

# City of Hercules Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan

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## *Draft Plan*

Prepared by



February 2024

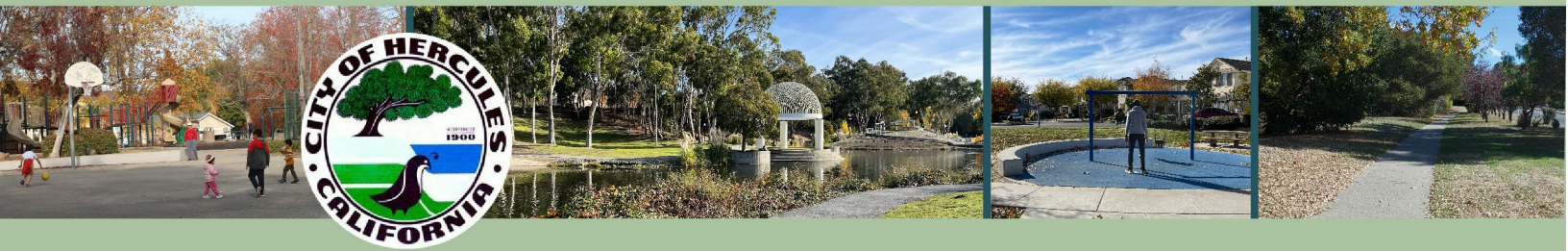






*Figure 1. A neighborhood play structure at Foxboro Park*





# PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES MASTER PLAN

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Draft Plan  
February 2024



Prepared by

MIG, Inc.

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*Figure 2. A landscaped path within Sierra Park*



# Acknowledgements

The City of Hercules extends deep gratitude to everyone who contributed to the development of the Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan. The immense amount of effort devoted to this planning process is indicative of the commitment by the residents, City staff, and elected officials of Hercules to enact positive change within their community and to shape the parks and recreation system for years to come.

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## Executive Summary

The City of Hercules is growing and maturing. To serve the community, the City has developed its first-ever Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan (Master Plan). The community-driven Master Plan is the culmination of the significant collaborative effort among City staff, City Council, the project Steering Committee, community leaders, stakeholders, and residents to determine how best to invest in Hercules' parks, facilities, and trails. This investment is guided by the community's love and enthusiasm for places that support Hercules' identity. The Master Plan provides a framework to guide the City in setting priorities and making decisions about the provision of parks, recreation facilities, trails, open space, and natural areas over the next 10 years, with particular focus on projects to be addressed in a 5-year action plan.

## The Future of Parks and Recreation

The Hercules community is invested in the future of the City and has a clear vision for parks and recreation. The projects identified in this document are based upon the needs, desires, and ideas identified by the community over a year-long public engagement process. The process involved a variety of activities designed to stimulate participants' thinking about needs, preferences, and new ideas. Throughout the planning process, a variety of public engagement activities were conducted to ensure diverse voices could contribute to the development of the Master Plan. Engagement activities were both online and in-person, ranging from questionnaires to workshops to pop-up events. A project website provided updates and a repository of relevant documents. Additionally, advisory groups were regularly involved to provide guidance, direction, and local insight. In total, over 1,000 people weighed in to shape the Master Plan goals.

**986** participants helped identify park needs

**213** participants helped identify project priorities

**12** in-person or online activities and events informed the Master Plan

**3** Steering Committee meetings provided direction at key points in the process

**2** City Council updates to review progress

**Ongoing Project Leadership Team meetings**



The Master Plan will strive to meet the following goals for parks and recreation facilities:

<b>1</b>	<b>Serve all ages and abilities</b> through recreation opportunities for children, youth, adults, and older adults of all abilities and interests. An emphasis on addressing the needs of teens in the park system is needed.
<b>2</b>	<b>Provide an accessible and equitable system</b> by restoring, enhancing, and developing parks and facilities that meet the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements and by providing parks so that all residents live within a 10-minute walking distance of recreation opportunities.
<b>3</b>	<b>Create an interconnected trail system</b> through new and existing multi-use and off-street trails to better connect the city to its park system, connect east and west Hercules, and improve access to open space and the waterfront.
<b>4</b>	<b>Improve and restore existing parks in Hercules.</b> Address deferred maintenance and repair facilities that are highly utilized by the public.
<b>5</b>	<b>Increase the variety of active recreation opportunities in the park system</b> through the addition and restoration of multipurpose fields, sport courts, bocce, pickleball, tennis, trail connections, and challenge features.
<b>6</b>	<b>Support and expand local collaboration</b> by leveraging resources through strategic and deliberate partnerships to provide community-supported parks, programs, events, and services.
<b>7</b>	<b>Create a strong local identity</b> by providing parks, recreation facilities, gathering spaces, events, and programs that reflect, protect, or enhance Hercules' cultural diversity and environmental context.

## Priorities and Key Needs

The Master Plan outlines a clear path forward with guidance to steer future investments and actions. Recommendations address needs and thematic priorities identified during the planning process.

- Safe, family friendly places
- Updated park features and amenities
- Convenient, accessible system
- Variety of features in developed parks
- More sports fields and courts
- Connected pedestrian and bicycle network
- Flexible indoor programming space

## The Proposed System

The Master Plan recommends improvements to all existing parks as well as addressing improvements to planned waterfront parks and identifying sites for new parks and trail connections. The envisioned future system will include many different improvements that respond to community needs. This includes the following different types of projects:

- **Develop.** Includes land acquisition, site master planning, design concepts/feasibility studies, and construction for new sites. This recommendation also includes working with developers where the City has a vested interest in ensuring the park remains publicly accessible.
- **Restore.** Restore existing park features, landscaping, and site amenities that are damaged, worn or at the end of their lifecycles. These represent larger repairs or a 'one for one' replacement in the same developed footprint.
- **Enhance.** Provide enhancements at existing parks with the addition of new, expanded or upgraded park features to expand park capacity and use.

The future system also addresses major recreation facilities. The recommended project types (develop, renovate, reprogram, trade, and continue) should be considered alongside the parallel Facilities Assessment process (to be completed in 2024) that addresses the City's recreation buildings.

The Master Plan includes far more projects than the City will complete in the next ten years. As a point of reference, it could cost approximately \$50 million to implement all recommended capital projects in this Master Plan, along with an additional \$1 million annually to maintain all sites after improvements are made. A 5-year action plan identifies a focused set of actionable projects that can deliver on the Master Plan goals and aligns with potential funding and grant opportunities.

## Community Prioritization

The prioritization phase of the Master Plan asked the community to weigh in on what project types are the most important. An online questionnaire, an in-person activity, and input from City Council identified the following priorities:

- Focus on existing sites and addressing gaps in the trail system to better connect Hercules.
- Concentrate efforts at some of Hercules' larger, aging parks that will provide visible results to the community.
- Provide improvements that serve everyone (safety and restrooms) alongside major investment in active recreation, fields, courts, and play.
- Implement select small projects that are low effort and cost and make a large impact.



## Action Plan

The community prioritization efforted helped identify priority projects at eight sites:

- Beechnut Park
  - Repurpose paved lot into active area for youth
  - Update park entry and access
  - Revegetate denuded areas
- Foxboro Park
  - Replace aging playground equipment and safety surfacing
  - Renovate basketball courts' surfacing and striping
- Frog Pad Park
  - Repair and refinish gazebo shade structure
- Refugio Valley Park and Tennis Courts
  - Initiate a site master plan or design development process to ensure near-term projects consider space requirements and needs of mid- and long-term projects
  - Dredge pond and naturalize edge to improve pond health and aesthetics
  - Provide shade structures where trees have been removed
  - Renovate connecting circulation system at tennis courts
  - Remove trees around the tennis courts
- Shoreline Park
  - Add identification sign
  - Replace drinking fountain
- Woodfield Park
  - Initiate a site master plan or design development process to ensure near-term projects consider space requirements and needs of mid- and long-term projects
  - Renovate the two existing basketball courts
  - Renovate the tennis courts
  - Replace the restroom
  - Remove pines surrounding tennis courts
  - Provide an accessible route between restroom, field, courts, playground, picnic areas, and street parking
- Bay Trail
  - Crack and seal the existing Bay Trail
- Sycamore Avenue Trail
  - Construct a 2800' lineal foot multiuse trail along Sycamore Avenue between Willow Avenue and Refugio Valley Road

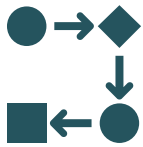
## Moving Forward

This Master Plan provides the information and tools to make strategic decisions about park investments moving forward. City staff will integrate this information into annual workplans and budgeting by taking the first four steps towards implementation:



**Develop Funding Strategies:** City staff, together with City Council, will consider options to increase impact fees, maximize existing funds, and add new funding sources. The City will continue to discuss projects with potential partners to determine where these invested stakeholders may be willing to support key projects.

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**Finalize and Sequence Projects:** The City will begin to sequence projects in the 5-Year Action Plan to be completed each year.

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**Plan and Design Large Projects:** Some larger sites, including Woodfield Park and Refugio Valley Park and Tennis Courts, will need additional design guidance before proceeding with development. Additional community feedback may be solicited.

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**Begin Construction:** With this information, the City will be ready to improve parks to enhance recreation opportunities and the quality of life of residents across Hercules.

To implement the Master Plan, City staff will need the continued support of residents, businesses, stakeholders, the City Council, and community leaders to support this investment. Working together, we can create the high-quality park and recreation system we envision for the future.



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Figure 3. Signage along the Refugio Valley Trail



# Chapter 1. Introduction

Nestled along the shores of San Pablo Bay, the City of Hercules stands as a testament to harmonious urban planning and a commitment to preserving the natural environment. Central to this ethos is the City's park and trail system, totaling thirteen parks, two primary multi-use trail corridors, and five recreation facilities, which are woven into the fabric of the community. Open space is another major public asset contributing to community well-being. Combining scenic beauty, recreational opportunities, and communal spaces, these parks, trails, and recreation facilities embody the City's dedication to fostering a high-quality of life for its residents.

In light of growing interest in public health, population growth, waterfront redevelopment, and renewed appreciation for connections to nature, City parks have emerged as invaluable sanctuaries for residents, visitors and workers. These pockets of natural respite not only support community aesthetics and character, but also contribute to the physical, emotional, and social well-being of residents.

## Purpose

Like park agencies in many California cities, Hercules' Parks & Recreation Department is faced with improvement and operational needs that outpace its financial and staff resources. As the city grows, enhancements and improvements to the park system are needed; as facilities age, maintenance and capital investments are needed; and as recreation trends shift, new facilities and designs are necessary to reflect the needs and desires of the community.

In response, the City of Hercules (the City) has developed its first-ever Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan (Master Plan). This Master Plan is a long-term plan that will identify community needs and priorities for the City's park system. It will help the City strategically allocate resources and leverage grant opportunities to maintain, improve, enhance, and selectively expand the park system over the next 10 years.

## Vision

The Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan is in alignment with the City's vision for the future. Parks and public facilities are to be well-maintained, and the action items identified in this Master Plan place a focus on reinvestment in the City's existing parks. Opportunities to enhance and expand trails are also identified, since an interconnected park, facility, and trails network will be the future building blocks for improving the public's well-being and improving safety and connectivity of the public realm.

***Vision Statement of the City of Hercules:*** "The City of Hercules is a richly diverse community, serving as a major transportation hub and a prime destination for the Bay Area. It is built on a sound economic and physical infrastructure, and its residents enjoy public safety, security, well-maintained parks, streets, and public facilities. We conduct our work in an atmosphere of trust and respect. We constantly look for better ways to deliver services and always strive for excellence."

## Goals

During community outreach and engagement activities in 2023, a series of goals were identified that shaped development of the parks master plan. The master plan will strive to meet the following goals for parks, trails, recreation facilities and open space:

1. **Serve all ages and abilities** through recreation opportunities for children, youth, adults, and older adults of all abilities and interests. An emphasis on addressing the needs of teens in the park system is needed.
2. **Provide an accessible and equitable system** by restoring, enhancing, and developing parks and facilities that meet the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements and by providing parks so that all residents live within a 10-minute walking distance of recreation opportunities.
3. **Create an interconnected trail system** through new and existing multi-use and off-street trails to better connect the city to its park system, connect east and west Hercules, and improve access to open space and the waterfront.
4. **Improve and restore existing parks in Hercules.** Address deferred maintenance and repair facilities that are highly utilized by the public.
5. **Increase the variety of active recreation opportunities in the park system** through the addition and restoration of multipurpose fields, sport courts, bocce, pickleball, tennis, trail connections, and challenge features.
6. **Support and expand local collaboration** by leveraging resources through strategic and deliberate partnerships to provide community-supported parks, programs, events, and services.
7. **Create a strong local identity** by providing parks, recreation facilities, gathering spaces, events, and programs that reflect, protect, or enhance Hercules' cultural diversity and environmental context.



# Planning Context

## A Changing City

The City of Hercules has a long and unique history. In 1879, California Powder Works (CPW) built a manufacturing plant that first made dynamite, and later TNT, an explosive compound used for military, industrial, and mining applications. When the plant ceased operations in the late 1970s, the land and several historic buildings along the waterfront were left underutilized/vacant. Additional land around the dynamite plant, originally set aside as a safety precaution, was sold in 1974 and developed into a large residential area. During the 1970s and 1980s, Hercules experienced significant residential growth, spurring complimentary retail, school, and park development.

In the early 2000s, the City of Hercules embarked on a new vision aimed at reconnecting neighborhoods and unifying the community. The vision, termed the Central Hercules Plan, aimed to create more walkable and connected neighborhoods with distinct cultural and aesthetic characteristics, as well as jumpstart investment and economic development in the city's core.

A defining result of the plan was Hercules' leap into 'new urbanism', which prioritizes human-scale design such as walkable streets, close proximity of housing and retail, and public park and gathering spaces. Parks, which were designed and built by the developer and later ceded to the City, are generally smaller in size but are close to adjacent housing. The Central and Waterfront neighborhoods are examples of the new urbanist approach to Hercules' urban design.

*Figure 4. (left) New Urbanist development with Bayside Park at center (Opticos Design); (right) New Urbanist type residential development in Hercules (Dover, Kohl & Partners)*

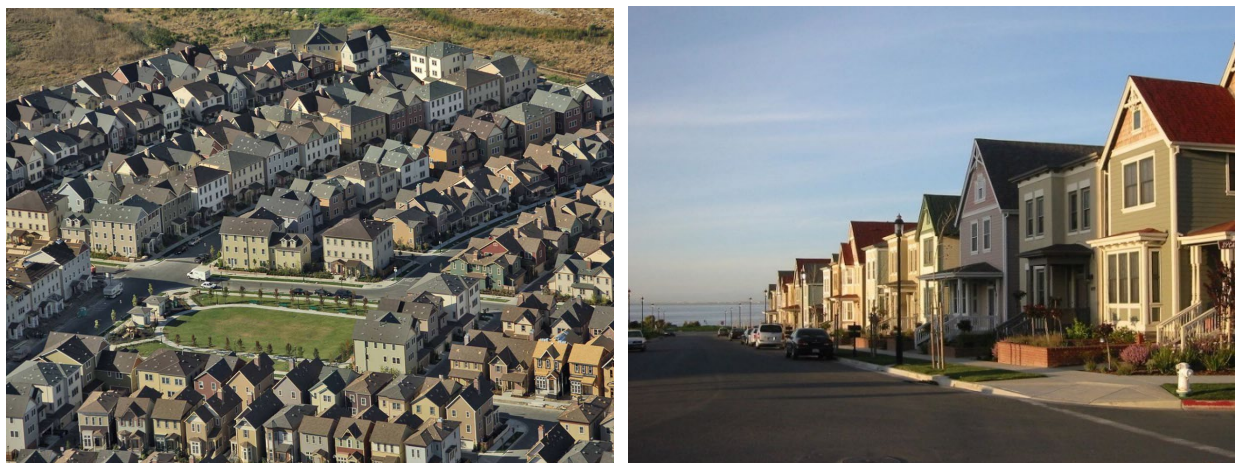
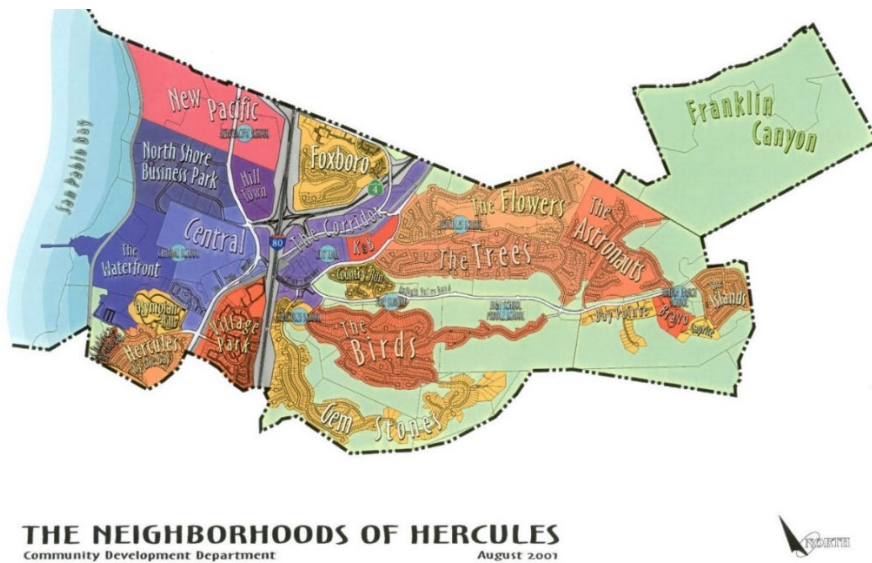


Figure 5. Hercules Neighborhood Map (City of Hercules)



Twenty years after the Central Hercules Plan originated, the city continues to grow. New developments as of 2023 include residential and mixed-use projects as well as hospitality and retail sites. The City is also pursuing wetland preservation and open space restoration projects along Refugio Creek.

The Hercules waterfront area is another key site of transformation, anticipated as a transit-oriented, neighborhood mixed-use project, called the 'Hercules Hub'. The Hub is envisioned to create a regional, state-of-the-art housing and transportation community on the waterfront overlooking San Pablo Bay. The Hub is intended to connect thousands of single-family and multi-family housing units with a new Amtrak train stop along the Capitol Corridor on Bayfront Boulevard, which includes a multi-modal transit hub where bicycle and pedestrian multi-use trails, bus routes, carpool options, and ferry service come together.

Another citywide initiative is focused on improving sustainability measures, as prompted by California SB 32. The State of California has set ambitious greenhouse gas emissions targets for the next 30 years, prompting the City of Hercules to take deliberate action to reduce emissions, including considering developing a Climate Action Plan, appointing a Sustainability Task Force advisory body, joining a Community Choice Energy provider for clean energy, and addressing vehicle emissions through electric vehicle (EV) options and incentives. Aligning with the State on sustainability goals would help the City secure funding for projects to improve quality of life within its communities. With regard to the park system master plan, these initiatives point toward a shared vision of a more environmentally-resilient city through greening, holistic citywide planning, and public health.

## Related Planning Efforts and Documents

Concurrent with the Master Plan, several other planning and development documents are in place to guide the City of Hercules. For best outcomes, the Master Plan has considered these concurrent plans, including but not limited to the following:

### ❖ **Building Facilities Assessment (2023-2024)**

Currently ongoing and assumed to be complete in Spring 2024, the Hercules Building Facilities Assessment will provide a systems evaluation for the City's facilities and recommendations based on that evaluation.

### ❖ **General Plan Open Space / Conservation Element (1998, Amended 2015)**

The Open Space / Conservation Element of the Hercules General Plan was adopted in 1998 and amended in 2015. The Element highlights the vital role parks, open spaces, and natural resources play in providing a high quality of life and contributing to the overall character of the region. The Element provides direction for land use decisions consistent with the goals, objectives, and policies of the Land Use Element, as well as addresses management of these spaces. Existing parkland classifications are identified in the Element. Levels of service for neighborhood parks, community parks and open space were articulated in the 2015 amendment (but have been updated in this Master Plan).

### ❖ **General Plan Housing Element Update (2023-31)**

The City of Hercules is revising its Housing Element for 2023-31 as required by State law. Its current Housing Element was adopted in 2015, with the update expected to be found compliant by the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) in the spring of 2023.

### ❖ **Beechnut Mini Park Rehabilitation Master Plan**

Beechnut Mini Park is currently in the process of a future park renovation. The project is funded by a Proposition 68, Local Park Rehabilitation Grant and remaining Measure WW East Bay Regional Park District funds. It is expected to be completed by the end of fiscal year 2024/2025.

### ❖ **Refugio Valley Park and Ohlone Park Tree Assessment**

In 2023, the City of Hercules began assessing trees in two parks for removal. This assessment included evaluating potentially hazardous eucalyptus trees at Refugio Valley Park and Ohlone Park.

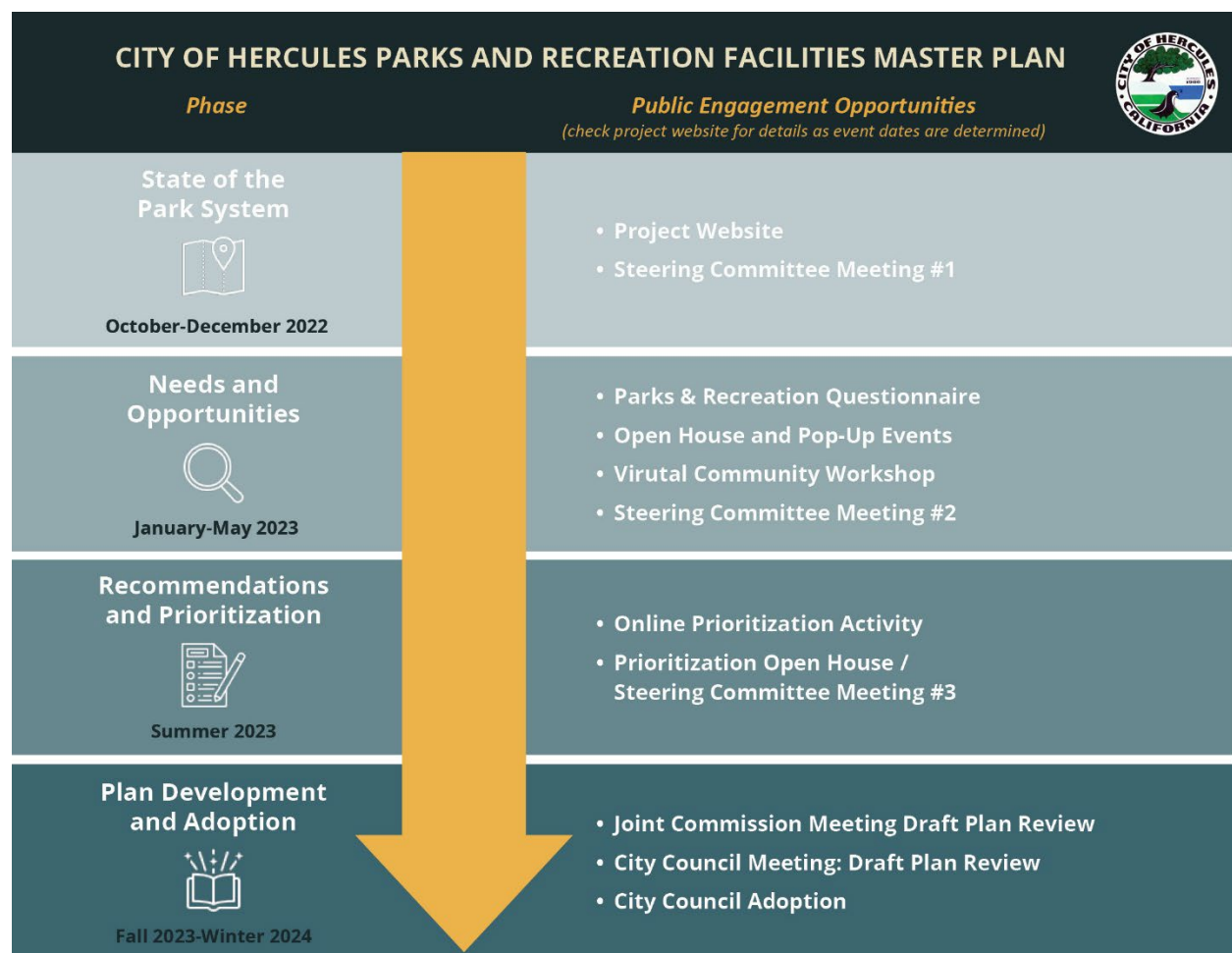


# Planning Process

## Overview

The four-phased Master Plan process began in Fall 2022. It involved data collection and community feedback, technical analyses, comparative research, identification of opportunities, planning-level costing, public surveys, and plan development. Throughout the entire process, communication and collaboration with the public and advisory bodies ensured the Master Plan best reflected the needs of the Hercules community.

Figure 6. The Planning Process



## Public Engagement and Advisory Groups

Throughout the planning process, a variety of public engagement activities were conducted to ensure diverse voices could contribute to the development of the Master Plan.

Engagement activities were both online and in-person, ranging from questionnaires to workshops to pop-up events. A project website provided updates and a repository of relevant documents. Additionally, advisory groups were regularly involved to provide guidance, direction, and local insight.

*Figure 7. Snapshot of Community Involvement*

### **Project Advisory Groups**

- Project Leadership Team (PLT)
- Steering Committee
- Joint Commission (all members of the Community and Library Services Commission and Planning Commission)
- City Council

### **Public Engagement Activities**

- Online questionnaires
- Pop-up events (indoors and outdoors)
- Community open house
- Virtual community workshop on park needs
- In-person prioritization workshop with the project Steering Committee

### **Project Information and Communication**

- Project website
- Social media posts
- Posters, dot voting, flyers

More information on advisory groups, public engagement activities, and key themes can be found in *Chapter 3. The Hercules Community*, as well as *Appendix C: Park Needs and Priorities Engagement Summary* and *Appendix E: Prioritization Engagement Findings*.

## Plan Organization

The Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan is organized into six chapters, with support documentation in the appendices.

### Chapters

- **Chapter 1. Introduction** provides an overview of the Master Plan, including its purpose, goals, timeline, development process, and relation to concurrent plans.
- **Chapter 2. Existing Parks, Facilities, and Trails** describes the current park and recreation system in relation to location, counts, and condition assessment.
- **Chapter 3. The Hercules Community** showcases the planning area, demographics of Hercules' residents, and current and projected populations. Chapter 3 also covers the various community outreach and engagement activities conducted as part of this planning process, and the key themes that emerged from engagement.
- **Chapter 4. Park System Needs** discusses systemwide needs based on community feedback, evolving trends, identified park-deficient neighborhoods, trail gaps, and insufficient programming and recreational services.
- **Chapter 5. Recommendations** offers recommendations related to design, planning, management, and investment. Recommendations are grouped as systemwide, site-specific, and operations.
- **Chapter 6. Action Plan** summarizes capital improvement projects, prioritization criteria, the 10-year action plan for implementation, and planning-level funding strategies for implementation.

### Appendices

- **Appendix A: City of Hercules Parks, Trails, and Recreation Facility Inventory** summarizes the inventory of park land and recreation facilities within the city.
- **Appendix B: Park Condition Assessment** provides detail on the assessment methodology and results.
- **Appendix C: Park Needs and Priorities Engagement Summary** highlights what the community identified as needs and opportunities in its park system during the second phase of the project.
- **Appendix D: Potential Improvement Costs** shows a menu of cost estimates for individual park and recreational features to use as a resource in the City's annual budgeting process.
- **Appendix E: Prioritization Engagement Findings** summarizes feedback from the online prioritization questionnaire and input received from the Steering Committee.
- **Appendix F: Capital Improvement Plan** presents all capital projects by site, their order-of-magnitude capital and maintenance costs, a proposed timeframe and urgency for completion, and the Master Plan goals that each project achieves.



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*Figure 8: A play structure at Shasta Park*



## Chapter 2. Existing Parks, Trails, and Facilities

The City of Hercules has a variety of parks, trails, and facilities that provide recreation opportunities to the community. This chapter describes the existing park system including the park classifications and facility definitions that are referenced in this Master Plan.

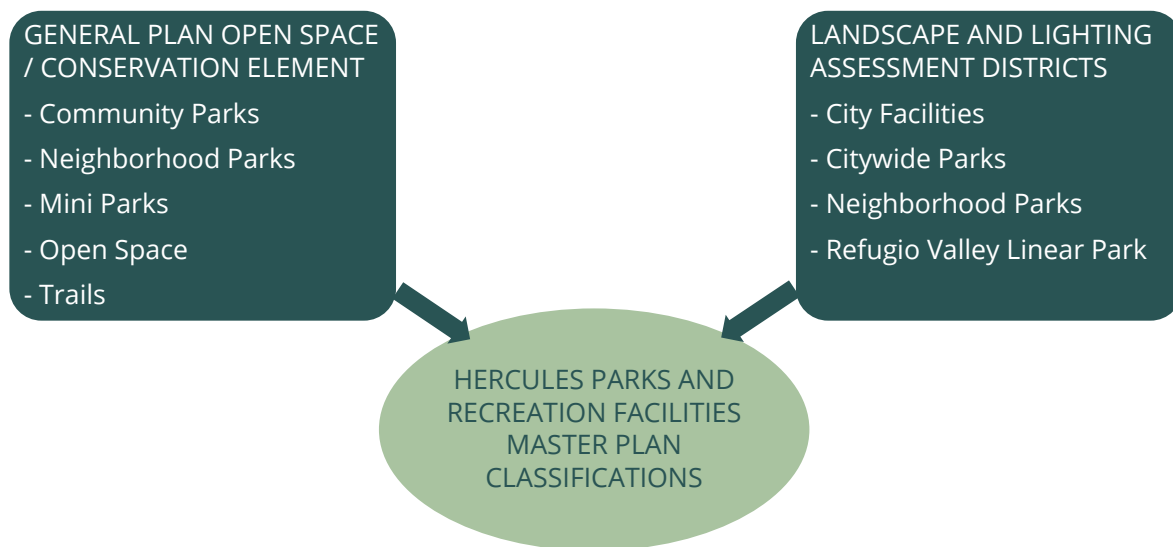
### Classifications

Cities use function-based park classification systems to describe the types of parkland and recreation spaces in their inventory and to plan for future needs. The classification system explains how each site functions with the park and recreation system, what types of facilities and recreation opportunities it provides, and who (or what area) the site is intended to serve.

This Master Plan introduces a refined classification system consisting of five categories of City sites: citywide parks, community parks, neighborhood parks, greenways and trails, and recreation facilities. For simplicity, this acreage is referred to as parkland.

This parkland classification system merges two separate classification systems used by the City of Hercules as set out in the City's General Plan Open Space/Conservation Element and the City's Landscape and Lighting Assessment Districts (LLADs). LLADs are a type of funding district used to maintain parks in Hercules.

*Figure 9. Existing Parkland Classification Systems Diagram*





Given the focus of the Master Plan on parks, trails, and recreation facilities, the proposed classification system establishes a clearer hierarchy for all park and recreation sites based on the site uses and areas that sites are intended to serve. The proposed classification system also better reflects widely used national standards used to describe parkland. An inventory of parkland sites, including their classifications, is provided in *Appendix A, Table A-1: City of Hercules Parks, Trails, and Recreation Facility Inventory*. Classification definitions and parks (or facilities) within each classification are noted on the next page.

## Parkland

The City of Hercules has a total of 13 parks, 4 trail corridors, and 5 recreation facilities covering nearly 110 acres (Table 1). A full inventory is provided in *Appendix A, Table A-1: City of Hercules Parks, Trails, and Recreation Facility Inventory*.

The City also owns nearly 1,360 acres of open space (including Franklin Canyon). Open space is protected greenspace, but unlike parks, this land was not set aside to address recreation needs. While open space was not a focus of the Master Plan, it is accounted for in the parkland level of service (LOS) calculations (see *Chapter 4*) and included in some recommendations (see *Chapter 5*).

Table 1. 2024 Parkland Classifications

PROPOSED PARK CLASSIFICATION	NUMBER OF SITES	TOTAL ACREAGE
Citywide Parks	1	12.7
Community Parks	6	37.4
Neighborhood Parks	6	7.9
Greenways and Trails	4	40.9
Recreation Facilities <sup>1</sup>	5	10.7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>109.6</b>

1. The Foxboro Community Center is located within Foxboro Park. The City counts the facility within Recreation Facilities, but it counts the acreage and outdoor amenities within Community Parks.

## CITYWIDE PARKS | 1 site totaling 12.7 acres

Citywide Parks are Hercules' largest park type. They provide significant greenspace and a variety of unique recreation facilities or cultural venues that serve as citywide destinations, attracting users from across the city and beyond. Facilities and amenities at citywide parks are the most extensive, and include elements such as off-street parking, expansive gathering spaces, larger restrooms, destination play, sport courts, and other specialized features.

- *Refugio Valley Park*

*Figure 10. Photographs of Refugio Valley Park. Clockwise from top left: entrance sign, open lawn, steps to tennis courts, and pond. (MIG 2022)*



## COMMUNITY PARKS | 6 sites totaling 37.4 acres

Community Parks are mid-size parks, typically 3 -10 acres in size, that serve several neighborhoods. They support active and passive recreation, programming, and group gatherings with playgrounds, picnic areas, and sports fields. Some include major facilities such as community centers. Shoreline Park is included as a community park despite its smaller size (2.6 acres) given its unique location along San Pablo Bay, access to the Bay Trail, and a design that allows for larger gatherings. These sites are accessible by walking, biking, and driving, with amenities such as on- or off-street parking and restrooms.

- Duck Pond Park
- Foxboro Park
- Hanna Ranch Park
- Shoreline Park
- Woodfield Park
- Ohlone Park (includes dog park but excludes the Ohlone Community Center which is considered a stand-alone facility)

*Figure 11. Photographs of community parks. Clockwise from top left: Foxboro Park lawn, Duck Pond Park basketball court, Woodfield Park softball field, Shoreline Park playground. (MIG 2022)*





## NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS | 6 sites totaling 7.9 acres

Neighborhood Parks are small parks, typically less than one acre in size, that support a mix of play, picnicking, and leisure activities for residents that live within walking or biking distance. Typical facilities include playgrounds, group picnic areas and open lawn areas.

*Note: Some sites with additional natural open space may be larger, such as Beechnut Park.*

- *Bayside Park*
- *Beechnut Park*
- *Frog Pad Park*
- *Railroad Park*
- *Shasta Park*
- *Sierra Park*

*Figure 12. Photographs of neighborhood parks. Clockwise from top left: Bayside Park, Sierra Park, Beechnut Park, and Railroad Park. (MIG 2022)*



## **GREENWAYS AND TRAILS | 4 sites totaling 40.9 acres**

Greenways and trails are typically single-purpose linear features not located within parks of other types. They serve to link destinations in the community and may extend beyond Hercules and connect to surrounding cities and regional trail systems. The two main City trails are the Refugio Valley Trail and the Bay Trail, with other local trails and other open space trails as additional paved and unpaved connectors.

