

Executive Summary

PRNS Vision

National leader of Parks and Recreation in cultivating healthy communities through quality programs and dynamic public spaces

PRNS Mission

To build healthy communities through people, parks and programs

The *Greenprint Update* provides the City with an opportunity for a new look at identifying future needs for parks, recreation facilities and trails, to keep San José a livable City and to attract new businesses. Sustaining and actively enhancing the livability, or quality of life, of a rapidly urbanizing area is a major challenge. The *Greenprint Update* is designed to reflect and define the current goals of the City Council and the community that would provide the very best of natural, educational, social, cultural and economic environments in which one can live, work and play. The facilities suggested in the *Greenprint Update* are just that, suggestions of facilities to implement the Ideal Planning Area Model for recreation facilities in each of the 12 Urban Planning Areas. In order to move forward with any project noted in the *Greenprint Update* a funding commitment by the City will be required. Therefore, to proceed with the development of a suggested facility in the *Greenprint Update*, one needs to look at the City's Annual Capital Improvement Program (CIP) budget for a listing and funding of the project. This information will also feed into the development of the City's General Plan Update – Envision San José 2040.

The 2000 *Greenprint* – A Twenty Year Strategic Plan was adopted by the San José City Council in September 2000 to provide staff and decision makers with a strategic plan for expanding

recreation opportunities in the City. Since 2000, there have been a number of changes in the City environment, leading to the need for an update of the original *Greenprint*. These changes include: land has almost doubled in cost from 2000 to 2007 along with major construction increases; the City's update of its General Plan to 2040 with an updated recreation element; adoption of the City's Green Vision and signing the Urban Environmental Accords; completion of four significant studies, Citywide Aquatics Master Plan, Community Center Reuse Strategy Report, Community Sports Fields Study and the Pricing and Revenue Policy; increased population projections to the year 2020; and perhaps most significantly, dwindling resources in both operating and capital budgets. Therefore, the City was unable to invest the \$60 million annually in capital funds assumed in the 2000 *Greenprint*.

The City's Green Vision is a fifteen-year plan to transform San José into a world center of clean technology innovation, promote cutting-edge sustainable practices, and demonstrate that the goals of economic growth, environmental stewardship and fiscal responsibility are inextricably linked. Visit the City's web site at <http://www.sanjoseca.gov/greenvision/> for more information.

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The Urban Environmental Accords are a declaration of participating city governments to build ecologically sustainable, economically dynamic and socially equitable futures for their residents, which the San José City Council signed in 2005. Visit the City's website at <http://www.sanjoseca.gov/esd/urban-accords.asp> for additional information.

Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services (PRNS) has made significant strides in meeting the community's growing needs for parks, recreation facilities and trails. The passage of the Parks Bond (Measure P) in 2000 enabled the City to fund various projects which would have been impossible otherwise. As of June 2009, \$186 million has been expended or encumbered toward improvements to 69 neighborhood and 5 regional parks, construction of 7 community centers and completion of three trail projects. The new Happy Hollow Park and Zoo, the largest improvement project in the Parks Bond Program (Measure P), is anticipated to open to the public in the spring 2010. Construction of 2 sports complexes, 2 community centers and 1 trail project remain to be completed.

Over 200 projects have been completed since 2000 using Bond and other funding sources. These projects are spread across the Urban Planning Areas and range from expansion and renovations

of parks and community centers to the construction of a 68,000 square foot regional skate park. A list of completed projects is included in Chapter 5.

PRNS looks at projects completed with a sense of accomplishment, but is cognizant that there are challenges ahead with limited resources to meet the community's growing recreation needs.

While the 2000 *Greenprint* used the ten Council Districts as planning areas, the *Greenprint Update* uses the 15 Planning Areas defined in the City's General Plan. Planning Areas are static boundaries and are especially valuable in the collection and analysis of data over a long period of time. The Council District boundaries are modified every 10 years to reflect the City's U.S. census numbers. Moreover, use of Planning Areas best serves the intent of making the *Greenprint Update* compatible with the City's General Plan. The 12 Urban Planning Areas addressed in the *Greenprint Update* are:

Almaden	Alum Rock	Alviso
Berryessa	Cambrian/Pioneer	Central/Downtown
Edenvale	Evergreen	North San José
South San José	West Valley	Willow Glen

The three southern Planning Areas, Calero, Coyote and San Felipe, were not included in the *Greenprint Update* because the bulk of the Planning Area is outside the Urban Service Area. The Urban Service Area is defined as the area which the City provides utility services, such as water and sewer, to residents.

It is important to note that the Council District boundaries differ from the Planning Area boundaries. One example is the South San José Planning Area, which is predominantly Council District 7 but also includes parts of Districts 6, 9 and 10. Every attempt has been made to include the Council District in the data sheets and tables for reference.

As with the 2000 *Greenprint*, the Update is based on community input. To date, over 1400 residents have given their opinions through community meetings and a telephone survey.

