



## Council Agenda Report

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Item 6a

**Department:** Parks and Recreation  
**Cost Center:** 7001  
**For Agenda of:** 7/6/2021  
**Placement:** Public Hearing  
**Estimated Time:** 60 Minutes

**FROM:** Greg Avakian, Parks & Recreation Director  
**Prepared By:** Shawna Scott, Senior Planner

**SUBJECT:** APPROVAL OF THE PARKS AND RECREATION BLUEPRINT FOR THE FUTURE: 2021-2041 (PARKS AND RECREATION PLAN AND GENERAL PLAN ELEMENT UPDATE) THAT WILL SUPERCEDE THE 2001 PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN AND GENERAL PLAN ELEMENT

### RECOMMENDATION

As recommended by the Planning Commission, Parks and Recreation Commission, and Active Transportation Committee:

1. Adopt a Resolution entitled, "A Resolution of the City Council of the City of San Luis Obispo, California, approving the Parks and Recreation Blueprint for the Future: 2021-2041 (Parks and Recreation Plan and General Plan Element Update) and adopting the associated Initial Study/Negative Declaration (GENP-1942-2018, EID-0150-2021; Citywide);" and
2. Adopt an Initial Study/Negative Declaration;
3. Approve the Parks + Recreation Blueprint for the Future: 2021-2041 (Parks and Recreation Plan and General Plan Element Update); and
4. Authorize the Parks and Recreation Director or their designee to approve future administrative revisions to Chapters 1, 2, 3, and 5 of the Parks + Recreation Blueprint for the Future: 2021-2041 (Parks and Recreation Plan) as necessary, so long as the revisions do not alter the vision and themes of the Plan, project recommendations, and substantive content of the document, and any such revisions are documented in writing, evaluated for consistency with the adopted Initial Study/Negative Declaration, and provided to the City Clerk for record keeping.

### REPORT-IN-BRIEF

The City Parks and Recreation Department has prepared the Parks + Recreation Blueprint for the Future: 2021-2041 (Parks and Recreation Plan and General Plan Element Update "Plan Update") to guide the future of parks and recreation facilities and programs in the City for the next twenty years. The current Parks and Recreation Master Plan and Element (2001) is proposed to be replaced in its entirety by the Plan Update.

One notable and important change with the Plan Update is that the Plan addresses urban parks and recreation, and no longer includes plans or policies related to the City's Open Space, which are appropriately addressed in the City's Conservation and Open Space Element (adopted in 2006) and adopted Natural Area plans. This report provides an overview of the Plan Update, including goals, policies, and implementation.

The Plan Update incorporates the comments and direction received during public input sessions on the draft Plan Update from the Active Transportation Committee (ATC), the Parks and Recreation Commission (PRC), and the City Council Study Session on the Public Draft Plan Update. No modifications were recommended by the Planning Commission. All specific edits incorporated into the Plan Update following release of the February 2021 Public Draft Plan are identified in Attachment D (Public Draft Plan Revisions) for reference. All advisory bodies unanimously recommended adoption of the Plan Update.

The Initial Study/Negative Declaration and Plan Update are provided as Attachments B and C, and the Plan Update is available for public review at <https://www.slocity.org/government/department-directory/parks-and-recreation/parks-and-recreation-plan-and-element-update>

## DISCUSSION

### Background

In 2017, the City Parks and Recreation Department initiated the update to the City's Parks and Recreation Element of the General Plan and the Parks and Recreation Plan (Plan Update). On November 7, 2017, the City Council approved the Project Plan for the Plan Update, and a consultant team led by WRT was selected in February 2018 to support staff. In April 2018, the Parks and Recreation Commission (PRC) approved the Community Engagement Plan<sup>1</sup> for the project, and the Plan Update has been informed by three years of public outreach and comment, public workshops and forums, a statistically valid survey, and focused review by Parks and Recreation and Planning staff and the PRC.

The Plan Update will be an essential guide for parks and recreation in San Luis Obispo, while also serving as the General Plan Parks and Recreation Element; goals and policies are embedded in the City's larger blueprint for future growth and change. Chapters 1, 2, 3, and 5 of the Blueprint comprise the **Parks and Recreation Plan**, and Chapter 4 is the **Parks and Recreation General Plan Element**.

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<sup>1</sup> Approved by the Parks and Recreation Commission in April 2018, [available here](#).

The Plan Update also serves to support, supplement, and advance the goals of the City's *Climate Action Plan for Community Recovery*<sup>2</sup>, *Active Transportation Plan*<sup>3</sup>, and *Recommendations to City Council for Advancing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in the City of San Luis Obispo*<sup>4</sup>. Implementation of the Plan supports and strives to ensure that City's parks, facilities, and programs will be inclusive, safe, and accessible to all people.

Specific revisions that have been incorporated into the Plan Update following review by the Active Transportation Committee (ATC) on March 18, 2021, the City Council Study Session held on May 3, 2021, and Parks and Recreation Commission (PRC) review on May 12, 2021 are incorporated into the Plan Update (Attachment C) and specifically identified in Attachment D (Public Draft Plan Revisions). No amendments to the Draft Plan were recommended by the Planning Commission following their review on May 26, 2021.

### **Summary of the Plan Update**

The following discussion provides a brief guide to the structure and content of the document. The Plan is divided into five chapters:

**Chapter 1** introduces the planning process and overarching goals of the plan. The Plan includes the following six Guiding Themes, which permeate through the Plan's recommendations, goals, and policies:

- Design Excellence
- Stewardship and Sustainability
- Inclusion and Access
- Building Community
- Partnerships and Public Engagement
- Good Governance

**Chapter 2** takes a deeper look at San Luis Obispo through demographic analysis and its parks through a detailed inventory. This information was presented to the PRC and the public in a Community Needs Assessment Report, which is included in the Plan Update Appendix.

**Chapter 3** provides a summary of the extensive community engagement conducted in association with the Plan Update. This information was presented to the PRC and the public in the adopted Community Needs Assessment Report, and subsequent updates presented to the PRC.