- *Refugio Valley Trail*
- *Bay Trail*
- *Other Local Trails (paved)*
- *Open Space Trails (unpaved)*

*Figure 13. (top) Refugio Valley Trail; (bottom) Bay Trail. (MIG 2022)*



## **RECREATION FACILITIES | 5 sites totaling 10.7 acres**

Five standalone recreation facilities serve the community. These include:

- *Foxboro Community Center*
- *Hercules Community Center & Swim Center*
- *Hercules Senior Center*
- *Ohlone Community Center*
- *Teen Center*

The Foxboro Community Center is located in Foxboro Park. The City counts the facility within this classification, but it counts the acreage and outdoor amenities within Community Parks. The Ohlone Community Center stands adjacent to Ohlone Park. The City counts the facility and acreage within this classification.



## Facilities and Amenities

Hercules' parks provide a variety of parks and recreation facilities and amenities to support healthy and active living, as well as visitor comfort and safety within park spaces. A full inventory is provided in *Appendix A, Table A-1: City of Hercules Parks, Trails, and Recreation Facility Inventory*.

### Park Facilities

Facilities are structures or equipment that provide recreation opportunities in parks. These facilities are frequently broken into four subcategories:

- **Athletic/Sports Facilities**, e.g., sports fields, sports courts, and tracks.
- **Outdoor Recreation Facilities**, e.g., playgrounds, picnic areas, outdoor fitness equipment, skate parks, fishing spots, dog parks, and community gardens.
- **Major/Specialized Facilities**, e.g., amphitheaters, recreation and community centers, senior centers, teen centers, and swimming pools. These are referred to as "major facilities" because they require a greater investment in staffing, maintenance, operations, and programming.
- **Trails/Natural Features**, e.g., trails, trailheads, ponds, wildlife viewing platforms.

### Park Amenities

The support features that facilitate the comfort, functionality, and use of parks are called amenities. These include elements such as restrooms, parking lots, trash receptacles, benches, picnic tables, barbecues, lighting, bike racks, drinking fountains, art, and signage. Table 2 summarizes City-provided park facilities and amenities.

*Table 2. City-provided Recreation Facilities and Amenities Inventory Summary*

<b>ATHLETIC / SPORTS FACILITIES</b>	<b>COUNT</b>
Baseball or Softball Field	2
Soccer Field	4
Basketball Court	3.5
Tennis Court	8
Bocce Court	2
Other Court (Tennis Practice Wall)	1
<b>OUTDOOR RECREATION FACILITIES</b>	<b>COUNT</b>
Exercise Equipment	20
Open Lawn Area	12
Community Garden	1

Playground (Ages 5-12)	4
Playground (Ages 2-5)	10
Picnic Area (Group)	17
Picnic Area (Single)	16
Dog Park	1
Gazebo	3
Horseshoe Pit	2
<b>MAJOR / SPECIALIZED FACILITIES</b>	<b>COUNT</b>
Recreation/ Community Center	5
Senior Center	1
Swimming Pool	2
Amphitheater	1
<b>TRAILS / NATURAL FEATURES</b>	<b>COUNT</b>
Trail (Bay Trail and Refugio Creek Trail)	2
Trail Head/Rest Stop	8
Walking/Jogging Path	5
Pond	2
Bridge	3
Wildlife Viewing	7
<b>PARK AMENITIES</b>	<b>COUNT</b>
Art (includes plaques, murals, monuments, and sculptures)	3
Restroom (permanent)	8
Shelter or Pavilion	2
Barbeque Grills	15
Benches	80
Pet Waste Stations	6
Parking Areas (off-street)	10
<b>OTHER</b>	<b>COUNT</b>
Rentable Facilities <sup>1</sup>	29
School Adjacencies	4

---

<sup>1</sup> City of Hercules Facility Rentals 2023 Brochure.

## Major Recreation Facilities

Table 3 summarizes the inventory of major recreation facilities. Major recreation facilities are facilities intended to act as hubs for recreation and programming for the community. Typical spaces include indoor multi-purpose rooms for classes and conferences, gymnasiums or fitness zones, and outdoor pools. Some facilities target specific age groups such as teens or seniors. Some of these facilities are City-owned, and others are leased from another entity but operated by City staff. See *Appendix A, Table A-2: City of Hercules Major Facility Inventory* for additional details on the types of programmable spaces and amenities within these buildings.

*Table 3. City-Operated Recreation Facilities*

MAJOR RECREATION FACILITIES	NUMBER OF SITES
Recreation/Community Centers (Community, Teen, and Senior Centers)	5
Aquatic Facility (Hercules Swim Center)	1
Childcare “Kidz” Centers (Recreation Afterschool Program Sites)	3
Other Programmable Sites (Library Room, VanDomselaar Room)	2



*Figure 14. Recreation facilities. Clockwise from top left: Hercules Senior Center, Ohlone Community Center, Hercules Community Center, Hercules Swim Center. (MIG 2022)*



## Recreation/Community Centers | 5 sites

These facilities include gymnasiums, multi-purpose rooms, classrooms, dance studios, kitchens, locker rooms, offices, swimming pools, wading pools, and outdoor decks, etc.

- *Foxboro Community Center*
- *Hercules Community Center and Swim Center*
- *Hercules Teen Center*
- *Hercules Senior Center*
- *Ohlone Community Center*

Figure 15. (left) Hercules Senior Center (MIG); (right) Activities at the Hercules Senior Center (City of Hercules)



## Recreation Afterschool Program Sites | 3 sites

Recreation afterschool program sites include three childcare centers that are associated with associated elementary schools, and features classrooms and dedicated outdoor space.

- *Lupine Kidz Center*
- *Hanna Ranch Kidz Center*
- *Ohlone Kidz Center*

## Other Programmable Sites | 2 sites

Other programmable sites include public facilities that offer rentable/reservable space for recreation and other uses such as jazzercise, karate, blood drives, and more.

- *Samarrah Terrace – VanDomselaar Room*
- *Library (large and small conference room)*

Figure 16. (left) Hanna Ranch Kidz Center outdoor area; (right) Lupine Kidz Center classroom (City of Hercules)



Figure 17. A childcare room at the Hanna Ranch Kidz Center. (City of Hercules)



## Parks and Recreation Resources from Other Providers

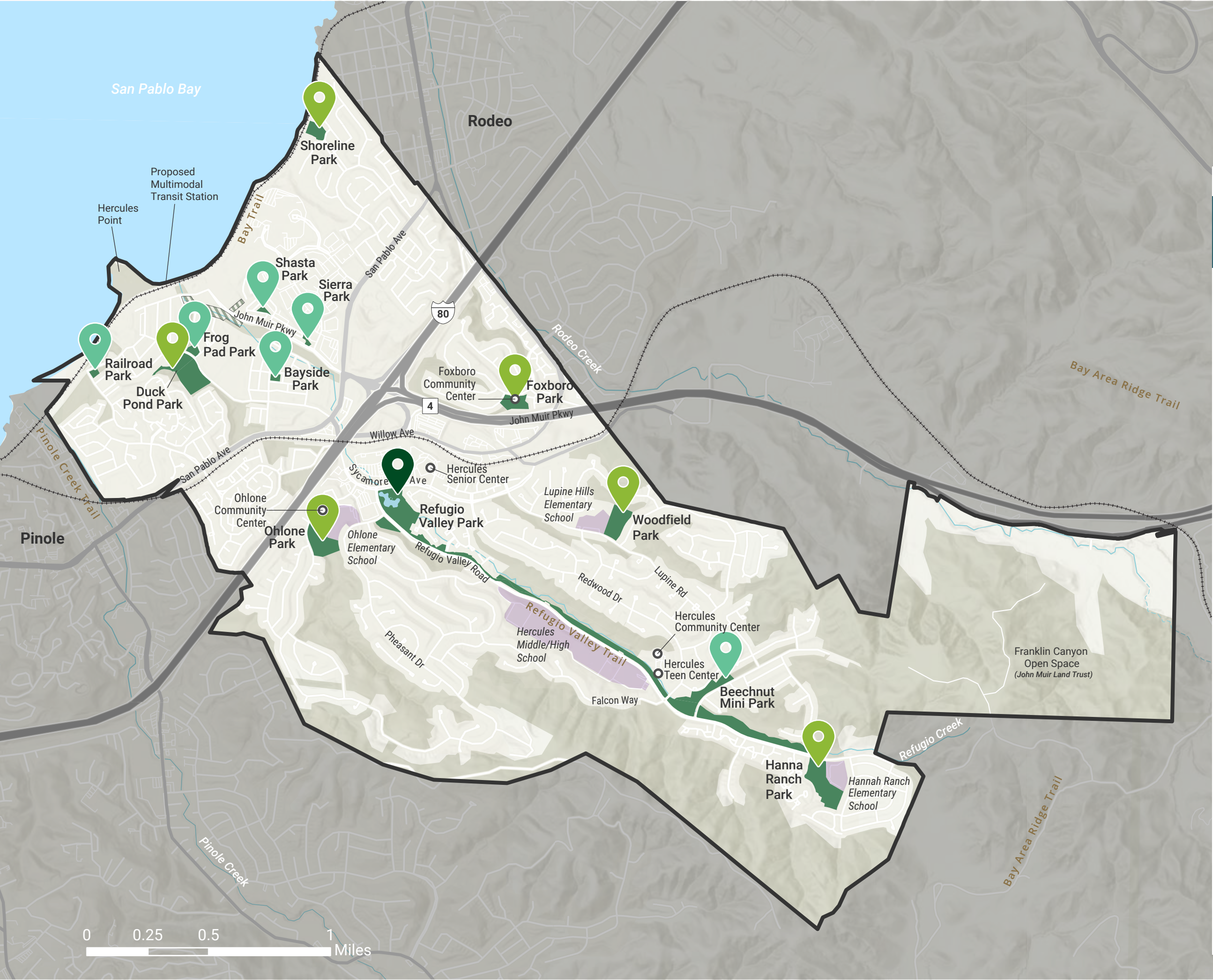
Residents of Hercules are further supported by other park and recreation providers, such as the West Contra Costa Unified School District (School District) and private Homeowners' Associations (HOAs). These other providers help to fill a gap in parkland and programs and are valuable assets to the communities they serve. However, their facilities are not always open to the public nor intended to meet broader recreation needs. Therefore, they are not addressed in Master Plan recommendations.

A summary of park and recreation resources from other providers is below. For the full inventory, see *Appendix A, Table A-1: City of Hercules Parks, Trails, and Recreation Facilities Inventory*.

Table 4: Park and Recreation Resources by Other Providers

OTHER PROVIDER	NUMBER OF SITES
School Facilities (Joint-Use Agreements)	4
Homeowner Association (HOA) Parks	4





**Figure 18. Parkland Classifications**

- Citywide Parks
- Community Parks
- Neighborhood Parks
- Parkland
- Recreation Facility
- Open Space
- Conservation Area
- Schools
- Creeks and Waterbodies
- City of Hercules
- Outside of City Boundary
- Railroad

Source(s): ESRI, OpenStreetMap, Google Maps. Disclaimer: Data is shown for planning purposes only and requires verification by public agencies. Permission to use parklands and trails should not be assumed. Some parklands and trails may traverse private property and their boundaries do not imply rights of public use.



## Park Condition Assessment Summary

A park condition assessment was conducted to evaluate existing City-owned parks, trails, and outdoor recreation facilities. This assessment confirmed the City's inventory of park assets, documented existing conditions, and identified potential opportunities for improvements. The condition of indoor facilities was not included in this assessment since the City is undertaking a separate evaluation of those indoor spaces. Parks and trails were assessed in November 2022 and recreation facility programming space was evaluated in January 2023.

The park assessment provided a 1- to 5-point rating for each evaluated park asset. Scores were based on the following definitions:

- **Excellent (5 points):** Asset appears new and is fully functional and in optimum working condition. Very few to no minor cosmetic defects may exist. Replacement will be required at the end of the asset's anticipated lifecycle.
- **Good (4 points):** Asset is currently fully functional and in good working condition. Minor cosmetic defects may exist. A Good rating indicates that facilities and amenities are not in need of repair. Replacement will be required at the end of the asset's anticipated lifecycle.
- **Fair (3 points):** Asset is currently functional but is old, worn, or in need of repairs or renovation in the short term. Surfaces, equipment, fixtures and safety features are operational and allow play, although moderate damage is evident. The asset should be considered for future repair and/or future replacement (recommended within five years).
- **Poor (2 points):** Asset has significant damage or has parts that are unusable. Major repairs or short-term replacement are needed to continue to be functional and/or safe (recommended within 1-2 years).
- **Not Functional (1 point):** Asset is either missing or has so much damage it is unsafe or inoperable. Immediate replacement, removal, or providing something different at the location is warranted.

Using this rating system, average park condition asset scores were tabulated for each park site, park type, and the park system as a whole. Average scores for each asset type across the park system were also tabulated.

Highlights of the park assessment follow. The condition assessment helped define recommendations for each site, which are presented in *Chapter 5*.

See *Appendix B: Park Condition Assessment* for full details.

Table 5. Park Site Average Score Key

Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Not Functional
> 4.6	3.6 - 4.5	2.6 - 3.5	1.6 - 2.5	< 1.6

Table 6. Park Condition Asset Scores

Park or Trail Name	Classification (Per General Plan)	Total Assets	Average Park Condition Asset Score (across all asset types)	
Beechnut Mini Park	Mini	6	2.7	Fair
Railroad Park	Mini	13	2.8	Fair
Woodfield Park	Neighborhood	27	2.9	Fair
Refugio Valley Trail	Trails and Greenways	61	3.0	Fair
Frog Pad Park	Neighborhood	19	3.2	Fair
Ohlone Park	Neighborhood	35	3.2	Fair
Refugio Valley Park	Community	108	3.4	Fair
Foxboro Park	Neighborhood	37	3.5	Fair
Hanna Ranch Park	Neighborhood	32	3.5	Fair
Shoreline Park	Neighborhood	36	3.7	Good
Bayside Park	Mini	21	4.1	Good
Duck Pond Park	Neighborhood	41	4.1	Good
Shasta Park	Mini	21	4.9	Excellent
Sierra Park	Mini	29	4.9	Excellent
<b>Community Parks</b>		108	3.4	Fair
<b>Neighborhood Parks</b>		227	3.4	Fair
<b>Mini Parks</b>		90	3.9	Good
<b>Trails &amp; Greenways</b>		61	3.0	Fair
<b>Average Park System Score</b>		486	3.6	Good

A total of 486 park assets were evaluated. The average condition rating for parks across the park system was 3.6 (Good), but notably, on the lowest end of the range for 'Good' scores (3.6 - 4.5). Looking at average scores by park type, neighborhood parks in Hercules score on the high end of Fair (score of 3.4), with Mini Parks (score of 3.9) pulling the average up for the overall park system score.



### Which Parks are in Fair Condition?

The following parks received scores that indicate they are generally Fair condition (score of 2.6-3.5) and will need more immediate and major repairs throughout, ideally within the next five years. These parks are on both the lower end (Beechnut Park = 2.7) and high end (Hanna Ranch and Foxboro Parks = 3.5) for 'Fair' scores, meaning that within this score category itself, there is variation across one park to the next. Parks in Fair condition include:

- Beechnut Park
- Railroad Park
- Woodfield Park
- Refugio Valley Trail
- Frog Pad Park
- Ohlone Park
- Refugio Valley Park
- Foxboro Park
- Hanna Ranch Park

### Other Assessment Takeaways

- Play areas in older and highly utilized parks are in 'Fair' condition based on facility age, condition of equipment and safety surfacing, wear and tear, and accessibility issues. Their condition limits how attractive they are to park visitors.
- Soccer fields and basketball courts across Hercules are in 'Fair' condition, which limits their appeal and use by the community. These fields and courts are critical in supporting active recreation opportunities in Hercules.
- Park design and programming does not adequately reflect local identity, neighborhood character, context, and history.
- Existing asphalt multiuse trails can be improved with restoration of trailside exercise equipment and routine maintenance.

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*Figure 19. Horseshoe pits at Duck Pond Park*



## Chapter 3. The Hercules Community

The Hercules community is diverse, active, and involved. A deliberate effort to involve residents in the planning process resulted in a robust engagement that informed development of recommendations in the Master Plan. This chapter provides some context and background about the Hercules community and overview of findings from public engagement. Details of this engagement phase can be found in *Appendix C: Park Needs and Priorities Engagement Summary*.

### Planning Area

The City of Hercules is located on the northeastern shore of San Pablo Bay in western Contra Costa County, one of the nine counties comprising the San Francisco Bay Area. Hercules is surrounded by neighboring communities such as Rodeo (north), Pinole (south), and Richmond (southwest). The city is served by two major transportation routes (Interstate 80 and State Route 4) that help connect Hercules to nearby parts of the Bay Area and inland regions, although they also act as barriers to pedestrians accessing the park system. The Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) runs along the bayfront, impeding access to the water. The Southern Pacific Railroad (SPRR) passes through central Hercules, as well. The city is primarily suburban with an abundance of open space and trails. Its bayside location also has vacant land along the waterfront that are opportunities for future development.

Figure 20. City of Hercules in relation to San Pablo Bay (Google)

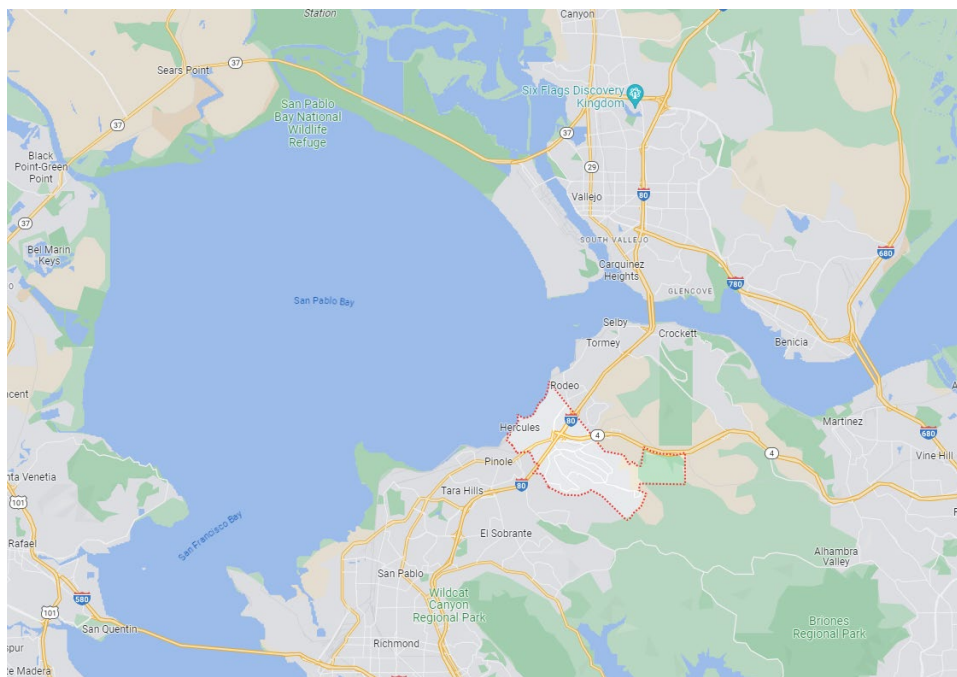
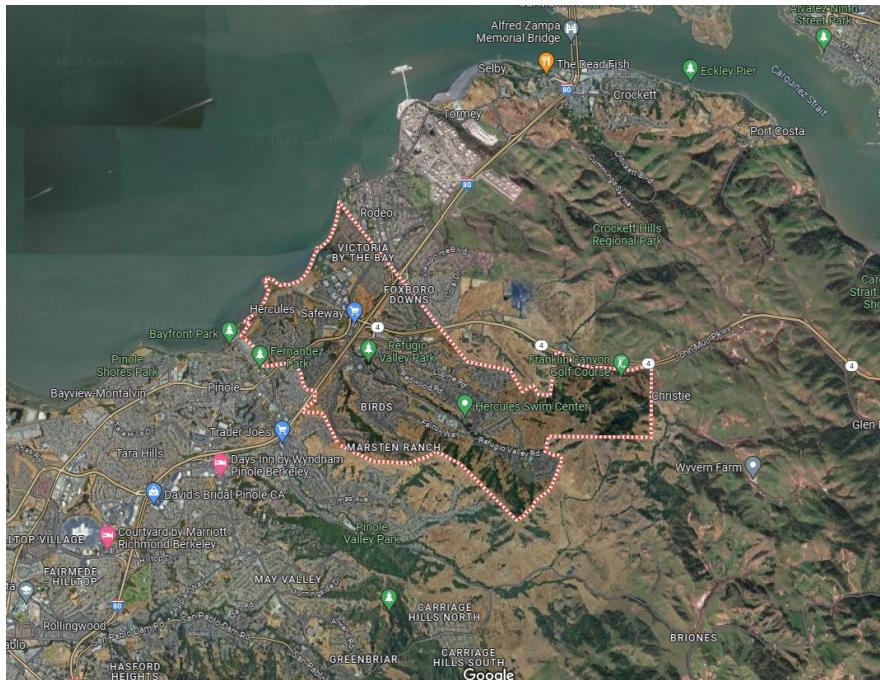


Figure 21. City of Hercules Planning Context (Google)



## Hercules Community Demographics

As of 2023, the City of Hercules is home to 26,643 residents,<sup>2</sup> with a growth rate and an age demographic similar to that of the wider Contra Costa County and State of California. In contrast, Hercules is more racially diverse than the wider County and the State, with notably more Black/African American residents, significantly more Asian residents, and more mixed-race residents. However, it has relatively fewer Hispanic or Latino ethnic residents than the County and State.

Table 7. Population and Growth Rates

	Population		Growth Rate Projections (ABAG)
	2023	2033	2020-2040
<b>Hercules City</b>	26,643	28,488	14.14%
<b>Contra Costa County</b>	1,187,214	1,318,636	22.90%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017-2020 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Modified and Interpolated using ABAG Growth Rate Projections 2040 for Household Population (percent change calculated for 2020-2040) to account for 10 years of growth.

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, 2017-2020 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates,

Figure 22. Age Demographics

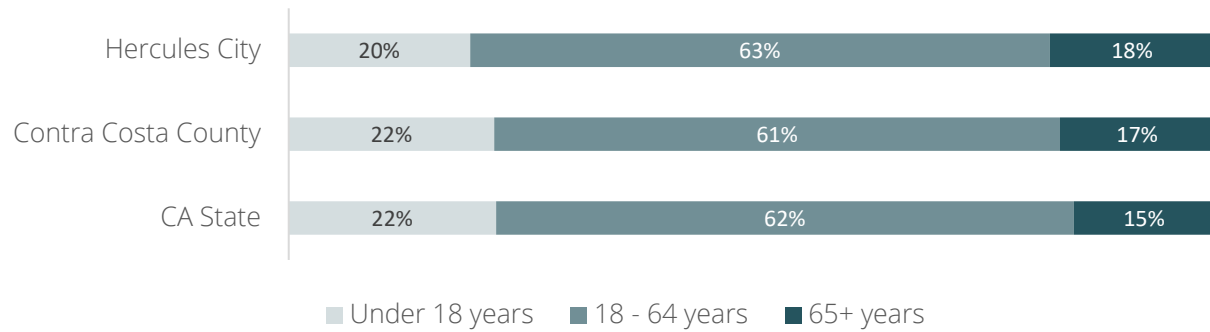


Figure 23. Race Demographics

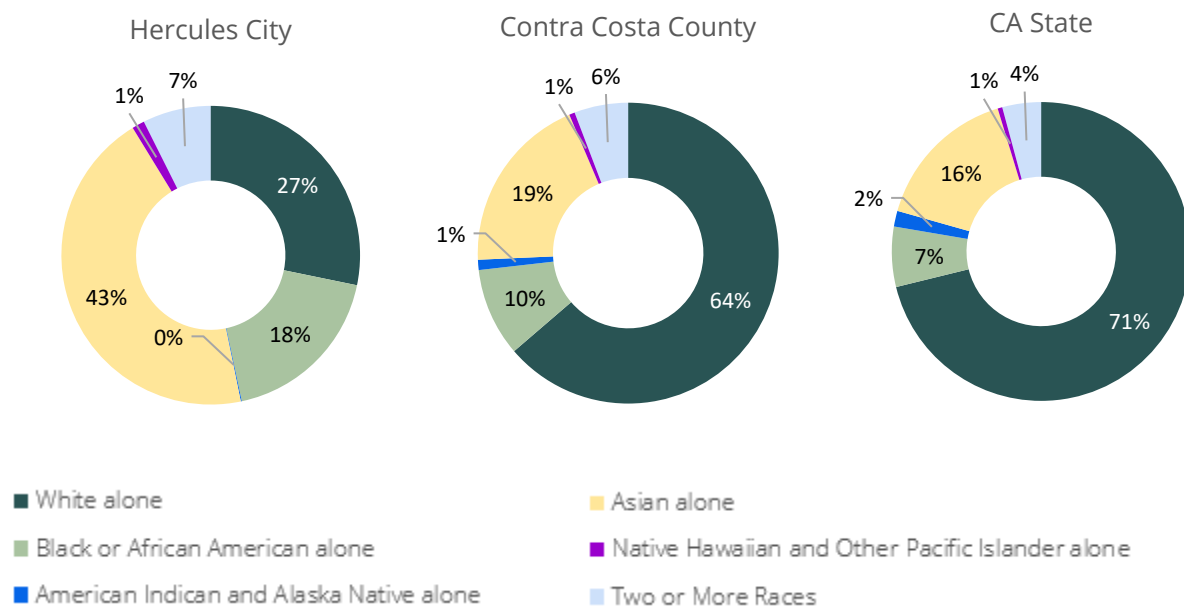
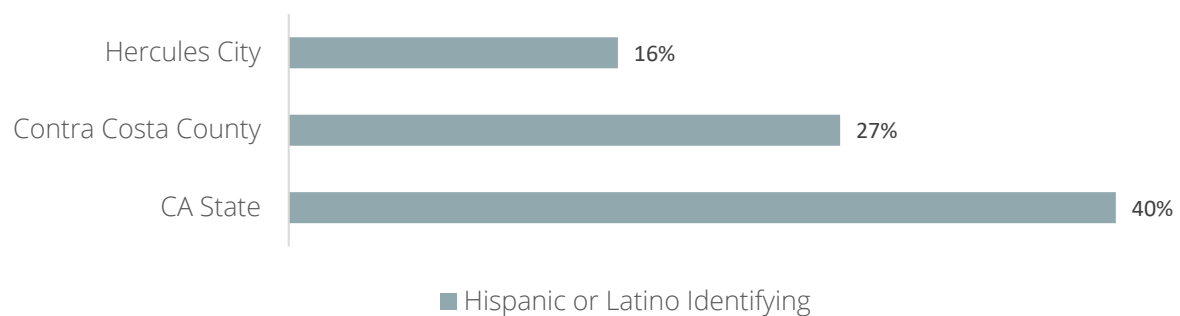


Figure 24. Hispanic or Latino Demographics





## Park Needs and Opportunities Community Outreach Summary

The Master Plan process included a robust public engagement and outreach strategy, which was designed to gain a greater understanding of the community's desires and collective vision for parks, trails, and recreation facilities. The outreach process balanced in-person meetings with online opportunities to participate that potentially could reach more people. The following section outlines public engagement efforts undertaken in Spring 2023.

### Public Engagement

Between January and March 2023, the Project Leadership Team conducted in-person and online activities for community members to identify park and program priorities. Public outreach forums and engagement activities – in the form of a project website, online questionnaire, in-person pop-up events, an open house, and a community workshop – helped solicit valuable insight into the challenges and opportunities facing the park system.

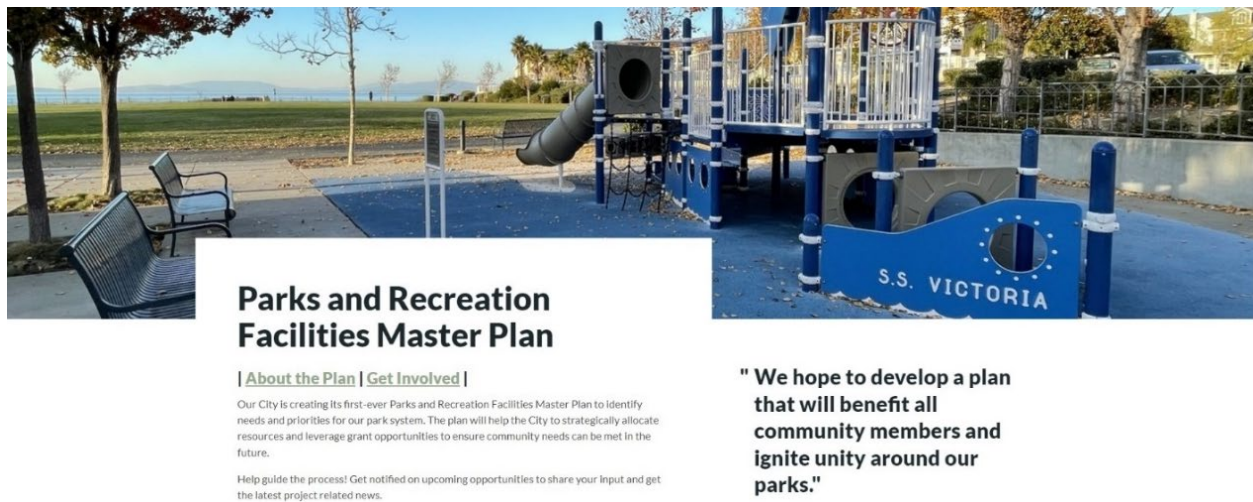
*Table 8. Public Engagement Activities*

#	ACTIVITY	DATES	ESTIMATED PARTICIPANTS
1	Project Website	continuous	---
2	Online Park Use, Needs, and Priorities Questionnaire	January 26, 2023 – March 19, 2023	671 (489 completed)
3	Pop-up: Breakfast w/ a Badge Senior Center	February 14, 2023	70
4	Pop-up: Align Basketball Community Center (Gym)	February 15, 2023	50
5	Open House at Community Center (Gym)	February 18, 2023	30
6	Pop-up: Swim Teams Community Center (Pool)	February 23, 2023	40
7	Virtual Community Workshop: Park Use, Needs, and Priorities	March 01, 2023	34
8	Pop-up: Spring into Wellness Senior Fair	March 07, 2023	40
9	Pop-up: Booth at The Exchange, Bayfront	March 11, 2023	6
10	Pop-up: Drop-in Foxboro Park	March 18, 2023	45
			Total = 986

## Project Website

A project website provided updates and information, a process graphic, a timeline, a sign-up for notifications, discussion questions, and contained links to access items such as online questionnaires and meeting registration sign-ups.

Figure 25. Project website banner (ZenCity)



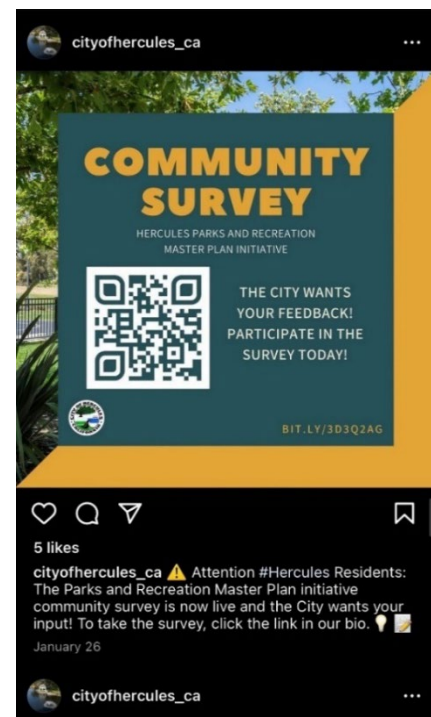
## Online Questionnaire

An online questionnaire collected input on community recreation use, needs, concerns, and preferences. The questionnaire was open from January 26, 2023 to March 19, 2023. A total of 671 people fully or partially submitted the questionnaire.

## Pop-up Events

Pop-up events were held in conjunction with other planned events. The team hosted six (6) pop-up events to build awareness of the Master Plan and to gather feedback from the public in a consistent and informal way that does not strain staff resources.

Figure 26. Social media post to advertise the online questionnaire (City of Hercules)



## Community Open House

An open house brought awareness and visibility of the project and to solicit input on park needs and priorities. Approximately 30 people attended the open house.

## Virtual Community Workshop

A virtual public workshop welcomed 34 guests for an open discussion, presentation, and poll on park needs and priorities. It followed a similar format to the in-person open house to ensure a similar experience.

*Figure 27. Feedback was received in-person at pop-up events and through virtual workshops (MIG 2023)*





## Key Findings

The public engagement activities and advisory group feedback together resulted in valuable insights that identified priorities, areas of concern, and suggestions related to Hercules' parks and recreational facilities. Several key findings emerged from these activities. They are organized as follows:

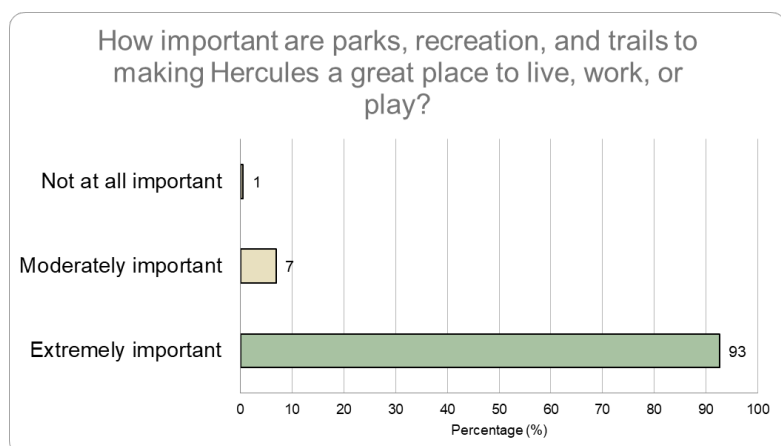
- Parks
- Trails
- Equity and Access
- Recreation Facilities
- Programs and Events
- Funding and Policy Directions

Key findings from this engagement effort are summarized below. Additional outreach information and details associated with each of these key themes can be found in *Appendix C: Park Needs and Priorities Engagement Summary*. These findings helped shape Master Plan recommendation and identified the right level of service to provide for parks, facilities, and trails in Hercules.

