-out areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1/2 acre minimum• Street frontage on at least two sides of the park	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cherry Blossom Park• Joyce-McKenzie Park• Marinovich Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tot Lot (Ages 2-5)• 1-5 Non-reservable picnic tables• Trees• Open Turf Area• Signage	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Children’s play area (Ages 6-12),• Sports courts (1/2 court basketball or single tennis court)• Restrooms• Shelter, or gazebo• Interactive water feature (small-scale)• Off-street parking• Shade structures for appropriate facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Community garden• Sports fields (baseball, flag football, soccer, softball, multi-purpose)• Destination facilities or resources with communitywide draw• Full-service recreation centers• Swimming pools (indoor or outdoor)

CLASSIFICATION	DEFINITION	BENEFITS	SIZE AND ACCESS	EXAMPLES	MINIMUM RESOURCES	MAY INCLUDE ADDITIONAL RESOURCES	DOES NOT INCLUDE CONFLICTING RESOURCES
Neighborhood Parks	Neighborhood parks provide access to basic recreation opportunities for nearby residents. These parks are generally 2-10 acres in size and serve residents within a ½-mile radius. Neighborhood parks provide informal, non-organized recreation opportunities, enhance neighborhood identity, and preserve neighborhood open space. Neighborhood parks often include amenities such as playgrounds, sport courts, turf areas, picnic tables, and benches.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide access to basic recreation opportunities for nearby residents of all ages• Contribute to neighborhood identity• Provide green space within neighborhoods• Provide a space for family and small group gatherings• Contribute to health and wellness	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2-10 acres• Street frontage on at least two sides of the park• Should be accessible to the surrounding neighborhood through the use of bikeways, trails, sidewalks, or local residential streets.• Should be bounded by public streets on all sides with the exception allowed on one side when a public school is adjacent to the park site.• Park land directly adjacent to private property should be separated from property by an 8 foot high (minimum) masonry wall located on the private property.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Callaghan Park• Hope Drive Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tot Lot (Ages 2-5)• Children’s play area (Ages 6-12)• Non-reservable picnic tables• Reservable picnic area• Perimeter path or sidewalks• Trees• At least two active recreation resources (see “May Include” list)• Open Turf Area• Off-street parking• Maintenance Area/ Shed/Storage• Sports Field• Signage	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Additional Sports fields (baseball, flag football, soccer, softball, multi-purpose)• Sports courts (basketball court, tennis court, volleyball court)• Other small-scale active recreation resources (skate spot, horseshoe pits, bocce court, shuffleboard lane, lawn bowling, mini skate park)• Interactive or ornamental water feature (small-scale)• Shelter, or gazebo• Par course• Neighborhood activity building (multi-purpose)• BBQ facilities• Community garden• Restroom• Shade structures for appropriate facilities• Pedestrian path• Ornamental security lighting	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Destination facilities or resources with communitywide draw• Memorials (except for memorial trees or benches)• Sports complexes• Full-service recreation centers• Swimming pools (indoor or outdoor)

CLASSIFICATION	DEFINITION	BENEFITS	SIZE AND ACCESS	EXAMPLES	MINIMUM RESOURCES	MAY INCLUDE ADDITIONAL RESOURCES	DOES NOT INCLUDE CONFLICTING RESOURCES
COMMUNITY PARK DESIGN GUIDELINES							
Community Parks	Community parks are designed to provide opportunities for structured, active and passive, and informal recreation for small and large groups of all ages. Community parks generally include facilities that attract people from the entire community, such as pools, lighted fields, and recreation centers. They require support facilities, such as parking and restrooms. While they serve residents within a 1½ –mile radius, they also serve as neighborhood parks for those living within a ½-mile radius. They provide opportunities for community social activities and are located in areas with good vehicular access. Community parks generally range from 14-20 acres in size.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a variety of accessible recreation opportunities for all age groups • Provide opportunities for social and cultural activities • Contribute to community identity • Serve recreation needs of families • Contribute to health and wellness • Connect residents to nature 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14-20 acres • Access from an arterial street • Bus and transit access • Encourage location near middle or high schools • At least two-thirds of the site should be available for active recreation use. Adequate buffers or natural open space areas should separate active recreation areas from nearby homes. • The site should be visible from adjoining streets and have a minimum of 400 feet of street frontage. • Parking Requirements: Dependent upon facilities provided. Generally, 50 off-street spaces per ball field are required, plus 5 spaces per acre of active use areas. • Access to the site should be provided via a collector or arterial street with sidewalks and bicycle lanes. • Park land directly adjacent to private property should be separated from property by an 8 foot high (minimum) masonry wall. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Franich Park • Ramsay Park 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tot Lot (Ages 2-5) • Children’s play area (Ages 6-12) • Non-Reservable Picnic Tables • Reservable Picnic Areas • Internal pathway system, looped walking path preferred • Sports fields (baseball/softball and soccer) for practice and league activities • Sport courts (basketball court, tennis court, handball court, volleyball court) • Restrooms • Off-street parking • Trees • Open Turf • Signage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other active recreation resources (handball/racquetball court, croquet court, disc golf course, fitness stations, tennis backboard, horseshoe pit, shuffleboard lanes, volleyball court, mini skate park, skate park, skating rink, etc.) • Interactive water feature • Swimming pool • Multi-purpose recreation center • Sports complex • Other facilities or resources with communitywide draw • Community garden • Shelter, or gazebo • Shade structures for appropriate facilities • Off-leash dog area • Snack Shacks • Stage/amphitheatre • Upgraded utility service to support special events • Natural areas • Memorials • Maintenance facilities • Multi-use trails • Pedestrian trails • Sports lighting • Ornamental security lighting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional-scale facilities (arboretum, regional sports complex)