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<sup>2</sup> Climate Action Plan for Community Recovery (August 2020), [available here](#)

<sup>3</sup> Active Transportation Plan (February 2021), [available here](#)

<sup>4</sup> Recommendations to City Council for Advancing DEI (January 2021), [available here](#)

**Chapter 4** consists of the Parks and Recreation Element of the General Plan and provides the detailed policies that flow from five system-wide goals. The draft goals and policies were presented to the PRC in July 2020 and have been expanded and updated based on continued public input, continued staff review, and to maintain consistency with the adopted *Climate Action Plan* and *Active Transportation Plan* and *Recommendations to City Council for Advancing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in the City of San Luis Obispo*. The Plan Update is intended to support and advance the goals and programs identified in these previously adopted plans.

The five goals include:

- **Build Community and Neighborhoods:** City Parks and Recreational facilities should build and connect community through inclusive and diverse amenities and programming.
- **Meet the Changing Needs of the Community:** Leverage regionalism and creatively increase the number of City parks, recreational facilities and amenities, to meet user needs.
- **Sustainability:** The City's Parks and Recreation facilities will be vibrant, resilient, and sustainable.
- **Optimize Resources:** Establish, maintain, and operate parks, facilities, and programs in a manner that is cost effective and manageable while engaging the community in a manner that optimizes involvement and support.
- **Safety:** Provide safe, accessible, inclusive, and well-maintained City parks, recreational facilities, and amenities.

In addition to the numerous policies identified under each of these goals, this chapter also identifies standards for future parkland and amenities in the City. The Plan Update carries forward the current parkland standard of 10 acres per 1,000 residents, and includes a new standard for the provision of amenities with the City based on both the resident and daytime (service) population (refer to *Key City Council Study Session Comments for Discussion*, below, for additional discussion regarding the City Council's comments related to parkland and amenity standards and staff's recommendation).

In order to determine base needs for City park facilities and amenities, staff worked with the project consultant team (WRT and PROS) to assess the current level of service for park facilities and amenities based on the 2017 estimated resident and daytime populations, and the 2035 estimated resident and daytime populations. This assessment considered a list of key amenities based on the City's current inventory, planned amenities identified in Specific Plan areas, input from the public and the PRC and ATC, consideration of recreational trends, and recommendations identified in the Community Needs Assessment.

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In addition to overall need Citywide, the Plan Update assessed needs based on identified sub-areas within the City that contain multiple neighborhoods, population density within residential neighborhoods, and identification of access gaps, with a policy directive for equitable distribution of amenities through-out the City, such that every resident would be able to access no-cost key amenities via sustainable transportation including walking, biking, rolling, or transit (Attachment C, Plan Update, *Policy 1.3 Park Access Standards* and *Policy 1.6 Park Amenities Per Area Standard*). Existing City inventory, existing needs, future needs, access gaps, and implementation timing priority are identified in *Table 1. Amenity Inventory and Current and Future Needs*.

Table 1. Amenity Inventory and Current and Future Needs

Amenity	Current Inventory	Current Additional Need	General Plan Build-out Total Additional Need <sup>1</sup>	Location Based on Access Gaps and Planned Amenities (Sub-area)	Priority
<b>ATHLETIC FIELDS</b>					
Diamond Athletic Fields (Youth)	4	2	3	Downtown Laguna Lake	0-10 years
Diamond Athletic Fields (Youth/Adult)	1	4	5	Downtown Meadow/Sinsheimer Righetti/Orcutt Stoneridge/Margarita Laguna Lake	0-10 years
Diamond Athletic Fields (Adult)	1	2	3	Downtown Righetti/Orcutt Stoneridge/Margarita Laguna Lake	0-10 years
Rectangle Athletic Fields	4	4	6	Downtown Meadow/Sinsheimer Laguna Lake	0-5 years
<b>SPORTS COURTS</b>					
Outdoor Basketball Court	6	6	8	Citywide	0 – 20 years
Tennis Court	8	7	10	Downtown Laguna Lake	0-5 years
Pickleball Court	3	9	12	Foothill/Anholm Downtown Meadow/Sinsheimer Laguna Lake	0 – 5 years
Sand Volleyball	8	3	5	Downtown Stoneridge/Margarita Laguna Lake	0-20 years
Roller Sports Court	1	1	2	Downtown Meadow/Sinsheimer Righetti/Orcutt Stoneridge/Margarita Laguna Lake	10-20 years

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Amenity	Current Inventory	Current Additional Need	General Plan Build-out Total Additional Need <sup>1</sup>	Location Based on Access Gaps and Planned Amenities (Sub-area)	Priority
Multi-generational recreation and community center	Ludwick Center and SLO Senior Center	27,000 sf	46,000 sf	Citywide	5-20 years
Dog Park/ Off-leash Dog Area	1	6	7	Foothill/Anholm Downtown Meadow/Sinsheimer	0-5 years
Playgrounds/ Tot Lot	26	10	18	Citywide	0-20 years
Group Seating/Gathering Areas	9	6	9	Downtown Stoneridge/Margarita	0-5 years
<b>SPECIAL RECREATION FACILITIES</b>					
Disc Golf Course (18-hole)	2	0	0	N/A	N/A
Golf Course	1	0	0	Citywide	N/A
Swim Center	1	Expansion of existing pool	1	Citywide	5-20 years
Skate Park	1	0	1	Citywide	10-20 years
Pump Track (Bike or Skate)	0	2	3	Citywide	0-20 years

<sup>1</sup> Includes amenities identified in approved Specific Plans

**Chapter 5** provides the details around **implementation and funding strategy**, including phasing and priority projects. This chapter was informed by public comment and PRC feedback on project prioritization for the near term (0-5 year), mid-term (5-10 year), and long-term (10-20 year) timeframes. Park and facility improvements can be understood in three tiers: Tier 1, Critical Park Improvements (Maintenance); Tier 2, Strategic Park Improvements, Improvement of Existing Parks/Facilities; and Tier 3, “Visionary” Park Improvements, New Opportunities.

Tier 3 park and facility needs and priorities identified in the Plan Update are grouped by park classification (i.e., neighborhood parks, community parks) and are then presented in alphabetical order. Project opportunities are prioritized by phase (near-term, mid-term, and long-term). For quick reference, Tier 3 park and facility opportunities and priorities are also summarized in *Table 5-1* of the Plan Update (Attachment C).

### **Implementation of the Plan Update**

The Plan Update will be implemented over the next twenty years, depending on funding and staffing resources. Plan Update Chapter 5 (Implementation) is intended to be aspirational and identifies opportunities that may be appropriate for existing parks based on the wants and needs expressed by the community. As amenities and parkland are constructed, the City will need to monitor implementation of the Plan Update and track progress towards meeting service standards for both park acreage and identified amenities, equitable distribution of amenities, and resolving access gaps such that all residents will be able to enjoy parks and recreation within a ½ mile (or ten minute walk) from their home.