### Parks

- Parks are frequently used and show signs of overuse.
- There is an unmet need for additional recreation programming at parks.
- Specialized facilities need more maintenance.
- Additional features can enrich and expand the park experience.
- Parks, recreation, and trails are important to the community.
- There is a need for active recreation, and youth and teen expanded programming.
- Parks are viewed positively, but there is room for improvement.
- Refugio Valley Park is the city's most popular park.
- More sports fields, courts, and unique play experiences are desired.

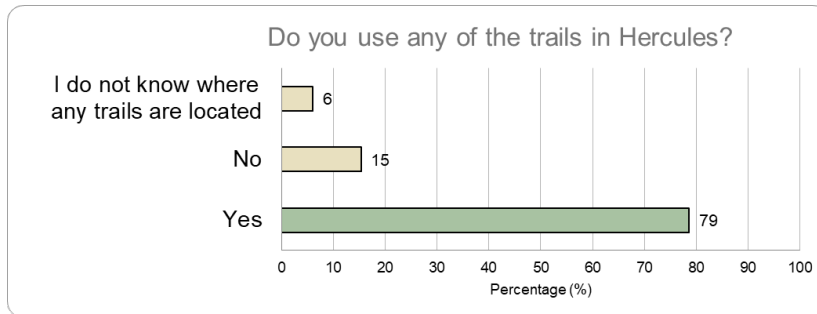
*Figure 28. Survey results for "How important are parks, recreation, and trails to making Hercules a great place to live, work, or play?"*



## Trails

- The community regularly uses and values its paved trails.
- New trail connections are needed.

Figure 29. Survey results for "Do you use any of the trails in Hercules?"



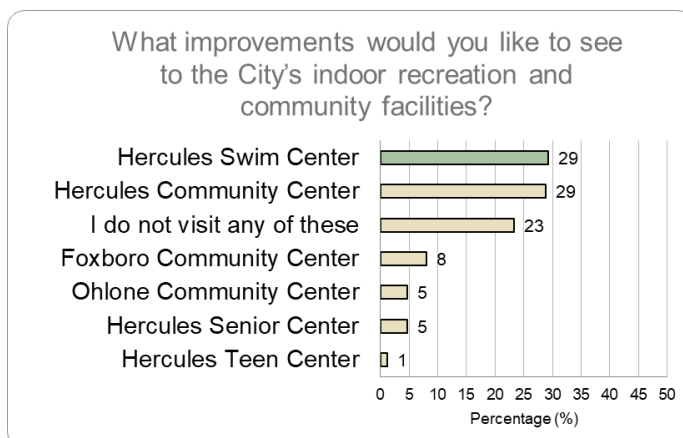
## Equity and Access

- A range of barriers impede full use of parks in Hercules.
- There is a desire to expand active recreation opportunities on the west side of town to include fields, sports courts, and all-ages challenge elements.
- Youth, teens, and young adults are underserved by age-appropriate active recreation facilities in parks. The Teen Center currently is underutilized.

## Recreation Facilities

- The Hercules Community Center/Swim Center is the hub for recreation services and programming.

Figure 30. Survey results to "What improvements would you like to see to the City's indoor recreation and community facilities?"



## Programs and Events

- There is a need to promote community gatherings and sports/fitness-focused programs and events.

## Funding and Policy Direction

- Additional financial investment in parks and facilities is needed.
- Many outreach participants would like the City to invest more in sports fields, courts, and features that add diversity to the park experience.
- Several people suggested that the City should expand community involvement in parks maintenance and natural resource stewardship.
- Respondents prefer that park investment focus on existing parks and facilities.





Figure 31. Accessible restrooms at Duck Pond Park



## Chapter 4. Park System Needs

Hercules residents believe strongly that parks, the trail network, and variety of indoor and outdoor facilities and programs are important to their quality of life. Despite this, there are unmet needs in the park system. This chapter presents the findings from the technical analyses used to assess community needs for parks and recreation and identify opportunities for future improvements and enhancements.

### Evolving Trends

Park and recreation needs are influenced not only by local circumstances, but also by evolving recreation, demographic, urban, and environmental trends. This context affects choices for recreation activities, as well as the design and development of parks, trails, and facilities.

In addition, the City of Hercules continues to grow in residential population and new mixed-use developments. Recent City initiatives include wetland preservation, open space restoration, waterfront mixed-use development, and transit-oriented development projects. The City is also embarking on new and improved transportation options including plans for a new multi-modal transit hub, bicycle and pedestrian pathways, bus routes, and ferry services. These urban changes will affect park and recreation services throughout the city, by providing new opportunities to expand services as well as challenges related to increased visitation and use of existing facilities.

### State and National Recreation Trends

Across California and the nation, the following national trends are influencing demand for parks, recreation facilities, and programs.

- **COVID Impacts on Parks:** The COVID-19 pandemic affected park and facility use in many ways. After lockdowns kept people restricted to indoors for much of 2020 and early 2021, Americans returned to parks with great enthusiasm. Cities saw a dramatic increase in use of outdoor parks for health and fitness, and the appreciation of outdoor (and eventually indoor) spaces for social gatherings, events, and programs that connect families, friends, neighbors, and residents together. In addition, COVID-19 initiated an era of remote work that made lasting changes in how people use urban spaces, especially parks and downtown business areas. The hybrid mix of in-person and remote work environments has resulted in a more dispersed workforce across cities and counties. With white collar suburban residents no longer commuting for work, this increased time spent in parks and on trails in residential communities.

- **Active Recreation and Health:** Health and wellness emerged as one of the National Recreation and Park Association's three pillars in the years before the pandemic. Post-pandemic, the focus on parks for their physical and mental health benefits increased. People value opportunities to participate in outdoor and indoor activities to support health and fitness. Cities are responding by increasing opportunities for self-directed activities such as walking and bicycling, as well as organized activities such as team sports and pickleball. This has increased demands for trails, sports courts and fields, outdoor and indoor fitness areas, gymnasiums, etc.
- **Play for All Ages:** While play and play structures have long been recognized as vital to the mental and physical development of young children, recreation and healthcare industries are also promoting the benefits of play for all age groups. Programs and play spaces are being integrated to meet the "playful" needs of teens, younger and older adults, and seniors. This includes outdoor fitness equipment, nature-based play and exploration, all-ages climbing structures and tactile features, adult sports teams, low-impact group activities, challenges courses, and more. The intent is to create more planned and spontaneous opportunities for play, and to reduce stress levels, improve health, connect people socially, and learn new skills.
- **Outdoor Fitness Zones:** Outdoor exercise stations are becoming increasingly popular amongst all age groups, but especially the older adult population. Easy and free access to simple exercise equipment promotes active recreation, physical fitness, and mental wellbeing for populations who do not wish, or cannot afford, to patronize private gymnasiums or fitness clubs. Organizations such as the World Health Organization, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and state health departments have highlighted the risks of inactivity on physical and mental health. Subsequently, there are increasing funding and grant opportunities in support of outdoor fitness zones within public City spaces.
- **Multi-use Trails:** As cities explore creative ways to add park space and recreational opportunities, trails and pathways are seen as untapped resources for a multitude of uses and users. In most communities, trail use is among the most prevalent form of recreation participation, appealing to people of a variety of ages and cultures. Adding amenities (such as picnic areas and fitness equipment) to existing trails promotes more diverse uses of the space. Safe designs allow for different user groups including bicyclists, families with strollers, joggers/runners, etc. all on one pathway that is separated from vehicle traffic. Improvement of trails and connectivity also helps with access to parks.



- **Creative Partnerships for Underutilized Space:** Many cities across the U.S.—especially in built-out communities—struggle with procuring enough parkland to serve their populations. This often results in a need to develop partnerships with other providers, such as local school districts or non-profit organizations, to meet needs for recreation space. Other less traditional partnerships might include long-term land leases from private owners and companies, such as repurposing underused utility corridors for low-investment recreational facilities like jogging paths, dog runs, nature-based trails, picnic sites, etc. Partnerships are not limited to land leasing, but also are good ways to support recreation programs and events. City departments are contracting with private companies and organizations to activate their parks and recreation centers with classes and programs such as yoga, Zumba, parenting classes, etc.
- **Extended Facility Hours:** Another way cities are increasing their provision of parks and programs is to extend the operating hours of parks and facilities. Key to this trend is nighttime lighting and safety measures to ensure residents and park users are safe and welcome in the space. Environmentalists also advocate for appropriate nighttime lighting (color hue, intensity, on-and-off hours) to not disturb the animal species within the spaces.
- **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and Placemaking:** Cities are recognizing the longtime marginalization of certain resident populations and cultures in how parks and recreation programs have been designed, planned, and structured in the past. They are making efforts to address these inequities and to intentionally foreground these populations in discussions of future park systems, to make parks and programs more diverse, welcoming, and inclusive. Parks and public spaces must reflect the spirit of place, and that includes the people and cultures within that place. To this aim, culturally-appropriate design as well as adaptable programming – including recreational activities, classes, and events – are increasingly being provided by city departments.

## Parkland Needs

Spending time outdoors has immense physical, emotional, and social benefits for people. Access to quality parks is needed to reap these benefits.

### Access to Parks Within Walking Distance

To develop an equitable park system that serves all residents, the City of Hercules analyzed the distribution of parks in relation to where people live. The overall goal is to provide a park within walking distance (1/2 mile) for every resident.

Neighborhoods that are farther than a ½ mile walking distance from existing parks and recreation facilities are considered “unserved” gap areas. This analysis is intended to help the City of Hercules strategize its future investment and resources to serve these gap areas and fulfill the needs of all residents.

As seen in Figure 32, the analysis reveals that most of the city is served by City-owned parks. However, four gap areas are identified with pink shading, indicating residential areas that lack access to parks within walking distance.

**Gap area #1**, in the northwestern portion of the city, is a small zone earmarked for an approved commercial-residential mixed-use development, Hill Town. The new development is planned to include approximately 23 acres of landscaping, walkways, and common open space throughout the site to serve future residents here. Additionally, there is a homeowners association park (HOA Victoria Park) in the neighboring residential area.

**Gap area #2**, in the western portion of the city north of San Pablo Avenue and east of Pinole Creek, is a small gap in a single-family low density residential area. Needs in this gap area could be met by improving access and/or trail connections to the existing Duck Pond Park.

### 10-Minute Walk Assessment and Methodology

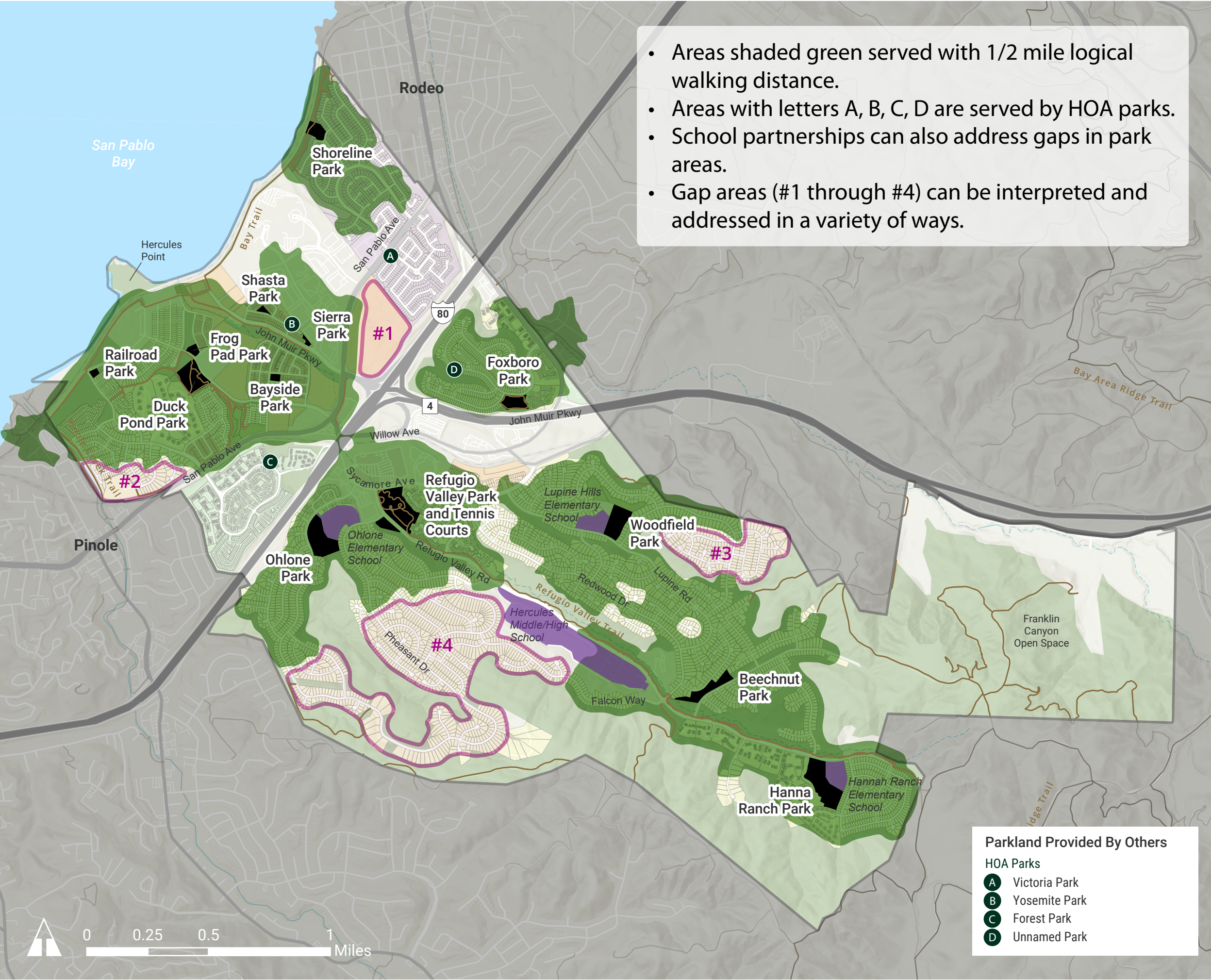
Using ArcGIS Network Analyst™, Figure 32 shows the service area of each park classified as a Neighborhood, Community, or Citywide park, over a basemap that also shows schools, private parks, planned waterfront parks, and other existing City open space, as well as residential areas. The half-mile travel distance – roughly a 10-minute walk – is the industry standard recommended by the National Recreation and Park Association and the Trust for Public Land for providing close-to-home parks.

The analysis takes into account the actual routes of travel, physical barriers (i.e., private property, Interstate 80 and Route 4/John Muir Parkway, as well as the railroad tracks through town and along the San Pablo Bay) and logical routing (i.e., park entrances via roads, trails or sidewalks) based on existing transportation networks.

**Gap area #3**, in the eastern part of the city, has an unserved single-family low-density residential neighborhood. Given the proximity to existing City parks – Woodfield Park and Beechnut Park – there is an opportunity to improve connections to these sites by providing pathways and cut-through trails. This would extend the service areas for these parks and thus serve this entire residential neighborhood. These connections will be challenging in terms of providing accessible routes given the topographical context in this part of Hercules.

**Gap area #4** also is unserved and needs a new neighborhood park. The lack of nearby City parks and HOA parks in this area make it the most critical of all the gap areas for a new park. However, much of the area is surrounded by open space, so the residents do not lack nearby greenspace. There is a potential to create a “nature park” that provides recreation opportunities while respecting the natural resource protection goals of City open space.





- Areas shaded green served with 1/2 mile logical walking distance.
- Areas with letters A, B, C, D are served by HOA parks.
- School partnerships can also address gaps in park areas.
- Gap areas (#1 through #4) can be interpreted and addressed in a variety of ways.

### Figure 32: Park Service and Gaps within a 10-minute Walk

Half-Mile Walkshed to Parks

Gap Areas <sup>1</sup>

City of Hercules Parks

HOA Parks

#### Residential Land Uses

Low Density Residential

Medium Density Residential

Planned Commercial Residential Mixed Use District

New Pacific Properties Specific Area Plan

#### Basemap Features

Open Space

Trails and Bikeways

Schools

<sup>1</sup> The numbers displayed in the map correspond to the areas identified in the needs assessment.

Source(s): ESRI StreetMap Premium, OpenStreetMap, Healthy Places Index 3.0, Hercules Land Use and Zoning PDF (2019)

#### Parkland Provided By Others

HOA Parks

- Victoria Park
- Yosemite Park
- Forest Park
- Unnamed Park



## Waterfront Development

Hercules is facing a great opportunity to enhance community livability through the redevelopment of the waterfront. In anticipation of this development and the future multi-modal transit hub in Hercules, the 2008 Waterfront District Master Plan (WDMP) by Opticos Design forecasted park needs and identified design standards for the planned Waterfront District. While park and facility needs have evolved in the 15 years since this plan was adopted, the City still uses it to guide new residential development. These proposed new parks and public spaces include both public and private sites, only some of which would be managed by the City of Hercules. All proposed sites were re-evaluated as part of this planning process to determine which parks would be needed to serve nearby neighbors and which plazas should be publicly accessible to support special uses. Public parks that are anticipated to be City-operated were factored into the City's park level of services (see section below). Proposed public parks, public spaces, and trails provided by Homeowners Associations (HOAs), the East Bay Park and Recreation District (EBPRD), and commercial entities were inventoried to determine how these sites affected park needs.

## Parkland Level of Service (LOS) and Needs

While park distribution and anticipated development are both vital to ensuring equitable access to parks and recreational facilities, the amount of parkland acreage also must sufficiently serve the population. Cities with insufficient parkland may experience overcrowding of park spaces, overuse of facilities, high capital and operational costs, and unwelcoming spaces for diverse user groups. They also may not be able to offer the types of facilities desired, such as sports fields, which require more park space.

To measure the sufficiency of park acreage, cities measure their parkland level of service (LOS) as a ratio of acres per 1,000 residents. A higher parkland LOS means more parkland for city residents; a lower parkland LOS means less parkland for city residents. The calculation does not factor in park use by visitors from surrounding communities, which also affects the use of Hercules parks.

Based on the current inventory and 2023 City population, Table 9 shows the existing parkland level of service for the City of Hercules. It distinguishes the LOS associated with City parks, but also factors in parks, public spaces, and trails anticipated to be provided by Homeowners Associations (HOAs), the East Bay Park and Recreation District (EBPRD), and

**Current LOS standard:** Per the currently adopted Parkland LOS standards, as stated in the 1998 General Plan Open Space / Conservation Element (amended in 2015), the level of service standard is:

- **Neighborhood Parks:**  
1.75 acres per 1,000 people
- **Community Parks:**  
3.25 acres per 1,000 people
- **Open Space (public and private land):**  
51 acres per 1,000 people

privately, such as in commercial or mixed-use development. The City's existing LOS is 4.1 acres per 1,000 residents, or 4.2 acres per 1,000 if counting HOA parks. This is lower than the currently adopted standard of 5 acres per 1,000 residents. [Note that open space does not count toward parkland and is shown separately.]

The table also forecasts potential LOS standards for the City of Hercules, based on the forecasted population and potential park acreage to be acquired and developed by the year 2033. These standards are based on a variety of factors, including:

- Current city park acreage;
- Unserved gap areas (four in total);
- City and community goals;
- City resources and feasibility of expansions/acquisitions;
- Partnership opportunities within the City's land management coverage;
- Planned and proposed future parkland and trail development;
- Anticipated future residential development areas; and
- Projected population growth within city boundaries.

These potential parkland standards can be used to identify parkland needs. If adopted, these new standards would guide City investment in parkland for current and future residents.

Based on these standards and forecasted needs, the potential future City parkland level of service is 4.1 acres per 1,000 people. If parks provided by others are counted, the Hercules community has access to a total of 4.6 acres per 1,000 residents. This parkland LOS is lower than the lowest quartile of cities tracked through the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), as noted in Park Metrics data.

### **2023 NRPA comparison**

The 2023 NRPA Park Metrics data for jurisdictions with populations of 20,000-49,999 residents indicates the following:

**Median LOS:** 11.3 acres per 1,000 residents

**Lower Quartile LOS:** 5.9 acres per 1,000 residents



Table 9. Developed Parkland and Open Space LOS and Needs

Hercules Population

26,643 : Population in 2023<sup>1</sup>

28,488 : Projected Population in 2033<sup>1</sup>

	EXISTING PARKS / SITES		LEVEL OF SERVICE (LOS) [X acres per 1,000 residents]			FUTURE NEEDS	Future Site Needs
	Total Count of Sites	Total Acreage of Sites	Adopted LOS Standards <sup>2</sup>	Existing LOS (2023)	Potential Future LOS (2033)	Approx. Additional Acres Needed	
CITY PARKS, TRAILS, AND FACILITIES							
City Parks (All Types) <sup>3</sup>	13	58.0	5.00	2.2	2.2	4.7	2 waterfront special use sites (0.9 acres); 3 new neighborhood parks (1.55 acres) and 1 nature park (~3 acres)
Greenways and Trails	4	40.9	(none)	1.5	1.6	3.3	Planned multi-use trails (3.4 acres)
Recreation Facilities	4	10.7	(none)	0.4	0.4	0.0	No new sites needed for recreation facilities
Subtotals	21	109.6	5.0	4.1	4.1	7.9	
SITES PROVIDED BY OTHERS							
HOA Parks	4	1.6	(none)	0.1	0.1	0.0	No new HOA Parks
Planned EBRPD Parks			(none)	0.0	0.4	11.4	Hercules Point Park (11 acres)
Planned Private Parks			(none)	0.0	0.0	0.9	7 new waterfront public spaces (0.76 acres total)
Subtotals	4	1.6	0.0	0.1	0.5	12.2	
CITY OPEN SPACE							
Franklin Canyon Open Space		473.0	(none)	17.8	16.6	0.0	No new acreage
Other Open Space		886.0	34.0	33.3	31.1	-2.9	No new acreage; standard takes into account that 3 acres would be converted to park use
Subtotals		1,359.0	34.0	51.0	47.6	-2.9	
Total		1,4700	39.0	55.2	52.2	17.2	

1. LOS is based on a 2023 population of 26,643 and a forecasted 2033 population of 28,488. Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017-2020 ACS 5-Year Estimates, modified using ABAG Growth Rate Projections 2040 for Household Population.

2. Source: Hercules General Plan Growth Management Element and Open Space/Conservation Element (1998; updated 2015).

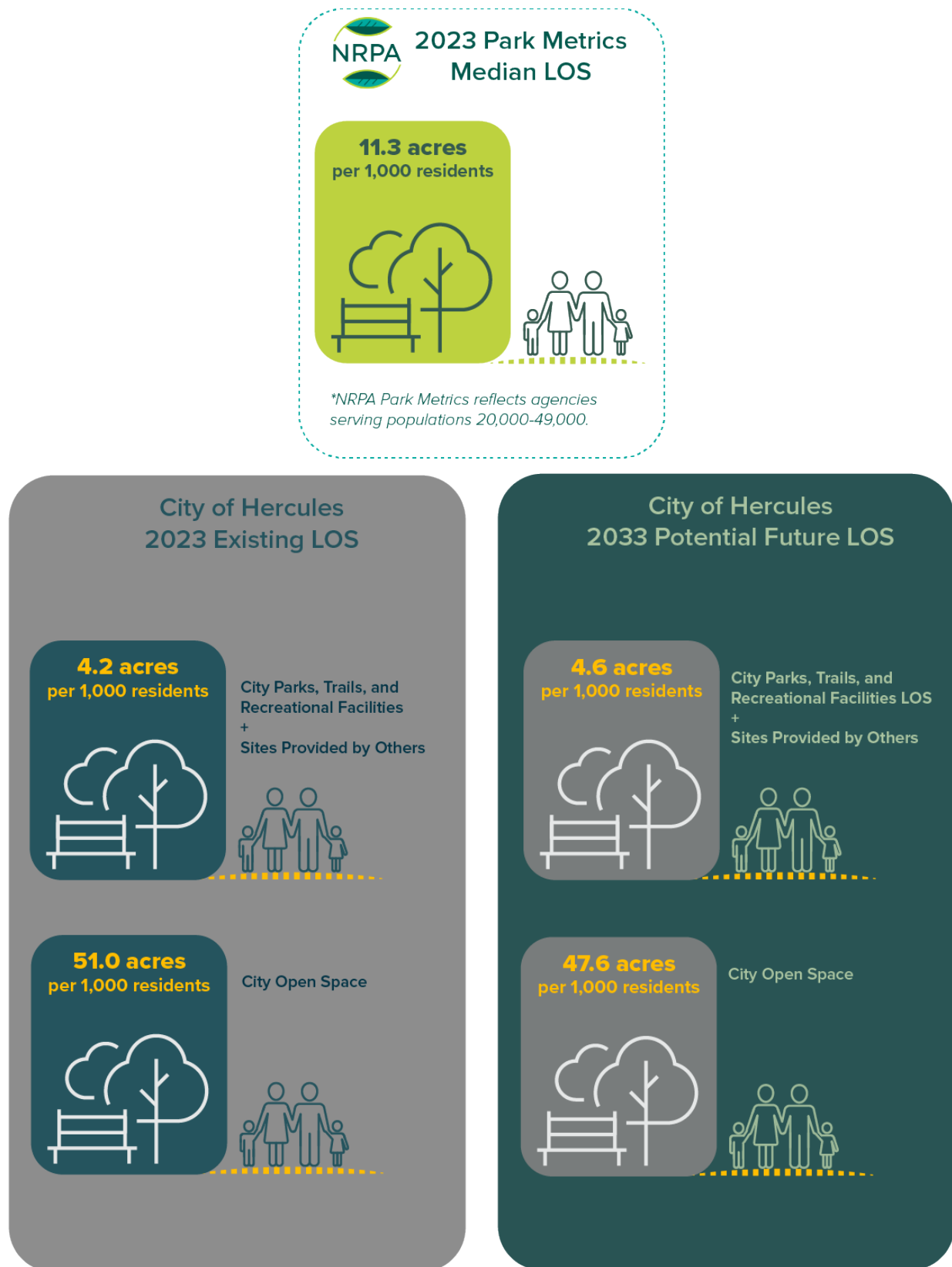
3. This includes Neighborhood Parks, Community Parks, Citywide Parks, Special Use Sites, and any converted open space areas that are anticipated to serve unserved gaps in residential areas. This latter type of park is noted as a Nature Park.

4. This number reflects the total additional amount of park and open space acreage. It reflects that fact that some open space would be developed as park land.

Hercules is unique in that it provides much more undeveloped open space than developed parkland. This is an important asset that contributes to greenspace in the community, even though this space is not developed to support recreation. (Some open space areas do have informal footpaths.) The 2023 existing level of service for open space in Hercules is 51 acres per 1,000 people, which exceeds the City's adopted standard. With expected population growth and no new open space development planned, this potential future level of service decreases to 47.6 by 2033.

If open space and parkland are counted together, Hercules has a tremendous amount of greenspace. It creates an opportunity to develop some open space areas for trails and similar nature-based recreation uses. It also suggests that additional park acquisition may not be needed based on the LOS deficiency alone, because the City offers this additional greenspace. Figure 33 provides a graphic representation of this information and compares Hercules to NRPA's median LOS standards for communities similar in size.

Figure 33. Level of Service (LOS) Comparison Graphic





## Facility Needs

### Access to Recreation Facilities

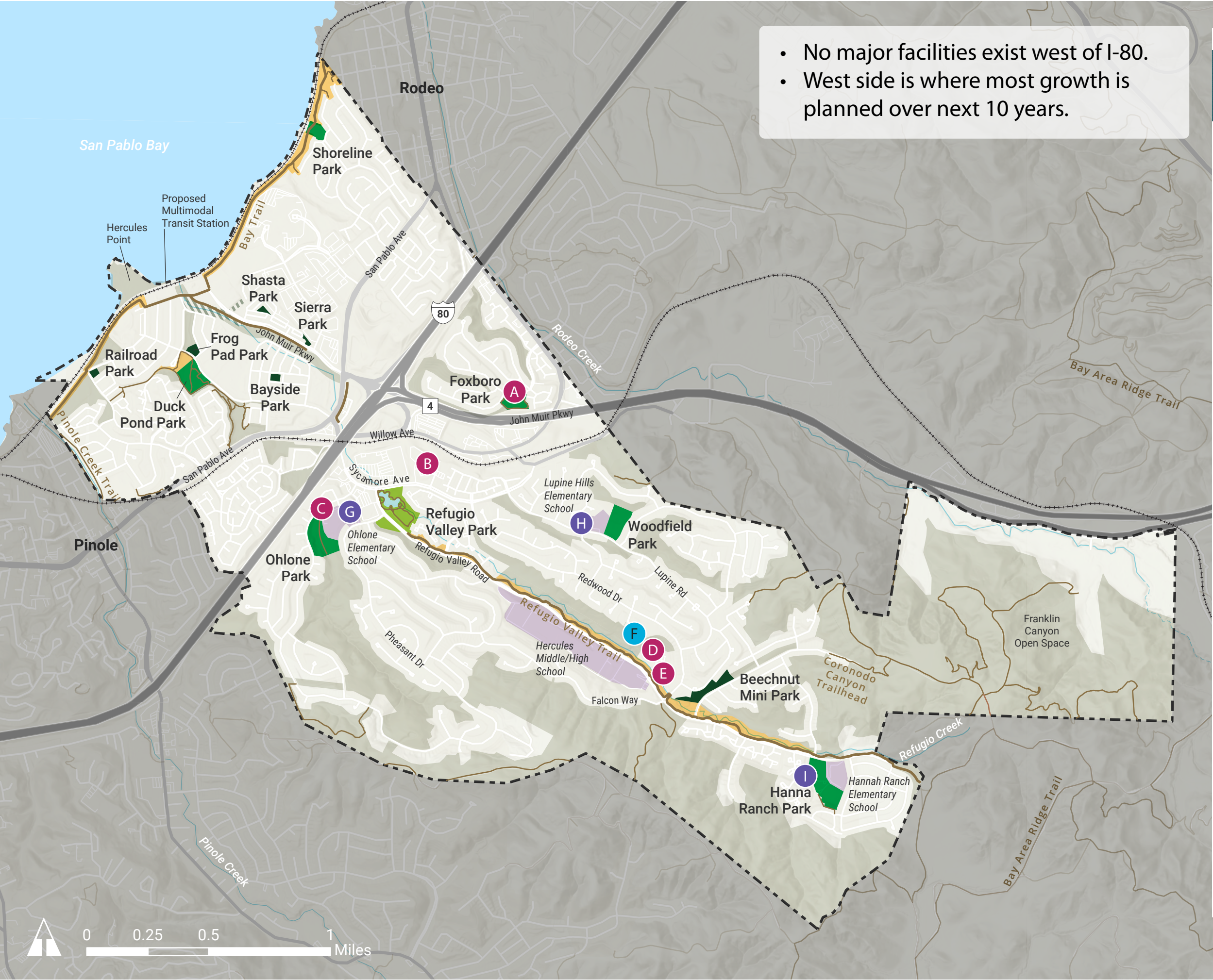
In addition to parkland, the City of Hercules also provides recreation facilities to support the physical and social well-being of residents. As noted in Chapter 2, these range from small features such as playgrounds and sports courts to major facilities (that require operations), such as community centers and swimming pools.

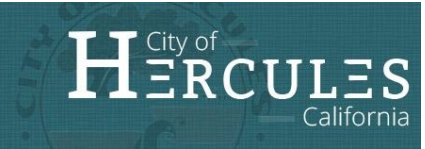
Because of the strong demand for major facilities and active recreation facilities, these assets were mapped to evaluate their distribution. This informs the City where there are unserved residential areas that lack convenient access to such recreational facilities.

Figure 34 displays the distribution of major facilities, including recreation/community centers, swimming pools, and childcare centers. As shown, the five recreation/community centers are fairly dispersed within the city, yet mostly concentrated within the central spine along the Refugio Valley. Across Interstate 80, in the western portion of the city, there are no community centers. Hercules has one swimming pool located close to Hercules Middle and High Schools. The three childcare centers are sufficiently dispersed to serve residents; however, similar to recreation/community centers, there is a lack of facilities on the western side of I-80.

Figure 35 shows the distribution of active recreation facilities including baseball/softball fields, soccer fields, basketball courts, tennis courts, bocce courts, tennis practice walls, exercise equipment/fitness zones, and horseshoe pits. The map illustrates that there are few recreation facilities on the west side of Hercules, and no fields to support sports and other forms of active recreation. The largest proportion of active recreation facilities are outdated exercise equipment stations along the Refugio Valley Trail.