CLASSIFICATION	DEFINITION	BENEFITS	SIZE AND ACCESS	EXAMPLES	MINIMUM RESOURCES	MAY INCLUDE ADDITIONAL RESOURCES	DOES NOT INCLUDE CONFLICTING RESOURCES
SPECIAL USE AREAS DESIGN GUIDELINES							
Special Use Areas	Special use areas are freestanding specialized facilities that typically are not incorporated into a park of another type. Special use areas may include, for example, stand-alone community centers, sports complexes, golf courses, skate parks, swimming pools and community gardens. Since special use areas vary widely in function, there is no minimum size for these sites. However, special use areas must be large enough to accommodate the intended use and should include support facilities, such as parking and restrooms, as needed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide regional or citywide opportunities for recreation, social and cultural activities• Serve recreation and leisure needs of families• May provide other benefits depending on its purpose• Contribute to community identity• Provide attractive grounds surrounding public buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Access from an arterial street• Bus and transit access	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Youth Center• Marinovich Community Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Features with a city-wide or regional draw• Signage	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Game sports fields – complexes or stadiums (baseball, flag football, soccer, softball, multi-purpose)• Specialized active recreation facilities (indoor soccer center, climbing wall, gymnasium)• Specialized cultural and arts facilities (theater, dance studio, kiln room)• Sports courts (basketball court, tennis court, volleyball court)• Other recreation resources (skate park, horseshoe pits, bocce court)• Commercial ventures or features• Concessions• Large-scale interactive water feature• Water park or swimming pool complex• Historical or interpretive facilities• Community garden• Off-leash dog area• Stage/amphitheatre• Infrastructure to support large community events• Natural areas• Memorials• Trees• Maintenance facilities• Multi-use trails, pedestrian trails• Restrooms• Parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conflicting resources depend on the purpose of the special use facility

CLASSIFICATION	DEFINITION	BENEFITS	SIZE AND ACCESS	EXAMPLES	MINIMUM RESOURCES	MAY INCLUDE ADDITIONAL RESOURCES	DOES NOT INCLUDE CONFLICTING RESOURCES
URBAN PLAZA DESIGN GUIDELINES							
Urban Plazas	Urban plazas include local landscaped space gathering areas centrally located within communities such as downtown districts. This type of park is usually smaller than one acre and typically is located in higher density urban areas or along transit corridors. Urban plazas provide social gathering space that often includes benches, landscaping, gathering space, public art, or fountains. Urban plazas can provide gathering spaces and respite for nearby residents and employees, as well as shoppers, transit-users, and recreation users. These sites can provide space for community events, help balance high density development, and communicate neighborhood character.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide for the day-to-day recreational needs of nearby residents and employees, as well as shoppers, transit-users, and recreationalists• Provide space for community events, such as outdoor concerts or markets• Help balance high density development• Provide opportunities for public gathering and social activities• Contribute to community identity• Provide opportunities to experience public art, cultural, or social events	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Size is easily traversed on foot• Should be within or adjacent to a business district or high density housing area• Maintains the street network	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• City Plaza	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hardscape or soft-scape area of sufficient size to accommodate anticipated use• Signage	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Turf area• Playground or play features,• Interactive water feature• Small-scale sporting facilities compatible with an urban site (bocce, basketball, croquet)• Shelter, shade structure or gazebo• Stage/amphitheatre• Upgraded utility service for special events• Concessions or vendor space• Commercial lease space (restaurant, bookstore, coffee shop, etc.)• Restrooms• Memorials• Trees• Ornamental fountain	