The Plan Update is also intended to be flexible, to enable the City to conduct focused community outreach and prepare park-specific comprehensive plans for the following existing community and neighborhood parks:

- Laguna Park (update Laguna Lake Plan)
- Meadow Park and Meadow Park Center
- Sinsheimer Park, Sinsheimer Stadium, SLO Swim Center
- Mitchell Park

In addition, as noted in the plan, **new parkland** is needed in the following areas to address population density within neighborhoods and access gaps:

- Foothill/Anholm area: in the vicinity of Grand Avenue, potentially through agreement with San Luis Coastal Unified School District;
- Downtown area: along the Johnson Avenue corridor south of the high school;
- Meadow/Sinsheimer area, potentially through expansion or amenitization of Stoneridge Park;
- Stoneridge/Margarita area: along the South Higuera corridor;
- Laguna Lake area: at the Laguna Lake Golf Course as part of potential site reuse.



Key considerations for the enhancement and redevelopment of existing parks and the development of new parkland will be striking a balance between active and passive recreational use, maintaining neighborhood character, ensuring high quality design and maintenance, and optimizing resources by incorporating multi-generational, multi-use, inclusive and accessible amenities and facilities. Incorporation of innovative universal design and continued conversations with the community will be critical to resolve and prevent any barriers<sup>5</sup> to our community's enjoyment of the City parks, recreation amenities, public art, and programs.

The Plan Update also identifies the need for park activation and building community through site planning and provision of community gathering space and associated infrastructure (i.e., gazebo, stage, improved access); supporting and facilitating community events; incorporation of public art and cultural expression; and dynamic programming to address multi-generational and multi-ability needs of our community.

Implementation of the Plan Update would be funded by impact fees, the general fund, grants, revenues from services, provided, and group area and facility rentals. Potential external funding sources could include grants; "friends of parks" organization(s); corporate sponsorships; crowdfunding; partnerships with other agencies; gifts from non-profit foundations; private donations; irrevocable remainder trusts; volunteerism; and fundraisers. The Plan update identifies rough lifecycle costs for key amenities, while more aspirational projects such as multi-generational center would require a specific cost and financing assessment due to the potential variables that affect construction, operation, and maintenance costs.

### **Previous Council or Advisory Body Action**

**Planning Commission, May 26, 2021.** The Planning Commission considered the Plan Update, and moved to recommend the City Council adopt the Initial Study/Negative Declaration for the project, and approve the Draft Plan as presented in the May 26, 2021 agenda report package.

**Parks and Recreation Commission (2018-2021).** Over the past three years, the PRC has provided valuable input on the Plan Update. The PRC held a meeting on May 12, 2021 to receive public comment, consider Council comments during the May 3, 2021 Study Session, review staff-recommended revisions to the Public Draft Plan, and provide a recommendation for consideration by the Planning Commission and City Council.

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<sup>5</sup> Potential barriers may include, and are not limited to, ability, skill level, sense of safety, monetary limitations, knowledge and/or interest in programming and/or recreational activity.

The PRC unanimously recommended adoption of the Plan Update with noted clarifications by staff. In addition, the PRC recognized that the Plan Update is aspirational, considered City Council Study Session comments and recommended retainment of the 10 acres per 1,000 resident parkland standard, retainment of the sub-area delineations, and clarification regarding the use of the Access Gap/Amenities map (amendments to Figure 4-2: Sub-Area Map), and supported additional City Council Study Session comments.

**City Council Study Session, May 4, 2021.** During the City Council Study Session on the Public Draft Plan Update,<sup>6</sup> the City Council provided directional items and suggestions for staff and PRC review and consideration. The City Council's comments and direction, including staff's response, are incorporated into the table below. Edits that have been made to the Plan Update are identified by showing deleted text in ~~strike-through~~, and added text is underlined. All amendments to the Public Draft Plan are identified in Attachment D, and include all the specific changes including numerous edits to provide clear distinctions related to Open Space, open public spaces/places, and urban trails and replacement of references to "picnic areas" with gathering and seating areas.

**Table 2. City Council Study Session Comments**

CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION COMMENTS	HOW ADDRESSED
Further assess if use of resident or daytime population is appropriate for parkland aspirations (10 acres per 1,000 people) and/or current and future amenity needs.	The Plan Update identifies a parkland standard of 10 acres per 1,000 residents, and identifies amenity level of service based on the daytime (service) population. This approach is identified to recognize that both the resident and daytime (service) populations create demands on parks and recreational amenities and facilities. The PRC specifically recommended support for the 10 acres per 1,000 residents standard, and use of the daytime population to determine future amenities.

<sup>6</sup> City Council Study Session Agenda Report available online:  
<http://opengov.slocity.org/WebLink/DocView.aspx?id=141546&dbid=0&repo=CityClerk>  
 City Council Study Session, video of meeting available online:  
[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCjSH3YJ12dVzLmQYuevI\\_sw](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCjSH3YJ12dVzLmQYuevI_sw)

CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION COMMENTS	HOW ADDRESSED
Make sure there are clear distinctions about Open Space and open public spaces/places and urban trails.	Multiple edits were incorporated into the Plan Update to ensure that the document makes the appropriate and clear distinction that the Plan Update focuses on urban parks and recreation, and does not affect or serve as a policy document or plan for the City's Open Space. Specific edits are identified in Attachment D (Public Draft Plan Revisions).
Remove reference to a second golf course.	<p>The Plan Update has been modified to remove the opportunity for a second golf course from the document:</p> <p><b>Page 84:</b> <i>Table 4-2 Park Amenity Standards</i>, do not identify a second golf course.</p> <p><b>Page 114:</b> <i>Golf Courses:</i></p> <p>"Additional Need</p> <p>San Luis Obispo would need one additional golf course by 2035 to meet standards; <u>however, two golf courses to serve the City is not needed.</u></p> <p>Access Gaps</p> <p>Laguna Lake Golf Course is in Area 6 (West). <del>Any future course should be in a different part of the city.</del></p> <p>Priority</p> <p><del>Providing an additional golf course may be considered a long-term (10-20 year)-priority, subject to land availability. An</del> <u>additional golf course is not a priority for the City."</u></p>
Consider dividing the Meadow/Sinsheimer sub-area into two sub areas.	Staff reviewed this comment and discussed with the PRC for further direction. No changes to the sub-area

CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION COMMENTS	HOW ADDRESSED
	<p>delineations are proposed or recommended by the PRC; however, Figure 4-2 has been amended to show the sub-area delineations and the population density and access gaps shown in Figure 5-5, Park Access Gaps and Potential Future Park Sites (refer to Attachment C, Draft Plan and Attachment D, Public Draft Plan Revisions). The purpose of the map revision is to clarify that there are multiple factors that will drive the location of new and upgraded amenities throughout the City.</p>
<p>Look for "quick build" projects as it relates to what we already have, such as a dirt pump track, dog parks, shade/cooling, lighting, gardens, and community events.</p>	<p>No changes to the Plan Update are proposed; however, the Parks and Recreation Department and Public Works Department are working to identify "quick build" projects within the context of the Capital Improvement Plan, the City's Financial Plan, grant funding, and opportunities for volunteer/community collaboration.</p>
<p>Update opportunities for Cheng Park improvements.</p>	<p>The Plan Update includes the following additional text:</p> <p><b>Page 126:</b> <i>Cheng Park, Planned Improvements</i></p> <p>Added the following two bullets:</p> <p><u>" + Provide Improved cultural expression and educational opportunities</u></p> <p><u>+ Maintain cultural significance of original design"</u></p>
<p>Clarify if multi-generational center would also be a multi-cultural center.</p>	<p>No changes to the Plan Update are proposed. In recreational terms, a multi-generational center focuses on activities for all ages and abilities and likely would</p>

CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION COMMENTS	HOW ADDRESSED
	<p>not focus solely on cultural activities. As part of the 2021-23 Major City Goal work program for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion there is a task to support a feasibility study for a multi-cultural center via staff and/or City Liaison support. Programming will be incorporated at Parks and Recreation facilities to support Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion goals.</p>
<p>Clearly explain and clarify community engagement results summarized in the document.</p>	<p>The Plan Update includes the following edits to clarify community engagement responses:</p> <p><b>Page 74: <i>Park Improvement Priorities Workshop, Your Neighborhood:</i></b></p> <p>“Participants were asked to state their priorities for park improvements in their neighborhood, from a list of options. Of these options, “safer access” was the highest priority, followed by walking paths, neighborhood events, and dog park. <u>“Approximately 110 participants provided responses at this workshop station, and the average ranking for each priority is identified in Figure 3-1.”</u></p> <p><b>Page 74: <i>Park Improvement Priorities Workshop, Community Parks:</i></b></p> <p>“For Laguna Lake Park, we asked participants to rank a list of 11 potential improvements. The most popular: a bike pump track, an adventure playground, a botanical garden, a walking path, an outdoor learning area, and additional</p>

CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION COMMENTS	HOW ADDRESSED
	<p>picnic areas. <u>“Approximately 100 participants provided responses at this workshop station, and the average ranking for each priority is identified in Figure 3-2.”</u></p> <p><b>Page 75: <i>Park Improvement Priorities Workshop, Fields and Facilities:</i></b></p> <p>“Participants were asked to rank four potential improvements to the SLO Swim Center. Of these, extended hours for recreation swim and for lap swim were the highest ranked. <u>Approximately 85 participants provided responses at this workshop station, and the average ranking for each priority is identified in Figure 3-5.”</u></p>
Consider park ambassadors to support diversity, equity, and inclusion.	No changes to the Plan Update are proposed at this time, as consideration of establishing park ambassadors at City parks would be better identified during evaluation of resources and staffing needs, are often based on a particular amenity (such as the Santa Rosa SLO Skate Park), and would need to take equity into consideration as well as operational and financial resources.
Conduct additional focused outreach related to diversity, equity, and inclusion.	<p>The Plan Update includes the following edits to further clarify outreach efforts during park-specific and facility-specific planning:</p> <p><b>Page 103:</b></p> <p>“Next, the chapter defines three types of park improvements, and documents potential <del>improvements</del> <u>opportunities</u> at each park where “visionary” changes are needed. <u>The chapter provides the</u></p>

CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION COMMENTS	HOW ADDRESSED
	<u>flexibility to consider identified opportunities and determine the appropriate design and amenities of our City's parks and recreational facilities through focused community outreach and the preparation of comprehensive park-specific plans. The community engagement process will include direct contact with community groups and organizations to further advance diversity, equity, and inclusion at all City parks and facilities."</u>
Update Table 4-2 Park Amenity Standards by deleting "Meets Standard/Needs Exist" column and replacing it with the number of additional amenities needed to serve the future daytime population.	<i>Table 4-2 Park Amenity Standards</i> has been updated by deleting "Meets Standard/Needs Exist" column and replacing it with the number of additional amenities needed to serve the future daytime population.
Note that the SLO Senior Center is an historic building.	<p>The Plan Update includes the following edits:</p> <p><b>Page 130:</b> <i>SLO Senior Center, Planned Improvements, Mid-Term (5 to 10 years):</i></p> <p>" + Re-envision SLO Senior Center in the context of Mitchell Park through Planning process. Goals will include creating a strong linkage between the park and the center; and considering potential renovation <u>or expansion or replacement of the Senior Center relocation of programs and services</u> to achieve multi-generational use of the facility. <u>The SLO Senior Center building is a historic property, and any improvements shall be consistent with the City's Historic Preservation Ordinance and Historic</u></p>

CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION COMMENTS	HOW ADDRESSED
	<u>Preservation Program Guidelines.</u> <u>Increase the City's financial and staff investment in the SLO Senior Center."</u>
<p>Research deed for 1445 Santa Rosa (SLO Senior Center), specific to use requirements or limitations for the building.</p>	<p>In November 1962, a Quitclaim Deed was executed between the San Luis Obispo School District and City of San Luis Obispo for Mitchell Park. At that time, the building located at 1445 Santa Rosa was not managed by the City and was not operated as a senior center. In 1971, the City Council turned the building over to the Parks and Recreation Department for use as a senior center.</p> <p>A Notice of Assurances to the State of California of the Use of Property and/or the State of California's Right of Recapture (San Luis Obispo County Document No. 33982) was executed February 1991 and filed with the County of San Luis Obispo Clerk Recorders Office June 1991.</p> <p>This notice was required to be filed due to the award of \$50,000 from Senior Center Bond Act Funds for renovation of the facility at 1445 Santa Rosa. As result of receipt of these funds, the facility was required to be used as a senior center for a period of five years (September 1989 to September 1994) or the State of California would be entitled to recapture funding. As this period has expired, no additional use restrictions or limitations are required.</p>

### Key City Council Study Session Comments for Discussion



A majority of comments received from the City Council during the Study Session have been incorporated into the Plan Update. There are two topics that warrant a more detailed response from staff, which are discussed below.