### Figure 34.

## Distribution of Major Facilities

Citywide Parks

Community Parks

Neighborhood Parks

Greenways

Existing Trails

Existing Multiuse Trails

Open Space

Conservation Area

Schools

Creeks and Waterbodies

City of Hercules

### Major Recreation Facilities

#### Recreation /Community Centers

A

 Foxboro Community Center

B

 Senior Center

C

 Ohlone Community Center

D

 Community Center

E

 Teen Center

#### Swimming Pools

F

 Hercules Swim Center

#### Childcare Centers

G

 Ohlone Kidz Center

H

 Lupine Hills Kidz Center

I

 Hanna Ranch Kidz Center

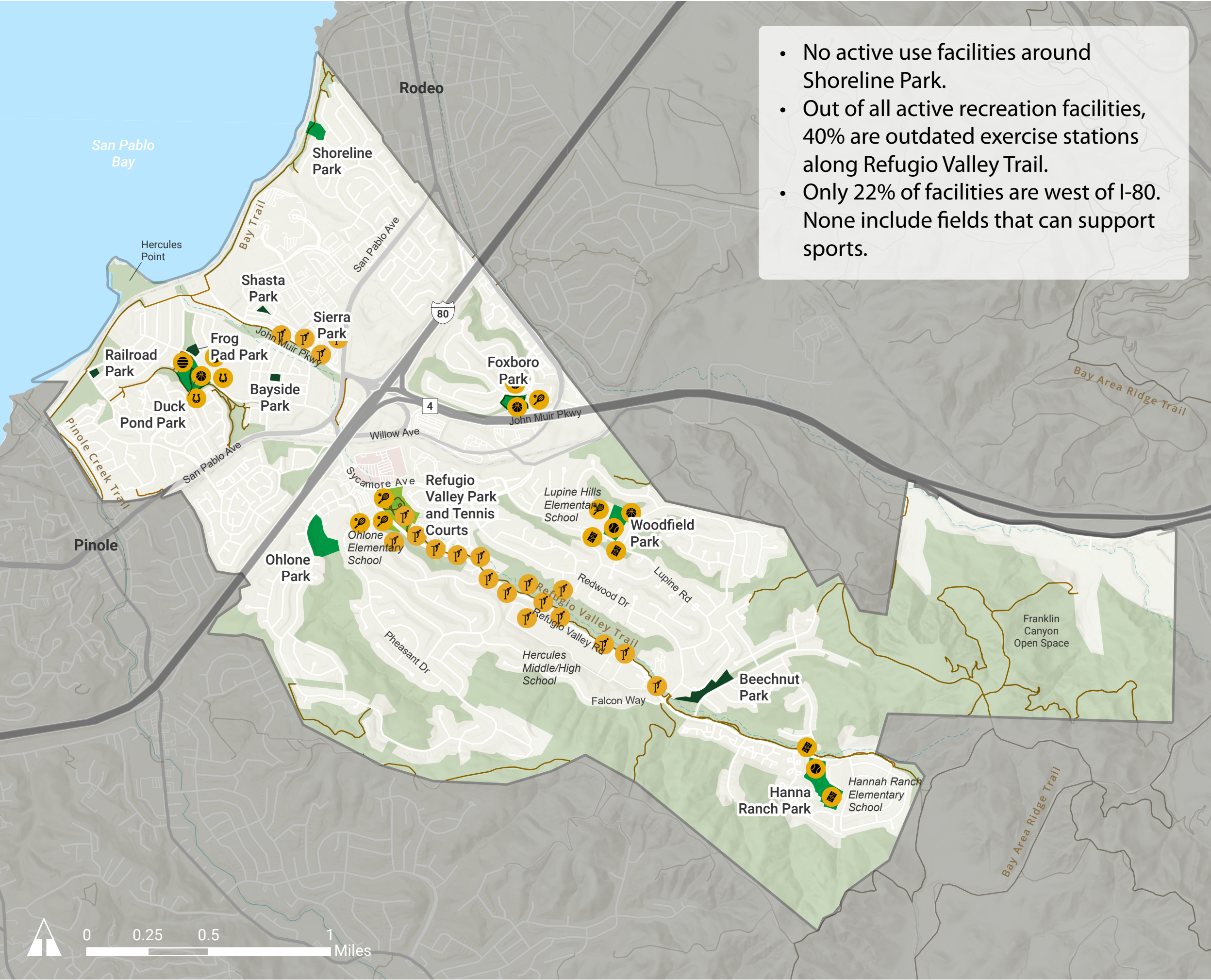
Source(s): ESRI, OpenStreetMap, Google Maps. Disclaimer: Daa is shown for planning purposes only and requires verification by public agencies. Permission to use parklands and trails should not be assumed. Some parklands and trails may traverse private property and their boundaries do not imply rights of public use.

M

I

G





- No active use facilities around Shoreline Park.
- Out of all active recreation facilities, 40% are outdated exercise stations along Refugio Valley Trail.
- Only 22% of facilities are west of I-80. None include fields that can support sports.

**Figure 35.**  
**Distribution of Active Recreation Facilities**

**Active Recreation Types**

- Baseball or Softball Field
- Basketball Court
- Bocce Court
- Exercise Equipment
- Horseshoe Pit
- Soccer Field
- Tennis Court

**City of Hercules Parks**

- Citywide
- Community
- Neighborhood
- Open Space

Source(s): ESRI StreetMap Premium, OpenStreetMap, Healthy Places Index 3.0, Hercules Land Use and Zoning PDF (2019)



## Facility Level of Service (LOS) and Needs

Facility LOS is metric to measure the numbers of facilities provided to ensure these are sufficient to serve all city residents. It is described in terms of one facility per number of people served. Unlike parkland LOS, a higher facility LOS has a lower population number, meaning fewer residents rely on that one facility. A lower facility LOS has a higher population number, meaning more residents per facility (i.e., more crowding).

Table 10 shows the existing facility level of service based on the City's current inventory and population. It compares this LOS to similar sized cities with a population of 20,000-49,999 residents using data from NRPA Park Metrics. While data is not available for all facilities, the table quickly shows that Hercules is deficient in:

- Baseball or Softball Field (when both youth and adult fields are counted);
- Soccer fields (deficient in youth fields and all fields combined);
- Pickleball courts; and
- Playgrounds.

In general, deficiencies in active use and play facilities are caused by the lack of developed parkland in Hercules. The lack of parkland not only limits the numbers of facilities that are available, it also has limited the variety of facilities and diversity of recreation experiences in parks. These technical findings confirm residents' outreach priorities, which show the city needs more sports fields and courts, as well as a greater variety of features in parks.

Figure 36. "Which of the following funding priorities and policy directions are most important to you and your family?"

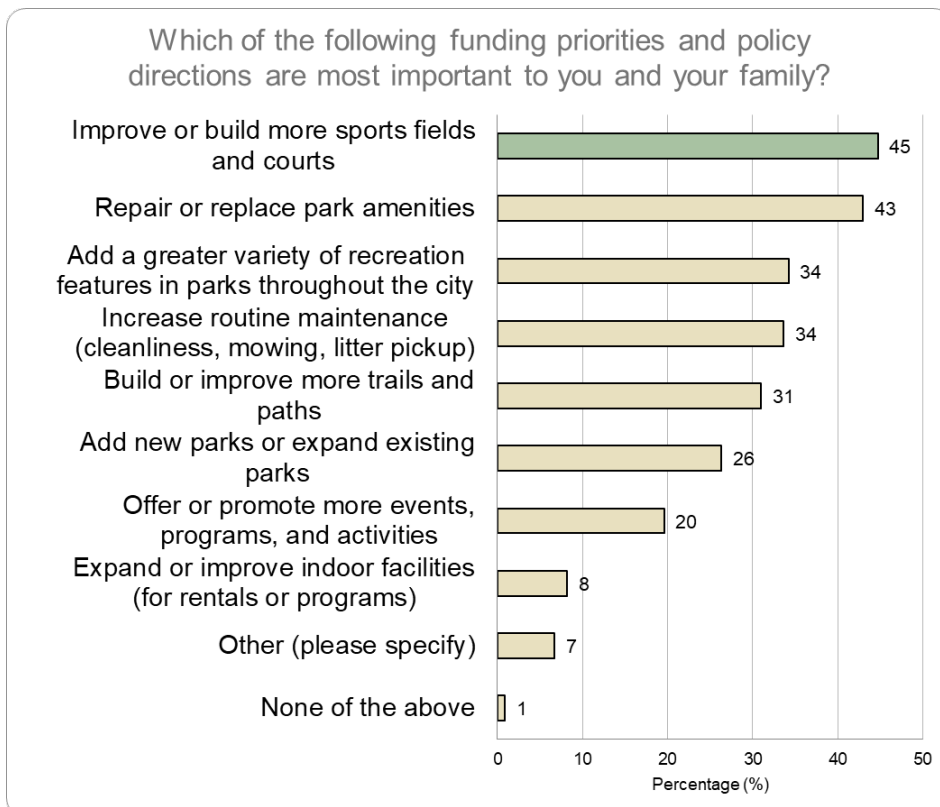


Table 10. Existing Facility LOS and Comparison to Similar-Sized Communities

Hercules Population

26,643 : Population in 2023<sup>1</sup>

	EXISTING FACILITIES	LEVEL OF SERVICE (LOS) <i>[amount of population served by 1 facility]</i>			COMPARISON <i>to Similar Size Communities (as per NRPA Park Metrics)</i>		
FACILITY TYPE	Facility Count	2023 Existing LOS	NRPA Standard <sup>2</sup>		Hercules Has Less	Hercules Has Nearly the Same	Hercules Has More
Baseball or Softball Field (Youth) <sup>3</sup>	2	13,322	14,308				✓
Soccer Field (Youth) <sup>4</sup>	4	6,661	4,947		✓		
Basketball Court	4.5	5,921	7,117				✓
Tennis Court	8	3,330	5,815				✓
Pickleball Court	0	(none)	9,257		✓		
Community Garden	1	26,643	26,741			✓	
Playground 5-12	4	6,661	3,028		✓		
Dog Park	1	26,643	28,000				✓
Recreation/ Community Center (Multi-Use) <sup>5</sup>	1	26,643	25,675			✓	

Notes:

1. Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017-2020 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates
2. NRPA standards reflect the median for jurisdictions with populations of 20,000-49,999 residents.
3. NRPA standard represents the average between youth baseball and youth softball fields. The City is deficient when adult fields are included as well.
4. NRPA standard represents youth soccer fields. The deficiency is greater when adult soccer fields are included as well.
5. NRPA standards represent the average between recreation centers and community centers.

# Trail Needs

## Access to Trails

The City of Hercules has 5.15 miles of multiuse trails<sup>3</sup>, most of which is comprised by two major existing trails – the Bay Trail and the Refugio Valley Trail. These trails provide critical east-west connectivity across central Hercules and north-south connectivity along San Pablo Bay. Multiuse trails are supported by the existing network of other trails that may be paved or soft surface depending on their surrounding context, as well as paved sidewalks. Imperative to adequate park access are sufficient trailheads and access points, and safely designed trails across barriers such as I-80, busy intersections, and railroad tracks. Sensitively sited and scaled parking lots are also beneficial in providing more residents convenient use of the trails.

The park and trail condition assessment, discussions with the City, and public engagement findings identified several notable gaps which impede pedestrian and bicycle access in Hercules. The needs assessment identifies three multiuse trail segments needed to improve pedestrian and bicycle connectivity to make it easier, safer, and more intuitive to access park and recreation opportunities across Hercules. They include:

- **Bay Trail:** A proposed segment along the Bay Trail was identified in previous planning efforts<sup>4</sup>. It runs parallel to the railroad tracks along the planned Transit Loop Drive between John Muir Parkway and Railroad Avenue. Currently, the trail jogs east and uses sidewalks along Bayfront Boulevard before it jogs west to rejoin the Bay Trail. The proposed segment would provide a straight connection along the shore.
- **John Muir Parkway:** The proposed segment along the south side of John Muir Parkway closes a gap between Alfred Nobel Drive and San Pablo Avenue. Currently, the paved trail dead ends at Alfred Nobel Drive. There appears to be an adequate amount of shoulder along the John Muir Parkway to support the proposed segment.
- **Sycamore Avenue/Refugio Valley Road:** The proposed segment along the north side of Sycamore Avenue and along Refugio Valley Road closes a gap between Willow Avenue and the west trailhead of the Refugio Valley Trail. This segment provides access underneath Interstate 80 and over railroad tracks. Here, the right-

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<sup>3</sup> Multiuse trails are generally 10' to 14' wide separated, paved right-of-way for exclusive use by bicyclists, pedestrians and those using non-motorized modes of travel. In Hercules, multiuse trails include the Bay Trail (2.05 miles), a portion of the John Muir Parkway (0.55 miles), a portion of San Pablo Avenue (0.22 miles), and the Refugio Valley Trail (2.35 miles).

<sup>4</sup> Waterfront District Master Plan, 2008, and updated 2012, 2016 (Opticos Design).



of-way is extremely constrained and traffic speeds/patterns are unfriendly to pedestrians. Given the number of constraints along this segment, extensive planning and design effort will be needed to realize this trail connection.

Other trail connections (both paved and soft surface, but not considered multiuse trail facilities) are proposed. These proposed segments generally improve connections in residential areas where sidewalks, as part of the street network, do not provide convenient or direct access to parkland. There are notable opportunities to add soft surface trails through open space areas to expand pedestrian connectivity in neighborhoods at the City perimeter. A major observed constraint, however, is the lack of public owned or easement access points at the perimeter of open space surrounded by residential development. Also, access to surrounding open space at the edges of the City may be obstructed by chain link fencing.

## Recreation Services and Programs Needs

The provision of recreation services, programs, and events should be dynamic. It should evolve alongside changes to parks and facilities, resident demographics, recreation trends, and community priorities and preference for organized and drop-in indoor and outdoor activities. In turn, the amount and types of recreation facilities needed also evolves with the changing demands for recreation programs and activities. This section identifies recreation program needs within the City of Hercules to describe how these affect needs for major recreation facilities, such as community centers, teen centers, childcare “Kidz” centers, and other programming spaces.

### Recreation Program Areas

The City of Hercules offers a variety of recreation programs and activities for the public. In some cases, the Department of Parks & Recreation hosts the programs themselves, in other cases, they contract with outside providers. The types (or categories) of programs offered are described as “program service areas” or program areas for short. Table 11 provides an overview of the program areas supported by the City of Hercules, including those led by contract staff (highlighted in blue) in City facilities.

Table 11. Hercules Program Service Areas and Locations where offered

*\*Items highlighted in blue are led by contract staff.*

Program Service Area	Age Group	Examples	Locations where offered
<b>Special Events</b>	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Night Out</li> <li>• Friday Family Flix &amp; Fun</li> <li>• Eggstravaganza</li> <li>• Splash-A-Palooza</li> <li>• Community Clean-Up Day</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refugio Valley Park</li> <li>• Hercules Community Center</li> <li>• Community Swim Center</li> <li>• Senior Center</li> <li>• Teen Center</li> </ul>
<b>Aquatics</b>	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adult Lap Swim</li> <li>• Adult Water Fitness</li> <li>• Youth Swim Team</li> <li>• Youth Swim Lessons</li> <li>• Recreation Swim (Pass)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Swim Center</li> </ul>
<b>Preschool &amp; Kindergarten</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preschool Play Group</li> <li>• Sports Medley</li> <li>• Mommy &amp; Me</li> <li>• All Sorts of Sports</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hanna Ranch Kidz Center</li> <li>• Lupine Kidz Center</li> <li>• Hanna Ranch Park</li> <li>• Hercules Community Center</li> </ul>
<b>School Age Programs</b>	K-5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kaleidoscope Kidz</li> <li>• Early Bird Program</li> <li>• SPOT</li> <li>• Breakfast Club</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hanna Ranch Kidz Center</li> <li>• Lupine Kidz Center</li> <li>• Ohlone Kidz Center</li> </ul>

Program Service Area	Age Group	Examples	Locations where offered
<b>Youth Programs</b>	Youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All Sorts of Sports</li> <li>• Volleyball Clinic</li> <li>• Soccer Club</li> <li>• Basketball Camp</li> <li>• Tennis</li> <li>• Fundamental Drawing</li> <li>• Cooking</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hercules Community Center</li> <li>• Foxboro Community Center</li> <li>• Hanna Ranch Soccer Field</li> <li>• Woodfield Park</li> <li>• Refugio Tennis Courts</li> <li>• Senior Center</li> </ul>
<b>Teen Programs</b>	Teens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teen Activities (none offered recently)</li> <li>• Volunteer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teen Center</li> </ul>
<b>Virtual Programs</b>	Teens, adults, and seniors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public Speaking</li> <li>• Speakers and Writers</li> <li>• Money and Investing</li> <li>• Mind Math</li> <li>• Driver's Education</li> </ul>	
<b>Adult Programs</b>	Adults	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jazzercise</li> <li>• Karate Dojo</li> <li>• Stargazing</li> <li>• Career Training</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hercules Community Center</li> <li>• Senior Center</li> </ul>
<b>Senior Activities and Services</b>	Seniors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dancing</li> <li>• Bingo</li> <li>• Lunch</li> <li>• Computer Lab</li> <li>• Food Bank</li> <li>• Low Impact Exercise</li> <li>• ARC Blood Drive</li> <li>• Health Insurance Counseling</li> <li>• Legal Consult Wills/Trusts</li> <li>• Transportation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Senior Center</li> </ul>
<b>Rentals</b>	Resident & Non-Residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reservation application processing</li> <li>• Scheduling</li> <li>• Facility staffing</li> <li>• Set-up/clean-up</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hercules Community Center</li> <li>• Ohlone Community Center</li> <li>• Senior Center</li> <li>• Foxboro Community Center</li> <li>• Van Domselaar Room</li> <li>• Teen Center</li> <li>• Council Chambers</li> <li>• Library Rooms</li> <li>• Park picnic shelters, fields, gazebo, and tennis courts</li> <li>• Dynamite &amp; Resource Room</li> <li>• Press Room</li> </ul>



## Programming Needs

The following bullets summarize changing needs for recreation programs and events facilitated by the City of Hercules. Some are programming opportunities that can be fostered through facility improvements and new park development.

- **Core Programs:** Hercules staff strongly support the following services and should continue to do so in the future. They are primarily focused on activating the Swim Center, Community Center, Senior Center, Kidz Centers, and event space in parks and include:
  - Special Events
  - Aquatics
  - Seniors Center Programs (recreation and social)
- **Program Expansion:** The City does not currently have staff nor facilities to strongly support programs for all ages in the following programs areas, which could be expanded:
  - Indoor sports
  - Health, wellness, and fitness
  - Arts & cultural programs
  - Community enrichment programs
- **Teen Needs:** The City's role in providing teen programs may be shifting to better meet future teen needs. Teen Center programs may be discontinued, while teen volunteer programs and teen-focused outdoor/pool programs could be expanded.
- **Rentals/Reservations:** The City of Hercules facilitates the rental/reservations of City facilities for community use, which represents a core use for otherwise underutilized facilities such as the Ohlone Community Center and Foxboro Community Center. This revenue-generating service will be needed as buildings continue to age, until decisions are made about facility renovation, alternative uses, or divestment. Rentals at underperforming, aging facilities should be re-evaluated before investing in facility improvements.
- **Emerging Opportunities Outdoors:** Given the needs for health and fitness, the City may strengthen outdoor sports and activities such as boot camps or yoga in parks to activate outdoor facilities.
- **Opportunities on the Waterfront:** As the waterfront develops, several special use plazas and public spaces may be added. This would provide an opportunity to expand special events, activities, and programs in parks – either as City-led activities or partner-led activities.

## Facility Needs for Programming

The City has a variety of major facilities to support organized programs. While some are successful and well designed for recreation, others are not. The facility evaluation conducted for the Master Plan process focused on facility function and needs for different types of programming space. The City will conduct a separate evaluation of building conditions to determine specific improvements needed.

As shown in Table 11, only three of the City's 11 major facilities (27%) are highly functioning for programs. These include the Hercules Community Center, Hercules Swim Center, and Hercules Senior Center. While demand is high for these spaces, the City's smaller facilities, single-purpose facilities, and reserved rooms are limited in the types of activities they can support. Many are held for sporadic rentals and reservations, while others are kept so the City can offer some types of spillover programs. Key findings and needs are summarized below.

- **Recreation Programming Space Needs:** National trends favor the provision of larger multi-use, multi-generational recreation facilities, located within parks, to maximize indoor/outdoor programming opportunities. Hercules has one: the 37,000-square foot Hercules Community Center. However, the Hercules Community Center is too small to meet the community's demand alone. Conflicts over whether the gymnasium should be scheduled and/or improved for sports or group events are examples of issues created by the lack of sufficient space for both activities. While the Swim Center is adjoining, the rest of the surrounding greenspace is not developed to support outdoor programs that would expand opportunities for activities. Additional indoor programming space, especially spaces designed for active recreation, events, and art space, is needed.
- **Aquatic Facility Needs:** The Hercules Swim Center is well-functioning. The site needs minor improvements, such as added shade, to improve use. There is an opportunity to augment the social and event space (e.g., lounge chairs, party room, rental cabanas, or improved deck space) to support leisure use of the pool area. As a companion use that's seen in many other cities, there is opportunity to add more dedicated fitness space in the same complex to support greater health and wellness activities. The key need is continuing to invest long-term in pool maintenance and operations, which typically will require an increasing subsidy as the facility ages.
- **Limitations of Smaller Facilities:** Hercules maintains four smaller facilities. The Teen Center and Hercules Senior Center are smaller, age-focused facilities supporting passive programming and gathering spaces. Since teen programming attendance declined through the pandemic, the Teen Center is not currently operated for teen programs. It is largely unused, unless needed for other spillover

programs. The Foxboro Community Center and Ohlone Community Center are better described as activity buildings. These are small, older, multi-purpose rooms available for reservation or overflow programs. Of the two, Foxboro is better situated within a park for indoor/outdoor uses, but it lacks air conditioning for summer use. The Ohlone Community Center would need substantial improvements to attract rentals or better support programs. The City needs to re-evaluate the use and utility of these sites before investing in improvements.

- **Kidz Center Issues:** The City operates three “Kidz Centers” on or adjacent to elementary school grounds. These facilities—often housed in portable classrooms—provide dedicated space for youth and school-age programs. Located at school sites, they are not used for other types of programs. While the childcare centers all appear to be well-programmed, the Lupine Kidz Center and Hannah Kidz Center are older facilities. Lupine needs the greatest amount of improvement, but its enrollment is declining, which raises questions about the value of this site. The newest facility, the Ohlone Kidz Center, was intended to be a temporary facility until a bond-funded childcare wing in the school was developed. In all three cases, partnership agreements with the School District need to be revisited before investing in facility improvements.
- **Demand for Additional Space:** Although the demand for dedicated indoor recreation space will continue to grow, none of these existing facilities are able or well-positioned to meet that demand. Due to the shortage of quality programming space, the City rents Library rooms and the Van Domselaar Room at Samara Terrace for passive programming. It will need to continue to do so until better programming spaces are added. However, neither of these venues can support active indoor programming.
- **Return on Investment (ROI):** This category of facilities is called “major facilities” because of the capital and operations costs for asset management, facility maintenance and operations. In many cases, further evaluation is needed to determine whether the value and amount of the recreation offered is worth the cost of improvements, maintenance, and operations. Given a desire to focus park and recreation investment in projects that have the highest ROI and offer a variety of benefits, the City will need to re-evaluate its strategy for building use.



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*Figure 37. Shoreline Park offers ample lawn space and views of the bay*



## Chapter 5. Recommendations

This chapter provides a comprehensive set of recommendations for existing and proposed parks, trails, and recreation facilities in the City of Hercules. The purpose of the recommendations is to capture all beneficial improvements and new developments that could benefit the park and recreation system in the future.

**Recommendations described in this chapter will exceed the available funding and staffing resources in the near term. They are documented to support a long-term funding strategy (including the use of grants and bonds) for future implementation.**

This approach ensures that no opportunities that will inevitably arise in the future are missed, and that the highest priority projects are properly identified given the entire realm of improvements is captured.

### Methodology

Recommendations were developed based on findings from the site tour, community engagement, Steering Committee and City Council input, Project Leadership Team discussions, as well as a technical evaluation and analysis of site conditions and needs. The following data were also incorporated:

- Results from the Park Tour (November 2022) and Park Condition Assessment (April 2023), as described in *Chapter 2* and *Appendix B: Park Condition Assessment*.
- Community engagement findings as described in *Chapter 3* and *Appendix C: Park Needs and Priorities Engagement Summary*.
- Needs Assessment findings, as described in *Chapter 4*.
- Steering Committee input and direction.
- Prioritization Engagement Findings (August 2023), as described in *Appendix E: Prioritization Engagement Findings*.
- Directions from the Council update (August 2023) and Council briefing (September 2023).

### Systemwide Recommendations

While the City of Hercules will focus on improving specific parks and facilities, some projects will be implemented across the park system. These systemwide recommendations should be considered for all parks and trails, regardless of classification, size, or location:



## Park and Facility Level of Service and Access

- Strive to provide a minimum level of service of 4.1 acres per 1,000 residents as the community continues to grow. This will sustain the same ratio of parkland for residents as the City's population increases.
- Ensure that City parks are well designed and well developed to reflect neighborhood character, the City's identity, and its unique environmental context.
- Diversify amenities and facilities to increase active recreation and create more varied park experiences, using the recommendations in this chapter as guidance.
- Provide new parks in locations centralized to the area each site is intended to serve. Connect new parks to sidewalks and trails to ensure they are easily accessible by walking and biking.

## Wayfinding and Signage

- Provide standard park identification signs and updated rules signs at all parks. Many parks are missing identification signs (examples: Sierra, Shasta, Shoreline, Bayside). Remove old or out-of-date signage. Install park signage along the accessible route.
- Provide directional or wayfinding information to City parks on existing or new signs, where appropriate. Consider this in any future City sign and wayfinding project.

## Design Standardization

- Use the two-stall unisex restroom at Duck Pond Park as a model for prefabricated restroom replacement throughout the park system. Some parks with unique restrooms, such as Refugio Valley Park, may require another approach that upholds the original park design intent.
- Select standard equipment (ex: basketball poles, backboards and hoops) that can withstand high intensity use to reduce need for maintenance/repairs.

## Landscaping and Planting

- Determine invasive plant species in Hercules parks and remove them with volunteer/contractor/City coordination. Examples include pampas grass (*Cortaderia selloana*) and eucalyptus trees found at Refugio Valley Park, Duck Pond Park, Ohlone Park, and Frog Pad Park.
- Replace trees and other vegetation by prioritizing California natives and including pollinator species to support sustainable Bay Area landscapes.

## Accessibility Standards

- Address the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) when developing or renovating parks, facilities, and trails and replacing furnishings. This includes the replacement of green painted wood park benches found throughout the park system which do not meet accessibility standards.

## Site Recommendations

The subsequent tables summarize capital recommendations as they apply to existing sites, planned sites and proposed sites; existing and proposed greenways and trails; and recreation facilities. More than one capital recommendation applies to some sites. Recommendation for each site follows these tables. Tables use the following definitions to characterize proposed capital projects:

- **Develop:** Includes land acquisition, site master planning, design concepts/feasibility studies, and construction for new sites. This recommendation also includes working with developers where the City has a vested interest in ensuring the park remains publicly accessible.
- **Restore:** Restore existing park features, landscaping, and site amenities that are damaged, worn or at the end of their lifecycles. These represent larger repairs or a 'one for one' replacement in the same developed footprint.
- **Enhance:** Provide enhancements at existing parks with the addition of new, expanded or upgraded park features to expand park capacity and use.

*Note: Many existing parks in Hercules were assigned a "Restore & Enhance" recommendation, reflecting the need to both replace items in-kind as well as expand capacity.*

Figure 38. Planned Sites in the Waterfront District (reference map)



Table 12. Parks Recommendations Summary

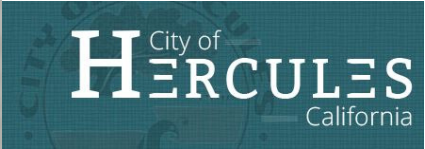
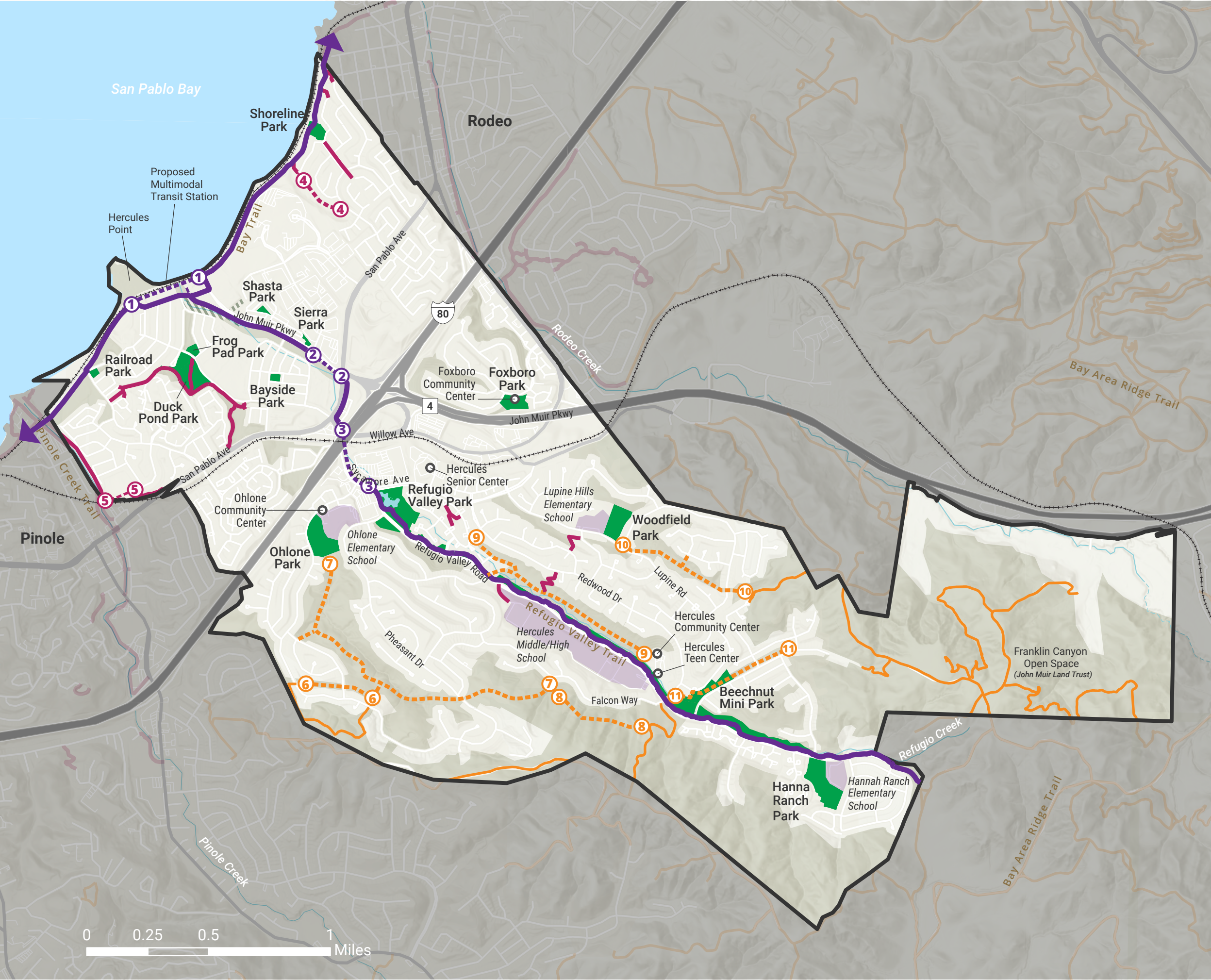
Site Name	Acres	Classification	Capital Recommendation(s)	Map Ref. #
<b>Existing Sites</b>				
Refugio Valley Park and Tennis Courts	12.7	Citywide	Restore & Enhance	n/a
Duck Pond Park	6.8	Community	Restore & Enhance	n/a
Foxboro Park	3.6	Community	Restore	n/a
Hanna Ranch Park	10.2	Community	Restore & Enhance	n/a
Ohlone Park	8.2	Community	Restore & Enhance	n/a
Shoreline Park	2.6	Community	Restore & Enhance	n/a
Woodfield Park	6.0	Community	Restore & Enhance	n/a
Bayside Park	0.7	Neighborhood	Restore & Enhance	n/a
Beechnut Park	4.7	Neighborhood	Restore & Enhance	n/a
Frog Pad Park	1.0	Neighborhood	Restore	n/a
Railroad Park	0.6	Neighborhood	Restore & Enhance	n/a
Shasta Park	0.5	Neighborhood	None	n/a
Sierra Park	0.4	Neighborhood	None	n/a
<b>Planned Sites – Waterfront District</b> (see Fig 38. Planned Sites in the Waterfront District)				
Bayfront/Creekside Park/Block K	0.35	Neighborhood	Develop	Fig. 38: 1
Neighborhood Park/Block B	0.60	Neighborhood	Develop	Fig. 38: 2
Neighborhood Park/Block L&M	0.60	Neighborhood	Develop	Fig. 38: 3
Civic Plaza, Block G	0.5	Special Use Site	Develop	Fig. 38: 4
Plaza, Block D&E	0.4	Special Use Site	Develop	Fig. 38: 5
<b>Proposed Sites</b>				
Gems Nature Park (converts open space)	2-4	Nature Park	Develop	n/a



Table 13. Greenways and Trails Recommendations Summary (See Proposed Trail Connectivity Map)

Trail Name	Acres	Lineal Feet	Type	Capital Recommendation	Map Ref. #
<b>Existing Greenways and Trails</b>					
Bay Trail	16	n/a	Multiuse	Restore	n/a
Refugio Valley Trail	23	n/a	Multiuse	Restore & Enhance	n/a
Paved Trails	1.3	n/a	Paved	None	n/a
Unpaved Trails	0.6	n/a	Unpaved	Restore	n/a
<b>Proposed Greenways and Trails</b> (see Fig 39. Proposed Park and Trail Connectivity Map)					
<i>* Note: Trail names are for reference only.</i>					
Bay Trail (missing segment)	0.46	1,120	Multiuse	Develop	Fig. 39: 1
John Muir Parkway Trail	0.35	960	Multiuse	Develop	Fig. 39: 2
Sycamore Ave Trail	0.65	1,800	Multiuse	Develop	Fig. 39: 3
Trestle Cove Connection	0.16	1,200	Paved	Develop	Fig. 39: 4
Pinole Creek Connection	0.11	820	Paved	Develop	Fig. 39: 5
Gem Stones Trail	0.11	1,600	Unpaved	Develop	Fig. 39: 6
Ohlone Creek Trail	0.52	7,550	Unpaved	Restore & Enhance (requires HOA coordination)	Fig. 39: 7
The Birds Trail	0.16	2,400	Unpaved	Develop	Fig. 39: 8
Refugio Creek Loop Trail	0.38	4,765	Unpaved	Restore & Enhance	Fig. 39: 9
The Flowers Trail	0.27	3,925	Unpaved	Develop	Fig. 39: 10
Upper Watershed Loop Trail	0.25	3,700	Unpaved	Develop (requires HOA coordination)	Fig. 39: 11





**Figure 39. Proposed Park and Trail Connectivity**

- Existing Multiuse Trails
- Proposed Multiuse Trails
- Existing Trails - Paved
- Proposed Trails - Paved
- Existing Trails - Unpaved
- Proposed Trails - Unpaved
- Parks and Trails
- Recreation Facility
- Open Space
- Conservation Area
- Schools
- Creeks and Waterbodies
- City of Hercules
- Outside of City Boundary

Source(s): ESRI, OpenStreetMap, Google Maps. Disclaimer: Data is shown for planning purposes only and requires verification by public agencies. Permission to use parklands and trails should not be assumed. Some parklands and trails may traverse private property and their boundaries do not imply rights of public use.



Table 14 summarizes recommendations for existing major recreation facilities. These are intended to complement the Building Facilities Assessment (estimated completion in Spring 2024). This Master Plan does not include an architectural evaluation of buildings. Thus, recommendations only focus on facility needs and operations. The plan recognizes that several of these recommendations would require planning, outreach, financial feasibility studies, and substantial long-term investment. Capital recommendations are defined as:

- **Develop:** Create a site master plan, complete a financial feasibility study, and construct a new building at the existing site.
- **Restore:** Repair, replace or make minor improvements to existing recreation facilities to refresh aging and worn features.
- **Renovate:** Enhance or provide more extensive changes to an existing building to add new, expanded or upgraded features to expand capacity and existing use.
- **Reprogram:** Improve or renovate a building to accommodate a new use.
- **Trade:** Negotiate an agreement, long-term lease, or other arrangement to give a current building to another public service provider in exchange for an equally valuable benefit.
- **Continue:** Continue current reservable uses to support recreation.

