

PARKS MASTER PLAN

CITY OF LOS BANOS



OCTOBER 2020



PARKS MASTER PLAN

Prepared for:

City of Los Banos
411 Madison Avenue
Los Banos, CA 93635

Contact Person: Terri Chagnon, [Click here to enter text.](#)
Phone: (209) 827-7056

Consultant:



2816 Park Avenue
Merced, CA 95348
Contact: Mike Ratajski
Phone: (559) 449-2400
Fax: (559) 733-7821

October 2020

Table of Contents

***Acknowledgements*..... v**

***Executive Summary* 1**

***SECTION 1 - Introduction* 1-1**

1.1 - Purpose..... 1-1

1.2 - Plan Organization..... 1-1

1.3 - Location/Geographic Context..... 1-2

 1.3.1 - City of Los Banos 1-2

 1.3.2 - Merced County 1-3

***SECTION 2 - Community Profile & Demographics*..... 2-1**

2.1 - Population Forecast 2-1

2.2 - Age Distribution..... 2-2

2.3 - Race/Ethnicity..... 2-2

2.4 - Households..... 2-3

2.5 - Socioeconomics..... 2-4

2.6 - Health and Related Factors 2-5

***SECTION 3 - Community & Stakeholder Input*..... 3-1**

3.1 - Community Engagement Plan 3-1

 3.1.1 - Los Banos Parks Master Plan Public Outreach Plan 3-1

3.2 - Community Vision and Goals 3-3

 3.2.1 - Vision..... 3-3

 3.2.2 - Goals 3-3

3.3 - Outreach Summary..... 3-3

 3.3.1 - Stakeholder Interviews 3-3

 3.3.2 - Community Workshop #1..... 3-4

 3.3.3 - Community Development Director Meeting..... 3-6

 3.3.4 - Workshop #2: Renovations and New Parks..... 3-6

 3.3.5 - Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting..... 3-8

 3.3.6 - City Council Meeting..... 3-8

 3.3.7 - Summary of Surveys..... 3-8

***SECTION 4 - Trends*..... 4-1**

4.1 - Local..... 4-1

4.2 - Regional..... 4-2

 4.2.1 - Regional Trends in Park Ratios and Park Access 4-2

 4.2.2 - Regional Trends in Facilities..... 4-4

4.3 - National	4-6
<i>SECTION 5 - Inventory & needs Assessment Analysis</i>	<i>5-1</i>
5.1 - Methodology.....	5-1
5.2 - Parks and Facilities by Classification.....	5-1
5.2.1 - Park Classifications	5-1
5.2.2 - Descriptions of Existing Parks.....	5-4
5.3 - Access to Parks and Facilities	5-36
5.3.1 - Proximity/Street Access	5-36
5.3.2 - Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)	5-37
5.3.3 - Service Area Analysis	5-40
5.4 - Parks Maintenance and Operations	5-42
<i>SECTION 6 - Level of Service (LOS) Analysis.....</i>	<i>6-1</i>
6.1 - Guidelines Comparisons.....	6-2
6.1.1 - NRPA Guidelines.....	6-2
6.1.2 - Current City of Los Banos.....	6-2
6.1.3 - Regional Standards	6-3
6.1.4 - Proposed City of Los Banos Standards	6-6
6.1.5 - Staffing and Operating Expenses Guidelines	6-6
<i>SECTION 7 - Focus Areas</i>	<i>7-1</i>
7.1 - Regional Sports Facility	7-1
7.1.1 - Concept Study Descriptions	7-2
7.2 - Aquatics Center	7-5
7.2.1 - Concept Study Descriptions	7-5
7.3 - Ag Sports Complex.....	7-8
7.3.1 - Concept Study Descriptions	7-8
7.4 - Colorado Ballpark Renovation	7-12
7.4.1 - Concept Study Description	7-12
7.5 - Green Infrastructure Studies.....	7-14
7.6 - Other Future Projects to Consider	7-14
<i>SECTION 8 - Park Design and Development Guidelines</i>	<i>8-1</i>
8.1 - Use of Guidelines	8-1
8.2 - Park Characteristics	8-1
8.2.1 - Pocket Parks.....	8-1
8.2.2 - Neighborhood Parks.....	8-2
8.2.3 - Community Parks.....	8-2
8.2.4 - Regional Parks.....	8-3
8.2.5 - Specialty Parks	8-3
8.2.6 - Trails.....	8-3

8.3 - Design Guidelines.....	8-3
8.3.1 - Guidelines for Amenities by Park Classification.....	8-4
8.3.2 - Guidelines for Type of Facility by Population	8-9
SECTION 9 - Action Plan.....	9-1
9.1 - Goals and Policies.....	9-1
9.2 - Opportunities: Renovations and New Facilities	9-5
9.3 - Prioritization	9-6
9.4 - Facility Needs Summary.....	9-15
9.5 - Budget and Funding Analysis.....	9-16
9.5.1 - Park Acquisition Guidelines	9-16
9.5.2 - Cost Projections.....	9-16
9.5.3 - Funding.....	9-17
9.5.4 - Partnerships.....	9-31
9.6 - Parks Maintenance and Operations	9-32
9.6.1 - CIP.....	9-32
SECTION 10 - References.....	10-1

Appendices

- Appendix A – Los Banos Citywide Parks, Trails, and Facilities Map
- Appendix B – Stakeholder Interview Results
- Appendix C – Workshop #1 Survey Results
- Appendix D – Measure H – Los Banos Community Survey Results Memo
- Appendix E – Survey Monkey Survey – August-September 2020
- Appendix F – Detailed Cost Estimate by City Park and Priority
- Appendix G – Pacheco Park Cost Estimate
- Appendix H – Los Banos Parks List – Recreation Guide

List of Figures

Figure 1 Composite Map: All City Parks Service Area Analysis.....	11
Figure 1-1 City/Regional Map.....	1-4
Figure 5-1 Pocket Parks and Neighborhood Parks Service Area.....	5-41
Figure 5-2 Community Parks and All City Parks Service Areas	5-43
Figure 7-1 Regional Park – Option A.....	7-3
Figure 7-2 Regional Park – Option B.....	7-4
Figure 7-3 Aquatic Center – Option A.....	7-6
Figure 7-4 Aquatic Center – Option B.....	7-7
Figure 7-5 Ag Sports Complex – Option A	7-10
Figure 7-6 Ag Sports Complex – Option B	7-11
Figure 7-7 Colorado Ballpark.....	7-13

List of Tables

Table 1 Population Projections 1
Table 2 Park Standards by Classification for Similar California Cities..... 14
Table 3 Comparison of Park Acreage Regional Standards by Classification 16
Table 4 Comparison of Park Acreage Regional Standards by Classification 17
Table 5 Operating Expenses by Population 17
Table 6 Operating Expenses by Park Acreage 17
Table 7 Guidelines for Amenities by Park Classification..... 20
Table 2-1 Population Projections..... 2-1
Table 2-2 Age Distribution in Los Banos..... 2-2
Table 2-3 Race and Ethnicity..... 2-3
Table 2-4 Housing Occupancy Rate 2-4
Table 2-5 Los Banos Housing Values 2-4
Table 2-6 Income and Benefits..... 2-5
Table 2-7 Education and Poverty Level for the Population 25 years and Over 2-5
Table 4-1 Comparison of Park Demographics between Regions and Cities in California 4-3
Table 4-2 2019 NRPA Park Facilities Review 4-6
Table 5-1 ADA Access Evaluation for Existing Facilities 5-38
Table 6-1 Regional Park Examples–Classifications and Standards 6-4
Table 6-2 Comparison of Park Acreage Regional Standards by Classification 6-5
Table 6-3 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) Staffing Needs by Population..... 6-7
Table 6-4 Operating Expenses by Population 6-7
Table 9-1 Projects for Existing Facilities – High Priority 9-7
Table 9-2 Projects for Existing Facilities – Medium Priority..... 9-10
Table 9-3 Projects for Existing Facilities – Low Priority..... 9-12
Table 9-4 Cost Assumptions for New Park Development Project Cost/Unit* 9-17
Table 9-5 Cost Guidelines per Park Classification..... 9-33
Table 9-6 Comparison of NRPA Standards with Los Banos Standards..... 9-34

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

CITY COUNCIL

- Mike Villalta, Mayor
- Tom Faria, District 2
- Deborah Lewis, District 4
- Daronica Johsno-Santos, District 1
- Brett Jones, District 3

PLANNING COMMISSION

- Thomas Higby III, District 1
- Rob Robinson, District 2
- John Cates, District 3
- Susan Toscano, District 3
- Katherine Uhley, District 4

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

- Kimberlee Flores
- Martin Irwin
- Gary Munoz
- John Spevak
- Jesus Rosales

CITY STAFF

- City Manager, Alex Terrazas
- Mark Fachin, Public Works Director/City Engineer
- Fred Pezeshk, Public Works Assistant Director
- Stacy Sousa Elms, Community and Economic Development Director
- Joe Heim, Parks & Recreation Operations Manager
- Michael O'Brien, Parks Foreman
- Carlos Granillo, Parks Maintenance III

Special and grateful acknowledgements to the citizens of Los Banos who participated in the public input process by answering surveys, participating in workshops, and providing feedback at public hearings!

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Section 1: Introduction

Purpose. The new Los Banos Parks Master Plan will guide the Parks and Recreation Division, Parks and Recreation Commission, and staff in allocating resources over the next 15 years or more and to adapt to changing conditions and population needs. The Parks Master Plan has been informed by substantial community input, demographics and current trends analyses, assessment of parks and facilities, and existing and new policies. The Master Plan describes various types of parks and identifies park facilities and access improvements designed to maintain and improve Los Banos' quality of life for everyone.

Section 2: Community Profile & Demographics

This section provides an overview of the demographics, housing, income, and education's association with poverty levels for the City of Los Banos. Los Banos has experienced relatively slow population growth in comparison to the County of Merced and the State of California. The analysis uses data from U.S. Census Bureau (2015-2017) American Community Survey estimates and the Economic Conditions and Trends Report developed by BAE Urban Economics in coordination with PlaceWorks for the Los Banos General Plan 2040 Update. The BAE report was developed in conjunction with the Los Banos 2040 General Plan. The Census and American Community survey data were taken in 2015 and 2017.