Council Comment: *Further assess if use of resident or daytime population is appropriate for parkland aspirations (10 acres per 1,000 people) and/or current and future amenity needs.*

Staff Recommendation. The Parks and Recreation Commission considered the parkland standard following the City Council Study Session, and unanimously supported maintaining proposed parkland standards. The Planning Commission did not identify or recommend any policy modifications, and staff recommends:

- Maintaining the **parkland** standard, applicable to the **residential population**, consistent with the current standard (10 acres per 1,000 residents), which is aspirational but provides a goal to strive for through future Specific Plans, General Plan Amendments, Annexations and other methods (land dedication or acquisition within the City); and
- Identifying **amenity** needs based on the **daytime (service) population**, based on the recognition that both residents and the daytime (service) population use park and facility amenities.

Discussion. According to the 2021 National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) Agency Review, the typical park and recreation agency manages 9.9 acres of parkland for every 1,000 residents in its jurisdiction.<sup>7</sup>

The City currently has 205.6 acres of parkland, including:

- 99.7 acres of Community Parks
- 34.7 acres of Neighborhood Parks
- 7.9 acres of Mini Parks, and
- 63.3 acres of recreational centers and special facilities.

Current and proposed park acreage standards require a minimum of **10 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents**, including five acres of Neighborhood Parks per 1,000 residents (refer to Attachment C, Plan Update, Policy 1.2 Park Acreage Standards).<sup>8</sup> This current standard has been applied to Specific Plan and annexed areas and was addressed by either provision of parkland based on the 10 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents, or a combination of provided parkland, improved parkland, and fees, as approved by the City Council. This Plan Update would carry forward this same standard, and this standard would continue to be applied to any new Specific Plans or annexations, which is close to NRPA statistics (9.9 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents).

The City's parkland acreage inventory only includes parks and recreational facilities that are owned and operated by the City. Recreational opportunities such as Cal Poly facilities, school properties (subject to joint-use agreements for youth recreation), and El Chorro Regional Park fields (subject to a joint use agreement with the County) are not included in the parkland acreage calculations.

As shown in Table 3 (Existing Parkland Inventory and Current and Future Parkland Need), an additional 220 acres of parkland is needed today to serve the current (2017) population of 46,724 residents. Looking ahead, the City would need an additional 361 acres of parkland to meet this park acreage standard for residents in 2035, inclusive of 249 acres of Neighborhood Parks, based on resident population estimates in the City's General Plan (56,686) (Attachment C, Appendix C, *Community Needs Assessment Table 2-6, San Luis Obispo Park Acreage Standards and Level of Service*).

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<sup>7</sup> 2021 NRPA Agency Review available online: [https://www.nrpa.org/siteassets/2021-agency-performance-review\\_final.pdf](https://www.nrpa.org/siteassets/2021-agency-performance-review_final.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> Proposed Policy 1.2 Park Acreage Standards. *San Luis Obispo shall continue to develop a park system at the rate of ten acres of parkland per 1,000 residents. Aspirational standards for each park and facility type are as shown in Table 4-1. The City has demonstrated that a high-quality park system can be achieved within a smaller footprint but seeks to achieve this goal over time.*

Implementation of currently approved parks within adopted Specific and Development Plans (Avila Ranch, Orcutt Area, Froom Ranch, and San Luis Ranch) would provide 54 acres of parkland<sup>9</sup> and several new amenities. This will contribute to the total acreage of parkland in the City, resulting in total park acreage of 260, with a remaining gap of **307 acres** needed to serve the estimated resident population in 2035. Eventual build-out of the Margarita Area Specific Plan, which is contingent on submittal of a development proposal by the private landowner(s), would provide a 10-acre Neighborhood Park and a 16-acre improved sports field site.

**Table 3. Existing Parkland Inventory and Current and Future Parkland Need**

Resident Population	City Parkland Type and Standard	Requirement (total acreage to meet standard)	Existing parkland acreage	New approved Parkland	Additional Need
46,724 (2017)	Overall: 10 acres/1,000 residents	467 acres	206 acres	54 acres	207 acres
	Neighborhood Parks: 5 acres/1,000 residents	234 acres	35 acres	23 acres	176 acres
56,686 (2035)	Overall: 10 acres/1,000 residents	567	206 acres	54 acres	307 acres
	Neighborhood Parks: 5 acres/1,000 residents	283 acres	35 acres	23 acres	225 acres

In 2018, a *Capital Facilities Development Impact Fee Nexus Study* was prepared to provide the necessary technical documentation to support the adoption of updated impact fees ensuring that new development pays its fair share of the park facilities needed to serve it. The City collects two types of parkland fees, parkland in-lieu fees (pursuant to the Quimby Act) and park development impact fees (pursuant to the Mitigation Fee Act). Under the Quimby Act, all cities can establish parkland in-lieu fees up to a maximum of 5.0 acres per 1,000 residents. Park in-lieu fee estimates are based on the existing (2018) standard for the resident population, which is 4.18 acres per 1,000 residents.

<sup>9</sup> The acreage of approved parkland has been updated to include the Orcutt Area Specific Plan Neighborhood Park.

Prior to the 2018 Nexus Study and subsequent adoption of the Master Fee Schedule by the City Council, the City only collected parkland in-lieu fees (Quimby Act), which apply only to single-family and multi-family condominium developments.

The City's current park development impact fees are based on the existing (2018) standard for the service population, which is 2.69 park acres per 1,000 service population, because both residents and non-residents use City parks. As a part of the Nexus Study, park development impact fees were calculated for multi-family apartments and for commercial development at the 2.69 acres per 1,000 service population rate. While the Nexus Study identified a park development impact fee for both residential and non-residential development, the City Council adopted the impact fee for multi-family developments only (based on the 2.69 acres per 1,000 service population rate), but not for commercial development because of the overall fee burden already carried by commercial development. The maximum park development impact fees must align with the current standard (at the time of the Nexus Study) and cannot be raised to address existing deficiencies (as identified per a policy standard or objective).