*Table 14. Major Recreation Facilities Recommendations Summary. (Note: This table is to be considered in coordination with recommendations from the forthcoming Building Facilities Assessment.)*

Site Name	Sq Ft	Classification /Type	Recommendation
<b>Major Recreation Facilities</b>			
Hercules Community Center	17,000	Recreation Facility	Renovate & Develop
Hercules Swim Center (considered part of the Hercules Community Center)	20,000	Aquatics Facility	Restore
Teen Center	2,000	Recreation Facility	Reprogram
Ohlone Community Center	2,050	Recreation Facility	Renovate (or explore other options)
Foxboro Community Center (considered part of Foxboro Park)	1,200	Recreation Facility	Restore
Senior Center	1,500	Recreation Facility	Restore
Lupine Kidz Center	n/a	Childcare Center	Relocate
Hanna Ranch Kidz Center	n/a	Childcare Center	Renovate
Ohlone Kidz Center	n/a	Childcare Center	Trade
Hercules Library	n/a	Library	Continue
Samara Terrace Van Domselaar Room	n/a	Recreation Facility	Continue



## **Recommendations for Existing Parks**

Recommendations for individual parks and trails then follow. For existing sites, the first two pages document the site's assets and condition assessment findings to show elements that may need improvements. The next two pages define and map specific recommendations to restore or enhance existing sites. Some existing sites also include image pages that illustrate recommendations.



# REFUGIO VALLEY PARK AND TENNIS COURTS







# REFUGIO VALLEY PARK AND TENNIS COURTS

Park Classification: **Citywide Park**

Park Size: **12.7 Acres**

## Existing Assets

 Amphitheater	 Gazebo	 Playground
 Barbecue Grill	 Lake or Pond	 Public Art
 Bench	 Open Lawn Area	 Restrooms
 Bike Rack	 Other	 Sign
 Bridge	 Parking (off-street)	 Storage or Equipment Building
 Drinking Fountain	 Picnic Area or Table	 Tennis Court
 Exercise Equipment	 Planting Area	 Trash or Recycle Receptacle
		 Walking/Jogging Path

## Asset Condition Scoring (2023)

● Excellent
 ● Good
 ● Fair
 ● Poor
 ● Not Functional

Bench	Picnic Area or Table	Bench	Trash or Recycle Receptacle
Bench	Picnic Area or Table	Bench	Trash or Recycle Receptacle
Open Lawn Area	Planting Area	Bench	Trash or Recycle Receptacle
Other	Planting Area	Bench	Bench
Sign	Playground	Bench	Bench
Sign	Sign	Bench	Bench
Sign	Sign	Drinking Fountain	Bench
Tennis Court	Sign	Lake or Pond	Bench
Tennis Court	Sign	Open Lawn Area	Bridge
Trash or Recycle Receptacle	Sign	Other	Other
Trash or Recycle Receptacle	Sign	Other	Parking (off-street)
Trash or Recycle Receptacle	Storage or Equipment Building	Picnic Area or Table	Picnic Area or Table
Trash or Recycle Receptacle	Tennis Court	Picnic Area or Table	Planting Area
Trash or Recycle Receptacle	Trash or Recycle Receptacle	Picnic Area or Table	Planting Area
Trash or Recycle Receptacle	Trash or Recycle Receptacle	Planting Area	Planting Area
Trash or Recycle Receptacle	Trash or Recycle Receptacle	Planting Area	Playground
Walking/Jogging Path	Trash or Recycle Receptacle	Planting Area	Public Art
Walking/Jogging Path	Trash or Recycle Receptacle	Restrooms	Sign
Amphitheatre	Trash or Recycle Receptacle	Sign	Trash or Recycle Receptacle
Barbecue Grill	Trash or Recycle Receptacle	Sign	Trash or Recycle Receptacle
Barbecue Grill	Trash or Recycle Receptacle	Sign	Trash or Recycle Receptacle
Bike Rack	Trash or Recycle Receptacle	Sign	Walking/Jogging Path
Bike Rack	Trash or Recycle Receptacle	Sign	Drinking Fountain
Gazebo	Walking/Jogging Path	Tennis Court	Other
Open Lawn Area	Barbecue Grill	Trash or Recycle Receptacle	Other
Parking (off-street)	Barbecue Grill	Trash or Recycle Receptacle	Other
Picnic Area or Table	Barbecue Grill	Trash or Recycle Receptacle	Playground



# REFUGIO VALLEY PARK AND TENNIS COURTS





# REFUGIO VALLEY PARK AND TENNIS COURTS

Park Classification: **Citywide Park**

Park Size: **12.7 Acres** Capital Recommendation: **Restore and Enhance**

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## Sitewide Recommendations

- Initiate a site master plan or design development process for the identified near-term projects. Near-term design should consider the needs and space requirements of other mid- and long- term projects identified in this Master Plan. A public engagement process for this high-profile site may be considered.
- Provide new electrical hookups to better support events.

## Location-Specific Recommendations (see keyed locations on map)

### Park

1. Improve sightlines around restroom – remove ficus (creeping fig) from restroom exterior wall and refinish restroom exterior – OR – replace restroom outright with prefabricated restroom (4 unisex stalls). The former is preferred as existing circular restroom is a feature of the park’s overall design aesthetic (circles and curvilinear lines exist in park throughout).
2. Remove the existing tot lot and concrete foundation along pond edge; naturalize the area in conjunction with pond rehabilitation.
3. Remove existing play hill stairs feature at pond’s east edge. Add a new 6,000 - 8,000 SF accessible flexible space for concerts, community performances and gatherings. This space can function as a group picnic area when performances aren’t planned.
4. Improve the central grass lawn by regrading, adding subsurface drainage and irrigation system, and reseeding lawn with shade tolerant grass seed mix.
5. Remove eucalyptus trees recommended by certified arborist. Grind down stumps and remove surface roots.
6. Provide shade structures near group picnicking areas where trees have been removed. Locate shade structures along an accessible route from the parking lot. Replant trees that were removed with species selected to provide shade and meet other City maintenance needs.
7. Renovate and expand the older children’s playground (currently 2,800 SF) to a universally accessible 8,000 - 10,000 SF destination play space suitable for ages 2 to 5 and 5 to 12 years. Incorporate accessible swing into the future playground design, (planned be added in 2023).

8. Add another parking lot along Refugio Valley Road. Design lot to support function of the Refugio Valley Trail – see Trails.

### Tennis Center

9. Renovate connecting circulation system between parking lot, practice wall, group picnic area, tennis courts, and Turquoise Avenue.
10. Provide a marked accessible parking spot and accessible route to tennis courts and gathering areas.
11. Replace wood railroad tie stairs, steps and other connecting features with concrete throughout. Wood steps throughout are trip hazards with uneven surfaces, rotted areas, gaps, and cracked risers.
12. Revegetate bald slopes along Turquoise Avenue, between tennis courts, and at parking lot.
13. Remove trees at Tennis Center including tree stumps and replant using species with characteristics compatible with tennis and maintenance needs.

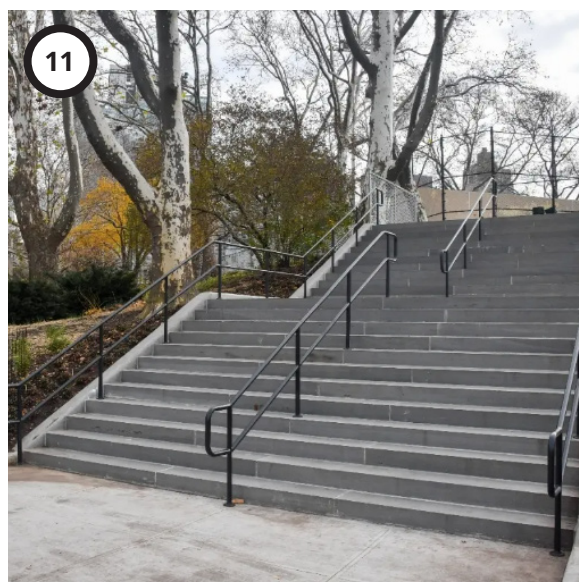
### Pond and Creek

14. Initiate permits needed to dredge the pond. Select a qualified contractor to dredge and semi-annually maintain the pond.
15. Naturalize pond edge with a 10’-20’ buffer of native pond plantings; replenish existing edges; limit public access around pond edge.
16. Replace decking of wood bridge over Refugio Creek.











# DUCK POND PARK






















# DUCK POND PARK

Park Classification: **Community Park**  
Park Size: **6.8 Acres**

## Existing Assets

-  Basketball Court
-  Bench
-  Bike Rack
-  Bocce Court
-  Drinking Fountain
-  Gazebo
-  Horseshoe Pit
-  Lake or Pond
-  Other
-  Parking (off-street)
-  Picnic Area or Table
-  Playground
-  Public Art
-  Restrooms
-  Sign
-  Trash or Recycle Receptacle
-  Waking/Jogging Path

## Asset Condition Scoring (2023)

Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Not Functional
Excellent	Lake or Pond			
	Open Lawn Area			
	Picnic Area or Table			
	Trash or Recycle Receptacle			
	Trash or Recycle Receptacle			
	Trash or Recycle Receptacle			
	Trash or Recycle Receptacle			
	Basketball Court			
	Bench			
	Bench			
	Bench			
	Bike Rack			
	Bike Rack			
	Open Lawn Area			
	Open Lawn Area			
Good	Parking (off-street)			
	Picnic Area or Table			
	Picnic Area or Table			
	Sign			
	Bench			
	Bench			
	Bench			
	Bench			
	Bocce Court			
	Bocce Court			
	Drinking Fountain			
	Gazebo			
	Horseshoe Pit			
	Horseshoe Pit			
	Other			
	Picnic Area or Table			
	Picnic Area or Table			
	Picnic Area or Table			
	Picnic Area or Table			
	Picnic Area or Table			
	Restrooms			
	Sign			
	Trash or Recycle Receptacle			
	Trash or Recycle Receptacle			
	Trash or Recycle Receptacle			
	Waking/Jogging Path			



DUCK POND PARK





# DUCK POND PARK

Park Classification: **Community Park**

Park Size: **6.8 Acres** Capital Recommendation: **Restore and Enhance**

---

## Sitewide Recommendations

### PLANTING AREAS

- Dedicate one of the park hillside meadow areas to butterfly habitat.
- Renovate empty planters throughout developed areas of park with drought tolerant pollinators like Russian sage, Mexican bush sage, California lilac, etc. Consider removing manicured shrubs.
- Add mulch to planter areas to meet elevation of paved walkways. Current walkways are 4" above grade and present a fall/trip hazard.

### POND

- Improve park's natural features to enhance habitat, site aesthetics, and reduce fire risk.
- Remove dead or dying trees near pond.
- Remove felled tree debris, dead brush, and eucalyptus litter.
- Leave horizontal limbs that provide perching habitat within pond.
- Refrain from mowing the west slope of pond until late June to encourage pollinator establishment and lifecycle.

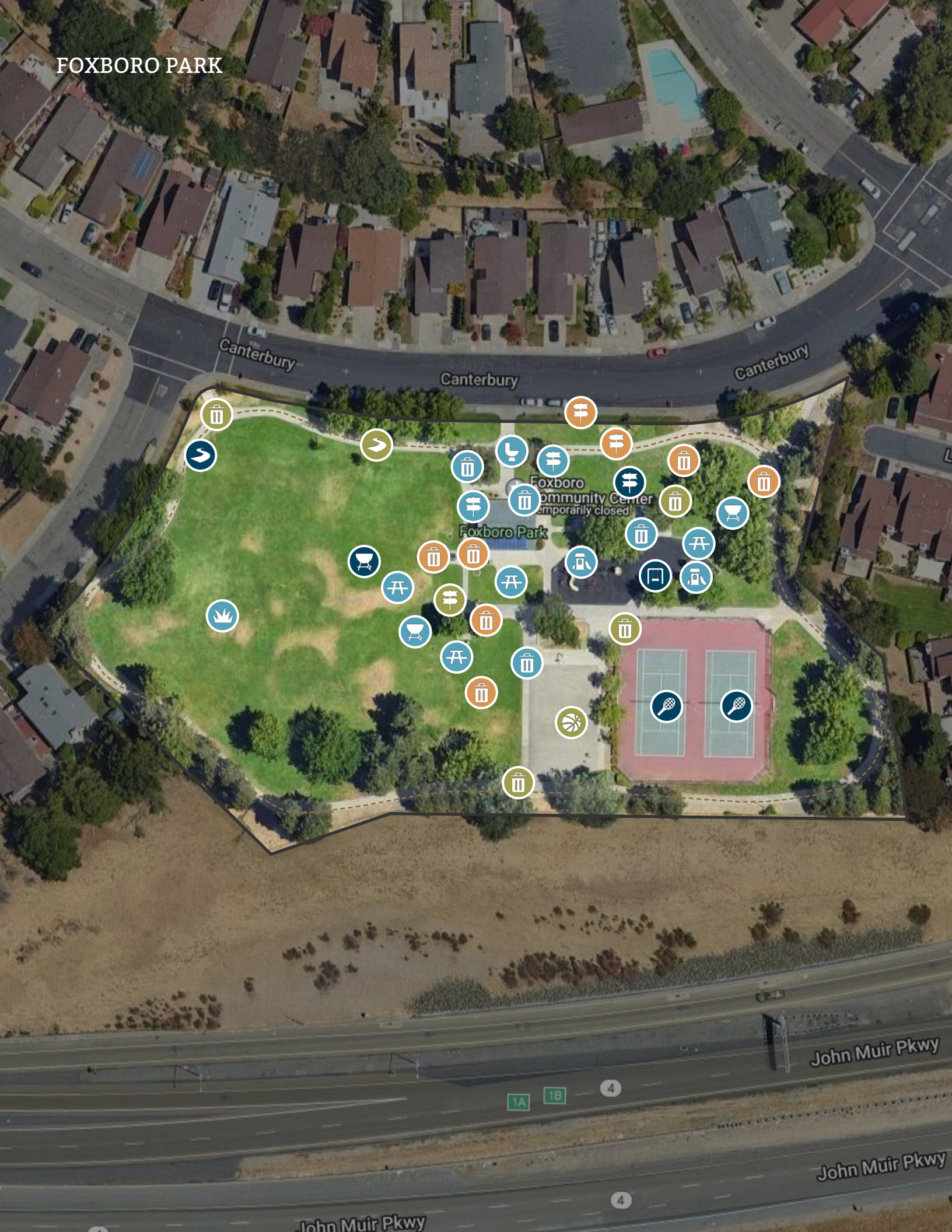
## Location-Specific Recommendations (see keyed locations on map)

1. Replace horseshoe courts with 2 additional bocce courts (if sponsored by area bocce league), or other similar footprint element like ping pong tables, futsal court, etc.
2. Remove trees lining bocce courts to minimize leaf litter. Replace them with other drought tolerant landscaping or evergreen trees with no or very limited leaf litter (ex: fruitless olive) – or – add a small shade feature or shelter for each group of courts.
3. Provide a 0.75-acre fenced dog park on grass slope surrounding developed park to provide a dog park on the west side of I-80. Consider partitioning separate areas for more active/less active dogs and include rules sign, agility features, fountain, waste receptacles, dog bag stations, shaded seating, etc.
4. Add a paved trail connection from the southwest corner of park to Athena Road.





# FOXBORO PARK



Canterbury

Canterbury

Canterbury

Foxboro Community Center temporarily closed

Foxboro Park

John Muir Pkwy

John Muir Pkwy












John Muir Pkwy



# FOXBORO PARK

Park Classification: **Community Park**  
 Park Size: **3.6 Acres**

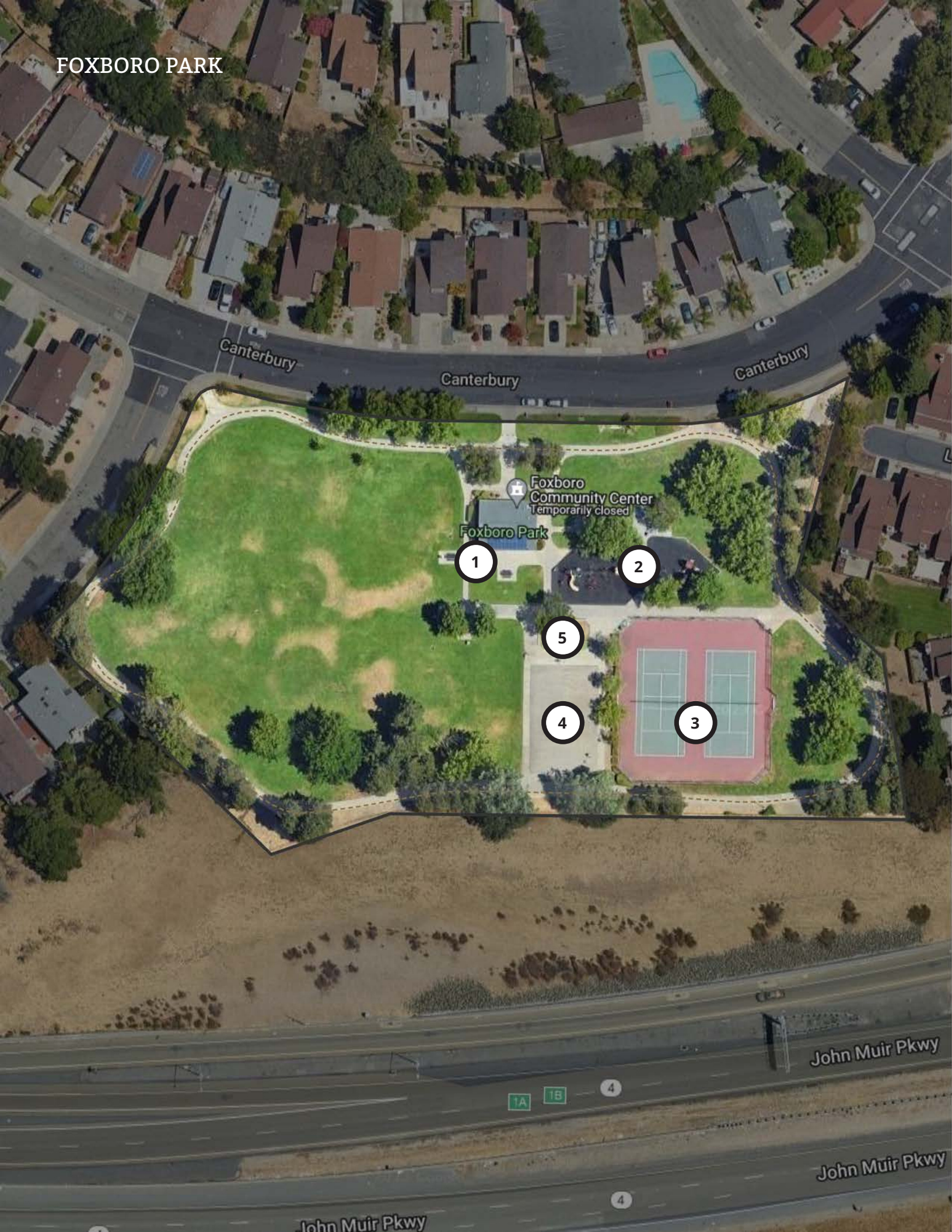
## Existing Assets

-  Barbecue Grill
-  Basketball Court
-  Open Lawn Area
-  Picnic Area or Table
-  Playground
-  Restrooms
-  Sign
-  Swings
-  Tennis Court
-  Trash or Recycle Receptacle
-  Waking/Jogging Path

## Asset Condition Scoring (2023)

Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Not Functional
Barbecue Grill				
Sign			Sign	
Swings			Trash or Recycle Receptacle	
Tennis Court			Trash or Recycle Receptacle	
Tennis Court			Trash or Recycle Receptacle	
Waking/Jogging Path			Trash or Recycle Receptacle	
Barbecue Grill			Trash or Recycle Receptacle	
Barbecue Grill			Trash or Recycle Receptacle	
Open Lawn Area				
Picnic Area or Table				
Picnic Area or Table				
Picnic Area or Table				
Picnic Area or Table				
Playground				
Playground				
Restrooms				
Sign				
Sign				
Trash or Recycle Receptacle				
Trash or Recycle Receptacle				
Trash or Recycle Receptacle				
Trash or Recycle Receptacle				
Basketball Court				
Sign				
Trash or Recycle Receptacle				
Trash or Recycle Receptacle				
Trash or Recycle Receptacle				
Trash or Recycle Receptacle				
Waking/Jogging Path				

# FOXBORO PARK



Canterbury

Canterbury

Canterbury

Foxboro Community Center  
Temporarily closed

Foxboro Park

1

2

5

4

3

John Muir Pkwy

John Muir Pkwy

John Muir Pkwy

1A

1B

4

4



## FOXBORO PARK

Park Classification: **Community Park**

Park Size: **3.6 Acres** Capital Recommendation: **Restore**

---

### Location-Specific Recommendations (see keyed locations on map)

1. Improve the Foxboro Community Center to support indoor/outdoor uses. Main improvements include adding central air conditioning and enlarging storage room doorway. (See *Recommendations for Major Recreation Facilities* for more details.)
2. Replace aging playground equipment and safety surfacing.
3. Renovate tennis court surfacing and striping. Reuse existing nets.
4. Renovate basketball court surfacing and striping; reposition hoops and posts so that the backboard protrudes four feet out from the baseline.
5. Renovate planting area at seat wall and add drought tolerant pollinator species.





# HANNA RANCH PARK



















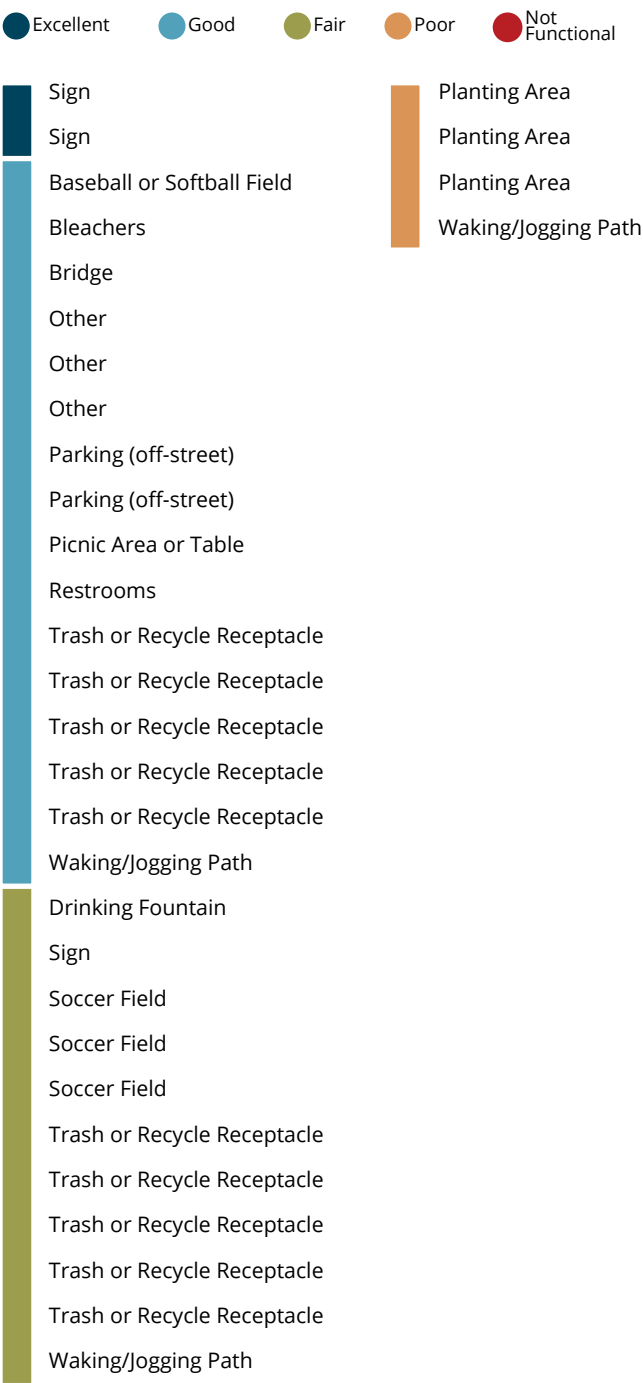
# HANNA RANCH PARK

Park Classification: **Community Park**  
Park Size: **10.2 Acres** Capital Recommendation: **Restore and Enhance**

## Existing Assets

-  Baseball or Softball Field
-  Bench
-  Bleachers
-  Bridge
-  Drinking Fountain
-  Other
-  Parking (off-street)
-  Picnic Area or Table
-  Planting Area
-  Restrooms
-  Sign
-  Soccer Field
-  Trash or Recycle Receptacle
-  Waking/Jogging Path

## Asset Condition Scoring (2023)





# HANNA RANCH PARK



5

1

2

3

4

Hanna Ranch Elementary School

Hanna Park

Hanna Ranch Park

Florence Ct

Caprice Cir

Mandalay Ave



# HANNA RANCH PARK

Park Classification: **Community Park**

Park Size: **10.2 Acres** Capital Recommendation: **Restore and Enhance**

---

## Sitewide Recommendations

- Partner with community based organizations, such as youth sports leagues, to improve fields.
- Explore options to partner with the School District to fund and add other recreation uses at the park, including sports courts or a climbing wall.

## Location-Specific Recommendations (see keyed locations on map)

1. Take existing upper field and renovate as 1 full-size regulation field, with option for 2 micro fields for children's soccer.
2. Upgrade upper grass fields into artificial turf fields through funding and partnership agreement with youth sports organizations.
3. Consider the addition of sports field lighting and fencing at upper field in coordination with neighbors.
4. Consider adding bleachers (ideally shaded) along the accessible route to the upper field.
5. Upgrade lower field to be an artificial turf multiuse field to support a range of sports such as lacrosse, soccer, baseball, softball, etc.





# OHLONE PARK



Turquoise Dr

Turquoise Dr

Ohlone Park

Turquoise Dr

Ohlone Creek












Ohlone Creek



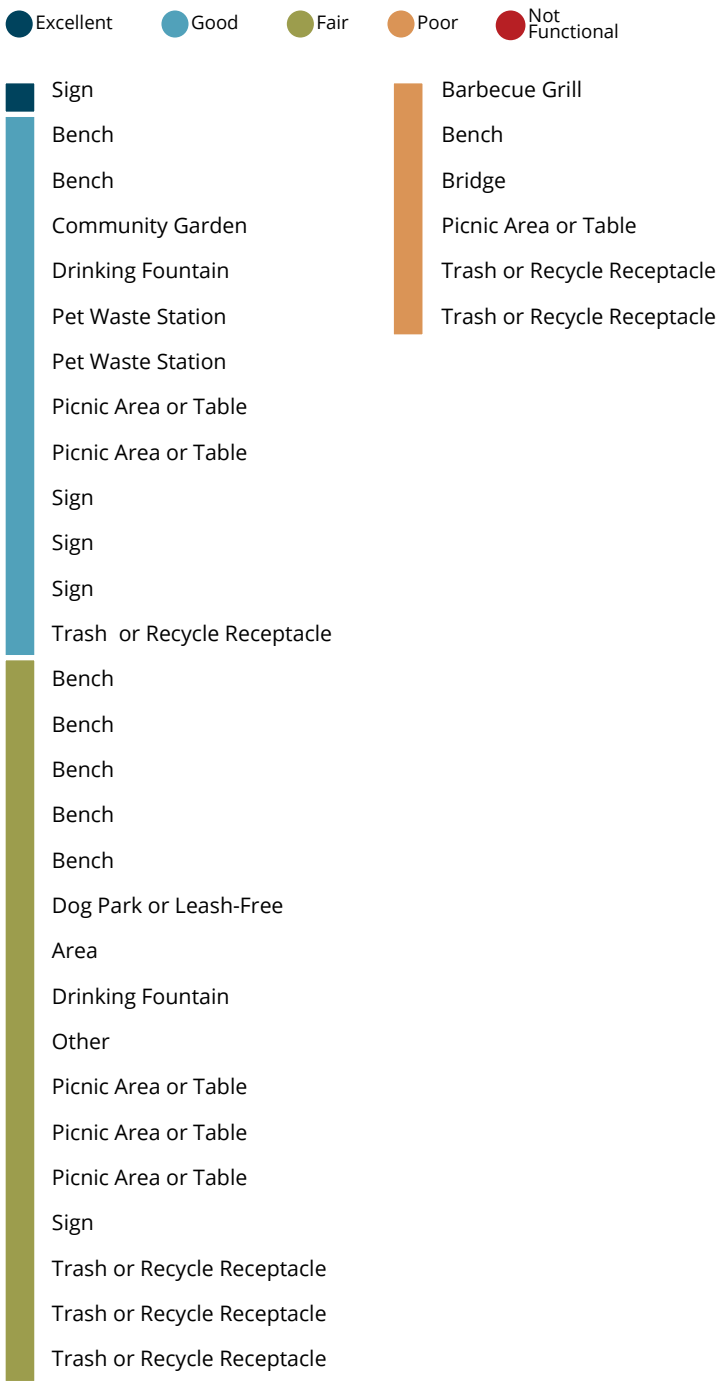
# OHLONE PARK

Park Classification: **Community Park**  
Park Size: **8.2 Acres**

## Existing Assets

-  Barbecue Grill
-  Bench
-  Bridge
-  Community Garden
-  Dog Park or Leash-Free Area
-  Drinking Fountain
-  Other
-  Pet Waste Station
-  Picnic Area or Table
-  Sign
-  Trash or Recycle Receptacle

## Asset Condition Scoring (2023)





# OHLONE PARK



Turquoise Dr

Turquoise Dr

Ohlone Park

Ohlone Creek

1

2

3

4

5

6

8

7

11

9

10



# OHLONE PARK

Park Classification: **Community Park**

Park Size: **8.2 Acres** Capital Recommendation: **Restore and Enhance**

---

## Sitewide Recommendations

- Initiate a site master plan or park design development process prior to addressing long-term projects identified for Ohlone Park. Consider including a parallel public engagement process.
- Provide an accessible loop connecting all major park elements and key amenities (parking, dog park, community garden, proposed all ages play area). As part of this work, resurface paved asphalt path throughout park, providing minor reroutes as necessary (remove divots, cracks, shifts, tree root damage).
- Add signage identifying park, features, and trail connections to adjacent open space (See Proposed Trail Connectivity Plan – Proposed Trail Segment 7) and adjacent neighborhoods.

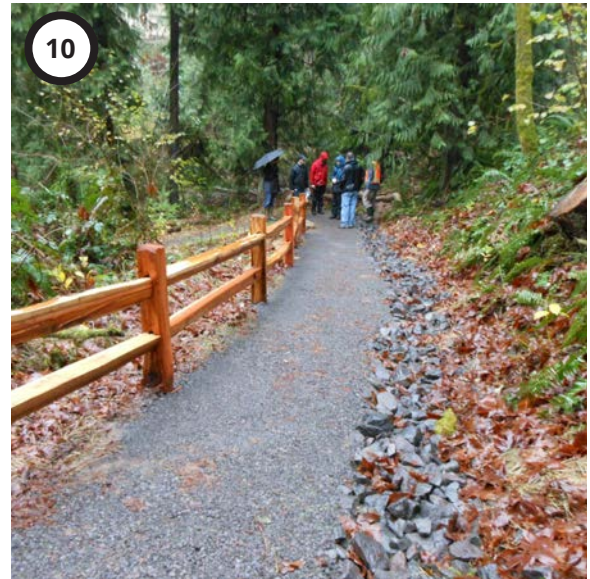
## Location-Specific Recommendations (see keyed locations on map)

1. Replace fence at dog park. Provide accessible gates into dog park and accessible features inside dog park.
2. Connect all concrete picnic pads to asphalt path near dog park.
3. Remove eucalyptus trees at the dog park; add a shade structure at dog park.
4. Removed patterned concrete paver section in dog park and replace with asphalt path or reinforced concrete path.
5. Provide a challenge/adventure type facility for teens and young adults, such as a skate spot, climbing wall or net, in a location with good visibility and regular foot traffic.
6. Protect heritage oak tree on slope during any kind of construction activity. Do not place any development within the critical root zone and dripline of tree crown given sensitivity of oak root systems.
7. Add an all ages play feature that works with the site's natural topography – such as an embankment slide and related elements.
8. Add a group picnic area/group seating/hang out space near the all ages play feature; consider an “art wall” installed in conjunction with youth artists.
9. Expand community garden to address waitlist backlog working with Hercules Community Gardening Program.
10. Provide a soft surface path entrance into the park from Turquoise Drive (between Opal Court and Cinnabar Way).
11. In the long term, re-establish the natural amphitheater on slope beyond oak dripline.

























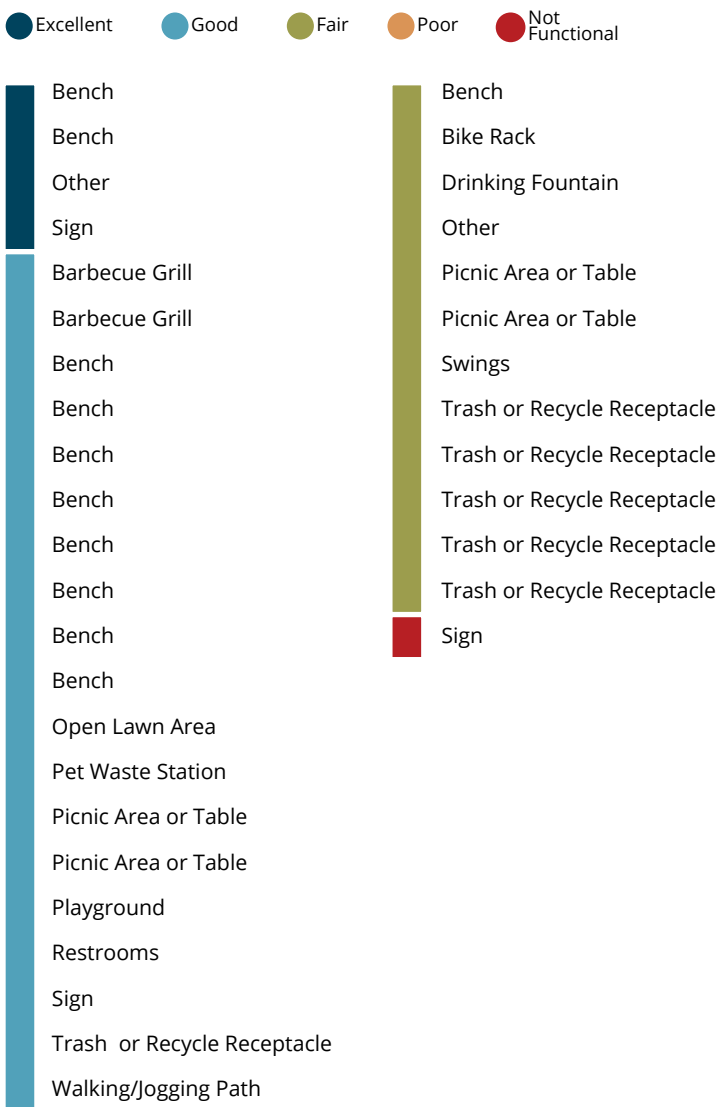
## An aerial photograph of Shoreline Park, a large green field with a winding path labeled 'San Francisco Bay Trail'. The park is surrounded by residential areas with houses and streets like 'Trestle Cove' and 'Victoria Park'. Numerous circular icons are overlaid on the map, indicating various facilities: benches, trash cans, picnic tables, playground equipment, and other amenities. A red icon is also visible near the bottom right.