Population Forecast. Population growth is a key factor for increasing demands for parks and recreation facilities in most areas. Demographic characteristics can influence the level of service for parks in the City of Los Banos. The current population for the City of Los Banos is 41,898 according to 2019 data from the California Department of Finance. The population projections in Table 1 below represent a 35 percent growth rate from 2015 to 2035 and a 20 percent growth rate from 2020 to 2035.

Table 1
Population Projections

	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	Total Growth Rate	Average Growth Rate
Los Banos	38,681	41,898	44,785	48,634	52,349	35%	7.8%

Age Distribution. The biggest age groups are 25 to 45 comprising more than one-fourth of the City's population. Residents over 55 years old make up 20 percent of the City's population.

Race/Ethnicity. Race/Ethnicity plays a large part in the utilization of parks and the level of participation in various activities. This could help highlight areas of the City where a park might be better utilized than others. The Hispanic population group (70.6%) is the predominate ethnic group within Los Banos and continues with an incremental growth trend. The non-Hispanic ethnic groups are the next largest ethnic group (combining White,

Black/African American, American Indian/Alaskan Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian and other Pacific ethnicities at 29.4%), which has exhibited a declining trend.

Households. In 2017, there were approximately 11,364 total housing units according to the U.S. Census. The percentage of residents owning their households is similar to renter-occupied households. Park utilization can be directly tied to locations. Typically, parks located in areas where the housing prices and income are lower will be better utilized compared to other neighborhoods. The median price for a home in Los Banos in 2017 was approximately \$226,700. According to the Los Banos average home price, 2,368 owner-occupied homes are below the Los Banos average.

Socioeconomics. Trends in park planning illustrate that people with more disposable incomes tend to be more active and participate in physical and sometimes more expensive types of leisure activities, while many low-income families take advantage of free or low-cost recreation opportunities, such as playing in parks and attending City-sponsored programs and events. The average California median income is \$71,805. Eighty percent of California's median income is \$57,444. A disadvantaged community has a household median income below 80 percent of the State median income. The median household income in Los Banos, CA in 2017 was \$48,410. Therefore, the City of Los Banos is considered a disadvantaged community. A significant number of households, roughly 60 percent, are living below the poverty line.

Health and Related Issues. There are two major public health concerns facing Los Banos: air quality and obesity. A parks master plan can assist in reducing the effect of both these issues.

Air Pollution is a major issue in the San Joaquin Valley. Hemmed in by mountains and rarely having strong winds, pollution is exacerbated by stagnant weather, coming mainly from diesel and gasoline-fueled vehicles and agricultural operations. Diseases that may be caused by or exacerbated by poor air quality include asthma and asthma attacks, valley fever¹, lung and heart disease, cancer, and more. Furthermore, the inclusion of parks in a community does promote a healthier lifestyle, which can reduce the ailments often exacerbated by poor air quality. In 2015, the County of Merced had an adult obesity rate of nearly 31 percent; even though, 68 percent of residents have access to available exercise opportunities. Furthermore, there is a higher prevalence of obesity among people with low incomes and Latinos than among people of higher incomes or people who are white.

¹ Center for **Disease** Control (CDC) claims **valley fever** is endemic in the San Joaquin Valley. This fever is caused by fungus in the soil getting trapped in the air and inhaled by residents. It can cause **pneumonia** and is especially dangerous for seniors.

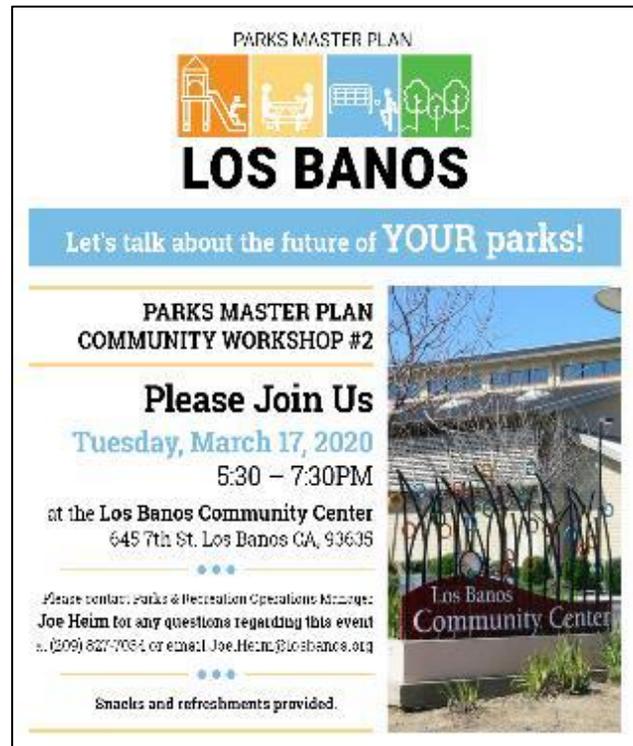
Section 3: Community & Stakeholder Input

QK prepared a public outreach plan that was reviewed by the City staff for their input and acceptance before the outreach process began.

Parks and Recreation Staff. QK met with the Parks and Recreation Commission, Parks Foreman, key sports organizations, educators, and other key stakeholders as defined by the City Parks and Recreation Manager to discuss the project and solicit comments, issues, problems, and preferences. The one-day event (approximately six hours) included prearranged timeslots to interview individuals and solicit responses. Interviewees also had the opportunity to offer their own input regardless of the prepared questions.

Stakeholder Interviews. The stakeholder survey questions were based on input gathered from the site tours with Parks and Recreation Operations Manager and included questions about key issues such as desired park improvements, frequency of use and popularity of certain parks, Regional Sports Complex, Colorado Ballpark, and the potential for an aquatic center. QK team members interviewed the stakeholders on November 19, 2019, at the Los Banos Community Center and provided the opportunity for stakeholders who were unable to attend the interview to participate via an email survey. The stakeholders preferred to see a regional sports facility on the west side. Their preference for the types of amenities that they would like to see were ranked in this order:

1. Splash Park;
2. Outdoor Pool located downtown;
3. Expand Current Parks;
4. Increase the number and length of trails;
5. Teen Club;
6. More picnic areas and picnic shelters; and
7. More playgrounds.



The ad appeared in the Los Banos Enterprise newspaper and a similar flyer was sent in emails and posted on prominent sites throughout the City. Flyers and posters were printed in English and Spanish. Attendance at the first workshop surpassed 100 residents.

Workshop #1: Introduction to the Parks Master Plan. QK conducted Workshop #1 that included an overview of the Parks Master Plan and the planning process; a brief tour with images of current City of Los Banos' parks; local, regional, and national trends; and, National Parks and Recreation Association (NRPA) guidelines. This meeting was held in the evening over an approximately two-hour period on January 9, 2020. The meeting was divided into three parts—exhibit boards with voting dots; a project PowerPoint presentation with real time response survey; and, a question and answer period/open mic discussion by the consultant and participants who individually expressed their ideas and concerns.

Meeting with Community Development Director. The City of Los Banos 2040 General Plan Update was underway at the time the Parks Master Plan project was in process. QK had one meeting with the Community and Economic Development Director to collect information on the General Plan progress and to gather input on possible locations for a regional sports park. The Community Development Director has suggested to the QK team that the goals and policies that are derived from the Parks Master Plan process will likely be included in the General Plan update.



Workshop participants used 'voting dots' to select recreational amenity preferences, their favorite park, and where they lived on a map of the city.

Workshop #2: Renovations and New Parks. On March 19, Governor Gavin Newsom California ordered a statewide mandate for nearly all residents to stay home and limit social interaction until further notice to try to slow the spread of COVID-19. As a result, large gatherings such as a public workshop were postponed by the City of Los Banos. As a result, Workshop #2 was held on September 10, 2020, via a Zoom Video Webinar hosted by QK over an approximately one-and-a-half-hour period. Our team was assisted in the webinar with the help of Joe Heim, Parks Division Manager. Using a graphic presentation, survey questions, opportunities for comment, QK was able to solicit input and feedback from the public. The workshop included a recap summary of the surveys and input provided from the first workshop; concept site plans for two parks cited for future renovations and two concept site plans for new parks; survey questions on a variety of topics; and a timeline for completion of the master plan. The workshop included exhibits for improvements to Focus Area parks (see Section 7 Focus Areas for exhibits of proposed new park sites and renovated parks) Colorado Ballpark, AG Sports Complex, and a new Regional Sports Complex and new aquatic center.

Participants were asked to prioritize types of facilities for new and renovated parks and to select their preferred locations for a skatepark, pickleball courts, and new restroom facilities.

The material was also provided for inclusion to the City's website for public consumption and comments.

Some of the results of the Workshop and simultaneous online survey hosted by the City included the following. The results of the Focus Area parks question and answer portion of the survey included the selection of the preferred Concept Site Plan for each park and the preferred amenities for each park as desired by the community.

Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting.

City Council Meeting.

Community Vision and Goals. Prior to the start of the Parks Master Plan, the City identified six goals during the course of this project. During the planning process and community and stakeholder outreach, additional goals were added as well as a list of policies to pursue to meet those goals. A review of past policies that were not yet completely implemented or policies that could be maintained which were identified in the 2030 General Plan or earlier City of Los Banos' Parks Master Plans were reviewed and included in the goals and policies identified in *Section 9 – Action Plan*. The vision and six initial goals are as follows:

- *Vision.* The City of Los Banos has held a long-standing vision to **“Create Community through People, Parks and Programs”**.
- *Goals.* Prior to the kick-off of the Parks Master Plan with the City of Los Banos and the consultant team, the City wanted to achieve at least six goals during the course of this project. During the planning process and public outreach with the community and stakeholders, additional goals were identified as well as a list of policies to pursue to meet those goals. A review of past policies that were not yet implemented or policies that could be maintained and were identified in the 2030 General Plan or earlier City of Los Banos' Parks Master Plans were reviewed and included in the goals and policies identified in *Section 9 – Action Plan*. The six initial goals are as follows:
 - **GOAL.** Increase capacity to meet future demand (population growth).
 - **GOAL.** Provide a system of park classifications and amenity requirements for future parks that serve their intended purpose.
 - **GOAL.** Develop a definitive program for renovation of existing recreation facilities and development of future facilities.
 - **GOAL** Improve connectivity to parks.
 - **GOAL.** Expand financial opportunities.
 - **GOAL.** Address accessibility including park visitors with disabilities.