Similar to the Nexus Study, the Plan Update recognizes that park and recreational amenities are used by both the resident population and the daytime (service) population, and identifies amenity needs based on the estimated 2035 daytime (service) population of 88,286<sup>10</sup> (Attachment C, Plan Update, *Policy 1.5 Park Amenity Standards*).<sup>11</sup> Staff's recommendation is discussed below for the Council's consideration.

Council Comment: *Consider dividing the Meadow/Sinsheimer sub-area into two sub areas.*

Staff Recommendation. As use of the sub-areas would not be the only factor considered when the City is identifying the locations for future amenities, staff recommends no changes to the sub-area delineations; however, an amendment to *Figure 4-2 San Luis Obispo Sub-Areas* is warranted. The proposed revised *Figure 4-2: San Luis Obispo Sub-Areas and Park Access Gaps* shows not only the sub-area delineation, but also population density, access gaps, and areas where additional parkland is needed to meet policy objectives (refer to Figure 1 on the following page and Attachment C, Plan Update and Attachment D, Public Draft Plan Revisions).

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<sup>10</sup> Daytime (service) population identified in the Capital Facilities Development Impact Fee Nexus Study, 2018)

<sup>11</sup> Proposed Policy 1.5 Park Amenity Standards. *The City will seek to provide park amenities at daytime population-based levels of service shown in Table 4-2. Recognizing that the City's amenities serve City residents as well as people who work in San Luis Obispo but live elsewhere, daytime population is used to calculate appropriate service levels. In addition, Cal Poly recreation amenities available for community use are taken into account.*

The PRC did not recommend revising the delineation of the sub-areas, and supported the staff recommendation to revise the map to accurately show all the factors that will be considered when considering future amenities. The Planning Commission reviewed the revised Figure 4.2, and did not identify any modifications.

Discussion. In addition to identifying overall need for parkland and amenities Citywide, the Plan Update assessed needs based on identified sub-areas within the City that contain multiple neighborhoods, population density within residential neighborhoods, and identification of access gaps, with a policy directive for equitable distribution of amenities through-out the City, such that every resident would be able to access no-cost key amenities via sustainable transportation including walking, biking, rolling, or transit (Attachment C, Plan Update, *Policy 1.3 Park Access Standards* and *Policy 1.6 Park Amenities Per Area Standard*). Staff reviewed this recommendation, and brought forward this comment for further consideration by the PRC. Staff's recommendation is discussed below for the Council's consideration.

Figure 4-2  
SAN LUIS OBISPO SUB-AREAS AND PARK ACCESS GAPS

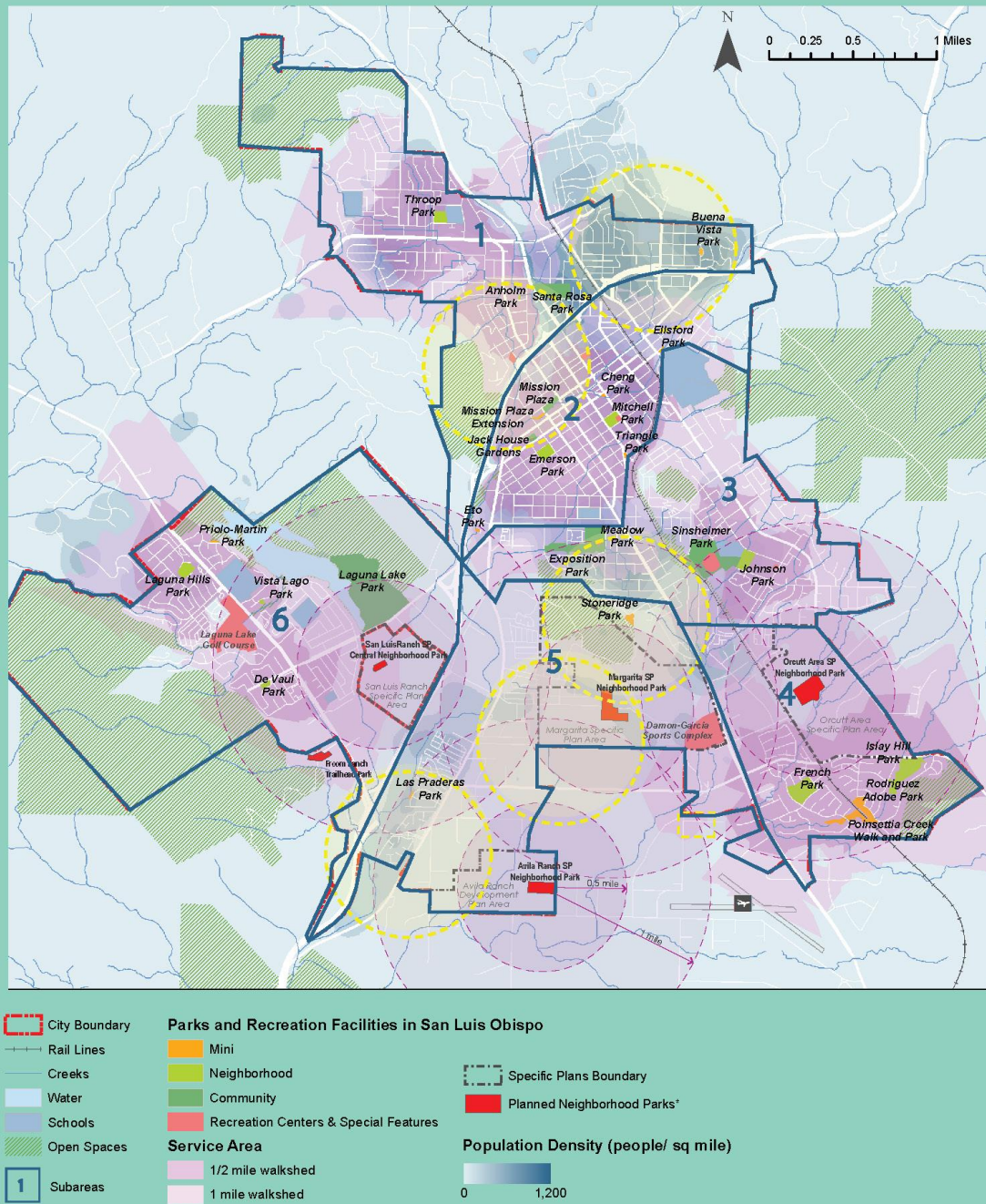


Figure 1. Revised Figure 4-2: San Luis Obispo Sub-Areas and Park Access Gaps

**Active Transportation Committee, March 18, 2021.** The Public Draft Plan was presented to the ATC on March 18, 2021. The ATC unanimously moved to recommend adoption of the Plan Update, with recommendations that were supported by the PRC. ATC recommendations are identified in the table below, and edits that have been made to the Plan Update are identified by showing deleted text in ~~strike-through~~, and added text is underlined in addition to staff's response to requested amendments. These edits are also specifically identified in Attachment D (Public Draft Plan Revisions).