Existing Assets

-  Barbecue Grill
-  Bench
-  Bike Rack
-  Drinking Fountain
-  Open Lawn Area
-  Other
-  Pet Waste Station
-  Picnic Area or Table
-  Playground
-  Restrooms
-  Sign
-  Swings
-  Trash or Recycle Receptacle
-  Waking/Jogging Path

Asset Condition Scoring (2023)





# SHORELINE PARK





## SHORELINE PARK

Park Classification: **Community Park**

Park Size: **2.6 Acres** Capital Recommendation: **Restore and Enhance**

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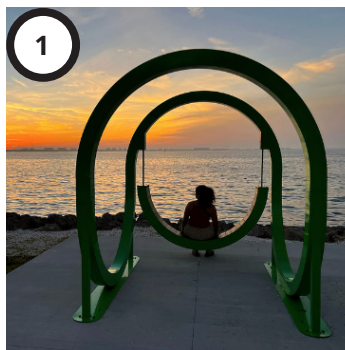
### Sitewide Recommendations

#### PLANTING AREAS

- Add mulch to planter areas to meet elevation of adjacent paved walkways.
- Repair bald spots in turf lawn
- Renovate empty planters throughout developed areas of park with salt-spray tolerant plants and drought tolerant pollinators.

### Location-Specific Recommendations (see keyed locations on map)

1. Renovate overlook seating at Bay edge of park to enhance views, accommodate groups, add signage and art.
2. Add another developed node on northeast corner of park and provide passive/not noisy element(s) for teens, adults, and seniors. Ideas include adult-scaled swings, group swing, group study space/ community table/hangout space, shade sail, etc.
3. Add paved, accessible companion seating areas at two benches spots along park paved loop.
4. Add mulch to planter areas to meet elevation of adjacent paved walkways. Current walkways near playground and restroom are 4" above planter grade and present a fall/trip hazard.
5. Add additional soft surface access point into park from sidewalks.
6. Add Shoreline Park identification sign.
7. Replace drinking fountain.
8. Repaint restroom.
9. Improve access to picnic spots along Bay Trail. Remove vegetation growing within pavement; add paved access path to second picnic spot.





WOODFIELD PARK





















# WOODFIELD PARK

Park Classification: **Community Park**  
Park Size: **6.0 Acres**

## Existing Assets

-  Barbecue Grill
-  Baseball or Softball Field
-  Basketball Court
-  Bench
-  Drinking Fountain
-  Open Lawn Area
-  Other
-  Picnic Area or Table
-  Playground
-  Public Art
-  Restrooms
-  Sign
-  Soccer Field
-  Tennis Court
-  Trash or Recycle Receptacle
-  Waking/Jogging Path

## Asset Condition Scoring (2023)

● Excellent   ● Good   ● Fair   ● Poor   ● Not Functional

	Sign
	Trash or Recycle Receptacle
	Trash or Recycle Receptacle
	Barbecue Grill
	Baseball or Softball Field
	Bench
	Drinking Fountain
	Picnic Area or Table
	Planting Area
	Playground
	Public Art
	Sign
	Soccer Field
	Trash or Recycle Receptacle
	Walking/Jogging Path
	Basketball Court
	Basketball Court
	Open Lawn Area
	Other
	Planting Area
	Restrooms
	Sign
	Soccer Field
	Tennis Court
	Tennis Court
	Trash or Recycle Receptacle
	Trash or Recycle Receptacle



WOODFIELD PARK





# WOODFIELD PARK

Park Classification: **Community Park**

Park Size: **6.0 Acres** Capital Recommendation: **Restore and Enhance**

---

## Sitewide Recommendations

- Initiate a site master plan or design development process for the identified near-term projects of Woodfield Park. Near-term design should account for the needs and space requirements of mid- and long- term projects to be addressed in the future. Consider including a parallel public engagement process. Incorporate a sound study at this stage (or later during schematic design) to inform design as it relates to noise generating uses.
- Explore Joint Use Agreement to provide public access to school parking during non-school hours.

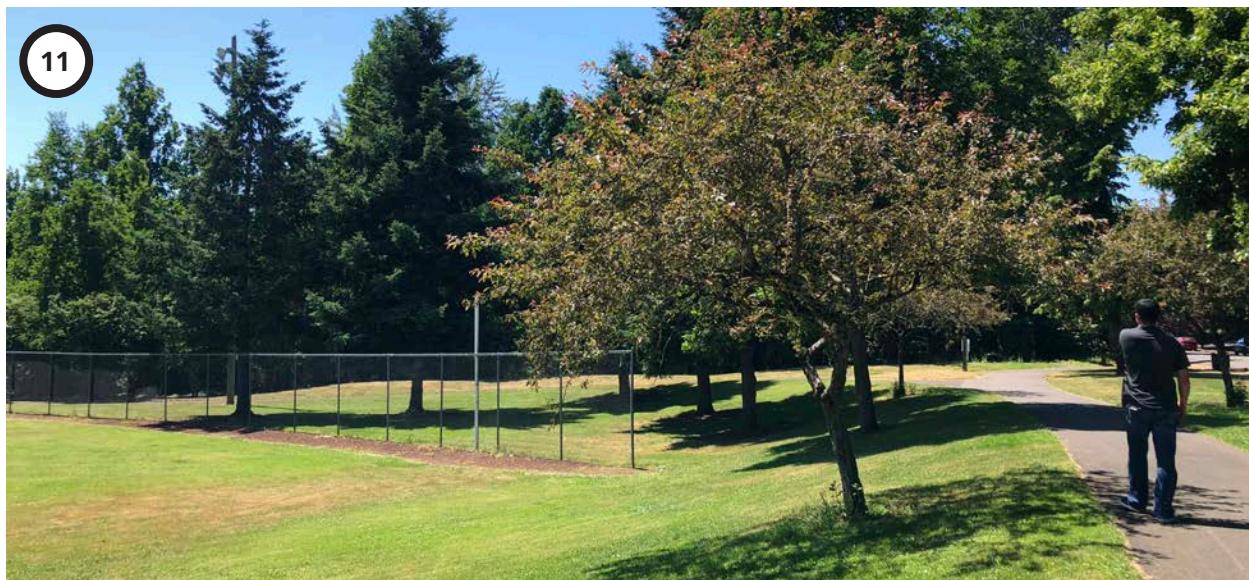
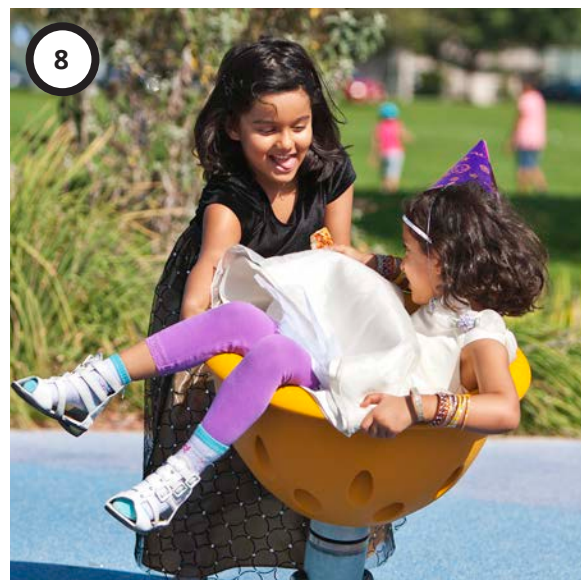
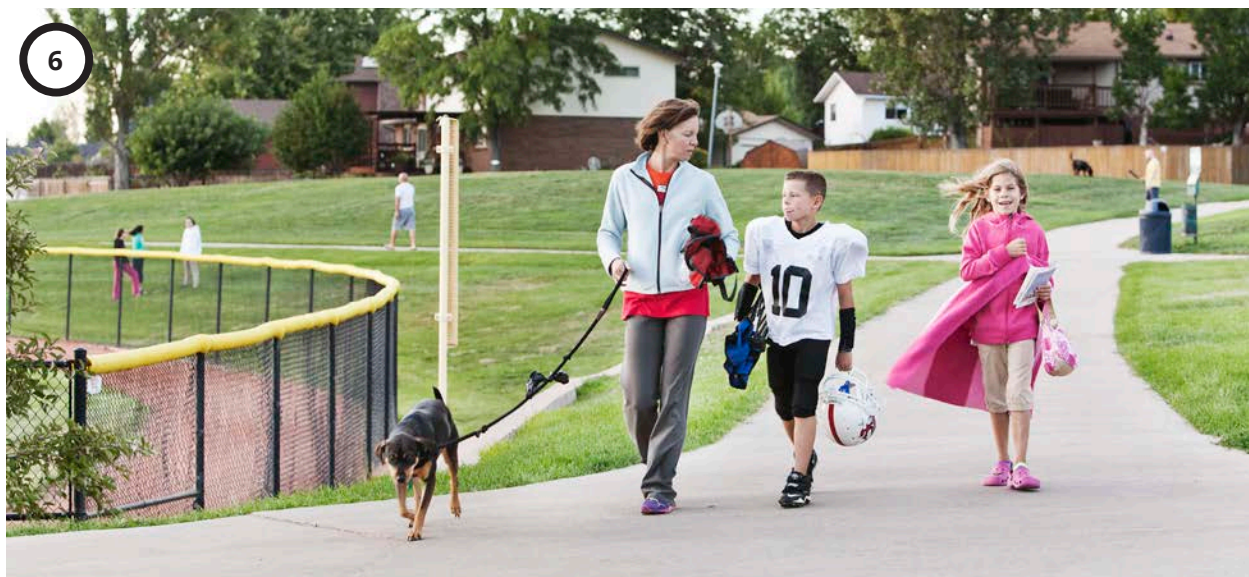
## Location-Specific Recommendations (see keyed locations on map)

1. Renovate 2 existing basketball courts, including court resurfacing, restriping, new posts, backboards, hoops, etc.
2. Renovate the tennis courts to support tennis courts and/or pickleball courts, including court resurfacing, restriping, new nets, perimeter shaded seating, and storage. Provide wind guard system on court fencing.
3. Replace the current restroom. Select prefabricated restroom with two individual unisex stalls. Provide water fountain at restroom.
4. Renovate grass fields, add drainage system, and add overlay to baseball field for a multi-use rectangular turf grass field for youth sports. Replace dugouts.
5. Add group picnic spot near restroom and grass fields.
6. Provide an accessible route between the restroom, fields, courts, playground, picnic areas, and street parking. Reorient and enhance park entry and location of restroom as needed.
7. Add off-street parking stalls across the street on City-owned land.
8. Given the wide range of ages the renovated park will attract, all-ages play features should be incorporated. Replace aging younger children's playground with 2-3 freestanding, all-ages elements such as spinner bowls and sticks, seesaw, balance equipment, etc. As part of this, consider siting these elements near the new restroom to provide more circulation space and open areas around courts.
9. Work with local artists to renovate wood totem pole art. Add interpretive information about the art piece. Consider relocating the piece within the park so its visibility is prominent and complements other park elements.
10. Remove pines surrounding courts as they uplift and damage pavement and create other maintenance issues for court use. Remove any other hazardous trees.
11. Selectively prune other park trees to improve visibility into park's active areas.
12. Vegetate slopes along the asphalt path with new plantings and temporary irrigation. Select low growing vegetation to ensure visibility across the park.











# BAYSIDE PARK



Central St

Central St

Central St

Central St

Cabrillo Ln

Central St

Bayside Park

Clark St

Clark St

Clark St

Clark St









Clark St



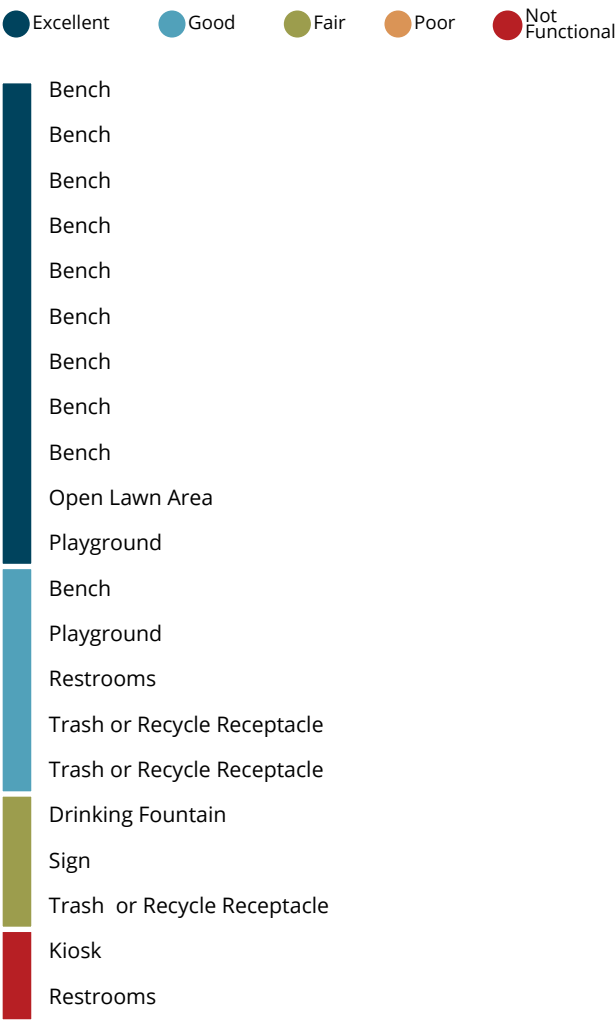
# BAYSIDE PARK

Park Classification: **Neighborhood Park**  
Park Size: **0.7 Acres**

## Existing Assets

-  Bench
-  Drinking Fountain
-  Kiosk
-  Open Lawn Area
-  Playground
-  Restrooms
-  Sign
-  Trash or Recycle Receptacle

## Asset Condition Scoring (2023)





BAYSIDE PARK





## BAYSIDE PARK

Park Classification: **Neighborhood Park**

Park Size: **0.7 Acres** Capital Recommendation: **Restore and Enhance**

---

### Sitewide Recommendations

- Renovate planters where vegetation is dead or missing. Consider removing manicured shrubs in high traffic areas.

### Location-Specific Recommendations (see keyed locations on map)

1. Consolidate the two separate small tot play areas in one expanded area of the park. As part of this process, replace tot play equipment and safety surfacing.
2. Add a small shade structure with picnic tables across from restrooms.
3. Add 1-2 all-ages play elements (balance, spinning, rocking elements, etc.) to provide teens, adults, and seniors something to do.
4. Repair the out-of-service restroom and repaint both restroom buildings.
5. Replace message kiosk between restrooms with a small neighborhood library (little free library)





# BEECHNUT PARK











# BEECHNUT PARK

Park Classification: **Neighborhood Park**  
Park Size: **4.7 Acres**

## Existing Assets

-  Bench
-  Other
-  Parking (off-street)
-  Pet Waste Station
-  Swings
-  Trash or Recycle Receptacle

## Asset Condition Scoring (2023)

-  Excellent
-  Good
-  Fair
-  Poor
-  Not Functional
-  Other
-  Swings
-  Trash or Recycle Receptacle
-  Bench
-  Bench
-  Parking (off-street)



BEECHNUT PARK





## BEECHNUT PARK

Park Classification: **Neighborhood Park**

Park Size: **4.7 Acres** Capital Recommendation: **Restore and Enhance**

---

### Sitewide Recommendations

- Add drought tolerant pollinator vegetation around developed park area.

### Location-Specific Recommendations (see keyed locations on map)

1. Update park entry and access from driveway curb cut. Add standard park sign.
2. Repurpose paved lot into active area for youth. Add a tricycle loop or small skate spot and a half-basketball court and appropriate screening vegetation from neighbors.
3. Remove extraneous asphalt at paved lot.
4. Add a small shade feature with seating near the tricycle loop.
5. Replace swings with 2 adult swings or group swing. Add balance, spinning or other features that can serve all-ages.
6. Add a small neighborhood library kiosk in a high visibility area (little free library)
7. Remove dead or dying trees and select woody vegetation to improve visibility across the park.
8. Provide a soft surface pump track, challenge or bike skills course on upper slopes of park.





FROG PAD PARK

510 mobile detail

Avocet Dr

Sycamore Ave

Frog Pad Park












The image is an aerial photograph of Frog Pad Park, a modern park with a large, irregularly shaped green lawn and several circular play areas. The park is bordered by Sycamore Ave to the west and Avocet Dr to the east. Various amenity icons are overlaid on the park map, including a playground, picnic tables, benches, trash cans, and a mobile detail unit. The text 'FROG PAD PARK' is visible in the center of the park, and '510 mobile detail' is visible near the top right corner. The streets 'Sycamore Ave' and 'Avocet Dr' are labeled on the left and right sides of the park respectively.

[illegible][illegible][illegible][illegible]

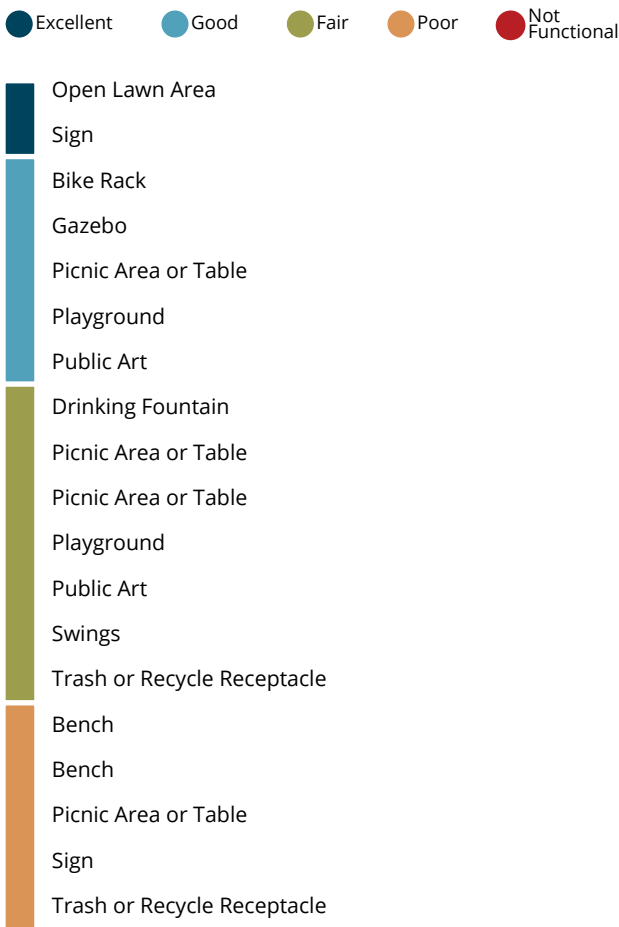
An aerial photograph of Frog Pad Park, outlined by a black boundary. The park features a large green lawn area, two circular playground structures with slides, and a central paved area with a gazebo-like structure. Various amenities are marked with colored icons: blue icons for restrooms, water fountains, and trash bins; orange icons for picnic tables and benches; and green icons for dog waste stations. The park is bordered by Sycamore Ave to the west and Avocet Dr to the east. A label "Frog Pad Park" is visible near the center. In the top right corner, there is a small inset showing a "510 mobile detail" map.



Existing Assets

-  Bench
-  Bike Rack
-  Drinking Fountain
-  Gazebo
-  Open Lawn Area
-  Picnic Area or Table
-  Playground
-  Public Art
-  Sign
-  Swings
-  Trash or Recycle Receptacle

Asset Condition Scoring (2023)





FROG PAD PARK



510 mobile detail

Avocet Dr

Avocet Dr

Sycamore Ave

Frog Pad Park



## FROG PAD PARK

Park Classification: **Neighborhood Park**

Park Size: **1.0 Acres** Capital Recommendation: **Restore**

---

### Location-Specific Recommendations (see keyed locations on map)

1. Replace the playground and safety surfacing in the next 5 years. Remove the concrete step up to the new play feature to provide direct access for those with mobility issues.
2. Repair and refinish gazebo shade structure.
3. Renovate planting beds throughout park with drought tolerant pollinator species.





# RAILROAD PARK













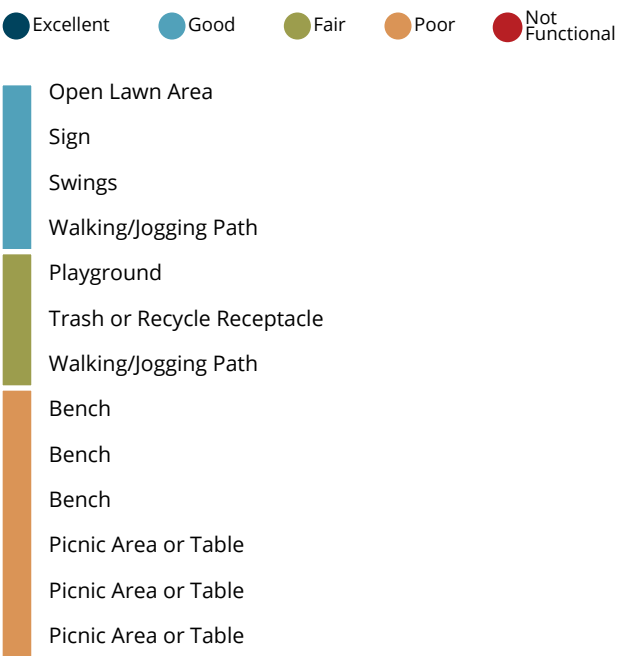
# RAILROAD PARK

Park Classification: **Neighborhood Park**  
Park Size: **0.6 Acres**

## Existing Assets

-  Bench
-  Open Lawn Area
-  Picnic Area or Table
-  Playground
-  Sign
-  Swings
-  Trash or Recycle Receptacle
-  Waking/Jogging Path

## Asset Condition Scoring (2023)





# RAILROAD PARK





## RAILROAD PARK

Park Classification: **Neighborhood Park**

Park Size: **0.6 Acres** Capital Recommendation: **Restore and Enhance**

---

### Location-Specific Recommendations (see keyed locations on map)

1. Replace playground elements and safety surfacing and use space more efficiently to provide more opportunities. Provide equipment consistent with the park's "railroad" name. Swings appear to be in good condition for reuse.
2. Add an all-ages play elements (e.g., balance, spinning, rocking elements, etc.) to provide teens, adults and seniors something to do.
3. Provide a half basketball court, by relocating picnic tables/benches and adding appropriate screening vegetation from neighbors.





# SHASTA PARK



Shasta Park

Shasta Ln












Shasta Ln



# SHASTA PARK

Park Classification: **Neighborhood Park**  
Park Size: **0.5 Acres**

## Existing Assets

-  Barbecue Grill
-  Bench
-  Bike Rack
-  Open Lawn Area
-  Pet Waste Station
-  Picnic Area or Table
-  Planting Area
-  Playground
-  Shelter or Pavilion
-  Trash or Recycle Receptacle
-  Walking/Jogging Path

## Asset Condition Scoring (2023)

● Excellent   ● Good   ● Fair   ● Poor   ● Not Functional

Barbecue Grill	Excellent
Bench	Excellent
Bench	Excellent
Bench	Excellent
Bench	Excellent
Bench	Excellent
Bench	Excellent
Bench	Excellent
Bench	Excellent
Bike Rack	Excellent
Open Lawn Area	Excellent
Pet Waste Station	Excellent
Picnic Area or Table	Excellent
Planting Area	Excellent
Planting Area	Excellent
Planting Area	Excellent
Playground	Excellent
Trash or Recycle Receptacle	Excellent
Walking/Jogging Path	Excellent
Shelter or Pavilion	Excellent
Planting Area	Good
Walking/Jogging Path	Fair



# SHASTA PARK



## SHASTA PARK

Park Classification: **Neighborhood Park**

Park Size: **0.5 Acres** Capital Recommendation: **None**

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### Sitewide Recommendations

- This park is new and in excellent condition with no immediate improvements needed.



[illegible]

An aerial photograph of Sierra Park, a community center and park. The map shows a large green lawn, a red-roofed building, and a winding path. Various amenity icons are overlaid on the map, including a trash can, a picnic table, a bench, a playground structure, a dog park, a water fountain, a fire pit, a gazebo, a shelter, a restroom, a parking lot, a bus stop, a bike rack, a water station, a first aid kit, a map, a compass, a location pin, a magnifying glass, a list, a calendar, a mail icon, a phone, a camera, a microphone, a speaker, a lightbulb, a gear, a wrench, a screwdriver, a hammer, a saw, a shovel, a rake, a leaf, a flower, a tree, a bush, a grass, a sand, a water, a fire, a sun, a moon, a star, a heart, a love, a family, a group, a team, a community, a neighborhood, a village, a town, a city, a state, a country, a world, a globe, a map, a compass, a location pin, a magnifying glass, a list, a calendar, a mail icon, a phone, a camera, a microphone, a speaker, a lightbulb, a gear, a wrench, a screwdriver, a hammer, a saw, a shovel, a rake, a leaf, a flower, a tree, a bush, a grass, a sand, a water, a fire, a sun, a moon, a star, a heart, a love, a family, a group, a team, a community, a neighborhood, a village, a town, a city, a state, a country, a world, a globe. The map is labeled with 'SIERRA PARK' at the top, 'Shasta Ln' on the left, and 'John Muir Pkwy' at the bottom. A green location pin icon is placed on the lawn area, labeled 'Sierra Park'.

An aerial photograph of Sierra Park, a community center and park. The map shows a large green lawn, a red-roofed building, and a winding path. Various amenity icons are overlaid on the map, including a trash can, a picnic table, a bench, a playground structure, a dog park, a water fountain, a fire pit, a gazebo, a shelter, a restroom, a parking lot, a bus stop, a bike rack, a water station, a first aid kit, a map, a compass, a location pin, a magnifying glass, a list, a calendar, a mail icon, a phone, a camera, a microphone, a speaker, a lightbulb, a gear, a wrench, a screwdriver, a hammer, a saw, a shovel, a rake, a leaf, a flower, a tree, a bush, a grass, a sand, a water, a fire, a sun, a moon, a star, a heart, a love, a family, a group, a team, a community, a neighborhood, a village, a town, a city, a country, a world, a globe, a map, a compass, a location pin, a magnifying glass, a list, a calendar, a mail icon, a phone, a camera, a microphone, a speaker, a lightbulb, a gear, a wrench, a screwdriver, a hammer, a saw, a shovel, a rake, a leaf, a flower, a tree, a bush, a grass, a sand, a water, a fire, a sun, a moon, a star, a heart, a love, a family, a group, a team, a community, a neighborhood, a village, a town, a city, a country, a world, a globe. The map is labeled with 'SIERRA PARK' at the top, 'Shasta Ln' on the left, and 'John Muir Pkwy' at the bottom. A green location pin is placed on the lawn with the label 'Sierra Park'.














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# SIERRA PARK

Park Classification: **Neighborhood Park**  
Park Size: **0.4 Acres**

## Existing Assets

-  Barbecue Grill
-  Bench
-  Bike Rack
-  Exercise Equipment
-  Open Lawn Area
-  Other
-  Pet Waste Station
-  Picnic Area or Table
-  Planting Area
-  Playground
-  Shelter or Pavilion
-  Trash or Recycle Receptacle
-  Walking/Jogging Path

## Asset Condition Scoring (2023)

 Excellent  Good  Fair  Poor  Not Functional

Excellent	Barbecue Grill
Excellent	Bench
Excellent	Bench
Excellent	Bench
Excellent	Bench
Excellent	Bench
Excellent	Bike Rack
Excellent	Exercise Equipment
Excellent	Exercise Equipment
Excellent	Exercise Equipment
Excellent	Exercise Equipment
Excellent	Open Lawn Area
Excellent	Other
Excellent	Other
Excellent	Pet Waste Station
Excellent	Picnic Area or Table
Excellent	Planting Area
Excellent	Playground
Excellent	Shelter or Pavilion
Excellent	Shelter or Pavilion
Excellent	Shelter or Pavilion
Excellent	Trash or Recycle Receptacle
Excellent	Trash or Recycle Receptacle
Excellent	Trash or Recycle Receptacle
Excellent	Walking/Jogging Path
Excellent	Walking/Jogging Path
Good	Barbecue Grill
Good	Planting Area
Good	Trash or Recycle Receptacle



# SIERRA PARK



Shasta Ln

Shasta Ln

1

1

Sierra Park

John Muir Pkwy

John Muir Pkwy

John Muir Pkwy



## SIERRA PARK

Park Classification: **Neighborhood Park**

Park Size: **0.4 Acres** Capital Recommendation: **None**

---

### Sitewide Recommendations

- This park is new and in excellent condition with no immediate improvements needed.

### Location-Specific Recommendations (see keyed locations on map)

1. Consider the addition of a small (300 SF) nature play node along curvilinear walkway to provide something for children to do here.





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## **Recommendations for Planned Sites (Waterfront District)**

Park recommendations and design standards for the five recommended Waterfront District sites were originally defined in the 2008 *Waterfront District Master Plan* (WDMP) by Opticos Design. In the pages that follow, 2008 plan recommendations are noted for each site, along with additional recommended elements that were identified through the recent assessment of community needs.

The Master Plan classifies these planned sites as either Special Use Sites or Neighborhood Parks, as defined in Chapter 2.



BAYFRONT/CREEKSIDE PARK (BLOCK K)





## BAYFRONT/CREEKSIDE PARK (BLOCK K)

Park Classification: **Planned Neighborhood Park (Waterfront District Master Plan)**

Park Size: **0.35 Acres** Capital Recommendation: **Develop**

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### Sitewide Recommendations

- The Waterfront District Master Plan (WDMP) recommends developing Bayfront Creekside Park as a 0.35-acre passive, open space park with seating, civic elements, and plantings along Refugio Creek. In addition, develop Bayfront Creekside Park (Block K) to meet neighborhood needs, protect riparian greenspace, and support community aesthetics.
- Create a site master plan with a “natural” design theme to provide continuity between these two sites, to highlight Refugio Creek as a key feature, and to enhance views to San Pablo Bay.
- Landscape the sites with trees, shrubs and plantings that include native riparian species and natural forms but may include lawn to support other park functions.
- Coordinate with the developer to ensure public access. Determine whether the site will be maintained by the City (potentially through an LLAD) or a Homeowners Association.

### Other Recommendations (locations to be determined)

1. Provide an artistic painted crosswalk across Bayfront Boulevard to ensure safe pedestrian crossing and visually link these sites.
2. Create an intimate, shaded play space for ages 2-5 that incorporates nature play options and adjacent shaded seating for families.
3. Provide more challenging climbers and features for ages 5-12 or all ages.
4. Incorporate themed or interactive art, potentially as part of the play space.
5. Provide unique group seating arrangements (in lieu of individual park benches) that maximize creek and bay views. Include covered tables and seating under a pergola or other unique shade shelter.
6. Ensure access to the Creekside Trail.
7. Avoid elements such as traditional fountains that would detract from the natural beauty of the park and be costly to maintain.





# NEIGHBORHOOD PARK (BLOCK B)





## NEIGHBORHOOD PARK (BLOCK B)

Park Classification: **Planned Neighborhood Park (Waterfront District Master Plan)**

Park Size: **0.6 Acres** Capital Recommendation: **Develop**

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### Sitewide Recommendations

- The WDMP recommends developing Bayfront Creekside Park as a 0.6-acre neighborhood park that features views to Mt. Tamalpais with shade and casual along with active, passive and unstructured recreation.
- Create a site master plan.
- Coordinate with the developer to ensure public access. Determine whether the site will be maintained by the City (potentially through an LLAD) or a Homeowners Association.

### Other Recommendations (locations to be determined)

1. Provide play elements and features to expand use to all ages.
2. Incorporate active recreation for teens, adults, and older adults such as exercise equipment.
3. Provide safe access routes and protected spaces (fencing or other barriers from roads).
4. Connect to the adjacent Bay Trail/Promenade.





NEIGHBORHOOD PARK (BLOCK L&M)





## NEIGHBORHOOD PARK (BLOCK L&M)

Park Classification: **Planned Neighborhood Park (Waterfront District Master Plan)**

Park Size: **0.6 Acres** Capital Recommendation: **Develop**

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### Sitewide Recommendations

- The WDMP recommends developing this site as a 0.6-acre neighborhood park with formal character and terraces/levels that support events and group gatherings, with viewpoints that face outwards to the bay, a fenced playground, interactive art/fountains, and shaded casual seating.
- Coordinate with the developer to ensure public access. Determine whether the site will be maintained by the City (potentially through an LLAD) or a Homeowners Association.

### Other Recommendations (locations to be determined)

1. Add connections to the Bay Trail/Promenade
2. Provide active recreation spaces for teens, adults, and older adults, including exercise equipment or challenge features.
3. Connect this park to the adjacent neighborhood square and activate it with residential and commercial uses.
4. Consider adding a small outdoor amphitheater.





CIVIC PLAZA (BLOCK G)





## CIVIC PLAZA (BLOCK G)

Park Classification: **Planned Special Use Site (Waterfront District Master Plan)**

Park Size: **0.5 Acres** Capital Recommendation: **Develop**

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### Sitewide Recommendations

- The WDMP recommends developing this site as a 0.5-acre community plaza space with a large open area for gatherings, commercial activity, unstructured recreation and other passive uses. Shaded seating, landscaping, and a civic anchor element such as a fountain or kiosks can also be provided. This future civic plaza will have a relationship to a multimodal transit station envisioned to be constructed nearby as part of The Hub.
- Determine whether the site will be managed and maintained by the City or LLAD.