Section 4: Trends

Since the provision of public parks and recreation services can be influenced by demographic preferences, the Master Plan process identified local, regional, and national recreation trends that help define what Los Banos residents may be seeking either now or as the City grows. Resident demographics using local community input and research of relevant trends, critical insights that help to plan for the future can be found. This section reviews local, regional, and national recreation trends relative to Los Banos' demographic and identified interests.

Local Trends. Local trends were identified by listening to the residents of Los Banos to determine their interests and desires for recreation amenities in the City. A preference by the community is not necessarily a trend but a preference may result because it is a trend. The top three trends that the consultant team heard from listening and from survey input included the following:

- Skatepark that could hold regional competitions;
- Pickleball courts throughout the community; and
- Splash parks.

Recent park renovations in nearby communities in Merced County can also reflect the trends that are occurring locally. Local parks that were recently renovated contained amenities such a splash pad, outdoor stage, new benches welded by local high school students, graffiti resistant picnic tables, and a lighted jogging path with exercise stations. Lighted basketball courts and shade for playgrounds remain a continuous trend in the county. A recently completed park in Merced, McNamara Park, included synthetic turf soccer fields, splash play, fencing and entry gate designed and welded by local high school students, mural wall designed and painted by the UC Merced art students, climbing play structure, and security cameras.

Regional Trends in Park Ratios and Park Access. Most Los Banos residents (84%) live less than a half mile from a park and the City has a park ratio of more than six acres per 1,000 residents, which would be closer to the ratios within the Bay Area despite a lower median household income. The cities with similar populations to Los Banos include Danville and Newark. Danville's General Plan and current ratio of acres per 1,000 residents are 6.5 and 6.6, respectively. Newark's General Plan and current ratio of acres per 1,000 population are 3.0 and 3.11, respectively.

Regional Trends in Facilities. Many communities throughout California are expressing interest in bringing a regional sports complex to their city. Out-of-town visitors can have a big economic impact from a regional sports park since their spending is new money being introduced into the local economy. Los Banos' location between I-5 and Highway 99, and at the crossroads of Highway 152 and Highway 165 provides it with easy access to airports in Fresno, Oakland, San Jose, San Francisco, and is a short distance from the Sacramento International Airport. Within a two-hour drive, a sports complex could attract teams from San Francisco, Oakland, San Jose, and the Central Valley. Within a four-hour drive the complex could attract teams from Los Angeles, Sacramento, and Reno. Additionally, Los Banos offers large parcels of land for development and over 300 days of sunshine per year. The benefits of a Regional Facility in Los Banos would also go beyond the financial stability of the Los Banos Parks & Recreation Division, but also advance tourism to the area.

Regional trends may identify recreational facilities being proposed by cities throughout California, particularly in central California, southern California, and the Bay Area. Some of the more common themes include a focus on walking and hiking; outdoor pools with an emphasis on swimming and competitions; and, team sports. Pools also included recreational

pools, water slides, wet play/splash play areas, and shallow areas or separate pools for swimming lessons.

Recent trends related to concerns over football concussions, has sparked a new interest in touch football. Soccer as a year-round sport can have immense pressure on natural fields. Future recommendations suggest cities consider constructing a ratio of one to every three sports fields as lighted, synthetic turf fields wherever sports complexes are being planned. Long-term water and maintenance cost savings will benefit the sustainability of City operations. Trends towards renewable energy where appropriate to reduce energy costs were also found.

Playgrounds that incorporated new types of play elements and features such as: music gardens; nature play components and nature play areas along trail corridors; and, destination or themed playgrounds were popular. Diversified recreation opportunities that could mix all ages and all interests included adding facilities such as bocce courts, a bike skills area/pump track, pickleball courts, exercise stations, and climbing structures.

While Los Banos appears to provide its residents with the majority of popular regional trends, the need is to repair, replace, improve, and maintain where needed. This plan document will address the City's park needs.

National Trends. According to the "2019 NRPA Agency Performance Review – Park Facilities," the top 10 recreational facilities in the United States are, in the following order:

1. Playgrounds;
2. Basketball Courts;
3. Indoor Tennis Courts;
4. Youth Baseball Fields;
5. Adult Softball Fields;
6. Rectangular Multi-purpose Fields;
7. Diamond Fields: Softball-Youth;
8. Dog Parks;
9. Diamond Fields: Baseball-Adult; and
10. Outdoor Swimming Pools

Other national trends include:

- *Combating Obesity Rates.* Specifically combatting the increasing rate of obesity has become a national trend.
- *Increased Opioid Use.* Given the rise in opioid use nationwide, the design of parks, where much drug use may take place after normal operating hours, is an important factor that could help stem the progression of opioid use. Design changes include, but are not limited to, improving sight lines near restrooms, eliminating potential hiding places, changing the placement or removing benches altogether, and installing additional safety lighting.

- *Nationwide Fitness Activity.* High impact intensity training (HIIT) and cross-training style workouts, or CrossFit, and the exercise equipment that encourages such workouts, are two of the top trending aerobic activities.
- *Technology.* In the near or distant future, park and recreation agencies may embrace the use of technology for a variety of purposes, including monitoring systems such as beacon counters and geofences, biometric identification at entrances to public facilities and programs, and use of drones for surveillance.
- *eSports.* Several park agencies will sponsor eSports tournaments that combine digital gaming with supplemental events and physical activity challenges and provide an opportunity for park and recreation agencies to attract and engage youth.
- *Dog Parks.* Dog parks are one of the fastest growing types of parks in the country. Many dog parks include two separate fenced areas – one for large dogs and one for small dogs.
- *Themed Playgrounds and Splash Parks.* Theme playgrounds and splash parks continue to be a popular trend.
- *Increase in Indoor Activities.* Some traditional public park facilities are being replaced by indoor commercial recreation experiences. With some areas of the country like Los Banos experiencing extreme heat in the summer, there is a growing market for indoor pay-to-play recreation.
- *Outdoor Yoga.* Yoga is one of the fastest-growing wellness trends, and its popularity is only expected to climb. Twenty million Americans currently practice yoga. Nearly one third of yoga enthusiasts practice the activity outdoors.
- *Pickleball.* More than 3.1 million players play pickleball in America and has grown by more than 10 percent each year over the past decade. Pickleball is a sport that anyone can enjoy. Another reason for the sport's popularity is that many people are migrating from tennis to pickleball. Tennis courts can be easily striped for pickleball players.
- *Connectedness.* The City of Los Banos has been successful with trails on irrigation canals and abandoned rail lines and more trails and bikeways have been identified in their Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan.

Section 5: Inventory & Needs Assessment Analysis

The City of Los Banos prides itself on providing the highest quality parks and recreation to its citizens. The parks and recreation facility inventory indicate there is a broad range of passive and active opportunities on approximately 264 acres well dispersed throughout the city. The current park acreages are analyzed against a ratio of park or recreation facility per 1,000 population. Local agencies can adopt their own standards, but often agencies tend to look toward national and regional standards. The current population of Los Banos is 41,898 and an average size of 3.45 people per household. This averages out to 6.3 acres per 1,000 population. Unlike the cities of Hanford and Clovis, California, school recreation facilities are not included with the average per 1,000 population. Schools in Los Banos keep their facilities fenced and locked to the public but are available for public rental if the school's athletic schedules allow it.

The Master Plan classifies the city's parks into five categories: **Pocket Parks, Neighborhood Parks, Community Parks, Specialty Parks or Facilities, and Trails.** A sixth classification, **Regional Parks,** are identified as parks larger than 25 acres, service the region and nearby cities, and provide a range of activities including passive and active recreation but primarily sports field games such as soccer, football, and baseball/softball. Los Banos does not have a regional facility.

Pocket Park. Pocket Parks are most often found in residential neighborhoods developed as an amenity to serve the immediate neighborhood and are generally located less than one-quarter mile from the furthest residence. Pocket parks are usually less than one acre and typically include a playground, picnic tables and barbecues, benches, and shade. Lighting is usually available from the adjacent streets. Larger pocket parks (between one-half to one acre) may provide basketball and/or volleyball.

Neighborhood Park. Neighborhood Parks are designed to meet local neighborhood needs and are intended to be within walking or bicycling distance of less than a one-half mile radius. Neighborhood Parks usually emphasize child- and family-oriented activities. They can range in size from one acre to 10 acres and the size can generally be as much as 25 acres when attached to a storm basin. The storm basins are generally used for open play, sports field games, and perimeter walking/jogging trails.

Community Park. Community Parks are designed to serve both the City as a whole or a group of neighborhoods. While community parks may include neighborhood park amenities, and do act as neighborhood parks as well, the focus of a community park is often on meeting community-based recreation, athletics, and open space needs. Two examples would be the Ag Sports Complex and the Colorado Ballpark. Despite its small size, Pacheco Park is considered a community park because of its many amenities, the library, the museum, and its proximity to a major arterial/state route. Typically, the service area ranges from one-mile to as much as a three-mile radius. The acreage ranges in size from seven to 20. Community Park facilities are most often oriented towards family and adult activities such as tennis courts, community centers, swimming pools or splash pads, sports fields, walking paths, picnic areas and/or picnic shelters, off-street parking, and night lighting.

Specialty Park or Facility. For the purpose of this Master Plan, a Specialty Park or Facility covers a broad range of specialized park and recreation facilities, often with a single major use. These parks may also include neighborhood or community park elements, but with amenities that have an appeal to visitors from outside the City. A specialty park or facility can be a building used for meetings or recreational programs or a memorial park or plaza generally smaller than five acres. Specialty parks may also include a park that is meant to commemorate a fallen hero or heroes or a specific use such as a skate park, BMX track or dog park.

Trail. For the purpose of this Master Plan, trails are linear paths usually along a canal or old railroad right of way or an easement that provides access to canal trails or rail trails. Trail easements can vary in width up to 100 feet as is the case with the City's rail trail. The paths

are usually a paved or DG surface from eight to 10 feet in width. Shade trees, bench seating, and trash containers are preferred; more amenities could be added.