CLASSIFICATION	DEFINITION	BENEFITS	SIZE AND ACCESS	EXAMPLES	MINIMUM RESOURCES	MAY INCLUDE ADDITIONAL RESOURCES	DOES NOT INCLUDE CONFLICTING RESOURCES
REGIONAL OPEN SPACE DESIGN GUIDELINES							
Regional Open Space	Regional Open Space areas are large sites that support a wide range of recreation interests and attract residents from throughout the region. These may include developed recreation areas, as well as wetlands, wildlife habitats, or stream corridors. For this reason, these sites are managed for both their natural resource value as well as for recreational use. Regional open space areas typically include facilities that support large group events, such as picnic shelters, amphitheaters, destination playgrounds, and multi-use fields. These sites also provide opportunities for nature-based recreation, such as bird-watching and environmental education.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide opportunities for experiencing nature• Provide opportunities for nature-based recreation, such as bird-watching and environmental education• Protect valuable natural resources and wildlife• Contribute to the environmental health of the community including improving water and air quality• Promote health and wellness• Contribute to community identity and quality of life• Provide opportunities for large-group activities and social gatherings	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Site size should be based on natural resource needs.• Acreage should be sufficient to preserve or protect the resource. No site designated as public open space to be managed by the City should be less than five acres.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pinto Lake	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Non-reservable picnic tables• Reservable picnic areas• Picnic shelters• Restrooms• Off-street Parking• Tot Lot (Ages 2-5)• Children’s play area (Ages 6-12)• Signage	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Restrooms• Trail or pathway system• Trailhead or entry• Interpretive signage• Viewpoints or viewing blinds• Interpretive center, nature center, or educational facilities or classrooms (indoor or outdoor)• Shelter, or gazebo• Destination playground, with appropriate shade structure• Large-group reunion venues• Amphitheater• Waterplay feature• Multi-purpose fields• Par course• Shade structures for appropriate facilities• Lake- and water-related recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Facilities and landscaping should be appropriate for a diversity of park environments• Active-use facilities and natural areas should be separated

CLASSIFICATION	DEFINITION	BENEFITS	SIZE AND ACCESS	EXAMPLES	MINIMUM RESOURCES	MAY INCLUDE ADDITIONAL RESOURCES	DOES NOT INCLUDE CONFLICTING RESOURCES
GREENBELTS AND TRAILS DESIGN GUIDELINES							
Greenbelts and Trails	Greenbelts and trails, as described here, provide off-street bicycle and pedestrian links to parks, with recreation emphasized. These include paths within natural open space areas. Guidelines are not presented for on-street bikeways or trails intended mainly for transportation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Connect parks and other community destinations such as schools and neighborhood shopping areas• Contribute to the environmental health of the community including improving water and air quality• Contribute to community identity and quality of life• Encourage non-motorized transportation, such as walking and biking	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Size is dependent on corridor length.• When possible, recreation pathways and trails should be located outside street rights-of-ways.• Paths that are within street rights-of-way but separated should be designed, when possible, along continuous features, so that they do not pose hazards when crossing driveways and intersections.• Pathways and trails may need to utilize street rights-of-way in order to complete a segment link.• Since trails are more difficult to provide after an area has been developed, advanced detailed trail planning for developing areas is essential.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Watsonville Slough• Levee trails	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Natural areas• Trail or pathway• Signage	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Restrooms• Trail or pathway system• Trailhead or entry• Viewpoints or viewing blinds• Interpretive center or educational facilities or classrooms (indoor or outdoor)• Shelter, shade structure or gazebo• Interpretive signage• Off-street parking• Natural areas• Memorials or benches• Shrub beds	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Turf areas• Active use facilities (sports fields, paved courts)• Any resource that conflicts with the trail use

