The mission of Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services is to build healthy communities through people, parks, and programs.
The Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services Department (PRNS) operates the City’s regional and neighborhood parks, as well as facilities such as Happy Hollow Park & Zoo. Happy Hollow Park & Zoo served 508,000 visitors and generated $7.7 million in revenues in 2017-18. PRNS also operates community and recreation centers and provides various recreation, community service, and other programs for the City’s residents. PRNS offers programs and services for children, youth, teens, adults, seniors, and people with disabilities.

In 2017-18, PRNS’ operating expenditures totaled $84 million. This included personal and non-personal/equipment expenditures. PRNS was responsible for additional costs including $10.6 million in Citywide and other expenses and $1.9 million in debt service expenses. Staffing totaled 685 authorized positions, 32 more positions than 2016-17. This includes additional funding for park maintenance positions, the Project Hope Program, continued funding for the Senior Nutrition Program and recreation facilities, and placemaking and activation efforts with Plaza de Cesar Chavez, Viva CalleSJ and !VivaParks!

PRNS has a goal of recovering 40 percent of its direct program costs through collected revenues (e.g., fees, charges, leases, grants). For 2017-18, PRNS reported its direct program cost recovery rate was 36.5 percent. Program fees accounted for approximately 70 percent of collected revenues.
PARKS

The City has 195 neighborhood and 9 regional parks, as well as other facilities, such as community gardens, trails, and skate parks. Excluding golf courses, the developed portion of these facilities covered 1,773 acres. There were an additional 1,441 acres of open space and undeveloped land.

After significant reductions to park maintenance earlier in the decade, nine maintenance staff were added in 2017-18. The City’s General Fund cost to maintain developed parkland increased to $12,548 per acre. (See the CSA dashboard chapter for additional information on park condition)

The PRNS 5-year Capital Improvement Program (CIP) allocated $168 million to parks in 2017-18. The CIP’s key priority for 2017-18 was to repair the damage sustained at 65 parks citywide as a result of the 2016-17 winter storms. Prior to the storms, PRNS estimated it had a deferred maintenance and unfunded infrastructure backlog totaling approximately $259 million for regional park facilities, community buildings, regional facilities, trails, and park restrooms.

The City Trail Network is composed of 40 unique trail systems that will be interconnected as further development occurs. The current network includes 59 miles of trails (85 percent paved). An additional 83 miles have been identified or are being studied for further development, or are in the planning or construction phases of development.

KEY FACTS (2017-18)

- Neighborhood parks (195 parks): 1,225 acres
- Regional parks (9 parks): 548 acres
- Golf courses (3 courses): 321 acres*
- Open space and undeveloped land: 1,441 acres
- Total*: 3,534 acres*

For list of City parks see: City Parks

*State, county, or other public lands within San José’s boundaries are not included in the above figures. Does not include 50 acres open space. Total may not add due to rounding.

RESIDENT SURVEY

% of San José residents rating services as “excellent” or “good”

- San José’s Parks
- San José’s Paths and Trails

Parks and Trails Goals

The City’s Envision 2040 General Plan includes goals for park acreage per resident of 3.5 acres of neighborhood/community serving parkland per 1,000 residents (1.5 acres of public parkland and 2.0 acres of recreational school grounds). It also has a goal of 7.5 acres per 1,000 residents of Citywide/regional park or open space lands through a combination of facilities owned by the City and other public agencies. Finally it aims to provide 500 square feet per 1,000 population of community center space.

The City’s Greenprint adopted in 2000 and updated in 2009 is a twenty year strategic plan to provide staff and decision makers with a strategic plan for expanding recreation opportunities in the City. A major update to the Greenprint is now underway, with completion anticipated by Summer 2019. The new document is expected to establish strategic goals in the delivery of the City’s parks system.
PARKS, RECREATION AND NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES

RECREATION PROGRAMS AND COMMUNITY CENTERS

PRNS program offerings include (but are not limited to) after-school programs, camps, aquatic programs, arts and crafts, dance, educational programs, health and fitness programs, sports, therapeutic classes designed for persons with disabilities, and programs for seniors. For a list of all programs and classes, see Community Center Brochures.

In 2017-18, the City operated 11 hub community centers throughout the City. Three of those centers are combination community centers and libraries. PRNS also has reuse facilities which are operated by nonprofit, neighborhood associations, school districts, and other government agencies or community service providers. Other City programs operated out of 10 of the reuse sites.

2017-18 was the first full year that the Grace Therapeutic Art and Wellness Center was run out of the Northside Community Center.

The City’s 10 hub community centers and the Bascom Community Center were open from 35 to 72 hours per week which is mostly unchanged from the previous year. No City run centers had regularly scheduled Sunday hours.

(See the CSA Dashboard chapter for results of recreation program participant surveys)

KEY FACTS (2017-18)

Community centers (including reuse sites)* 50
Community center square footage* 558,000 sq. ft.
Average weekly hours open (hub community centers) 59
Estimated recreation program participation at City run programs** 786,000

* This includes hybrid centers. Includes Old Alviso Community Center and the Old Hillview Library which are closed.
**This is a duplicated count (i.e. individuals are counted for each program attended).
Facilities in bold are hub community centers operated by the City. Facilities with (N) are Neighborhood Centers and facilities with (S) are Satellite Centers. Neighborhood centers are less than 10,000 square feet of space that generally house organizations who offer targeted types of services. Satellite centers are larger facilities, with roughly 10,000-20,000 square feet of space. Satellite centers can house multiple service providers which are often larger organizations with multiple branches. The Old Alviso Community Center and the Old Hillview Library are currently not in use.

*For more information see our 2018 audit Community Center Reuse: Efficient Monitoring and better data can help determine the next phase of reuse
NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES

PRNS also provides a number of community services including anti-graffiti and anti-litter programs, gang prevention and intervention programs, the Safe Schools Campus Initiative (SSCI)*, the senior nutrition program, Project Hope and others. In 2017-18, the SSCI team responded to 505 incidents on SSCI campuses. 84 high schools and middle schools participated in this program.

The Mayor’s Gang Prevention Task Force (MGPTF) has service components such as the Bringing Everyone’s Strengths Together (B.E.S.T.) program and the Safe Summer Initiative. These programs provide services to at-risk youth and their families. The 2017-18 expenditures for the MGPTF were $5.6 million. There were an estimated 3,000 participants in programs offered by community based organizations that received B.E.S.T. grants; the allocation for grants was $3 million.

In 2017-18, the City’s contractor completed 29,000 graffiti removal workorders. The resident survey reports that 29 percent of residents viewed graffiti removal services as good or excellent. Survey responses were likely based on respondents’ overall perception of graffiti removal, including graffiti on highways, expressways, and railroads that are the responsibility of others.

* SSCI is a partnership between school districts and the City (including the Police Department) to address violence-related issues in schools.