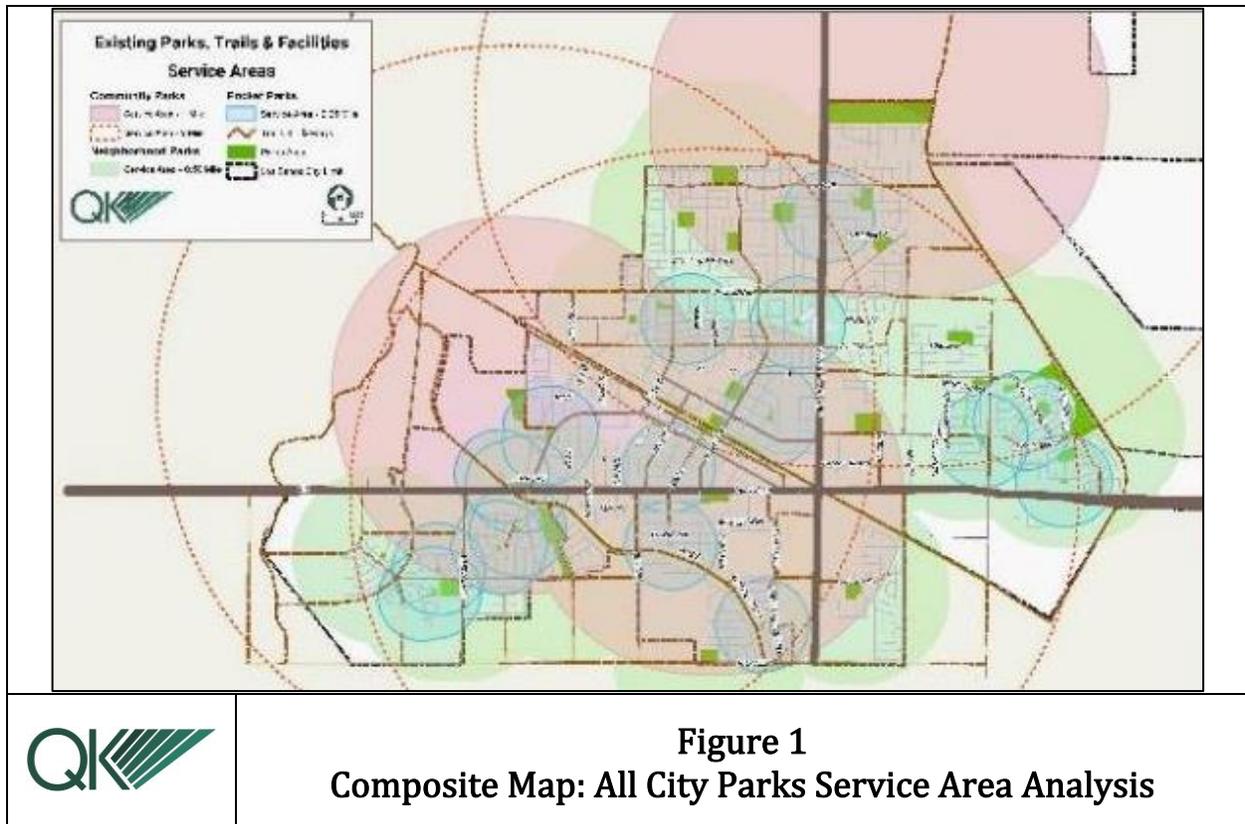
Descriptions of Existing Parks. Each of the parks or facilities in the City of Los Banos has been classified by the following five categories: Pocket Parks; Neighborhood Parks; Community Parks; Specialty Park or Facility; and, Trails. For a thorough description of parks by classification, see Section 5. The City park acreage by classification is as follows:

- Pocket Parks: 9.34 acres;
- Neighborhood Parks: 131.27 acres;
- Community Parks: 75.79 acres;
- Specialty Parks: 11.35 acres;
- Trails: 36.6 acres; and
- Total: 264.35 acres.

ADA Access Facility Evaluation. The California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Part 2 mandates that all publicly funded buildings, structures, and related facilities shall be accessible to and usable by persons with disabilities. These regulations pertain to Los Banos' public buildings, parks, and facilities that were constructed using state, City, or municipal funds or that are owned, leased, rented, contracted, or sublet by the City. This Master Plan identifies the necessary modification of playgrounds and public sidewalks adjacent to parks to ensure accessibility. The evaluation revealed that nearly half of the parks in the City needed ADA access ramps from the adjacent or nearby street to the park. Approximately 70 percent of the parks that had existing playgrounds required ADA access ramps to the playground on each park site. A detailed summary of ADA access needs by each facility can be found in Section 5 of this document.

Service Area Analysis. What is a Service Area? Service area distance radii are generated with the park location as the central radius point. A Level of Service Area Analysis was conducted with respect to all parks in the City. When areas zoned for residential use fall outside graphic service area designations, that area may be underserved by existing parks. The service area analysis demonstrates that there appears to be adequate coverage across the City's residential areas with the current parks provided in the Neighborhood and Pocket Parks classification. Community Park service radius coverage indicates that in the future, the southeast portion of the City should be considered for an additional community park site if the City continues to grow in that direction. Currently, expansion to the southeast is hindered by the 7,400-acre North Grasslands Wildlife Area to the east. Gaps in service can be addressed by adding a new facility or expanding existing facilities. There does not appear to be an opportunity to expand an existing park facility in the southeast area of the City.

A resident should be able to walk to a park within one-quarter mile of his or her residence. The following exhibit is a map of the City of Los Banos with all of the park facilities including the Los Banos Community Center with a quarter-mile walking radius for each park. The map illustrates that for the majority of residents in the City there is access to some kind of park.



The City has provided the residents of Los Banos with a series of trails along irrigation canals and the abandoned rail line as well as the bikeways identified in the Los Banos Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. In certain neighborhoods in the City, greenways provide access to parks (i.e., Meadowlands Greenway and Rancho dos Amigos Greenway). Not all greenways have sidewalks but installing them to provide better access to parks should be a priority.

When we view the service areas of all city parks, Los Banos parks are clearly accessible to all areas and neighborhoods in the community. New parks should be based on the criteria identified in this Master Plan. Future neighborhood parks will be developed as new subdivisions are approved and constructed. For example, the new communities of Shaunessy Village near College Greens and Sunrise Ranch near Talbott Park/Los Banos Junior Middle School will include new parks to accommodate the residents there.

Parks Maintenance and Operations. Continuing to maintain and improve the parks and facilities at the expected high level for residents is costly. Currently there is no reliable source of funding to pay for all of it. The Landscape and Lighting Districts (LLD's) provide funding for some parks and recreation facilities. The Ballot Measure H is a half-cent sales tax that provides for some additional funding. The Parks and Recreation Commission makes recommendations to the City Council for some upkeep and capital repairs every year, but the need for greater funding still exists.

One of the needs identified by the community was the need for clean and well-maintained parks and facilities. Safety and vandalism issues are connected to this maintenance issue as

the better maintained and well-used parks and facilities are typically less likely to experience vandalism and crime. Without adequate staffing and funding these needs could not be met. The City has many parks that are aging (or have aged) and need regular maintenance as well as replacement and improvements to overall amenities and park elements. Some of the work may be able to be funded through general funding, but many of the smaller items like replacement of water fountains, new trash receptacles, and bench or picnic table replacement, are not.

The Parks and Recreation Division will need to closely monitor resources to ensure that the assets of the park system reach the anticipated lifecycles. It is recommended that the Parks Division maintenance funding grow to accommodate new park development in the future. As the system grows, the following guidelines should be utilized to identify annual operational funding required to maintain additional park acreage:

- Athletic Field Parks:
 - \$12,000 - \$15,000 per rectangular field
 - \$18,000 - \$20,000 per diamond field
 - \$5,000 per acre
- Community Parks: \$7,500 - \$9,000 per acre
- Neighborhood Parks: \$8,500 - \$10,000 per acre
- Pocket Parks: \$10,000 - \$12,000 per acre
- Special Use Parks: Costs varies dependent upon amenities
- Trails: \$5,000-\$5,500 per acre

Note: Maintenance costs typically increase two to three percent annually to as much as six percent during a highly robust economy.

Section 6: Level of Service (LOS) Analysis

While it is unlikely that the City will need substantial new parkland except as the City grows and to meet the residents desire for a regional sports complex, there are areas for improvements and the need to revisit the existing park facilities and amenities to better serve the community, meet new trends, and provide the types of facilities that residents want.

Level of Service (LOS) standards are guidelines that define service areas based on population that support a city's investment decisions related to parks, facilities, and amenities. LOS standards for the City of Los Banos were evaluated using a combination of local, regional and national resources, including:

- General Plan Policy Document; Parks, Open Space, and Resources Element;
- National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) Guidelines;
- Similar standards from Parks Master Plans from communities in the region; and
- Community stakeholder and city staff input and general observations. This allows standards to be customized specifically for the City of Los Banos park system.

NRPA Guidelines. According to the 2020 National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) Agency Performance Review, the typical park and recreation agency offers one park for every 2,181 residents served, with 9.9 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents. But park and recreation agencies are as diverse as the communities that they serve, and what works well for one agency may not be best for every agency. Historically, NRPA has created a hierarchy of park types, as well as a set of acreage standards for different park types. For years, nationally accepted standards called for 9.9 or more acres of parkland for every 1,000 residents. But by the 1990s, the NRPA relaxed that, suggesting instead that each city establish its own standard based on its growth patterns. This information for cities within California are shown in Section 6.1.3 – Regional Standards.