The *Greenprint Update* process included four phases:

- Community Assessment and Prioritization
- Strategy Development
- Action Plan and Revenue Enhancements
- Review and Approval

The *Greenprint Update* Plan is based on five essential elements:

- A Vision for the City of San José’s parks, recreation facilities and programs
- A Mission to provide direction toward reaching the Vision
- Guiding Principles which are the mechanisms that drive PRNS to build a healthy and sustainable community
- Goals that provide focus and direction for the *Greenprint Update*
- Strategies that provide further direction in realizing the Vision and Mission

The *Greenprint Update* also provides a Capital Action Plan for rehabilitation, acquisition and development of future parks, recreation facilities and trails in the 12 Urban Planning Areas for the next 11 years and beyond that reflects the economic state the City is currently experiencing. San José, like other public entities, is experiencing a major drop in revenues not only to construct facilities, but also to fund operations and services. In order to move forward in the implementation of this revised plan, the City will need to provide additional operating funds through enhanced revenues and/or voter approved ballot measures.

Through community meetings and telephone surveys the community in 2000, and again in 2007, told the City that renovating its existing recreation

“It would be worth it, if it were my child.”

Horace Mann

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facilities is a priority over major expansions of existing facilities or development of new facilities, except in those areas that are underserved or under PG&E power lines. The *Greenprint Update* will help guide the day-to-day decision making process regarding investments in recreation amenities.

Personal health and wellness, as well as community livability, are enhanced and improved by expanded programming and services at the new larger community centers. San José's parks, trails and recreation services nurture a sense of belonging, ownership and common purpose among people who live and work together. Parks and recreation activities foster community connection both in spirit and in activity.

There are various service level objectives, guidelines and goals for recreation amenities in the City. The most common ones used in this document are as follows:

Service Level Objectives: Service level objectives provide the City with the ability to determine the ideal number of park acres and community center square footages based upon the City's population. These objectives have not changed from the 2000 *Greenprint* and are listed below:

- 3.5 acres/1,000 population: Ratio of neighborhood and community serving parkland and school recreation parkland

- 7.5 acres/1,000 population: Ratio of citywide/regional parkland within City boundaries (includes other jurisdictions such as the County)
- 500 square feet/1,000 population: Ratio of community center square footage

Guidelines: In order to use the Park Development and Park Impact Ordinance (PDO/PIO) fees to achieve the service level objectives and to ensure that these fees are being spent within the nexus of the development paying the fees, the following guidelines have been developed:

- Neighborhood Serving: PDO/PIO fees should be spent within a $\frac{3}{4}$ mile straight line radius of the development for neighborhood serving elements. Neighborhood serving elements include, but are not limited to neighborhood parks, playgrounds, plazas and open recreation areas.
- Community Serving: PDO/PIO fees should be spent within a 3-mile straight line radius or within the same Urban Planning Area as the development for community serving elements. Community serving elements include, but are not limited to trails, community centers, sports fields, skate parks, dog parks and aquatic facilities. This is an increase from the 2-mile radius practiced following the 2000 *Greenprint*.

Goals: In addition to the objectives related to the acres listed above, the City also has a goal of providing a park, open space, trail or recreation

school ground within 1/3 of a mile of every resident in order to align with the Urban Environmental Accords, or to provide safe connections to existing facilities outside of the 1/3 mile radius and to ensure that recreation facilities are accessible to all residents.

A New Vision

Chapter 2 introduces a new vision for PRNS: “National leader of Parks and Recreation in cultivating healthy communities through quality programs and dynamic public spaces.” This vision emphasizes PRNS’s commitment to parks and recreation. A new mission, “To build healthy communities through people, parks and programs,” builds on that commitment. Guiding Principles are foremost in developing the actions and strategies of the *Greenprint Update*. These principles are Accessibility, Inclusivity, Affordability, Equity, Diversity, Sustainability and Flexibility.

Six goals emerged from the planning process which provide focus and direction to the *Greenprint Update*. They are:

- Provide environmentally and financially sustainable recreation programs and infrastructure assets
- Provide environmentally responsible recreation facilities
- Provide accessible recreation opportunities that

are responsive to the community’s health and wellness

- Partner with the community to promote environmental stewardship and volunteerism
- Improve community image and livability by providing quality recreation facilities and programs
- Provide nationally recognized parks, trails, open space, recreation amenities and programs to meet the community’s growing needs

Strategies for implementation of the *Greenprint Update* align with the goals and are meant to realize the vision and mission. Citywide and Planning Areas strategies form a Capital Action Plan to help achieve the goals in concert with other operational activities. The Capital Action Plan was drafted using the Ideal Planning Area Model, developed to provide a balanced and equitable park and recreation system. These strategies are:

- Environmental Sustainability
- Economic Development
- Financial Sustainability
- Quality Services
- Civic Engagement
- Productive Partnerships

This chapter also includes recommended targets to assist the City in maintaining a high quality of life using creative solutions to provide a balanced parks and recreation system.