CLASSIFICATION	DEFINITION	BENEFITS	SIZE AND ACCESS	EXAMPLES	MINIMUM RESOURCES	MAY INCLUDE ADDITIONAL RESOURCES	DOES NOT INCLUDE CONFLICTING RESOURCES
SCHOOL PARKS DESIGN GUIDELINES							
School Parks	School parks are parks that are designed, developed, and maintained at school sites to provide enhanced opportunities for recreation and outdoor education. These parks are the result of a collaborative effort between the Parks Department and School Districts to augment learning environments and help meet community needs for close-to-home recreation opportunities in underserved neighborhoods.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide additional park resources without the cost of land acquisition• Leverage existing resources and infrastructure• Add value to school facilities and provides enhanced opportunities for outdoor learning and physical education, better play environments, and improved active-use facilities through cost-sharing• Locate specific types of recreation facilities where they are needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 3-15 acres	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ann Soldo School• Radcliff School• E.A. Hall	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Park identification signage• Site furnishings (bike rack, benches, trash/recycle receptacles, etc.)• State disabled access-compliant internal pathway system• Appropriate active and passive resources. The type of the school (elementary, middle, or high) should be taken into consideration to determine what facilities are appropriate at specific sites.• Open turf area	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Children's play area (Ages 2-5)• Children's play area (Ages 6-12)• Sports courts (basketball court, tennis court, volleyball court)• Sports fields (soccer, baseball, softball, multi-purpose)• Jogging path/track• Other active recreation amenities (fitness stations, par course, shuffleboard lanes, wall ball or tennis backboard, obstacle course, rock wall (horizontal or vertical), disc golf, etc.)• School garden• Creative play spaces such as: Interactive chess board, sand play area/archeological dig, cave space, stage/amphitheater, dramatic play area, outdoor lab, shelter/play canopy, moveable props (building blocks, buckets, shovels, wheelbarrows, wagons, pulleys, etc.)• Storage• Swimming pool• Picnic tables• Lighting• Restrooms• Fencing• Water feature/natural area• Landscaping	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Features not appropriate for school sites

CLASSIFICATION	DEFINITION	BENEFITS	SIZE AND ACCESS	EXAMPLES	MINIMUM RESOURCES	MAY INCLUDE ADDITIONAL RESOURCES	DOES NOT INCLUDE CONFLICTING RESOURCES
BASEBALL FIELD GUIDELINES							
1. Official	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 per 5,000 Lighted 1 per 30,000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recreational casual and league baseball play opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3.0-3.85 acre minimum; Baselines – 90' Pitching distance 60 ½" foul lines – min. 320' Center field – 400'+; baselines – 60' ¼ to ½ mile 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Franich Park baseball fields 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outfield fence Backstop Bleachers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parking lot Restroom Lighting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Features not appropriate for baseball fields
2. Little League	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 per 5,000 Lighted 1 per 30,000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recreational casual and league baseball play opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3.0-3.85 acre minimum; Baselines – 90' Pitching distance 60 ½" foul lines – min. 320' Center field – 400'+; baselines – 60' 1.2 acre minimum; pitching distance – 46' Foul lines – 200' Center field – 200' – 250' ¼ to ½ mile 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Franich Park baseball fields 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outfield fence Backstop Bleachers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parking lot Restroom Lighting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Features not appropriate for baseball fields
SOFTBALL FIELD GUIDELINES							
Softball Field	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 per 5,000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recreational casual and league plan opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.5 to 2.0 acres Baselines – 60' Pitching distance – 46' (men) min. 40' (women) Fast pitch field – radius from plate – 225' Between foul lines: Slow Pitch – 265'(men) and 250' (women) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outfield fence Backstop Bleachers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parking lot Restroom Lighting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Features not appropriate for softball fields
SOCCER FIELD GUIDELINES							
Soccer Field	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 per 10,000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recreational casual and league plan opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.7 to 2.1 acres 195' to 225x360' with a minimum 10' clearance all sides. 1- 2 miles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Soccer fields at Ramsay park 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Goals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parking lot Restroom Lighting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Features not appropriate for soccer fields