Current Los Banos Standards. The Los Banos General Plan had established a goal of providing seven acres of developed park land per 1,000 residents within the city limits (five acres provided by the development community and two acres provided by the City). The City currently has a population of 41,898 and 264.35 acres of park land. This translates into a ratio of 6.3 parks per 1,000 population. With this current ratio of 6.3 per 1,000 residents, the City has been able to maintain a favorable proportion of parks within a walking or biking distance to a vast majority of residents in the City. To maintain its current ratio of 6.3, then the park acreage needs to increase to 98 acres by 2035, an increase of 6.5 acres per year. **This Master Plan recommends that the City maintain its current ratio of 6.3 acres per 1,000 residents since it is currently working for the community, is equal to or better than other California cities of comparable population and land area, and parks are in a comfortable walking or biking distance from a majority of the people who live there.** A new regional park facility, addition of more trails, development of the additional area of Ag Sports Complex, and the city’s requirement for private development to build parks in the communities they develop would likely help the City of Los Banos achieve its preferred park acreage goals. Following is the recommended target ratios of new park land for the 2035 Los Banos Parks Master Plan:

Current Acreage per 1,000 Population by Classification

- *Neighborhood and Pocket Parks:* 3.35 acres per 1,000 residents;
- *Community Parks:* 1.8 acres per 1,000 residents;
- *Specialty Parks and Trails:* 1.15 acres per 1,000 residents; and
- *Regional Parks:* No standard available

Park Acreage by Classification Summary

- *Neighborhood and Pocket Parks.*
 - Los Banos has 37 Neighborhood and Pocket Parks containing a total of 140.61-acres resulting in 3.35-acres per 1,000 residents.
 - At the City’s projected 2035 population, the City should include, at a minimum, an additional 52.1 acres of neighborhood and pocket parks to continue to meet this level of service standard; however, neighborhood and pocket parks should be located within a walking distance of one-quarter to one-half mile of residents in **new residential communities.**

- *Community Parks.*
 - Los Banos has three Community Parks containing a total of 75.79 acres resulting in 1.8 acres per 1,000 residents.
 - At the City’s projected 2035 population, the City should include an additional 73.8 acres of community parks to meet this level of service standard. A new regional park will fulfill the needs for community parks.
 - Ag Sports Complex is a community park of nearly 50 acres but only 8.25 acres have been built out.
 - The acreage for a new regional park could meet or exceed the acreage needs for the community park standards.
- *Special Use Parks and Trails.*
 - Los Banos has five Specialty Parks containing a total of 48 acres resulting in 1.15 acres per 1,000 residents.
 - At the City’s projected 2035 population, the City should include an additional 18.1 acres of specialty parks and trails to meet this level of service standard. However, the types of facilities found in a special use park, i.e., dog park, skate park, disc golf course, etc., can often be found in neighborhood and community parks thus negating the need for additional area to meet the special use park acreage requirement.
- *Regional Parks.* The City currently has no regional park or regional park standards.

Regional Standards. In an effort to establish a consensus of what the average level of service for each park classification is, specific cities were selected due to their similarities to the City of Los Banos.

**Table 2
Park Standards by Classification for Similar California Cities**

Comparison City	Type	Service Area	Desirable Size	Acres/1,000 population
City of El Centro	Pocket Parks	No Applicable Standards	No Applicable Standards	No Applicable Standards
	Neighborhood Parks	¼ to ½ Mile	5-10 Acres	2.5 acres
	Community Parks	>½ Mile	20-40 Acres	2.5 acres
	Regional Parks	50-60 Miles	500+ Acres	No Applicable Standards
	Special Use Parks	No Applicable Standards	No Applicable Standards	No Applicable Standards
City of Hollister	Pocket Parks	¼ to ½ Mile	<2.5 acres	4 acres
	Neighborhood Parks	¼ to ½ Mile	2.5-10 Acres (5 Min)	4 acres

Comparison City	Type	Service Area	Desirable Size	Acres/1,000 population
	Community Parks	½ Mile	>10 Acres	4 acres
	Regional Parks	No Applicable Standards	No Applicable Standards	No Applicable Standards
	Special Use Parks	No Applicable Standards	No Applicable Standards	No Applicable Standards
City of Delano	Pocket Parks	No Applicable Standards	No Applicable Standards	No Applicable Standards
	Neighborhood Parks	< ½ Mile	3-5 Acres	3 acres
	Community Parks	<1 Mile	15-30 Acres	3 Acres
	Regional Parks	No Applicable Standards	No Applicable Standards	No Applicable Standards
	Special Use Parks ²	No Applicable Standards	No Applicable Standards	No Applicable Standards
City of Manteca	Pocket Parks ³	No Applicable Standards	No Applicable Standards	No Applicable Standards
	Neighborhood Parks	<¼ Mile	1-10 Acres	3 acres
	Community Parks	<3 miles	15-50 Acres	1 Acres
	Regional Parks	No Applicable Standards	No Applicable Standards	No Applicable Standards
	Special Use Parks	No Applicable Standards	No Applicable Standards	1 Acres

The average consensus of the four parks identified with similar populations and area to Los Banos and a comparison to current Los Banos standards is as follows in the table below.

² The City of Delano has six parks/open space areas designated as a Special Facilities. However, the City’s Recreation Master Plan does not designate applicable standards for the development of these facilities.

³ Pocket Parks are considered to be a subtype of Neighborhood Parks and therefore, does not have specific design standards.

Table 3
Comparison of Park Acreage Regional Standards by Classification

Classification	Current Los Banos Standards	Average Standards of Four Regional Cities Identified
Pocket and Neighborhood Parks	3.2/1,000	3.2/1,000
Community Parks	1.8/1,000	1.6/1,000
Specialty Parks and Trails	1.15/1,000	No Standard Available
Regional Parks	No Available Standard	No Available Standard

Conclusion: The City's current standards are equal to or better than the regional standards of comparable cities.

Park Acreage Standards by Classification

- *Neighborhood and Pocket Parks*: 3.35 acres per 1,000 residents.
- *Community Parks*: 1.8 acres per 1,000 residents.
- *Specialty Parks and Trails*: 1.15 acres per 1,000 residents.
- *Regional Parks*: Typically, one per region based on 2.5 acres per 1,000 population of the region although the standard can vary from region to region. The population of communities, both incorporated and unincorporated within a 20-mile radius (30-minute drive) of Los Banos is approximately 67,000 (Santa Nella, Volta, Dos Palos, Gustine, Newman, El Nido, Newman, and Stevinson, not including Merced with a current population of approximately 79,000). One regional park, which could ultimately service the City of Los Banos and surrounding communities, would meet or exceed the typical park standard of 2.5 acres per 1,000 population. The City of Merced has a 12-acre Youth Sports Complex. A larger regional facility like the one being proposed for Los Banos could also serve the City of Merced.

Distance Requirements by Classification

- *Pocket Parks* should have a minimum area of 5,000 square feet and a general service area of one-quarter mile radius.
- *Neighborhood Parks* should have a minimum size of one to seven acres and a general service area of one-half mile radius.
- *Community Parks* should have a minimum size of seven to 25 acres and a general service area of one- to two-mile radius; three-mile radius is acceptable but not encouraged.
- *A Regional Park* typically averages between 25 and 100 acres and serves the city and surrounding communities (i.e., Gustine and Los Palos.)

Staffing Needs. A typical park and recreation agency is staffed with 41.9 full-time equivalent staff (FTEs) that include a mix of full-time and part-time staff. One way to view agency staffing is to measure it relative to the population of the area that the agency serves. The

typical park and recreation agency has 8.1 FTEs⁴ on staff for each 10,000 residents living in the jurisdiction served by the agency. The following tables suggest the FTEs that may be considered for staffing the City of Los Banos Parks and Recreation Division.

**Table 4
Comparison of Park Acreage Regional Standards by Classification**

Year	2020	2025	2030	2035
Population	41,898	47,104	52,310	57,517
8.1 FTE's/10,000 residents	34	38	42.4	46.6

Operating Expenses. According to the 2020 NRPA Agency Performance Review, the typical park and recreation agency has annual operating expenditures of \$4,342,495. The typical park and recreation agency has annual operating expenses of \$81.19 on a per capita basis. The median level of operating expenditures is \$7,160 per acre of park and non-park sites managed by the agency. The typical park and recreation agency spends \$97,093 in annual operating expenditures for each employee. At the typical park and recreation agency, staffing costs account for 54 percent of the operating budget. The typical park and recreation agency dedicates 44 percent of its operating budget to park management and maintenance and 43 percent to recreation.

**Table 5
Operating Expenses by Population**

Year	2020	2025	2030	2035
Population	41,898	47,104	52,310	57,517
\$81.19 per capita	\$3,401,698	\$3,824,373	\$4,247,049	\$4,669,805

**Table 6
Operating Expenses by Park Acreage**

Year	2020	2025	2030	2035
Acreage*	264.35	296.8	329.5	362.4
\$7,160/acre	\$1,892,746	\$2,125,088	\$2,359,220	\$2,594,477

*Assuming a ratio of 6.3-acres or park land per 1,000 residents.
If the City acquires land for and constructs a regional sports complex, operating expenses should be increased based on the size of the new park.

Section 7: Focus Areas

The City of Los Banos Parks and Recreation Division wanted to gauge the community's interest in a several new facilities and renovations to existing facilities. The following summaries are conceptual studies to gauge the community's needs and desires for a regional

⁴ 2020 NRPA Agency Performance Review

sports facility and an aquatic center. Renovations for Colorado Ballpark and expansion of the Ag Sports Complex are described in the paragraphs that follow.

Regional Sports Facility. Two conceptual studies were prepared for a Regional Sports Facility on an approximately 210-acre site located south of Pioneer Road, west of Ortigalita Road, and north of the irrigation canal. Although a site for a regional sports facility has not been selected or determined, the location was used as an example of what a regional sports facility might look like. The two studies were conceptual only and further investigation will need to determine the number of facilities for the proposed project. A regional park could include soccer and football, baseball and softball, picnic areas/picnic shelters, basketball and tennis, restrooms/concession stands, and parking to accommodate large events and competitions.



Regional Sports Facility Concept Plan

Aquatics Center. The need and interest to develop an aquatic center was identified in the 2006 Los Banos Parks & Recreation Master Plan. Two conceptual studies were prepared for an approximately three-acre facility. Although a site has not yet been determined or finalized, the Fourth and H Street location was selected to depict an example of what an aquatic center might look like. The two studies were conceptual only and further investigation will need to determine the number of facilities for the proposed project. The two studies and a summary of the community’s preferences follow below. An aquatic facility should include a building large enough for restrooms, lockers and changing areas, administrative functions, and an event room and kitchen for rental space for parties and other events.



Aquatic Center Concept Plan

Ag Sports Complex. The Ag Sports Complex located at Mercey Springs Road and less than 500 feet north of St. Francis Drive in the northeast corner of the City currently is less than 17 percent built out. The 50-acre park has just 8.25 acres with ballfields, parking, restrooms,

tennis courts, and skate park. The remainder of the site includes approximately 11.5 acres of detention basins and a landfill site along its northern border of approximately 10 acres. The site could provide a facility for walking trails and access to a city-wide trail.



Ag Sports Complex Renovation and Expansion Concept Plan

Colorado Ballpark Renovation. The concept study for the Colorado Ballpark does not propose to relocate any of the ballfields, the parking lot, restroom or the tennis courts. The parking lot will need to be slurry sealed and restriped. A skatepark is proposed to be located north of the parking lot. The space between the outfields of two ballfields is a prime location for a picnic shelter, and a tot playground—a spot for all ages. Colorado Ballpark currently has no playgrounds. The nearby tennis courts will need to be resurfaced and re-netted. The skate park location north of the parking lot has visibility from both parking lot and Colorado Avenue and allows for 6,000 to 7,000 square feet of skatepark area with nearby shade pavilions or a 10,000-square-foot area without the nearby shade pavilions. The current skatepark is around 6,000 square feet.