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Financing and Marketing Strategies

Chapter 3 discusses financing strategies for delivering those projects beyond the five (5) year Capital Action Plan and marketing strategies to increase public awareness of parks, recreation facilities, trails, programs and services to garner support for potential voter approved measures. Without additional capital and operating revenues, the desired projects may not be realized. Major park improvements would likely require passage of another park and recreation general obligation bond. Each strategy has its own challenges, with some requiring voter approval. Other strategies identified in the 2000 *Greenprint*, such as pursuing Redevelopment Agency support of park and recreation projects in Redevelopment areas, pursuing state and federal grants, establishing a foundation and pursuing joint-use projects, are currently underway by PRNS.

Facilities and Programs

Chapter 4 describes City and non-City owned and managed recreation facilities which together increase community livability of San José as well the programs/services the City is responsible for or participates in. The facilities are:

- *Parks* - The City has over 180 parks that range in size from a half acre to hundreds of acres. There are neighborhood/community parks and citywide/regional parks. Residents can enjoy everything from a leisurely stroll through the

park enjoying the outdoors to participating in more physical activities such as tennis, basketball or soccer.

- *Trails Network* - Providing a well integrated trail network will allow residents access to natural areas and recreation opportunities, including walking, biking, jogging, rollerblading and horseback riding, that are rare in urban settings.
- *Sports Fields/Sports Complexes* - The Community Sports Field Study was recently completed, and it identified the need for over 100 additional sports fields. Given land and budget constraints, it is unlikely that the City will be able to provide this number of sports fields. Therefore, the Study has established three types of fields to be provided throughout the City: “Premiere,” “High Use” and “Standard.” It is expected that each Planning Area will have a mixture of “Standard” fields and “High Use” fields. The “Premiere” fields, which will serve a large number of people on a single field, will be spread throughout the City.
- *Community Centers* - San José residents of all ages and abilities should have access to community centers within a reasonable distance of their homes. Services will be provided through a three-tiered system of community centers (multi-service hub, satellite and neighborhood), including at schools and at facilities operated by community-based

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organizations in each of the 12 Urban Planning Areas. The City currently operates 55 community centers to offer programs and services to its residents.

- *Aquatic Facilities* - A master plan was completed which identified projects to fully build out the system. Projects range from a simple “sprayground” to large wellness facilities. The City currently has seven aquatic facilities.
- *Community Gardens* - Community gardens can help build a sense of community and fulfill important socialization needs, as well as creating sustainable urban farming opportunities for locally grown, specialty and heritage crops. The City currently has 19 community gardens.
- *Skate Parks* - A skate park is a recreation amenity that allows for skateboarders, inline skaters and bicyclists of all ages to safely practice their sports. The City currently has six skate parks, including the Lake Cunningham Regional facility, which is rated as one of the best in the nation.
- *Dog Parks* - A dog park is a place for dog owners to socialize while their dogs play and interact, and it is a place for dogs to get out of the house or yard. The City currently has eight dog parks.
- *Open Space* - Open space preservation is a high priority for the San José community. The City works with many agencies to acquire and

preserve open space in and surrounding San José.

- *Golf Facilities* - The City has three golf courses, San José Municipal and Los Lagos are 18-hole courses, while Rancho del Pueblo is a 9-hole course.
- *San José Family Camp* - San José Family Camp is a City-operated camp in Tuolumne County near Yosemite National Park.

PRNS strives to provide a continuum of services and programs to children, youth, adults, seniors and persons with disabilities. These programs/ services include: After school programs and homework centers, Youth Intervention Services, Safe School Campus Initiative (SSCI), Striving Towards Achievement with New Direction (STAND), Clean Slate, San José Bringing Everyone’s Strengths Together (BEST), Services for persons with disabilities, Senior programs, Adopt-A-Trail/Park, Anti-Graffiti/Anti-Litter programs, Christmas in the Park, Holiday Parade, Schools/City Collaborative, Youth Sports and various special events.

Urban Planning Area Strategies

Chapter 5 describes key strategies for addressing the recreation needs of the 12 Urban Planning Areas. This chapter analyzes and provides a profile of each Urban Planning Area and the amenities that are available to residents based on

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the Ideal Planning Area Model. It further identifies any underserved areas for both neighborhood and community serving parks and community centers. When opportunities arise to place new or expanded facilities in the future, the City should always look for opportunities to serve residents that are underserved if funding permits. However, before looking to place a new park in these neighborhoods, the City should first make every attempt to expand existing facilities which may be outside the accepted radius but would serve these residents nonetheless. By expanding existing facilities and using the trail, street or bikeway system to connect residents to these facilities, the City can provide a wider range of recreation opportunities to a greater population while concurrently minimizing operation and maintenance costs. If there are no opportunities to serve these residents by expansion of (or connection to) existing facilities, the City should consider placing a new facility within these underserved areas.

The quantity and distribution of neighborhood/ community serving parkland, community centers, aquatic facilities, sports fields, dog parks and skate parks are analyzed for each Urban Planning Area. Chapter 5 identifies future parkland needs and describes strategies for increasing access to park and recreation facilities for San José's underserved neighborhoods. Also included in this chapter is

the Capital Action Plan and maps for each of the 12 Urban Planning Areas.

For a glossary of terms see Bibliography after Chapter 5.