WATSONVILLE
Parks and Recreation Facilities
master plan

appendix



financial
implementation

appendix c

Table C-1. Cost of Projects and Actions Recommended in the Plan

Project	Improvements/Development	Cost per Unit	Total Cost	Notes
System-wide				
Playground improvements	Fybar for 29 playgrounds	\$12,000	\$348,000	Assumes 3,000 sq. ft. playground
Vandalism Abatement	Graffiti abatement and removal		\$5,000	Assumes Department staff will conduct abatement and removal
Turf Improvements	Irrigation improvements		\$4,000	Based on 80 hrs/yr + \$2,000 mat.
Safety/Accessibility Improvements	Repairs to sidewalk and path paving	\$29	\$8,700	Feet per year; includes demolition
Meet Accessibility Standards	Accessibility improvements to amenities and facilities		\$25,000	Unspecified items
Replacement	Replace wood picnic tables	\$800	\$40,000	Replace with metal tables
Added Amenities	New signage for 29 parks	\$3,000	\$87,000	Park sign and 2-3 informational signs
	Barbeques in 15 parks	\$500	\$15,000	Average 3 units per park
	Tree planting (allowance)	\$350	\$35,000	Assume trees planted by staff
	Recycle bins in all 29 parks	\$200	\$11,600	Assume 2 units per park
Subtotal			\$579,300	
Park-specific improvements				
Cherry Blossom	Shade structure near playground	\$25,000	\$25,000	Basic cloth screen + framework
Arista Park	Repaint and repair playground, benches, and fencing		\$50,000	
Crestview Park	Improve general appearance		\$8,000	Replace barb wire fence et al
	Replace wooden railing	\$25	\$750	30' of metal railing
	Extend pathway to meet grass	\$30	\$1,500	50' of asphalt walkway
	Remove graffiti from pavement		\$400	Assumes Department staff will remove graffiti
	Install bicycle rack	\$600	\$600	
Joyce-McKenzie Park	Address tree fungus problem and plant additional trees		\$1,000	
	Remove portion of turf and install drought-tolerant landscaping	\$30,000	\$15,000	Half acre; includes landscaping and irrigation
	Install shade structure	\$25,000	\$25,000	Basic cloth screen + framework
	Gazebo	\$50,000	\$50,000	Small unit suitable for weddings, etc.
	Bike rack	\$600	\$600	
Bronte Park	Repair pathway paving	\$15	\$6,000	400' of new lift only
	Directional signage to levee trail		\$400	
Flodberg Park	Install safety design features		\$5,000	Includes lighting, etc.
	Remove graffiti from pavement		\$500	

Table C-1. Cost of Projects and Actions Recommended in the Plan (continued)

Project	Improvements/Development	Cost per Unit	Total Cost	Notes
<i>Flodberg Park (continued)</i>	Shade structure above playground	\$25,000	\$25,000	
	Install ramp into playground		\$1,000	
	Install bike rack	\$600	\$1,200	
<i>Hope Drive Park</i>	New restroom building	\$250,000	\$250,000	Would serve proposed trail
<i>Peace Drive Park</i>	Landscaping and planting		\$35,000	Assumes no irrigation or turf
	Interpretive signage		\$500	
<i>Ramsay Park</i>	Update playground		\$93,350	Assumes some pieces remain
<i>Callaghan</i>	Repair water fountain at bathroom		\$500	
<i>City Plaza</i>	Install bicycle rack	\$600	\$600	
	New restroom building	\$250,000	\$250,000	
<i>Riverside Mini Park</i>	Repair fence fabric	\$12	\$1,200	
<i>Seaview Ranch Park</i>	Repair damaged shade fabric		\$500	
	New restroom building	\$250,000	\$250,000	
<i>Las Brisas</i>	Improve the concrete amphitheater - add landscaping or outdoor stage design	\$6	\$1,200	
	Shade amenity over playground		\$25,000	
<i>Future 37 Davis</i>	Increase park policy signage	\$400	\$400	
Subtotal			\$1,125,200	
Indoor Facilities				
<i>Muzzio Community Center Improvements</i>	Fix roof leakage problems		\$15,000	Assume 2,000 sq. ft. new roof
Sports Fields/Courts				
<i>Improvements</i>	Fill holes and repair turf on two soccer fields		\$4,000	No grading or irrigation repair
	Fill holes and repair turf on three baseball fields		\$6,000	No grading or irrigation repair
<i>Sports Courts Improvements</i>	Resurface three tennis courts		\$10,500	
Levee Trails				
<i>Levee Trails Improvements</i>	Interpretive signage, mileage markings		\$10,000	2.9 miles of trail
	Benches		\$6,000	Total of ten
	Install lighting		\$87,000	Light fixture @ 500'; total of 30 poles/fixtures
Subtotal			\$138,500	

Table C-1. Cost of Projects and Actions Recommended in the Plan (continued)