Colorado Ballpark Renovation Concept Plan

Green Infrastructure Studies. At the time of the preparation of this document, the federal government (i.e., EPA) has green infrastructure funding opportunities; the State of California had grants available for an urban greening program; and, Proposition 68 has funding for a green infrastructure program. Two parks were

considered for sites for green infrastructure and renewable energy: Colorado Ballpark and Ag Sports Complex. For the Colorado Ballpark, green infrastructure improvement projects could include converting the existing drainage ditch along the north property line into an active bioswale and filtration area for treating parking lot runoff. Both parks have opportunities for overhead shade structures with solar panel installations in the parking lot; installation of permeable paving in the parking areas would help decrease load on local storm drain systems and increase water percolation back into the surrounding soil; and, shade tree planting in the parking lot interior and around the perimeter would help offset the heat island effect with large parking area surfaces. .

Section 8: Park Design and Development Guidelines

Design guidelines support consistency and quality in planning, building and maintaining new and updated parks and facilities. The guidelines support the Master Plan vision and goals and provide greater detail on plan recommendations from developers. The design guidelines should be used as the basis for discussing, reviewing and approving all new development or improvements to the park system. Los Banos should use the guidelines to measure all projects for conformance with the intent and direction of the Master Plan. Developers, designers and planners, decision-makers, staff and members of the community should all use these guidelines.

Guidelines for Amenities by Park Classification. To ensure that future parks in Los Banos are the proper size and contain the appropriate amenities for their intended purpose, the following park classification guidelines are recommended. These classifications include recommended and optional amenities for each of the park classifications. This Executive Summary only includes the suggested minimum requirements. For a complete summary of both recommended and optional requirements, please refer to Section 10 of this document.

**Table 7
Guidelines for Amenities by Park Classification**

Classification	Recommended Amenities	Size & Distance
Pocket /Mini	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irrigated small turf and landscaped area, including shade trees near benches and picnic tables • Walking access via local neighborhood • Signage to identify park name and park rules sign necessary for use • Seating benches or seat wall • Children’s playground for ages 0–5 (minimum 1,500 square feet) with shade structure providing shade for the play equipment. • Trash receptacles (minimum one per half acre) • Minimum of two picnic tables. • Other amenities as may be required by Parks Division 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5,000 square feet to one acre • one-quarter mile radius to most residents

Classification	Recommended Amenities	Size & Distance
<p>Neighborhood</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perimeter walking paths with security lighting (solar-powered preferred) • Open turf area at least 125 feet x 200 feet or 180 feet x 300 feet for active recreation activities and youth/teen soccer for parks 3.0 acres to 5.0 acres. Minimum two open turf areas at least 125 feet x 200 feet or 180 feet x 300 feet each for parks larger than 5.0 acres or as determined by the Parks Division • Irrigated landscaped areas including shade trees near benches and picnic tables or shade structure(s) • Signage for park identification and sign for use regulations • Park benches and/or seat walls • Two children’s play areas, one for 0–5 years (minimum 2,000 square feet) and one for 5–12 years (minimum 3,500 square feet) • One large or two small family picnic areas; minimum of two picnic tables plus minimum one table for each additional acre over one acre. • Basketball court (one court for every four acres and no more than two) • Sand or grass volleyball court • Trash receptacles (one per half acre) • Bicycle racks on concrete slab • Drinking fountain(s) (minimum one per acre not to exceed four fountains). Note: At least one fountain shall have bottle filler station and pet friendly fountain. • Restrooms for parks larger than 3.5 acres • Security lighting • Other amenities as may be required by Parks Division. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One acre to seven acres • Half-mile radius to most residents
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lighted sports fields. Install minimum four athletic tournament fields; softball, little league, soccer or football tournament or as directed by the Parks Division in parks less than 18 acres. Install five athletic tournament fields; softball, little league, soccer or football tournament or as directed by the Parks Division in parks greater than 18 acres and less than 22 acres. Install six athletic tournament fields; softball, little league, soccer or football tournament or as directed by the Parks Division in parks greater than 22 acres and less than 25 acres. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seven acres to 25 acres • One-mile to three-mile radius to most residents

Classification	Recommended Amenities	Size & Distance
<p>Community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basketball courts (two courts for every four acres up to six courts) • Tennis courts with striping for pickleball (two courts for every four acres up to six courts) • Perimeter walking paths (five-foot minimum width, eight feet preferred) • Open turf areas for active recreation activities • Irrigated landscaped areas with shade trees near benches and picnic tables • Signage for park identification and posting of use regulations • Park benches and/or seat walls • Two children’s play areas, one for 0–5 years (minimum 3,000 square feet) and one for 5–12 years (minimum 5,000 square feet) • Minimum two group picnic shelters • Minimum three individual small family picnic areas • Sand or grass volley court • Restrooms • Trash receptacles • Bicycle racks on concrete slab • Drinking fountain(s). Note: At least two fountains shall have bottle filler station and pet friendly fountain. • Off-street parking, including ADA stalls. Eight spaces per acre; maximum 200 spaces. • Other amenities as may be required by Parks Division 	
<p>Regional</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • League soccer, football, and baseball fields to be determined by Parks Manager/Parks Division • Two children’s play areas, one for 0–5 years (minimum 4,000 sq. ft.) and one for 5–12 years (minimum 6,000 sq. ft.) • Basketball courts (one court for every six acres up to 10 courts) • Tennis courts with striping for pickleball (one court for every six acres up to 10 courts) • Off-street parking including ADA stalls to be determined by City of Los Banos • Trash receptacles • Restrooms • Concession stands • Drinking fountains Note: At least three fountains shall have a bottle filler station and pet friendly fountain. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 25 acres to 100 acres (more is acceptable) • Generally, serves residents within a 30-minute drive and a population of 50,000 to 100,000 (or more)

Classification	Recommended Amenities	Size & Distance
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lighting for sports fields and parking lots • Landscaped areas • Signage for park identification and posting of use regulations • Park benches and/or seat walls • Minimum two group picnic shelters • Minimum three individual small family picnic areas • Bicycle racks • Other amenities as may be required by Parks Division 	
Special Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signage for identification and park rules • Hardscape or turf area or both • Landscape areas • The primary use • Any resource or use that supports the primary use 	One use park; no minimum size requirement—depends on the special use
Trails	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signage/trailhead marker for trail identification and posting of use regulations • Benches or seat walls placed at each major entrance or major street crossing and located no less than 1,000 feet apart • Shade trees spaced approximately 25 feet to 40 feet • Bike racks on concrete slab • Trash receptacles • Dog waste stations • Drinking fountain(s) (one at every trailhead marker). Note: Fountain shall have bottle filler station and pet friendly fountain. • Concrete or steel bollards at street entrances • Asphalt or concrete paving 	Generally, 30-feet to 100-feet width.

NRPA Guidelines for the Type of Facility by Population. Based on NRPA standards, Los Banos may want to consider including the following amenities based on their current and future population in their 2035 plan:

- One dog park (under construction);
- One and one half community gardens;
- One lighted synthetic turf soccer field;
- One large skate park;
- One outdoor swimming pool; and
- Ten tennis/pickleball courts.

Section 9: Action Plan

Goals and Policies. Prior to the kick-off of the Parks Master Plan with the City of Los Banos and the consultant team, the City wanted to achieve at least six goals for this project. During the planning process and public outreach with the community and stakeholders, additional goals were identified as well as a list of policies to pursue to meet those goals. In addition to the original goals identified in Section 3, two additional goals were later identified through the course of this project:

- **GOAL.** Work at achieving sustainable landscapes, parks, and facilities.
- **GOAL.** Improve signage and wayfinding for parks in the City of Los Banos.

Opportunities, Renovations, and New Facilities. The city has over 264 acres of existing parks, trails, and facilities. Many parks need playground equipment, picnic tables, and bench replacements, parking lot improvements, park identification signage and rules signage, landscape replacement, and turf and irrigation management. In other parks, better access/sidewalks are needed and safety features such as lighting or fencing may be required.

Prioritization. Prioritization of city parks, trails, and facilities is based on several factors:

- Urgent need, outdated or unsafe areas or equipment;
- Extensive/popular public use;
- History of vandalism;
- Input from the community;
- Input from City Parks and Recreation Staff; and
- Visual tour of all facilities.

Two facilities, Downtown Aquatic Center and Regional Sports Complex are not included in the priority tables but a cost for each can be identified and the City will need to determine their priority based available funding and grant opportunities. Land acquisition and staffing costs are not included. Those facilities are:

- Downtown Aquatic Center: \$4.3 million to \$8.6 million including design and engineering fees.
- Regional Sports Complex: Based on comparable facilities in the central valley (i.e., Riverway Sports Park, Visalia), an average cost of \$185,000 to \$200,000 per acre including design and engineering fees.

The Tables in 9-1 through 9-3 identify a listing of park renovations and improvements as ranked by high, medium, and low priority. A detailed itemization of individual costs for each proposed renovation/improvement is located in the appendices.

The following parks were identified as High Priority Projects:

- 7th Street Ballpark;
- Ag Sports Complex;

- Big Page Park;
- City Park on Ninth Street;
- Cresthills Park;
- Citrus Terrace I Park;
- Colorado Ballpark;
- Davis Park;
- Jo-Lin Park;
- LittlePage Park;
- Pacheco Park;
- Regency Lot D Park;
- Skylark Park and Expansion; and
- Vineyard Basin C Park

All other parks fit under the categories of Medium Priority or Low Priority Renovations or Expansions.

Facility Needs Summary. This section brings together information from various public and staff input, as well as other relevant studies and analyses, and distills them into a broader overall picture of recreation facilities that can support the needs of the Los Banos residents to achieve the community vision, goals, and policies of the Master Plan. Input is derived from community surveys, stakeholder interviews, and listening to the public. The Facility Needs Summary establishes relative priorities; the more input on a particular need identified by the public, the higher the ranking. The facility needs are (in order of highest priority):

1. Skatepark/Action Sportspark;
2. Tie: Splash Park & Pickleball/Bocce/Chess Tables and Similar Games;
3. Tie: Outdoor Pool & Indoor Pool;
4. Soccer Fields;
5. Baseball Fields;
6. More Trails; and
7. Community Gardens.