**Table 3. Active Transportation Commission Recommendations**

<b>ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<b>HOW ADDRESSED</b>
Address Sinsheimer Park area connectivity, including inclusive non-vehicular access both to the Sinsheimer Park area and through the park. Identify need for a paved trail connecting the Railroad Safety Trail to Sinsheimer Park.	<p><b>Page 123:</b> <i>Sinsheimer Park, Planned Improvements, Near-Term (0 to 5 Years):</i></p> <p>Added bullet:</p> <p><u>+ Address Sinsheimer Park area connectivity, including inclusive non-vehicular access both to the Sinsheimer Park area and through the park. Provide for an inclusive and accessible paved trail connecting the Railroad Safety Trail to Sinsheimer Park.</u></p>
<p>Provide stronger language in <i>Policy 1.15 Sustainable Transportation Access</i> and <i>Policy 1.16 Shaded Play Areas</i>, beyond "evaluate potential..." and "strive to".</p> <p>Specifically address Sinsheimer Park, Laguna Lake Park, and Meadow Park in Policies 1.15, 3.1, and 5.2.</p> <p>Include bicycle parking in parks, with facilities for standard and electric bicycles, and cargo bicycles.</p>	<p><b>Page 88:</b> <i>Policy 1.15, Sustainable Transportation Access.</i></p> <p>"1.15 Sustainable Transportation Access.</p> <p>Support implementation of the Active Transportation Plan and provision of sustainable access to parks and recreational facilities <u>including, but not limited to Sinsheimer Park area, Laguna Lake Park, and Meadow Park, and interconnected paths citywide. Bicycle parking should be provided in parks, recreational facilities, and community centers, and include facilities for standard, electric, and cargo bicycles.</u>"</p> <p><b>Page 88:</b> <i>Policy 1.16 Shaded Play Areas.</i></p> <p>"1.16 Shaded Play Areas.</p>

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS	HOW ADDRESSED
	<p>In addition to shading play areas—a high priority for the community—trees and shade structures can also contribute to distinctive identity and sustainability. Existing play areas will be assessed for need, and enhancements to both play equipment and shade will be scheduled. The City should <del>strive for</del> <u>provide</u> shaded play areas within a short walk (1/2-mile) of all residents: this should be a core feature of all parks, including mini-parks.”</p> <p>Policy 3.1 addresses new parks and facilities, not existing; therefore, no modifications are proposed related to these comments.</p> <p>Policy 5.2 states: “Create bicycle and pedestrian connections between these mainline trails and the City’s community parks (e.g. Sinsheimer, Laguna Lake, Santa Rosa, Meadow) and major recreation facilities (e.g. Damon-Garcia).” Therefore, no modifications are proposed related to these comments.</p>
<p><i>Policy 3.1 Access by Foot and Bike:</i> Amend title to be more inclusive of those accessing parks and facilities by alternative non-vehicular means beyond “foot and bike”.</p>	<p><b>Page 94:</b> <i>Policy 3.1 Access by Foot and Bike.</i></p> <p>“Policy 3.1 Access by Foot, <del>and</del> Bike, <u>and Roll</u>”</p> <p>New parks and facilities should be located centrally to their service population, integrated with their community context, and easily accessed on foot, <del>and</del> by bike, <u>and roll</u>....”</p>
<p>Overall, provide a more specific ties to the Active Transportation Plan.</p>	<p>See above.</p>
<p>Suggestion to locate pump tracks on routes to schools, and locate pump.</p>	<p><b>Page 114:</b> <i>Bike/<u>Roller</u> Pump Tracks</i></p>



ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS	HOW ADDRESSED
tracks where it can be accessed via bicycle.	<p>“Priority</p> <p>A bike/<u>roller</u> pump track has been identified as a near-term (0-5 year) priority for the City. A second track may be considered a long-term (10-20 year) opportunity. <u>Pump tracks should be located where they can be accessed via bicycle or roll, and along routes to schools.</u>”</p>

### Policy Context

The recommendations of the Plan Update support and advance many of the goals, objectives, policies and programs of the City’s *General Plan*, *Active Transportation Plan*, and *Climate Action Plan for Community Recovery*. The development and enhancement of accessible parks and facilities in the City would reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and related greenhouse gas emissions. Redevelopment of parks and facilities would facilitate carbon-neutrality and provide an opportunity to educate and showcase evolving technology. The Plan Update is consistent with the General Plan, and implementation of the Plan Update would advance goals and policies of the *Land Use Element*, including neighborhood connectivity and enhancement (*Policies 2.2.4 and 2.2.6*); provision and enhancement of parks within neighborhoods (*Policy 2.3.1*); and increasing green space in the Downtown (*Policy 4.11*).

### Public Engagement

Chapter 3 of the Plan Update (*What We Heard*) summarizes the extensive public engagement conducted over the past three years pursuant to the Plan Update’s Community Engagement Plan, starting with foundational stakeholder interviews in April 2018. Throughout the summer of 2018, in order to reach our community, City staff conducted over 25 “pop-up” events with the Parks and Recreation “Bright Ideas” bicycle to reach and connect with residents and visitors at parks, facilities, programs, and events. During these pop-ups, the public had an opportunity to provide comments on portable white boards and comment cards and take photos with the “Bright Ideas” bicycle for sharing on the Parks and Recreation Instagram account. A statistically valid **Needs Assessment Survey** was conducted August to October 2018 (507 respondents).