Project	Improvements/Development	Total Cost	Additional Information
Sports Fields and Courts	Two new soccer fields	\$370,000	Includes irrigation but no parking or lighting
	Two new baseball fields	\$540,000	Includes outfield fence, backstop, bleachers; no lighting, parking or restroom
	Develop eight half-court basketball courts	\$128,000	One court each for eight parks
Community Facilities	New stand-alone gymnasium	\$1,500,000	10,000 sq. ft; two half-courts or one full size court, shower/restrooms, meeting room
	Outdoor swimming pool	\$4,000,000	8 lane, 25 yard pool with training tank
	New community theater, performing arts space - <i>limited amenities</i>	\$1,200,000	300-400 seat auditorium
	Construct new skate park	\$500,000	
	New dog park	\$125,000	Located in southwest portion of City
Subtotal		\$8,363,000	
Community Centers	New Multi-generational Community Center	\$5,000,000	15,000 - 20,000 square feet; gym, showers, meeting rooms
TOTAL		\$15,206,000	

FUNDING SOURCES

This section provides a variety of funding options that have been suggested during the course of the planning process. Chapter 5 of the Master Plan provides several approaches for meeting the financial needs of the recommended park system. The approaches presented in the plan represent the most likely and politically viable funding options at this time. However, additional opportunities may surface in the future and the Department is encouraged to explore these opportunities as they arise.

General Fund

This is the City's primary source for operating revenue and comes primarily from taxes. Since park and recreation services must compete with other City operations for these funds, the amount the Department receives can change from year to year.

Park and Recreation Impact Fees

This is a fee paid by developers for the impact of their residential project on the existing park system. The money received can be used for the acquisition and development of parks, open space, trails and other recreational facilities. The current fees for park and recreation impacts vary greatly between specific plan areas and the rest of the county. The County government is responsible for collecting impact fees for all unincorporated areas of the county. Within incorporated cities, the local government is the sole authority authorized to collect impact fees. The City of Watsonville currently collects park impact fees in lieu of land dedication. The fair market value per acre of the land is assessed periodically and the fee is adjusted if deemed necessary on a project-by-project basis. The fees were recently adjusted in October, 2008.

City Service Areas (CSAs)

Special districts called City Service Areas can be formed for a wide variety of purposes including parks; these assessment districts collect a fixed fee. A CSA is initiated by a petition of registered voters or by adoption of a resolution at the county level. Once proposed, the formation of the CSA will be subject to public notice and a public hearing. If more than 50% of registered voters or landowners protest, the CSA may need

to be subject to voter approval at a special election. When a CSA exists, the property owner will pay taxes and fees to the CSA instead of the city for the services provided. These will be billed as line items on the county property tax bill. The taxes may take a variety of forms:

- General property taxes may be levied depending upon Prop. 13 constraints. These taxes, referred to as "ad valorem taxes," are based on assessed value.
- Special taxes may be levied for specific purposes. These taxes must be approved by a two-thirds majority vote of CSA residents.
- Benefit assessments may be levied for specific purposes and are based on the direct benefit each parcel receives from the improvements or services financed. These charges are subject to annual approval at a public hearing.

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Funds

Grants from the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) are available for a wide variety of projects. These funds are mainly used for projects and programs in the lower income areas of the community. The City of Watsonville has made use of CDBG funds for park and recreation facility projects in the past, and could continue to do so where park projects meet program goals.

General Obligation Bond

These are voter-approved bonds with the assessment placed on real property. The money can only be used for capital improvements but not maintenance. This property tax is levied for a specified period of time (usually 15-20 years). Passage requires a two-thirds majority approval by the voters. Major disadvantages of this funding option are the high approval requirement and the high interest costs. The possibility of passing a General Obligation Bond in the current economic climate is less likely due to these disadvantages.

Mitigation Fees

Governments can impose fees to mitigate other impacts of development or improvement of property. For example, one California community charges fees to support the preservation or enhancement of native oak habitat areas and is funded

by a mitigation fee for removal of oaks on other property. The fee is based on the size of the trees removed.

Landscaping and Lighting Act

This funding mechanism permits a public agency to assess housing units or land parcels for a variety of services. The assessment revenues can be used for park land acquisition, development and/or maintenance. The agency can choose to use the revenue generated on a pay-as-you-go basis or can sell bonds in order to receive a lump sum amount. The bonds are then paid back from the annual revenue generated from the assessment. Establishment of a district or revision to an assessment district requires a simple majority vote of property owners. Because establishing a landscape and lighting district requires only a simple majority vote, it has become more popular than seeking approval of a general obligation bond.