Funding. In order to continue to build and maintain a vibrant parks and recreation system, a sound and strategic funding strategy must be developed to fulfill the capital improvement and operational costs considerations of this Master Plan. Fiscally sustainable and realistic funding sources are essential to implementing a capital improvement plan and there are significant existing funding sources to fund the capital improvement and operational costs. These sources include public sector grants, fees and tax measures, assessment districts, non-traditional methodologies as well as a wide range of private and corporate foundation sources. The following is a short list of those potential sources and funding mechanisms. An extensive list of possible funding sources and greater detail regarding the types of funding potentially available and what they should be used for can be found in the Section 9 of this document.

- State of California such as California Regional Recreation and Tourism Program, Proposition 68, and Greenhouse Reduction Fund.
- Federal Grant Programs such as Community Development Block Grants, Federal Highway Administration Recreational Trails Program, Land and Water Conservation Fund, and Transportation Alternatives Program.
- Benefit Assessment Districts such as Mello-Roos, Community Benefits Districts, and the Landscape & Lighting/Maintenance Assessment Districts.
- Tax Increment Financing methods such as Local Sales Tax Measures such as Measure H Sales Tax and Impact Fees.
- Non-traditional and Other Funding Sources such as Joint Powers Agreements, Bonds, Sponsorships, and specialty agreements.

Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). In order to continue to build and maintain the parks and recreation system, a number of sound and strategic funding options were identified for the capital improvement projects presented in this plan. Fiscally sustainable and realistic funding sources are essential to implementing a capital improvement plan. The following describes an approach to identify operating budget so that funding can be properly allocated for the city's capital improvement plan. What park maintenance costs should be included in a CIP budget and how much should be budgeted for it? Here are cost guidelines that the City of Los Banos might use in order to identify ongoing maintenance costs associated with park facilities. The Parks and Recreation Division will need to closely monitor resources to ensure that the assets of the park system reach the anticipated lifecycles. The Parks Division maintenance funding should continue to grow to accommodate new park development in the future. As the system grows, the following cost guidelines should be utilized to identify annual operational funding required to maintain additional park acreage:

- Pocket Parks: \$10,000 - \$12,000 per acre
- Neighborhood Parks: \$8,500 - \$10,000 per acre
- Community Parks: \$7,500 - \$9,000 per acre
- Regional Sports Park and Athletic Field Parks
 - \$12,000 - \$15,000 per rectangular field
 - \$18,000 - \$20,000 per diamond field
 - Other facilities: \$5,000 per acre
- Special Use Parks: Costs varies dependent upon amenities
- Trails: \$5-\$5,500 per acre

Note: Maintenance costs typically increase three to four percent annually.

SECTION 1 - INTRODUCTION

On October 31, 2019, the City of Los Banos began the process of completing a comprehensive update to the City's Parks Master Plan. The current Parks Master Plan was completed in 1986 with updates in 1999 and 2006. These interim updates primarily focused on general needs (i.e., capital expenditure needs, acquisition and development, maintenance and personnel), standards, and existing inventory; but, did not focus on specific projects, improvements, and renovations. The Master Plan was delayed a few months due to the State of California COVID-19 lockdown, but the delay did not impact the process nor the work being performed by the consultant or City Parks and Recreation, and the plan continued and was completed with virtual public, staff, and appointed and elected officials' meetings.

1.1 - Purpose

The new Los Banos Parks Master Plan will guide the Parks and Recreation Division, Parks and Recreation Commission, and staff in allocating resources over the next 15 years or more and to adapt to changing conditions and population needs. The Parks Master Plan has been informed by substantial community input, demographics and current trends analyses, assessment of parks and facilities, and existing and new policies. The Master Plan describes various types of parks and identifies park facilities and access improvements designed to maintain and improve Los Banos' quality of life for everyone.

1.2 - Plan Organization

The Master Plan is organized by the following sections:

Executive Summary. The Executive Summary provides a brief description of key components of the overall Master Plan.

Section 1: Introduction. The Introduction describes the purpose of the Master Plan and how it is organized; and, describes the location of the City of Los Banos in a regional context.

Section 2: Community Profile & Demographics. This section details the demographics of the City, including population forecast, age distribution, race/ethnicity, households, socioeconomics, and health and related issues.

Section 3: Community & Stakeholder Input. This section includes a description of the community engagement plan, the community's vision and main goals. A summary of the survey results for the stakeholders and the community is located in the appendices.

Section 4: Trends. Local, regional, and national park and recreation trends are examined.

Section 5: Inventory & Needs Assessment Analysis. Each park in the city is arranged by its classification. This section organizes city parks by: pocket parks; neighborhood parks; community parks; specialty parks; and, trails. The existing conditions of each park based on

site visits to each park by the consultant team, and interviews with park staff are identified in this section.

Section 6: Level of Service (LOS) Analysis. Level of Service (LOS) standards are guidelines that define service areas based on population that support a city's investment decisions related to parks, facilities, and amenities. This section includes a look at recommended standards by the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA), similar regional standards, city current standards, and a summary of key findings.

Section 7: Focus Areas. The section describes conceptual studies of four parks: the existing parks, Ag Sports Complex and Colorado Ballpark, and two potential new parks/facilities, Aquatic Center and Regional Sports Complex. The focus areas also include the potential for "green infrastructure" opportunities at the Ag Sports Complex and Colorado Ballpark.

Section 8: Park Design and Development Guidelines: This section identifies the characteristics of each park classification (i.e., size, distance from residents) and recommends the types of facilities for each park classification as well as a list of additional optional facilities.

Section 9: Action Plan. The Action Plan to implement the Master Plan includes sections on goals and policies; opportunities for renovations and facilities; and, a prioritization of parks contained in three tables that arrange all park renovations according to immediate need, mid-term need, and long-term need. This sections also includes a budget and funding analysis.

Appendices. Appendices are supporting materials for some of the information contained in each section.

1.3 - Location/Geographic Context

1.3.1 - CITY OF LOS BANOS

The City of Los Banos (City) is situated in the southwestern region of Merced County, in the northern portion of the San Joaquin Valley. Los Banos is conveniently located in the center of California, near the junction of California State Route (SR) 152 and Interstate 5, approximately 120 miles southeast of San Francisco, 83 miles northeast of Monterey and 72 miles northwest of Fresno. Los Banos is roughly five miles east of the Coastal Range and approximately 45 miles west of the base of the foothills to the Sierra Nevada Range. Los Banos is the second largest city in the county and is within the proximity of the communities of Dos Palos, Gustine, Volta, and Santa Nella. Los Banos is surrounded primarily by agriculture and wildlife reserve areas. The San Luis Reservoir State Recreation Area is west of the City. Various State and federal wildlife areas and refuges surrounding the City include the Volta State Wildlife Area to the northwest, the Los Banos Wildlife Area to the northeast, and the Mud Slough Wildlife Area to the east. The Los Banos Campus of Merced College, located on the City's west side, has served community college students since 2007.

Regional Location

Many communities throughout California are expressing interest in bringing a regional sports complex to their city. Out-of-town visitors can have a big economic impact from a regional sports park since their spending is new money being introduced into the local economy. Los Banos' location between I-5 and Highway 99, and located at the crossroads of Highway 152 and Highway 165 provides it with easy access to airports in Fresno, Oakland, San Jose, San Francisco, and is a short distance from the Sacramento International Airport. Within a two-hour drive, a sports complex could attract teams from San Francisco, Oakland, San Jose, and the Central Valley. Within a four-hour drive the complex could attract teams from Los Angeles, Sacramento, and Reno. Additionally, Los Banos offers large plots of land for development and over 300 days of sunshine per year. The benefits of a Regional Facility in Los Banos would also go beyond the financial stability of the Los Banos Parks & Recreation Division, but also bring tourism to the area.

Sphere of Influence

The Sphere of Influence (SOI) is considered an area where a City can plan for growth and, in anticipation, it will allow for the annexation of land within the SOI. The SOI is approximately 16,000 acres. Los Banos currently measures 10.12 square miles. Los Banos can propose the area that it would like its SOI to include. However, the SOI is defined by the Merced County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo). Establishment of this boundary is necessary to determine which governmental agencies can provide services in the most efficient way to the people and property in the area.

City Limits

The city limit boundary encompasses the land over which Los Banos has jurisdictional authority. The current city limit covers approximately 6,400 acres in an irregular rectangular like shape, expanding along SR 33 East and West and SR 165 North and South. Agricultural canals bound the eastern and western City Limit. To the south the city limit extends to Pioneer Road, and to the north the city limit extends just below Henry Miller Road.

1.3.2 - MERCED COUNTY

Merced County is in California's San Joaquin Valley. The County is bordered by Stanislaus County to the north, Fresno and Madera counties to the south, Mariposa County to the east, and Santa Clara and San Benito counties to the west. The City of Merced is the county seat for Merced County. Unincorporated land within the county accounts for a little over 1.2 million acres or 98.1 percent of all land in the county, while incorporated cities account for 24,138 acres or 1.9 percent. Agriculture is the predominate use in the county, totaling just over one million acres or 81.2 percent of the unincorporated county. Public/Quasi Public land is the next largest use with 131,582 acres or 10.6 percent of the unincorporated county.