Public Workshops and forums included the **“Bright Ideas” Public Workshop** in September 2018 to gain additional input from the community regarding existing parks and facilities and the future of parks and recreation in San Luis Obispo. A **PRC Workshop Series** was held in January, February, and March of 2019, which consisted of focused discussions and public input related to the community’s values and priorities, unmet needs, and hopes and dreams. Following the Workshop Series, a Community Needs Assessment report prepared by the consultant team was presented to the PRC and the public in May 2019, and a **Community Needs Assessment Workshop** was held in June 2019. A **Park Improvement Priorities Workshop** was held with the PRC in September 2019.

**Community Needs Assessment** report includes:

- Demographic characteristics and population trends of the community;
- Description of existing park system and comparison to benchmark cities;
- Overview of recreational trends and preferences in the U.S. and in the region;
- Summary and evaluation of existing amenities and programs; and
- Summary of themes heard during community engagement activities and the community preferences reflected in the statistically-valid survey.

Through the remainder of 2019 and 2020, the public had an opportunity to attend PRC meetings, where information was presented for public response and direction from the PRC, including draft themes, goals, and policies; lifecycle costs; and the ongoing feedback and questions provided by the public.

On March 25, 2021, a **Public Draft Plan Update Public Workshop** was held via Zoom. The Workshop included a presentation on the Plan Update, and the community was invited and encouraged to provide feedback via poll questions conducted during the workshop, use of the “chat” function, and [Open City Hall](#). The results of the public workshop are summarized in the April 5, 2021 PRC Agenda Report.<sup>12</sup> Online community engagement continues to be fostered by information updates on City social media, the project website, direct communications with staff, and the Open City Hall website.

Additional opportunities for public comment included public hearings with the PRC, ATC, Planning Commission, and Study Session with the City Council. Recommendations and direction from the PRC, ATC, and the City Council Study Session, and review by the Planning Commission, have informed the current version of the Plan Update under consideration by the City Council.

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<sup>12</sup> Parks and Recreation Commission agenda report, dated April 5, 2021, [available here](#).

## CONCURRENCE

The Administrative Draft Plan Update was provided for internal review by several City departments, including Community Development, Public Works, City Administration, and Utilities. The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Task Force provided valuable review and input on the Administrative Draft Plan Update. In addition, the Plan Update was coordinated with the City Transportation Division and the Office of Sustainability to ensure the document supports and advances the goals, policies, and programs of the *Active Transportation Plan* and *Climate Action Plan*.

Other community groups have helped shape the Plan Update including Arts Council, American Youth Soccer Organization, Cal Poly (special thanks to NR 418 class, 2018), Central Coast Concerned Mountain Bikers, Central Coast Soccer, Friends of SLO City Dog Parks; Downtown SLO, History Center of San Luis Obispo County, Jack House Committee, Land Conservancy of SLO County, San Luis Coastal Unified School District, San Luis Obispo Museum of Art, SLO Baseball, SLO Pickleball Club, SLO Railroad Museum, SLO REP Theatre, SLO Rugby, SLO Senior Center, SLO Soccer Club, SLO Women's Soccer Club, YMCA, and many other individuals.

## ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

An Initial Study / Negative Declaration has been prepared for the Plan (Attachment B). The public review period for the Initial Study / Negative Declaration was Thursday, March 25, 2021 to Monday, April 26, 2021. The Initial Study does not identify any potentially significant impacts that would occur as a result of adoption of the Plan Update.

As a policy document, the Draft Plan Update does not authorize any physical development or improvements or provide project-specific construction details that would allow for project-level CEQA analysis; instead, it is intended to provide goals and policies, and guide development of future parks and recreation projects within the City. Therefore, consistent with Section 15168(c)(1) of the State CEQA Guidelines, the IS/ND evaluates program-level actions that describe planned park and recreation facilities and programs and focuses primarily on the Draft Plan Update's consistency with adopted City plans, goals, objectives, and standards. Future proposed physical improvements that are subject to discretionary approval would be subject to separate environmental review on a project-specific basis, in accordance with the provisions of the California Environmental Policy Act (CEQA) and the State CEQA Guidelines. Reference copies of the IS/ND are available on the City's website at <https://www.slocity.org/government/departments-directory/community-development/documents-online/environmental-review-documents/-folder-2154>.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

Budgeted: Yes  
 Funding Identified: \$160,000

Budget Year: 2017-19

**Fiscal Analysis:**

<b>Funding Sources</b>	<b>Total Budget Available</b>	<b>Current Funding Request</b>	<b>Remaining Balance</b>	<b>Annual Ongoing Cost</b>
General Fund	\$160,000	\$ n/a	\$	\$
State				
Federal				
Fees				
Other:				
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>

The fiscal impact associated with fully implementing the Plan Update is significant and will extend over twenty years, requiring substantial funding commitments over multiple financial plans as well as exploration of grants, development fees and other outside funding sources. Since the Plan Update is a programmatic document, it provides only a planning level assessment of project costs, with estimates provided for line-item amenity features (i.e., seating, turf area, nets, etc.). Any larger scale projects identified in the programmatic document such as a multi-generational community center or additional aquatics center would require specific feasibility and financial assessments to determine cost based on a variety of factors such as location, size, and other specific features. Ultimately, each individual project and program expenditure would be considered and prioritized by the City Council as part of the City's two-year financial planning process.

The Council included \$160,000 in the 2017-2019 Financial Plan for the Plan Update. \$145,000 was allocated for Contract Services, which includes \$135,000 for consultant assistance with the Community Needs Assessment and Plan Update, and a \$10,000 contingency. \$131,622.54 has been spent on consultant services to date. \$10,000 was also allocated for City operating expenditures, such as meeting notifications, outreach direct costs and document production. \$5,000 was assigned for an intern to assist with the facility needs assessment.

**ALTERNATIVES**

1. Continue review of the Plan Update with specific direction to staff on pertinent issues.
2. Recommend denial of the Plan Update, however staff does not recommend this as it would be inconsistent with the General Plan, the Active Transportation Plan, and the Climate Action Plan for Community Recovery.

**ATTACHMENTS**

- A – Draft Resolution approving the Parks & Recreation Blueprint for the Future: 2021-2041
- B – Initial Study/Negative Declaration
- Ca – Draft Plan Update
- Cb – Draft Plan Update Appendices
- D – Public Draft Plan Revisions
- E – Planning Commission Resolution No. PC-1040-21 (2021 Series)