### Other Recommendations (locations to be determined)

1. Provide rest zones and additional shaded seating given the likelihood of higher visitor traffic, adjacency to the Bay Trail/Promenade, and planned multimodal transit station.
2. Provide active fitness programming such as morning yoga or evening dance/exercise classes at this site in lieu of fixed exercise equipment or other active recreation elements that take up fixed space.
3. Provide well-designed connections to transit stops/stations, bicycle parking, drop off areas, on-street parking, and access to the Bay Trail given the site will support civic gatherings and other events.
4. Provide interactive public art for placemaking purposes in lieu of fountains that may be costly to maintain.

*Recommended park additions include spaces that can support fitness programming, interactive art, and rest zones.*





PLAZA (BLOCK D&E)





## PLAZA (BLOCK D&E)

Park Classification: **Planned Special Use Site (Waterfront District Master Plan)**

Park Size: **0.4 Acres** Capital Recommendation: **Develop**

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### Sitewide Recommendations

- The WDMP recommends developing this neighborhood as a 0.40-acre plaza space with commercial and civic activity, including gathering, resting and casual dining, food kiosks or carts, with a connection to the Bay Trail.
- Determine whether the site will be managed and maintained by the City or LLAD.

### Other Recommendations (locations to be determined)

1. Provide walkable connections eastward along Bayfront Boulevard towards Refugio Creek, the Creekside Trail, and to the Civic Plaza site.
2. Provide visual connections such as street trees, other landscaping, or lighting cues to create a coherency and sense of place to define the waterfront district.





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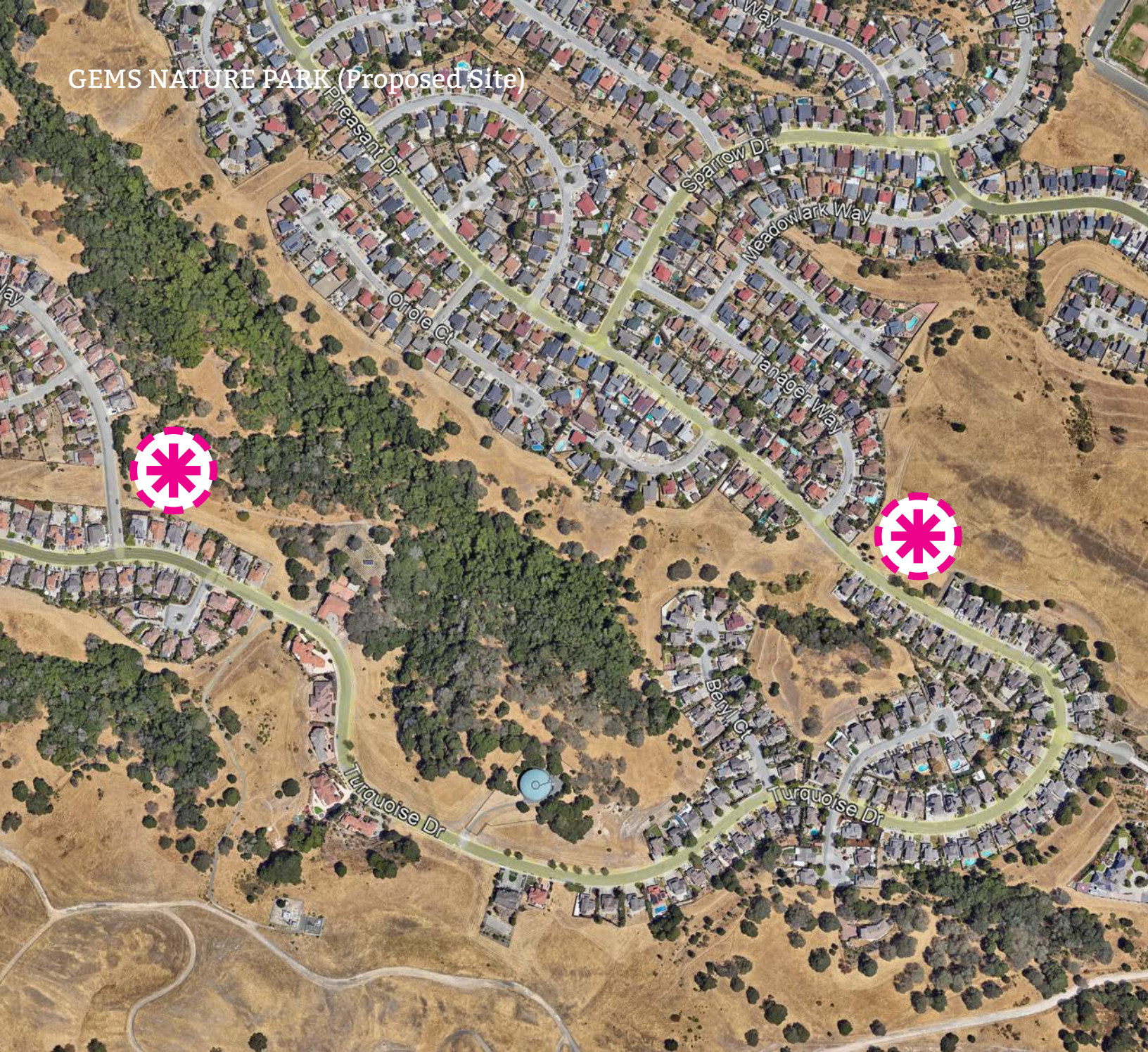
## Recommendations for a Proposed Park Site

This Master Plan proposes the development of one new park in addition to the Waterfront District park sites described earlier. The impetus for this new park is a lack of park and recreation space within the Birds and Gem Stones neighborhoods (Gap #4), based on the access analysis conducted in this plan. Taking advantage of existing open space, the plan recommends the development of a Nature Park, which is a new type of park for the City. This park classification is defined below:

- **Nature Parks** are mid-size parks, typically two to five acres in size, that protect wildlife habitat, conserve natural resources, and support ecological functions, while also providing recreation opportunities. These sites may serve nearby neighbors while also providing unique recreation options that attract residents from across the city. Typical facilities include nature trails, viewpoints, picnic areas, interpretive features, and other compatible recreation uses that are carefully considered to minimize wildfire risks and reduce impacts to natural areas.



# GEMS NATURE PARK (Proposed Site)



Potential Gems Nature Park site (2 sites under consideration)



## GEMS NATURE PARK (Proposed Site)

Park Classification: **Proposed Nature Park**

Park Size: **2 to 4 Acres** Capital Recommendation: **Develop**

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### Sitewide Recommendations

- Identify an open space site suitable for one 2–4-acre Nature Park. Taking into account land availability, access, topography, and development potential, consider a site on City-owned open space in the Birds/Gem Stones neighborhoods.
- Consider objectives (Objective 1 and Objective 6) and related policies in the City's Open Space Element regarding presence of threatened or endangered species such as the Alameda whipsnake, California red legged frog, and Contra Costa goldfields (plant).
- Provide ADA accessibility to extent feasible given the surrounding steep topography.
- Provide a self-guided nature trail with interpretive signage. Consider options to create an app with additional information about local natural features.

### Other Recommendations (locations to be determined)

#### SUPPORT ACCESS FOR NEIGHBORS

1. Provide multiple pedestrian and bike access points.
2. Provide adequate visitor parking that does not excessively impact surrounding residential properties.
3. Integrate public transit accessibility when siting the new park. There are existing bus stops (Bus #10) along Pheasant Drive and Turquoise Drive.
4. Connect the Nature Park to existing and/or proposed trail networks.

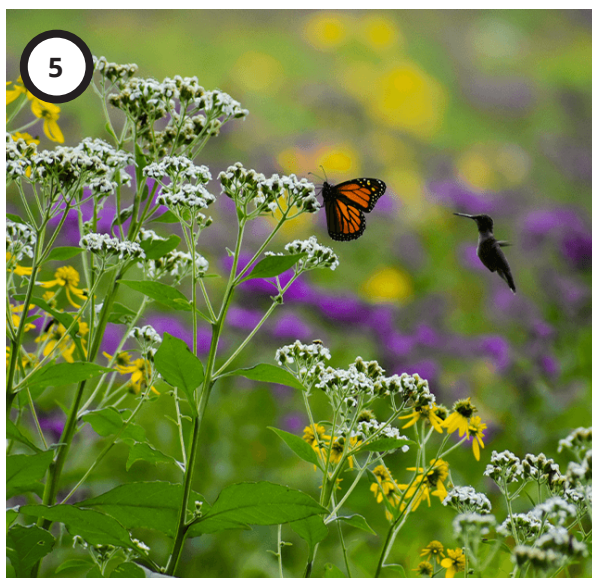
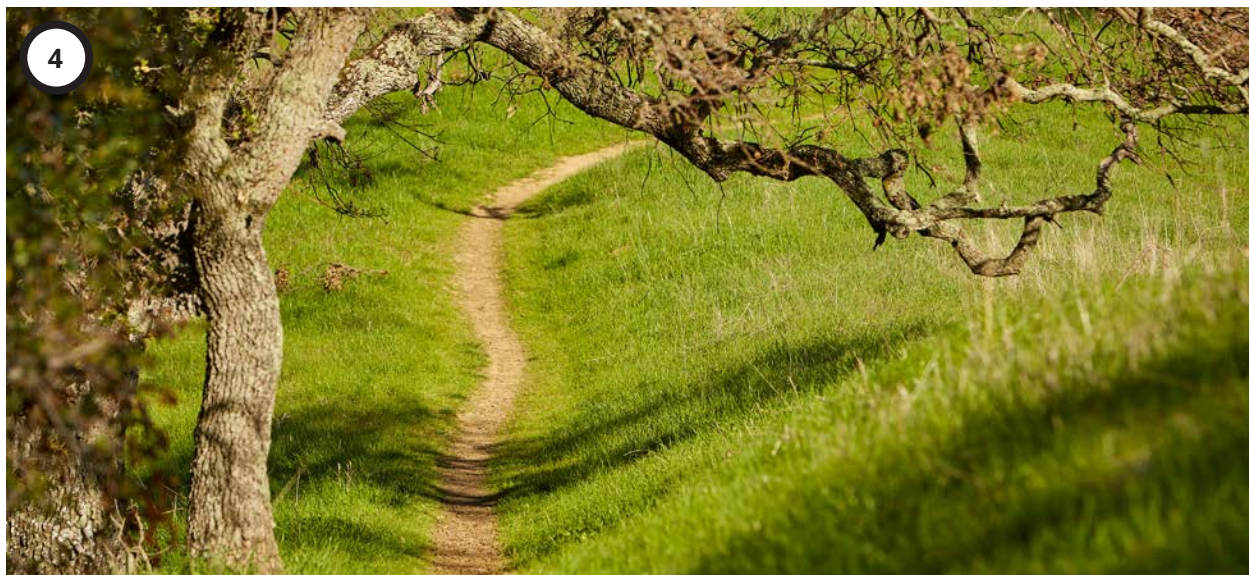
#### DEVELOP SITE AS A NATURE PARK

5. Provide nature-themed playground or nature play with shaded seating.
6. Add par course features along a trail or a fitness zone to support active uses and fitness.

7. Provide a 9- or 18-hole disc golf course with pads, baskets, golf signage, as well as site signage to eliminate user safety conflicts. Work with EBRPD for potential partnership.
8. Consider additional education/interpretation space, such as kiosks or an outdoor classroom shelter.
9. Provide a trailhead that includes shaded picnic tables, benches, and wayfinding signage. If feasible, provide a restroom and drinking fountain. Do not provide barbecues.
10. Activate and program the site with nature-themed events such as stargazing, educational events, trail hiking, and scouts' camp use.
11. If a utility corridor is present (such as the sites along Pheasant Drive), consider only suitable recreational activities to be coordinated with impacted utilities or districts.













## Recommendations for Greenways and Trails

This Master Plan proposed recommendations for greenways and trails in order to improve existing facilities, as well as develop new connections for better citywide networks. Some of the recommendations are intended for all trails; other recommendations are specific to their site.

### All Trails

- Add paved multiuse trail connections to improve east/west access for pedestrians and bicyclists through Hercules and along San Pablo Bay.
- Add connections between unconnected open space trail segments (See Figure 39). Coordinate with utilities and HOAs as necessary.
- Provide a range of compatible amenities along soft surface open space trails such as wayfinding, rules signage at trailheads, trash receptacles, viewpoints, seating, or par course/outdoor fitness stations along trail.
- Utilize fire roads as trails with wayfinding/signage and connections.

### Existing Greenways and Trails

#### Refugio Valley Trail

Capital recommendation: Improve & Enhance

- Replace aging exercise equipment along Refugio Valley Trail. Cluster equipment together in groups near parking lots to improve access to and visibility around equipment.
- Equipment should be accessible from the side of the trail and include safety surfacing.
- Install equipment out of drip lines of mature trees.
- Repair the pathway and add new surfacing where needed.

#### Bay Trail (Segment #1 on Proposed Trail Connectivity Plan)

Capital recommendation: Develop

- Crack and seal existing Bay Trail.
- Construct a 1120' lineal feet (LF) (0.21 mi) multiuse trail as part of completion of the Bay Trail.
- Match existing trail cross section dimensions. Include space for future crosswalks to reach planned multimodal transit station (The Hub) and civic plaza.
- Install promenade in vicinity of The Hub.

## Proposed Greenways and Trails

### John Muir Parkway Trail (Segment #2 on Proposed Trail Connectivity Plan)

Capital recommendation: Develop

- Construct a 960' LF (0.18 mi) multiuse trail along south side John Muir Parkway between Sierra Park and San Pablo Avenue.
- Match existing pathway width on John Muir Parkway. Use concrete to match existing paved trail.

### Sycamore Ave Trail (Segment #3 on Proposed Trail Connectivity Plan)

Capital recommendation: Develop

- Construct a 2800' LF (0.53 mi) multiuse trail along Sycamore Avenue between Willow Avenue and Refugio Valley Road.
- Use a 10' paved trail width.
- This multiuse trail connection will provide critical east-west pedestrian and bicycle connectivity to below I-80 and over railroad tracks.
- Project will require working with CALTRANS and railroad to identify appropriate design standards, details, materials, and safety requirements.

### Trestle Cove Connection (Segment #4 on Proposed Trail Connectivity Plan)

Capital recommendation: Develop

- Construct a 1200' LF asphalt trail connection between Trestle Cove and Victoria Crescent West.
- Use a 6' paved trail width.
- Coordinate with Bio-Rad and adjacent HOAs.

### Pinole Creek Connection (Segment #5 on Proposed Trail Connectivity Plan)

Capital recommendation: Develop

- Construct an 820' LF asphalt trail connection along the existing maintenance road between San Pablo Ave and the east side of Pinole Creek Trail.
- Use a 6' paved trail width.
- Coordinate with City of Pinole and obtain easements from adjacent landowners.

### Gem Stones Trail (Segment #6 on Proposed Trail Connectivity Plan)

Capital recommendation: Develop

- Construct a 1600' LF soft surface trail connection underneath an overhead voltage corridor to connect Bay Area Ridge to Gem Stones neighborhood open space.
- Use a 3' soft surface trail width.
- Coordinate with affected utilities.



### **Ohlone Creek Trail (Segment #7 on Proposed Trail Connectivity Plan)**

Capital recommendation: Improve & Enhance

- Construct a 7550' LF soft surface trail connection between Ohlone Park and Gems and Birds neighborhoods open space.
- Use a 3' soft surface trail width.
- 825' LF through HOA-owned open space dependent on use agreement between HOA and City.

### **Birds Trail (Segment #8 on Proposed Trail Connectivity Plan)**

Capital recommendation: Develop

- Construct a 2400' LF soft surface trail connection through Birds neighborhood open space and existing trail that links to Refugio Valley Road.
- Use a 3' soft surface trail width.
- Coordinate with affected HOAs.

### **Refugio Creek Loop Trail (Segment #9 on Proposed Trail Connectivity Plan)**

Capital recommendation: Improve & Enhance

- Construct a 5515' LF soft surface trail connection between Hercules Community Center and Lavender Place and Redwood Road.
- Use a 3' soft surface trail width.
- Coordinate with affected HOAs.

### **Flowers Trail (Segment #10 on Proposed Trail Connectivity Plan)**

Capital recommendation: Develop

- Construct a 3925' LF soft surface trail connection between Woodfield Park and Shephard Street.
- Use a 3' soft surface trail width.
- Coordinate with affected HOAs.

### **Upper Watershed Loop Trail (Segment #11 on Proposed Trail Connectivity Plan)**

Capital recommendation: Develop

- Construct a 3700' LF soft surface trail connection between Refugio Valley Road and Armstrong Street through Beechnut Park and adjacent HOA open space.
- Use a 3' soft surface trail width.
- Coordinate with affected HOAs.
- Completion of this segment will complete the Upper Watershed Loop Trail (the segment south of Refugio Valley Road already exists)

## Recommendations for Major Recreation Facilities

Preliminary recommendations for the City's major recreation facilities are noted below, including those that are located within parks and at school sites. These recommendations should be considered by City staff and City Council alongside the parallel Facilities Assessment process that will address the City's recreation buildings, estimated to be complete in 2024. Combining the results of both assessments will provide clearer directions for future development, use, and improvements of major facilities.

### All Major Recreation Facilities

- Right-size the City's operational investment and staffing needs for major facilities by enhancing buildings with high use, higher cost recovery, and a strong return on investment (ROI). Pursue alternate solutions (e.g., trade, reprogram, etc.) and avoid renovating older, underperforming buildings.
- Before developing new buildings or renovating older ones, conduct financial feasibility studies and operational *pro formas* to identify funding, staffing, and programming needs and ensure the revenues associated with new programs and activities will offset operations costs and support the hiring of additional staff for recreation, maintenance, and janitorial care.
- When developing, improving, or renovating buildings, create flexible use spaces in larger, multi-generational, multi-use buildings or in adjacent buildings that create hubs for activities. Gradually phase out smaller buildings with dedicated uses that tend to have higher costs and require additional staffing and logistics to operate.
- Track participation data and costs by facility to determine cost recovery and return on investment (ROI). These data will help determine which programs and facilities warrant continuation and capital investments, versus which are unaffordable as buildings age and renovation needs increase. Ensure that all facilities, pool, and room rentals have 100% cost recovery for direct expenses, plus additional revenues generated to offset facility wear and tear and other indirect costs.
- Complete and consider ADA assessment findings for building interiors as part of the Facilities Master Plan.

### Specific Recreation Facilities

#### Hercules Community Center

Capital recommendation: Renovate & Develop

- Continue to jointly plan and program the community center and swim center as one cohesive site that is the hub for indoor recreation activities in the city.
- Invest in Community Center renovations.
  - Invest in bathroom renovations and other accessibility improvements.



- In the short term, protect the gymnasium flooring during events. Add side hoops for cross court practices and basketball games. Provide a central drop screen or curtain to divide the gymnasium space for different uses, such as indoor pickleball, volleyball, and badminton.
- Convert the kitchen to a catering or warming kitchen, removing the cooking apparatus that would require replacement, servicing, and additional fire suppression features. Remove the industrial scale dishwasher.
- Continue to invest in technological improvements for meeting rooms, potentially to support e-sports programs.
- Longer term: As Hercules continues to grow, explore community demand and willingness to pay to develop a new gymnasium at this site.
  - Evaluate the open space south of the pool to construct a new two-gym facility or one full size gym, with a dedicated fitness room and auxiliary multiuse court, with support features such as a lounge, restrooms, storage, and staffing space.
  - Convert the existing gym in the Community Center to a dedicated banquet room/event space. Add stage lighting. Explore options to renovate the kitchen at that time.
  - Expand parking to accommodate new uses, considering additional solar panels to shade parking and offset energy needs.

### Hercules Swim Center

#### Capital recommendation: Restore

- Continue to jointly plan and program the community center and swim center as one cohesive site that is the hub for indoor recreation activities in the city.
- Improve locker rooms as they age, potentially removing rusting lockers, improving showers, and adding amenities such as swimsuit spinners. Long-term, evaluate options to add additional family-style changing rooms.
- When renovating spaces, improve ADA access to the building, drinking fountains, restrooms, and program space.
- Add one permanent shade structure in addition to the three temporary canopies available.
- Consider as a revenue-generating opportunity, provide reservable cabanas, lounge chairs, and pool play toys (noodles, flippers, etc.) for use.
- Consider modest improvements in equipment to support diversified programs, including lap swimming, water fitness and water walking, water safety, kayaking lessons, etc. to attract more diverse pool users.

## Teen Center

### Capital recommendation: Reprogram

- Given the decline in City-provided teen programs since the pandemic, explore options to reprogram and renovate the Teen Center for new uses, in conjunction with short and long-term plans for the Hercules Community Center.
  - Consider conversion to preschool space, renovating the outdoor patio to provide play equipment and improved play space. If a gym is constructed nearby, this facility could also provide childcare space for families using the recreation center after preschool programs are over.
  - As an alternative, convert the Teen Center to a multi-age programming space to offset the demand on space for the Community Center.
- In conjunction with this change, explore other options to better serve and empower teens and young adults in the community with indoor and outdoor active recreation opportunities and age-appropriate programs.
  - Strengthen and formalize an agreement with WCCUSD (the School District) where the Parks & Recreation Department becomes a primary method for students to complete community service hours through volunteerism and event support.
  - Develop a teen advisory committee or youth commission for the City, with the Department taking on oversight responsibilities.
  - Retain one full-time staff member responsible for teen programming and engagement, using other indoor and outdoor facilities.
  - Continue to maintain the fleet of vehicles to transport preschool students to this site and teens to teen programs.

## Ohlone Community Center

### Capital recommendation: Renovate (or explore other options)

- Avoid investment in the community center until more appropriate uses are identified. The building is older, in poor condition, and was originally designed for HOA use; it does not warrant a substantial investment for renovation as a larger community-serving recreation facility given its current use for rentals and overflow programming.
- Continue current uses until the end of the building's lifecycle. If no alternative use is identified, consider sale or a nominal long-term lease to a public service group or non-profit willing to renovate the building for community benefit.
- Discuss with the School District the opportunity to trade or exchange the Ohlone Kidz Center portables for funds to renovate the Ohlone Community Center into an afterschool/programming space. This investment would be consistent with previous voter-approved School District funding to have a dedicated, permanent after-school



center on site. It would address school needs for the portable space currently used as the Kidz Center. If an agreement can be reached:

- Hire an architect to plan, renovate, and expand the facility to provide dedicated space for school age programs. Ensure sufficient programming, storage, and staffing space is available.
- Remove the kitchen.
- Provide indoor, accessible restrooms, removing the exterior restroom stalls and sinks outside the building.
- Consider operational procedures that could make this site suitable for reservations or programming for youth activities after Kidz Center program hours to increase revenues.

### **Foxboro Community Center**

Capital recommendation: Restore

- Improve the community center for indoor and outdoor use. This facility is well situated for programming and public and private rentals for community use, parties, meetings, etc.
  - Add central air conditioning to support rentals and community group use.
  - Evaluate options to increase storage and improve restrooms.
  - Enlarge storage room doorway for large equipment such as table/chair racks.
  - Improve ADA access to the building.
- Increase fees for out-of-town visitors to offset costs for renovations and operations.

### **Senior Center**

Capital recommendation: Restore

- Continue Senior Center operations, renaming the facility the Hercules Adult and Senior Center to expand programming ages.
- Improve ADA access to the building, parking lot, and outdoor patio area amenities.
- Consider fee increases to re-invest in general updates and refreshed features as the facility ages.
- Long term, and especially if a second recreation building is added near the Hercules Community Center, continue to evaluate ROI to operate a dedicated senior center with limited space for programming.

### **Lupine Kidz Center**

Capital recommendation: Relocate

- Divest of the Lupine Kidz Center, which does not serve enough children to justify the renovation costs needed. This is an older facility in poor shape that lacks restrooms in classrooms, lacks sufficient outdoor play space (which cannot be expanded given the hill behind the building), and would require extensive renovation to be updated and functional.

- Move the preschool program to the existing Teen Center.
- If there is a demand for afterschool programs on site, discuss with the school the opportunity for a joint use agreement to use an unused classroom or the auditorium (which the City helped jointly fund) for after school programming, since school enrollment has declined as well.

### Hanna Ranch Kidz Center

Capital recommendation: Renovate

- In the short term, improve the back play space. Remove cut-out to expand half-court basketball and add greenspace; replace play equipment.
- Explore solutions to eliminate the flea problem from a nearby creek.
- As this site continues to age and if program demand continues, renovate the Kidz Center as the largest dedicated program space for children and youth focused on before and after school programs. This will require improvements to the existing portables.
- Long-term, expand and renovate the center as a dedicated preschool, Transitional Kindergarten (TK program), and afterschool program with office space for all three consolidated in one room/building.
- Explore options to add a small youth gym.

### Ohlone Kidz Center

Capital recommendation: Trade

- In the short term, continue operations of these three portables for the Kidz Center.
- Continue discussions with the School District regarding the previous voter-approved funding to have a dedicated, permanent after-school center on site. As enrollment demands increase (and the Kidz Center wait list is extended), explore a joint use agreement or memorandum of understanding with the School District that would allow use of the gymnasium or cafeteria for after-school program use.
- Initiate discussions to explore the opportunity to trade or exchange the three Ohlone Kidz Center portables for funds to renovate the Ohlone Community Center into an afterschool/programming space. If an agreement with the School District is reached, complete the renovation of the Ohlone Community Center prior to returning the portables to the School District.

### Other Recreation Spaces

Capital recommendation: Continue

- Continue to program the Van Domselaar Room in the Samara Terrace and rooms in the Hercules Library for rentals and overflow recreation space to offer additional activities, as long as these rooms are in good condition and available.
- Coordinate with the Library to support teen programs.



## Recommendations for Maintenance, Operations, and Asset Management

While residents and City leaders may be more interested in site improvements, enhancement, and new development, the City of Hercules will also effectively maintain assets and landscaping to sustain its park investments and provide a safe, clean, well-functioning, and attractive park and recreation system.

Recommendations include:

- Prior to adding new parks and facilities, ensure that sufficient resources—including staffing, funding, and equipment—are available to maintain, operate, activate, and program these sites.
- Continue to set aside funding long-term to have monies on hand for the repair and replacement of old, worn, or damaged amenities and facilities at the end of their lifecycle.
- Apply a tiered maintenance approach to ensure the sustainable routine and preventative maintenance of all parks and facilities and apply resources where needed most.
  - **Standard Maintenance:** A standard level of maintenance includes routine monitoring, inspection and care of infrastructure, recreation facilities and landscaping. It applies to most sites that do not provide organized activities and events, or specialized and major facilities.
  - **Enhanced Maintenance:** Enhanced maintenance is needed at highly visible, heavily used sites that include specialized assets. It includes a greater maintenance frequency and specialized tasks. All major recreation facilities required enhanced maintenance.
  - **Natural Resource Maintenance:** Nature resource maintenance costs may be needed for undeveloped/natural portions of parks to attend to the stewardship or protection of natural resource areas. Typically, natural resources such as river corridors, creeks, lakes/ponds, or undeveloped areas left in a mostly natural state require less maintenance. (This does not include capital projects such as pond dredging or restoration, which are described in site recommendations.)

Table 15. Maintenance Action Categories

Maintenance Actions	Applicable to	Routine Tasks	Occasional Tasks
<b>Standard Maintenance</b>	Sites with regular use and traffic that do not require specialized care.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basic landscaping for safety and aesthetics</li> <li>• Monitoring and inspection</li> <li>• Litter pick-up and trash removal</li> <li>• Restroom cleaning</li> <li>• Routine and preventative care for site furnishings and facilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Graffiti and vandalism removal</li> <li>• Amenity and facility repair</li> <li>• Removal of natural debris from trails</li> </ul>
<b>Enhanced Maintenance</b>	Sites with heavy use and traffic, often with specialized assets, public events, and programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All “standard maintenance” tasks but with more frequency</li> <li>• Specialized facility maintenance</li> <li>• Sports field turf irrigation and management</li> <li>• Janitorial care of buildings and equipment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Repair of major facilities</li> <li>• Setup and cleanup of public events, programs, and reservable spaces</li> <li>• Removal of natural debris from trails</li> </ul>
<b>Natural Resource Maintenance</b>	Sites with significant natural resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Routine monitoring and inspection</li> <li>• Tree / brush pruning</li> <li>• Mowing, where applicable</li> <li>• Trail clearing</li> <li>• Litter removal</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tree canopy protection</li> <li>• Invasive species removal</li> <li>• Dumping and hazards removal</li> <li>• Lake or creek stabilization</li> <li>• Natural area restoration</li> <li>• Natural resource management</li> <li>• Fire prevention</li> </ul>



Table 16. Maintenance Recommendations per Site

		Maintenance Actions		
Site Name	Site Type	Standard	Enhanced	Natural Resource
EXISTING SITES				
Bayside Park	Neighborhood	x		
Beechnut Park	Neighborhood	x		x
Duck Pond Park	Community	x		x
Foxboro Park	Community	x		
Frog Pad Park	Neighborhood	x		x
Hanna Ranch Park	Community		x	
Ohlone Park	Community	x		x
Railroad Park	Neighborhood	x		
Refugio Valley Park and Tennis Courts	Citywide		x	x
Shasta Park	Neighborhood	x		
Shoreline Park	Community	x		
Sierra Park	Neighborhood	x		
Woodfield Park	Community		x	
PLANNED SITES (Waterfront District)				
Bayfront/Creekside Park (Block K)	Neighborhood	x		
Neighborhood Park (Block B)	Neighborhood	x		
Neighborhood Park (Block L&M)	Neighborhood	x		
Civic Plaza (Block G)	Special Use Site		x	
Plaza (Block D&E)	Special Use Site		x	
PROPOSED SITE				
Gems Nature Park	Nature Park	x		
EXISTING GREENWAYS AND TRAILS				
Bay Trail	Multiuse	x		
Refugio Valley Trail	Multiuse	x		
Paved Trails	Paved	x		
Unpaved Trails	Unpaved	x		
PROPOSED GREENWAYS AND TRAILS <sup>1</sup>				
Bay Trail (additional segment)	Multiuse	x		
Birds Trail	Unpaved	x		
Flowers Trail	Unpaved	x		
Gem Stones Trail	Unpaved	x		
John Muir Parkway Trail	Multiuse	x		
Ohlone Creek Trail	Unpaved	x		
Pinole Creek Connection	Paved	x		

Site Name	Site Type	Maintenance Actions		
		Standard	Enhanced	Natural Resource
Refugio Creek Loop Trail	Unpaved	x		
Sycamore Ave Trail	Multiuse		x	
Trestle Cove Connection	Paved	x		
Upper Watershed Loop Trail	Unpaved	x		

1. Names assigned to proposed trail and trail segments are for reference only. It is recommended that names be revised based on community input once development is approved. It should be noted that while some of the proposed unpaved trail segments may exist, none are recognized as part of the City's maintained trail system and all require standard elements such as trailhead signage, dog waste/trash receptacles, painted crosswalks where they cross streets, etc., and standard maintenance if they are to support connectivity to, across, and through City-owned open space.





*Figure 40. A majestic older tree provides shade at Ohlone Park*



## Chapter 6. Action Plan

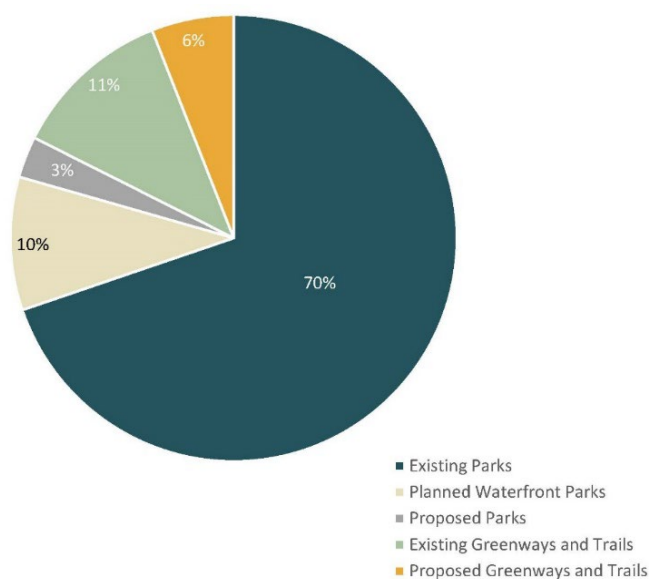
This chapter provides an overview of the proposed capital improvement plan for the Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan. It includes far more projects than the City will complete in the next ten years. To support the development of an annual budget, work plan, and a five-year capital improvement plan, the chapter also describes the prioritization process that was used to define a short-term Action Plan. It identifies funding strategies to implement near-term recommendations for existing and proposed parks, trails, and recreation facilities.

### Overview of CIP and Maintenance Costs

Chapter 5 detailed systemwide and site recommendations for all identified sites within Hercules. To have a sense of the magnitude of projects, planning-level capital costs and maintenance costs for all projects combined were estimated based on assumptions about potential implementation. Itemized project costs were not developed for individual parks or projects. As a point of reference, it could cost approximately \$50 million to implement all recommended capital projects in this Master Plan, along with an additional \$1 million annually to maintain all sites after improvements are made. Clearly this is more than the City is able to invest in parks over the next ten years.

Figure 41 shows how these investments would be allocated by site classification if all projects were completed. Most of the identified costs (81%) are targeted towards improving existing parks, greenways, and trails.

While it is important to include all recommended projects in a Capital Improvement Plan, it is typically not feasible for cities to immediately implement all recommendations. Limited resources and funding instead require a more strategic approach for making improvements over time. However, all projects—including those that may be implemented in 11+ years—are identified in the Capital Improvement Plan in case a partnerships, sponsorships, or grants may help advance them sooner than anticipated.



*Figure 41. Park System Capital Costs Allocation by Classification*



*Appendix F: Capital Improvement Plan* presents order-of-magnitude capital costs and maintenance costs for all sites. In addition, each project was assigned a timeframe and urgency for completion. This information is intended to help identify priority projects for a short-term action plan. (Detailed costs for individual sites and projects will be estimated later as part of the annual CIP development process.)