The City of Watsonville has three Landscaping and Lighting Districts in the Bay Breeze and Vista Montana neighborhoods and Gonzalez Street. The Department collects funds from these districts.

Revenue Bonds

These bonds are sold and paid from the revenue produced from the operation of a facility. These bonds are a good fit for improvements that will eventually involve user fees, such as community centers, swimming pools and some types of regional parks.

Donations

The donations of labor, land, or cash by service agencies, private groups or individuals are a popular way to raise small amounts of money for specific projects. Such service agencies as Lions and Rotary often fund small projects such as playground improvements.

Exchange or Sale of Property

If the City has an excess piece of property with some development value it could be traded for a private piece of property more suitable for park use.

Joint Public/Private Partnership

This concept has become increasingly popular for park and recreation agencies. The basic approach is for a public agency

to enter into a working agreement with a private corporation to help fund, build, and/or operate a public facility. Generally, the three primary incentives that a public agency can offer is free land to place a facility (usually a park or other piece of public land), certain tax advantages and access to the facility. While the public agency may have to give up certain responsibilities or control, it is one way of obtaining public facilities at a lower cost.

Exactions

Costs of necessary public improvements that are passed on to the adjacent landowners. They are direct charges or dedications collected on a one-time basis as a condition of an approval being granted by the local government. The purpose of the exaction must directly relate to the need created by the development and its amount must be proportional to the cost of improvement.

Public Land Trusts

Private land trusts such as the Trust for Public Land, Inc. and the Nature Conservancy can acquire and hold land for eventual acquisition by a public agency.

Government Grant Programs

There are a number of government grant programs for park and recreation projects. Key programs are:

a. **Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU):**

Originally called The Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA), this federal program has funded a wide variety of transportation-related projects. Funding is passed through the states. In 2005 the latest version of this legislation was authorized as SAFETEA-LU for the 5-year period of 2005-2009. Over the years, California has received considerable revenue for trail-related projects from these funds. In terms of recreation, the program primarily funds landscape and amenity improvements related to trail and transportation projects. The money can be used for both maintenance and capital

construction, and is primarily focused on regional systems and not local neighborhood trails.

- b. **Land and Water Conservation Funds:** This grant program is funded by the National Park Service and administered by California State Parks. In the past this was one of the major sources of grant money for local agencies. In the 1990s, funding at the federal level was severely cut, but in recent times more money has become available. The funds can be used for acquisition and development of outdoor facilities and require a 50% match.
- c. **Urban Forestry Grants:** There are several grant programs that provide money for urban forestry projects. One is funded by the U.S. Small Business Administration and provides grants to purchase and plant trees. This program sometimes funds urban street tree planting programs.
- d. **US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFW):** USFW may provide technical assistance and administer funding for projects that enhance water quality, including debris removal, flood mitigation, and enhancements to water crossings.
- e. **California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW):** CDFW may provide technical assistance and administer funding for projects that enhance water quality, including debris removal, flood mitigation, and enhancements to water crossings.
- f. **State Bicycle Funds:** This is revenue from state gas taxes that is distributed to California cities for the development of bicycle lanes. This can be a good funding source for developing bicycle lanes and off street bicycle trails.
- g. **Recreation Trails Program:** This is a grant program funded through the California Parks and Recreation Department. Projects eligible under this program include
 - 1) maintenance and restoration of existing trails,
 - 2) development and rehabilitation of trailhead facilities,
 - 3) construction of new recreation trails, and 4) acquisition of easements and fee simple title to property. Grants

are distributed on an annual basis and require a 20% match.

- h. **Statewide Park Bond (Proposition 40):** In recent years, California has passed two statewide bond measures for funding parks and open space projects. The funding program has several elements including a grant based on a per capita allocation, a matching grant and several competitive grant programs.
- i. **Other State Funds:** The State of California maintains a comprehensive list of grant programs available for park projects, located at <http://www.parks.ca.gov> under park and recreation technical services.

Private Grants and Foundations

Grants and foundations provide money for a wide range of projects. They are sometimes difficult to find and equally difficult to secure because of the open competition. They usually fund unique projects or ones of extreme need. Small park grant funds can be neighborhood or community driven. The community can apply on behalf of a city-owned park for needed improvements.