The capital improvement plan summarizes all projects by site, including the information that was used to identify project prioritization or phasing. This included:

- Capital Costs
- Annual Operating Costs
- Urgency
- Alignment with Hercules Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan Goals

**Capital Cost** provides an indication of the magnitude of capital cost to implement the recommendation, shown by dollar signs as follows:

\$ (<\$100,000)  
\$\$ (>\$100,000 to \$300,000)  
\$\$\$ (>\$300,000 to \$1,000,000)  
\$\$\$\$ (>\$1,000,000 to \$3,000,000)  
\$\$\$\$\$ (>\$3,000,000)

**Annual Operating Cost** estimates the added annual operating cost once the recommendation is implemented, also indicated by dollar signs as follows:

\$ (<\$5,000)  
\$\$ (\$100,000 to \$25,000)  
\$\$\$ (>\$25,000 to \$75,000)  
\$\$\$\$ (>\$75,000)

**Urgency** indicates the level of need. All recommendations within this Master Plan have a demonstrated need, but the level of urgency varies based on the availability of a particular amenity or program as compared to the demand. Urgency can also be a consideration of time sensitivity. For example, if a recommended project will influence or guide future operations, such as development of open space conservation plans, that project would have a high level of urgency. A recommendation could also be considered “high urgency” if failure to act results in a missed opportunity, such as purchase of an available open parcel that could be dedicated as parkland. Urgency is coded as:

**Low**  
**Medium**  
**High**

## Prioritization Process for Master Plan

To identify the highest priority projects to complete in the next 5 years, the City of Hercules involved residents, stakeholders, and community leaders in a project prioritization process. An online prioritization activity was designed to reach the broader public. The project's Steering Committee and interested residents were invited to participate in an in-person survey and facilitated discussion in August 2023. Directions and priorities identified through the prioritization process included:

- Focus on existing sites as well as gaps in the trail system to better connect Hercules;
- Concentrate efforts at some of Hercules' larger, aging parks that will provide visible results to the community;
- Prioritize improvements that serve everyone (such as park safety improvements), and make major investments in active recreation (including sport fields, sport courts, and playgrounds); and
- Implement small projects that have big impacts.

Figure 42. Survey Response to question about Funding Priorities

**Question: Money is tight, how much would you give to each of the following project types? You have \$100 to spend.**

Respondents think that 57% of available funding should go towards improving what the city already has or expanding what is offered at existing parks to add capacity; 33% of funding should go towards new trails and parks. The remaining 10% of funding should go towards new or enhanced indoor recreation facilities and childcare spaces.

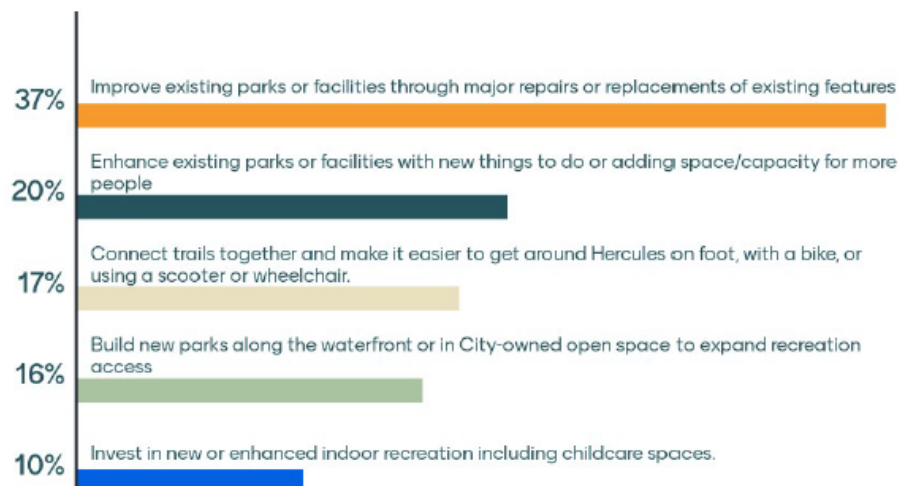
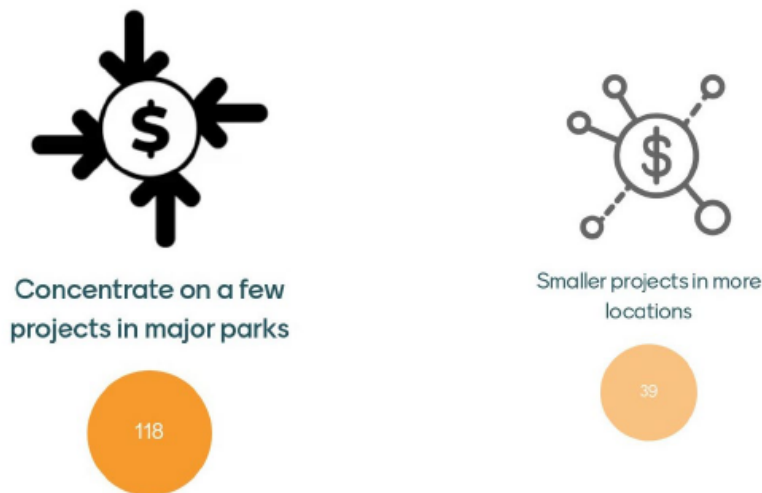




Figure 43. Survey Response to question about Preferred Geographic Distribution of Improvements

**Question: What is more important? Concentrate on a few projects in major parks or concentrate on smaller projects in more locations?**

An overwhelming majority of respondents (75%) prefer to concentrate investment in a few larger parks.



For more details as it relates to the prioritization process, see *Appendix E: Prioritization Engagement Findings*.

Key findings from the prioritization activities were presented to City Council in September 2023. Council, Steering Committee, and survey comments were reviewed by City staff to categorize projects in a three-phase timeline:

- Near-term (0-5 years)
- Mid-term (6-10 years)
- Long-term (11-20+ years)

Using this information, the Master Plan was able to identify which capital projects should advance as the City's 5-year Action Plan for implementation. This a shorter list of actions at select parks is more likely to be implemented with available funds over the next five years.

## The 5-Year Action Plan

Based on the prioritization activities, public feedback, and understanding of available funding, a 5-year Action Plan was developed. Projects identified in the action plan reflect an assumption of City finances, as well as what can be covered with grants and other funding sources over the next five years. These near-term projects will be incorporated in the 5-year CIP and should subsequently undergo refined costing.

The action plan includes near-term recommendations which impact the following sites:

- Beechnut Park
- Foxboro Park
- Frog Pad Park
- Refugio Valley Park and Tennis Courts
- Shoreline Park
- Woodfield Park
- Bay Trail
- Sycamore Avenue Trail (Proposed)

These near-term recommendations are described as follows.

Beechnut Park	Master Plan Goals						
	1. Serve all ages and abilities	2. Provide an accessible and equitable system	3. Create a connected trail system	4. Improve and restore existing parks	5. Provide varied active recreation	6. Support and expand local collaboration	7. Create a strong local identity
<b>Near-Term Recommendations</b>							
<b>Add drought tolerant pollinator vegetation</b> around developed park areas. Capital Cost: \$      Operating Cost: \$      Urgency: High				x			
<b>Update park entry and access</b> from driveway curb cut. Add standard park sign. Capital Cost: \$      Operating Cost: \$      Urgency: High				x			x
<b>Repurpose paved lot into active area for youth.</b> Add a tricycle loop or small skate spot and a half-basketball court and appropriate screening vegetation from neighbors. Capital Cost: \$      Operating Cost: \$      Urgency: High	x			x	x		
<b>Remove extraneous asphalt at paved lot.</b> Capital Cost: \$      Operating Cost: \$      Urgency: High				x			



Foxboro Park			Master Plan Goals						
Near-Term Recommendations			1. Serve all ages and abilities	2. Provide an accessible and equitable system	3. Create a connected trail system	4. Improve and restore existing parks	5. Provide varied active recreation	6. Support and expand local collaboration	7. Create a strong local identity
Replace aging playground equipment and safety surfacing.				x		x			
Capital Cost: \$\$\$	Operating Cost: \$	Urgency: High							
Renovate basketball court surfacing and striping. Reposition hoops and posts they meet standards.						x			
Capital Cost: \$\$	Operating Cost: \$	Urgency: Medium							

Frog Pad Park				Master Plan Goals						
Near-Term Recommendations				1. Serve all ages and abilities	2. Provide an accessible and equitable system	3. Create a connected trail system	4. Improve and restore existing parks	5. Provide varied active recreation	6. Support and expand local collaboration	7. Create a strong local identity
<b>Repair and refinish gazebo shade structure.</b>							x			
Capital Cost: \$	Operating Cost: \$	Urgency: Medium								

Shoreline Park			Master Plan Goals						
			1. Serve all ages and abilities	2. Provide an accessible and equitable system	3. Create a connected trail system	4. Improve and restore existing parks	5. Provide varied active recreation	6. Support and expand local collaboration	7. Create a strong local identity
Near-Term Recommendations									
Add Shoreline Park identification sign.						x			
Capital Cost: \$	Operating Cost: \$	Urgency: Medium							
Replace drinking fountain.						x			
Capital Cost: \$	Operating Cost: \$	Urgency: Medium							

# Refugio Valley Park and Tennis Courts

## Near-Term Recommendations

### Master Plan Goals

1. Serve all ages and abilities
2. Provide an accessible and equitable system
3. Create a connected trail system
4. Improve and restore existing parks
5. Provide varied active recreation
6. Support and expand local collaboration
7. Create a strong local identity

**Initiate a site master plan or design development process** for the identified near-term projects. Near-term design should consider the needs and space requirements of other mid- and long- term projects identified in this Master Plan. A public engagement process for this high-profile site may be considered.

Capital Cost: \$\$      Operating Cost: n/a      Urgency: High

x	x	x	x	x	x	x
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

**Provide shade structures** near group picnicking areas where trees have been removed. Locate shade structures along an accessible route from the parking lot. Replant trees that were removed with species selected to provide shade and meet other City maintenance needs.

Capital Cost: \$\$\$\$      Operating Cost: \$      Urgency: High

	x		x			
--	---	--	---	--	--	--

**Renovate connecting circulation system** between parking lot, practice wall, group picnic area, tennis courts, and Turquoise Avenue. Includes replacing wood railroad tie stairs, steps, and other connecting features with concrete throughout.

Capital Cost: \$\$      Operating Cost: \$      Urgency: High

	x		x			
--	---	--	---	--	--	--

**Provide a marked accessible parking spot and accessible route** to tennis courts and gathering areas.

Capital Cost: \$      Operating Cost: \$      Urgency: High

	x		x			
--	---	--	---	--	--	--

**Remove trees at Tennis Center** including tree stumps and replant using species with characteristics compatible with tennis and maintenance needs.

Capital Cost: \$      Operating Cost: \$      Urgency: High

			x			
--	--	--	---	--	--	--

**Initiate permits needed to dredge the pond.** Select a qualified contractor to dredge and semi-annually maintain the pond. Includes naturalizing the pond edge with a 10'-20' buffer of native pond plantings; replenish existing edges; limit public access around pond edge.

Capital Cost: \$\$\$      Operating Cost: \$\$      Urgency: High

			x	x		x
--	--	--	---	---	--	---



## Woodfield Park

### Near-Term Recommendations

	Master Plan Goals						
	1. Serve all ages and abilities	2. Provide an accessible and equitable system	3. Create a connected trail system	4. Improve and restore existing parks	5. Provide varied active recreation	6. Support and expand local collaboration	7. Create a strong local identity
<b>Initiate a site master plan or design development process</b> for the identified near-term projects of Woodfield Park. Near-term design should account for the needs and space requirements of mid- and long- term projects to be addressed in the future. Consider including a parallel public engagement process. Incorporate a sound study at this stage (or later during schematic design) to inform design as it relates to noise generating uses. Capital Cost: \$      Operating Cost: n/a      Urgency: High	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
<b>Renovate the two existing basketball courts</b> , including court resurfacing, restriping, new posts, backboards, hoops, etc. Capital Cost: \$\$      Operating Cost: \$      Urgency: High				x			
<b>Renovate the tennis courts</b> to support tennis courts and/or pickleball courts, including court resurfacing, restriping, new nets, perimeter shaded seating, and storage. Provide wind guard system on court fencing. Capital Cost: \$\$      Operating Cost: \$      Urgency: High	x			x	x	x	
<b>Replace the current restroom.</b> Select prefabricated restroom with two individual unisex stalls. Provide water fountain at restroom. Capital Cost: \$\$      Operating Cost: \$      Urgency: High		x		x			
<b>Provide an accessible route</b> between the restroom, fields, courts, playground, picnic areas, and street parking. Reorient and enhance park entry and location of restroom as needed. Capital Cost: \$\$\$      Operating Cost: \$      Urgency: Low	x	x		x			
<b>Remove pines surrounding courts</b> as they uplift and damage pavement and create other maintenance issues for court use. Remove any other hazardous trees. Capital Cost: \$      Operating Cost: \$      Urgency: High				x			

## Bay Trail

### Near-Term Recommendations

**Crack and seal the existing Bay Trail.**

Capital Cost: \$\$

Operating Cost: \$

Urgency: Medium

#### Master Plan Goals

1. Serve all ages and abilities
2. Provide an accessible and equitable system
3. Create a connected trail system
4. Improve and restore existing parks
5. Provide varied active recreation
6. Support and expand local collaboration
7. Create a strong local identity

x

x

x

x

## Sycamore Avenue Trail (Proposed)

### Near-Term Recommendations

**Construct a 2800' LF (0.53 mi) multiuse trail** along Sycamore Avenue between Willow Avenue and Refugio Valley Road. Use a 10' paved trail width. This multiuse trail connection will provide critical east-west pedestrian and bicycle connectivity below I-80 and the railroad tracks. Project will require working with CALTRANS and impacted railroad to identify, appropriate design standards, details, materials, and safety requirements.

Capital Cost: \$\$\$\$

Operating Cost: \$

Urgency: High

#### Master Plan Goals

1. Serve all ages and abilities
2. Provide an accessible and equitable system
3. Create a connected trail system
4. Improve and restore existing parks
5. Provide varied active recreation
6. Support and expand local collaboration
7. Create a strong local identity

x

x

x



## **Two-Step Assessment for Future Projects**

As the City continues to implement this plan, available funding, changing City initiatives and priorities, partner involvement, and similar factors may influence the desired phasing of projects. For this reason, the Master Plan presents an assessment process to help guide how and where to invest funding when it becomes available.

To assist the City of Hercules in assessing projects, the Master Plan outlines a two-step process for evaluating capital projects. Step 1 criteria ensure alignment with the Master Plan goals. Step 2 criteria ensure alignment with the reality of the current park system (Figure 44). Projects must fulfill at least one criterion per step; projects that fulfill more criteria should be prioritized. This evaluation framework should be used to sequence capital projects in annual capital improvement planning and budgeting.

Figure 44. Project Assessment Process for Future Projects

### Step 1. Alignment with the Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan Goals

- ☐ **Serve all ages and abilities.**
- ☐ **Provide an accessible and equitable system.**
- ☐ **Create an interconnected trail system.**
- ☐ **Improve and restore existing parks in Hercules.**
- ☐ **Provide additional opportunities for varied active recreation in the park system.**
- ☐ **Support and expand local collaboration.**
- ☐ **Create a strong local identity.**

### Step 2. Alignment with Park System Realities

How well does a proposed project address the following criteria?

- ☐ **Ease of Implementation:** Can the project be done quickly and easily? Is the project “shovel ready” (e.g., advanced planning, feasibility studies, and permitting have been completed)?
- ☐ **Resource Availability:** Does the project use or leverage available resources (staffing, funding, grants, partnerships, equipment)?
- ☐ **Existing Opportunity:** Does the project use existing resources (land, facility, equipment, etc.) for improvement, repurposing, renovation, etc.?
- ☐ **Cost Savings:** Does the project reduce costs, increase revenues, increase sustainability, or improve maintenance and operational efficiencies?
- ☐ **Value:** Does the project deliver high value for the cost of resources needed, relative to other projects?
- ☐ **Key Connection:** Does the project increase access, bring value, or expand use, of other sites within the system (i.e., will it yield benefits beyond its own improvement)?
- ☐ **Underserved or Underrepresented Groups:** Does the project serve underserved areas or underrepresented groups to improve equity across the city?
- ☐ **City Priority:** Does the project coincide with, or support, another City project or initiative?
- ☐ **Community Priority:** Does the project repair or renovate a high-use, popular park/facility, or address top community needs?
- ☐ **Multiple Benefits:** Does the project benefit many people and/or support multiple or flexible uses?
- ☐ **Urgency:** Is there an urgency to the project (e.g., issues around public safety, acquisition deadline, etc.).



## Existing and Potential Funding Sources

The City of Hercules works to keep its residents safe, maintain critical infrastructure, and support community livability—all while ensuring long-term fiscal sustainability. It does so through the wise and strategic use of its funding sources. Over the last several years, the global COVID-19 pandemic impacted the Hercules Parks & Recreation Department significantly, decreasing revenues while programming was suspended. The post-pandemic years have seen a steady return to normalcy as well as additional investments from funding associated with the American Recovery Plan Act (ARPA). This funding has allowed the City to consider options to increase City staffing and invest in neglected infrastructure. This commitment to improving City services is a step in the right direction to develop and maintain quality parks, facilities, and recreational services.

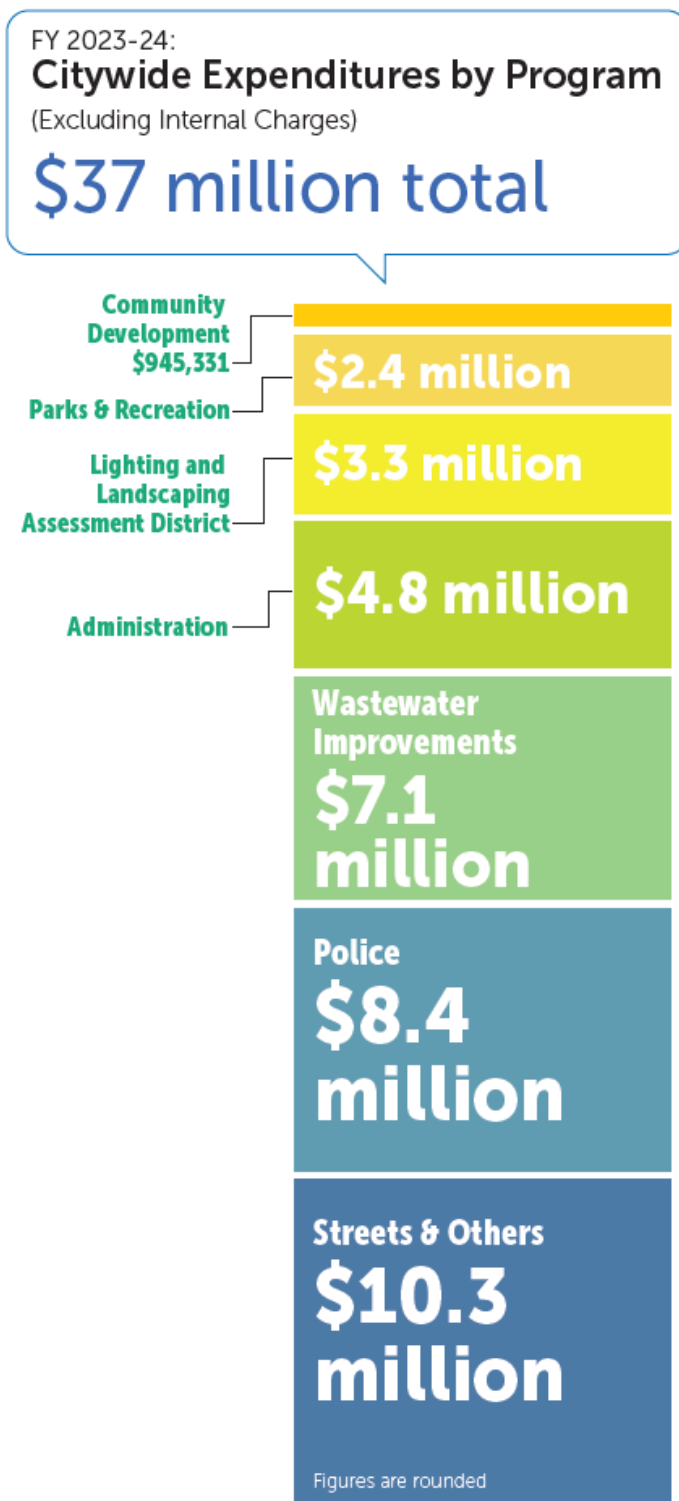


Figure 45 (right). FY 2023-24 City Expenditures by Program. (City of Hercules)

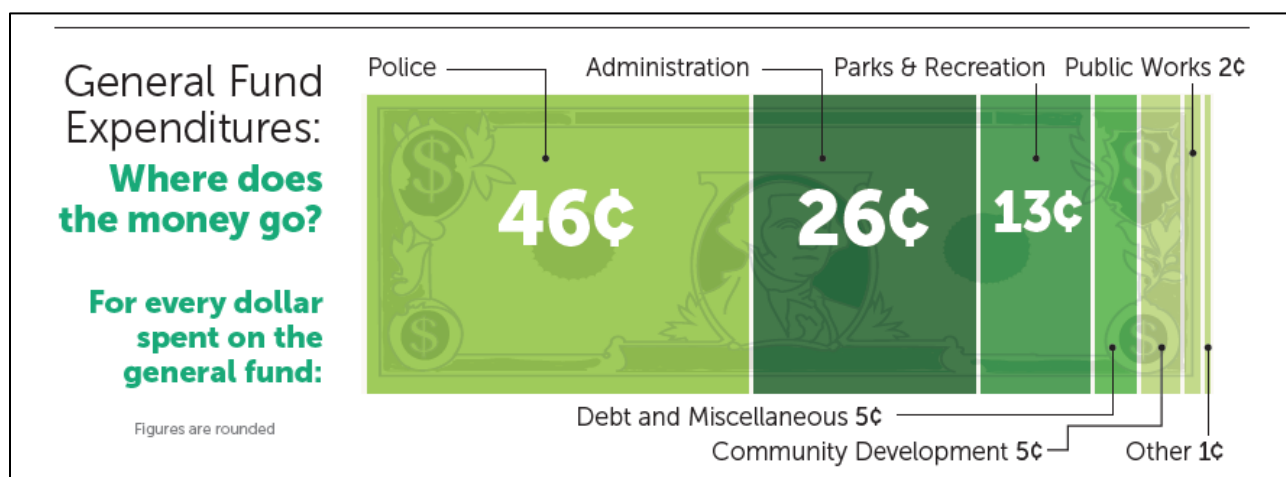
## Existing Hercules' Funding Sources

The City of Hercules relies on several funding sources to support park capital projects, maintenance, operations, and programming. The following existing funding sources are taken from the City of Hercules Fiscal Year 2023-24 Annual Budget (Adopted).

### General Fund

The City of Hercules General Fund is the general operating fund of the City. It accounts for all financial resources, except those required to be tracked in separate funds. It receives revenues from the sales tax, utility user tax, vehicle license fees, program revenues, property taxes, other taxes, and miscellaneous revenues. The majority of General Fund dollars support expenditures for Police and Administration (Figure 46). In FY 2023-24, approximately 13% of the General Fund was allocated to Parks and Recreation Department expenditures. In the last four fiscal years (FY 2019 – FY 2023), Parks and Recreation expenditures using General Fund dollars have ranged from a low of approximately \$1.44 million (FY 20-21, during the pandemic) to a high of \$2.17 million (FY 19-20). For many cities, it is difficult to increase General Fund monies for Parks and Recreation, but funds can be earmarked for Department expenditures so that there are dedicated funds for key tasks. For example, in Hercules, recreation revenues such as rentals, reservations, and program fees go into the General Fund. The City could earmark these revenues as dedicated funding for parks, facilities, and programs, so that any revenues collected are reinvested in recreation. The General Fund also funds parks capital improvement projects using capital reserve funding.

Figure 46. Hercules General Fund Allocations to Parks and Recreation. (City of Hercules)





### Consumer and Participant Fees

The City of Hercules receives funding through program participation fees. Pre-pandemic revenue yielded approximately \$1.5 million. With the return of programs and facility rentals, the City is expected to return to these revenues.<sup>5</sup> Given the extent to which inflation has affected prices in recent years, Hercules may need to review and potentially increase fees to align with market rates.

### Facility Rentals

There are a variety of facilities and spaces available for fee-based rentals, which result in a steady revenue stream for the City of Hercules. Rentable facilities include the Hercules Community Center, the Ohlone Community Center, the Hercules Senior Center, the Foxboro Community Center, the Van Domselaar Room, the Teen Center, Council Chambers, library rooms, the gymnasium, resource rooms, picnic tables and gazebos, and sports fields and courts. Rental facilities are commonly used for weddings, conferences, parties, and family gatherings. Given the extent to which inflation has affected prices in recent years, Hercules may need to review and potentially increase fees to be in line with market rates and comparable communities. The City should also charge non-resident rates when people from outside the City are renting facilities.

### Impact Fees

The Hercules Planning & Building Department collects and development impact fees to fund park projects tied to new growth. Authorized by AB1600, an impact fee is a flat fee assessed to new buildings to pay for new infrastructure that is needed to offset the “impacts” of that new housing on the community. The fee must be paid at the time the developer obtains a building permit and before a certificate of occupancy can be issued. Impact fees only support expenditures related to capacity enhancement projects, such as the acquisition and development of new parks or the provision of new or expanded facilities in existing parks. Fees cannot be used for maintenance, operations, programming, the renovation of existing parks, or the repair or replacement of existing facilities. Typically, developers pay a fee to the City that staff use to fund park development. However, the City may negotiate with the developer to develop a park instead of paying fees. In these cases, the City should oversee site planning and design to ensure the park meets City of Hercules park standards, addresses the needs of nearby neighbors, and does not integrate high-maintenance facilities or landscaping that the City cannot afford to maintain.

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<sup>5</sup> City of Hercules FY 2022-23 Annual Budget estimates conservatively a revenue yield of 75% of total pre-pandemic actual receipts (\$1.1 million).

As posted on the City's website, Hercules charges different rates for different types of dwelling units. Specifically for Parks and Recreation Facilities, current rates are as follows:

- Single Family: \$1,705 per dwelling unit
- Multi-Family: \$1,033 per dwelling unit

The City also collects Transportation impact fees, that (if sufficient) could help fund trails that support non-motorized transportation (e.g., multi-use trails). However, the City does not collect Parks and Recreation Facility impact fees for Retail/Flex, Office, Industrial, or Hotel development. Current rates on residential units are extremely low, especially given the inflation in prices for materials and construction services over the last several years.

Since the Master Plan recommends new park and trail development, including special use plazas in mixed-use developments, the City should review and potentially increase its impact fees. It should consider adding Parks and Recreation Facilities impact fees for non-residential buildings, because employees and hotel visitors also will benefit from nearby parks and multi-use trail development. These changes are critical, because the City cannot rely on General Funds or CIP Funds to support new park and facility development.

### **Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Funding**

Hercules' Citywide CIP includes funding that is intended to improve the City's aging public infrastructure. Public infrastructure includes the City's streets, sewers, storm drains, transportation, streetlights, trees, buildings, and parks. The City applies a "fix it first" approach, where capital maintenance of existing infrastructure is generally prioritized over installation of new infrastructure. Parks and recreation facilities compete against other types of infrastructure for eligible funding, where streets, lighting, etc., may be prioritized for public safety. The City acknowledges that current funds are insufficient to adequately maintain existing infrastructure, which leads to a backlog of deferred maintenance and improvement projects. This means that the City will need additional sources of funding to address deferred maintenance, ongoing asset management, as well as the ability to add new facilities in existing parks.

### **Special Revenue Funds: Landscape & Lighting Assessment District Fund**

The City of Hercules' Landscape & Lighting Assessment Districts (LLADs) collects revenues for the maintenance of parks, landscaping, and street lighting throughout the City and in neighborhood-specific zones, helping to keep neighborhoods safe and clean. LLAD funds support routine landscape maintenance – such as mowing, pruning, weed abatement, and trash and debris pick-up within street medians, parks, and public open space. The LLAD also funds tasks such as creating and maintaining fire breaks. Currently LLAD funding is used for maintenance activities and there isn't sufficient revenue for improvements.



### **Public-Private or Public-Nonprofit Partnerships**

Pursuing partnerships is a successful way that many cities solicit funding, labor, or the use of shared property from invested stakeholders to develop, maintain, or co-locate and operate specific facilities. The City of Hercules has a history of coordinating with the School District for youth facilities and recreation facilities, such as at Hanna Ranch Park. The City should continue to look at partnerships to improve and develop additional facilities. For example, partnerships with local youth sports organizations or leagues could be pursued to address sports field and sports court improvements and renovations, or even the development of a new facility such as a disc golf course.

### **Grants**

Typically, grant applications are competitive processes that—if awarded—restrict funds for a specific use. These may include but are not limited to park development, the replacement of a specific type of facility, or expansion of a specific type of program. Some grants require a city to commit to the maintenance and operation of the resulting facilities into perpetuity. Most grants also require matching funds. Many cities have dedicated or hired grant writers, or a park foundation or commission that can apply for grants on the city's behalf. The City of Hercules relies on existing staff to coordinate grant applications. Periodically, the City of Hercules has been successful in winning grant funding to support key projects. To be effective at competing for grant funding, the City will need to invest staff time in tracking and applying for grants. Currently, there are numerous grant opportunities from the state and federal level for projects that align with larger initiatives, such as public health, diverse and disadvantaged communities, or environmental resiliency.

### **Additional Funding Sources**

In addition to the existing funding sources the City typically uses to fund parks projects, it may need to consider new funding options to carry out the recommendations of this plan. Potential funding strategies are noted below for consideration by the City.

#### **General Obligation and Revenue Bonds**

General obligation bonds are voter-approved bonds with the assessment placed on real property. The money can only be used for capital improvements, but not for maintenance or operations. This property tax is levied for a specific period of time (usually 15-20 years). Passage requires a two-thirds majority approval by the voters.

Revenue bonds are typically sold to fund specific projects (e.g. systemwide park lighting or the renovation of a citywide park) or to finance revenue-generating facilities (e.g. community centers). These may include new facilities or the renovation of an existing

facility. The City must be able guarantee repayment. For example, the interest and capital could be paid from the revenue produced from the operation of the new facility. Some cities are exploring the use of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds or reserves to guarantee a revenue bond. This allows the City to borrow sufficient funds to complete an entire project at once, and then repay the costs gradually. This is a successful way to integrate construction efficiencies to do one or several large projects simultaneously, saving monies in the long term. Revenue bonds may be passed by City Council and do not require voter approval.

While Hercules has been hesitant to take on debt, it has demonstrated strong financial and funding management for several years. The City Council and community may consider a small general obligation or revenue bond to renovate key City parks and facilities that are accessible to all and integral to City identity.

### Property Sale, Exchange, or Lease

If a city has an excess building or piece of property that it does not need, it could sell the property or trade the property to obtain a site more suitable for park use. Long-term, it could lease a facility to a community group or business for long-term use. As Hercules continues to evaluate its Major Facilities and Buildings, it may identify buildings that are no longer cost-effective or feasible for City staff to operate for recreation or youth services. City staff may need to evaluate any property restrictions that affect potential sales, leases, or alternative uses before considering divestment.

### Donations and Foundation Support

Donations of land, materials, artwork, or funds could be made to the City for the purposes of developing, improving, maintaining, or operating parks and facilities. Endowment funds and grants can be sourced from the public through established organizations such as community foundations.

### Sponsorships, Naming Rights, Memorials, Promotions

Many cities solicit additional funds by offering opportunities to invest in the following:

- *Signage and Advertising Space:* Name promotion and recognition in key locations for businesses and agencies, e.g., on banners in a gymnasium, disc golf signage, etc.
- *Family Memorials:* Sales of engraved bricks, benches, plaques, or dedicated trees to honor lost ones or loved ones.
- *Naming rights:* A form of sponsorship that transfers funds to the city in exchange for having facilities such as a community center, classrooms, gymnasiums, amphitheater, playground, etc., named for a patron (person or business).



- *Sponsorships*: The act of the act of providing funding, promotions, or an in-kind fee for a park, facility, program, or service, in return for access or advertising.

### **Mello-Roos Community Facilities District**

The Mello-Roos Community Facilities Act of 1982 allows any county, city, special district, school district or joint powers authority to establish a Mello-Roos Community Facilities District (a “CFD”) to finance public improvements and services. The services and improvements that Mello-Roos CFDs can finance include streets, sewer systems and other basic infrastructure, police protection, fire protection, ambulance services, schools, parks, libraries, museums, and other cultural facilities. Formation of a CFD requires a two-thirds vote of residents living within the proposed boundaries. If there are fewer than twelve residents, then the vote is conducted of current landowners. The assessment cannot be based on property value; instead it is based on the size of the property or square footage of structures. By law, the CFD is also entitled to recover expenses needed to form the CFD and administer the annual special taxes and bonded debt. The special assessment continues until bonds are paid off and then is typically reduced to a level to maintain the investments.

## Moving Forward

The community-driven Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan is the culmination of the significant collaborative effort among City staff, the City Council, the Steering Committee, community leaders and residents to determine how best to invest in Hercules' parks, facilities, and trails. This Master Plan is the City's first park and recreation system plan. It reflects the City's desire to be responsive to community priorities and responsible for investing in a high-quality park system over the next ten years.

This Master Plan provides the information and tools to make strategic decisions about park investments moving forward. City staff will integrate this information into annual workplans and budgeting by taking the first four steps towards implementation:

1. **Develop Funding Strategies:** City staff, together with City Council, will consider options to increase impact fees, maximize existing funds, and add new funding sources. The City will continue to discuss projects with potential partners to determine where these invested stakeholders may be willing to support key projects.
2. **Finalize and Sequence Projects:** Using the two-step prioritization criteria and identified funding sources, the City will begin to sequence the projects in the 5-Year Action Plan to complete each year.
3. **Plan and Design Large Projects:** Several larger projects, including Woodfield Park and Refugio Valley Park and Tennis Courts, will need either site master plans or design guidance before proceeding with development. Documentation to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) will help evaluate and potentially mitigate impacts from park projects. Additional community feedback may be solicited.
4. **Begin Constructions:** With this information and construction documents, the City will be ready to improve parks to enhance recreation opportunities and the quality of life of residents across the city.

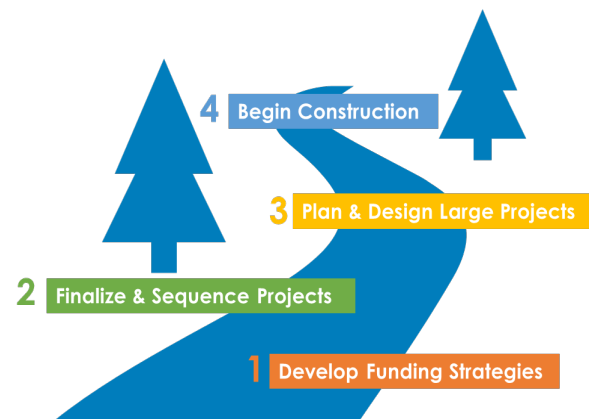


Figure 47. Four Steps to Begin Implementation

To implement the Master Plan, City staff will need the continued support of residents, businesses, stakeholders, the City Council, and community leaders to support this investment. Working together, we can create the high-quality park and recreation system we envision for the future.