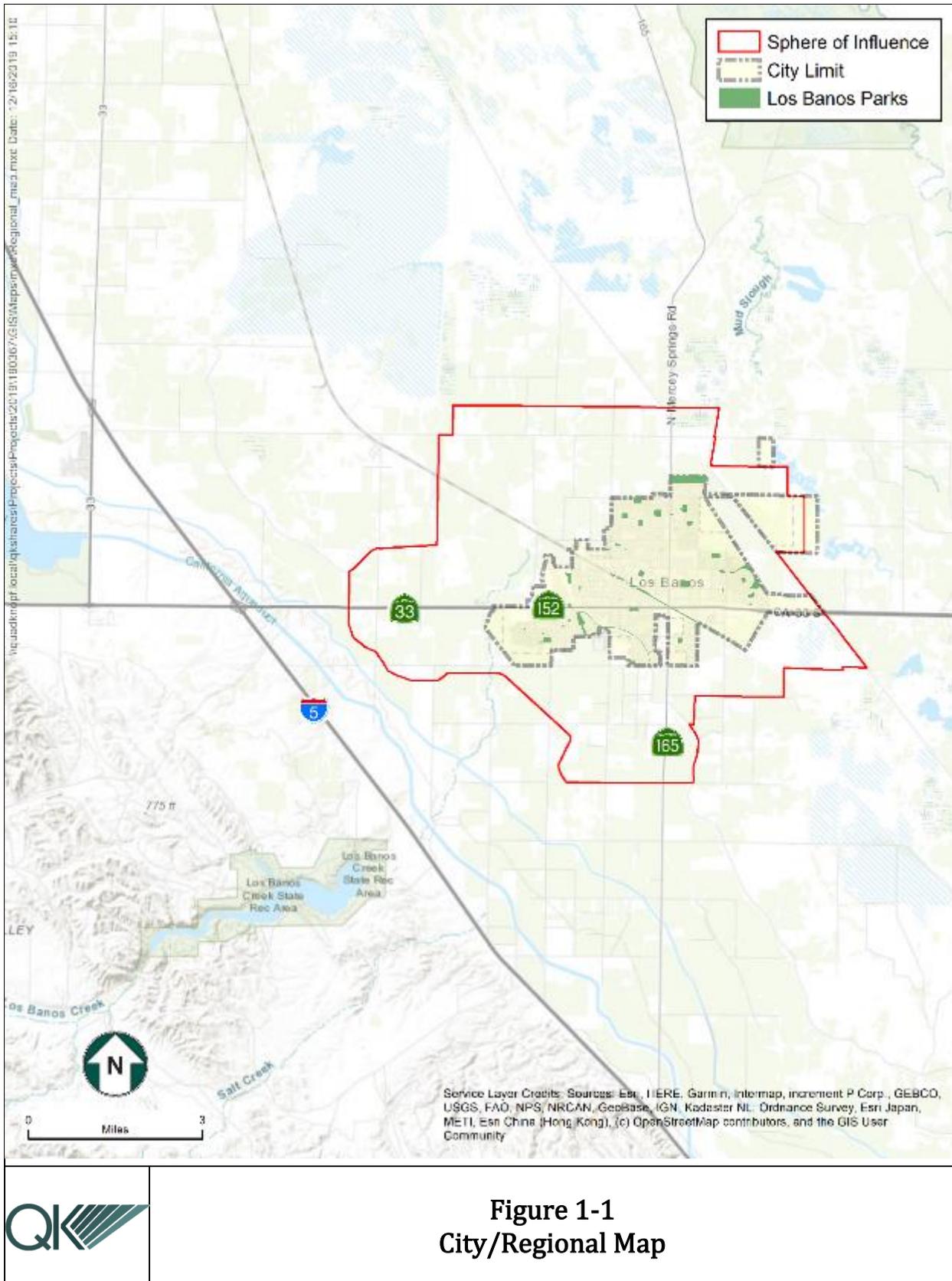


Figure 1-1
City/Regional Map

SECTION 2 - COMMUNITY PROFILE & DEMOGRAPHICS

This section provides an overview of the demographics, housing, income, and education’s association with poverty levels for the City of Los Banos. Los Banos has experienced relatively slow population growth in comparison to the County of Merced and the State of California. The analysis uses data from U.S. Census Bureau (2015-2017) American Community Survey estimates and the Economic Conditions and Trends Report developed by BAE Urban Economics, an economics and real estate advisory consultant, in coordination with PlaceWorks for the Los Banos General Plan 2040 Update. The Census data was taken at 2015 and 2017, due to the fact that the timeline of the Master Plan starts at 2015, and the most recent American Community Survey data is from 2017. The BAE report was developed in conjunction with the Los Banos 2040 General Plan.

2.1 - Population Forecast

Population growth is a key factor for increasing demands for parks and park facilities in most areas. Demographic characteristics can influence the level of service for parks in the City of Los Banos. For example, age and income affect an individual’s ability to pursue and utilize facilities. To a lesser extent, employment, education and ethnicity can also play a role. A demographic overview is presented here as a basis for determining park and recreation demands. As mentioned previously, the City of Los Banos, utilizes the U.S. Census Bureau and BAE Urban Economic ‘Conditions and Trends Report’; the majority of the data is from the U.S. Census.

The current population for the City of Los Banos is 41,898 according to 2019 data from the California Department of Finance (Department of Finance , 2019). The current population for the City of Los Banos is 41,898 according to 2019 data from the California Department of Finance. The population projections in Table 2-1 below represent a 35 percent growth rate from 2015 to 2035 and a 25 percent growth rate from 2020 to 2035. Although the approximately 7.8 percent average annual growth rate has been substantial, it is similar to the average growth rate of Merced County (7.0 percent). The population of Los Banos is projected to resume its rapid growth in coming years. A population forecast from Merced County Association of Governments, the population of Los Banos is projected to increase from 38,100 (2015) to 57,592 (2040) or an approximately 34 percent increase.

**Table 2-1
Population Projections**

	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	Total Growth Rate	Average Growth Rate
Los Banos	38,681	41,638	44,785	48,634	52,349	35%	7.8%
Merced County	272,718	291,056	310,572	334,443	357,496	31%	7.0%

Source: 2018 BAE Economic Conditions Trends Report, City of Los Banos, 2018 Madera County Association of Governments Regional Transportation Plan

2.2 - Age Distribution

Age distribution is often used to determine a city's need for park opportunities. It is understood that people in younger and older demographic groups utilize park facilities, while age groups 35–54 typically do not use parks as much. Trends show that senior activity levels have risen due to the benefits of being physically active.

Table 2-2 depicts age distribution in the City of Los Banos; residents based on each age group comprise the overall population in 2015 to 2017. Comparatively, the largest age groups are 25–34, 35–44, and 45–55 years with approximately 39 percent of the population. This population group is understood to underutilize parks compared to the senior and younger age groups (U.S. Census Bureau, 2017).

Table 2-2
Age Distribution in Los Banos

Age Group	Year	
	2015	2017
15-19	7.5%	7.8%
20-24	7.0%	6.4%
25-34	13.5%	13.8%
35-44	14.1%	13.6%
45-54	11.2%	11.1%
55-59	5.0%	5.6%
60-64	3.4%	4.3%
65 and older	9.8%	9.6%

Source: 2015 and 2017 U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey Demographics and Housing Estimates, Table DP05

2.3 - Race/Ethnicity

Race/Ethnicity plays a large part in the utilization of parks and the level of participation in various activities. This could help highlight areas of the City where a park might be better utilized than others.

The City of Los Banos has a culturally diverse population, similar to demographic trends that are present in the San Joaquin Valley. As alluded to, the population is largely Hispanic (approximately 70 percent) and white (approximately 23 percent). The City contains a below average amount of other prominent ethnic groups (Asian, Black/African American, Native Hawaiian, and American Indian). Often languages are spoken that reflect the heritage of the residents. The population being predominately Hispanic may challenge overall communication with patrons, municipal officials, or employers. In some cases, it is likely, the younger segment of the population is the first generation to be English-speaking (U.S. Census Bureau, 2017).

**Table 2-3
Race and Ethnicity**

Race/Ethnicity Group	Year	
	2015	2017
Hispanic/Latino (of any race)	70.4%	70.6%
Not Hispanic/Latino	29.6%	29.4%
White alone	22.8%	23.3%
Black/African American alone	2.1%	1.1%
American Indian and Alaska Native	0.5%	0.3%
Asian alone	2.5%	2.6%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific	0.0%	0.1%
Other	0.0%	0.0%
Two or More Races	1.6%	2.0%

Source: 2015 and 2017 U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey Demographics and Housing Estimates, Table DP05

Specifically, the Hispanic population group is the predominate ethnic group within Los Banos and continues with an incremental growth trend. The non-Hispanic ethnic groups are the next largest ethnic group (combining White, Black/African American, American Indian/Alaskan Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian and other Pacific ethnicities), which has been exhibiting a declining trend.

The following language breakdown is calculated by including the population age group of five years and over. According to the U.S. Census, there is a large population of English only speakers at approximately 65 percent; 35 percent are considered bilingual and 14 percent speak English less than very well (U.S. Census Bureau, 2017).

2.4 - Households

In 2017, there were approximately 11,364 total housing units according to the U.S. Census. The percentage of residents owning their households is somewhat similar to renter-occupied households. Owner-occupied households account for 54 percent of the number of occupied houses and 46 percent are renter-occupied. The percentage of renter-occupied housing in Los Banos is slightly higher than the national average of 43.3 percent. Furthermore, family households consisting of two or more members related by birth, marriage, or adoption; account for approximately 77 percent. Of the 77 percent, approximately 53 percent are married couple families. Not all households contain families since a household may include groups of unrelated people living together or a single person living alone. One person households account for approximately 19 percent of the total occupied households.

Table 2-4
Housing Occupancy Rate

Housing Type	Year	
	2015	2017
Occupied housing units	10,457	10,853
Vacant housing units	602	511
Total housing units	11,059	11,364

Source: 2015 and 2017 Census Bureau American Community Survey Occupancy Characteristics, Table S2501

Table 2-5
Los Banos Housing Values

Income Category	Year	
	2015	2017
Less than \$50,000	164	142
\$50,000 to \$99,999	640	336
\$100,000 to \$149,999	1,339	745
\$150,000 to \$199,999	1,560	1,145
\$200,000 to \$299,999	1,190	1,867
\$300,000 to \$499,999	437	1,512
\$500,000 to \$999,999	15	112
\$1,000,000 or more	53	28
Total Owner-Occupied units	5,398	5,887

Source: 2015 and 2017 Census Bureau American Community Survey Selected Housing Characteristics, Table DP04

Park utilization can be directly tied to locations. Typically, parks located in areas where the housing prices and income are lower will be better utilized compared to other neighborhoods. The median price for a home in Los Banos in 2017 was approximately \$226,700 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2017). Comparatively, the approximate median home price in Merced County is \$230,000 and \$600,860 for the State of California. According to the Los Banos average home price, there are about 2,368 owner-occupied homes below the Los Banos average.

2.5 - Socioeconomics

Trends in park planning illustrate that people with more disposable incomes tend to be more active and participate in physical and sometimes more expensive types of leisure activities, while many low-income families take advantage of free or low-cost recreation opportunities, such as playing in parks and attending City-sponsored programs and events. However, low-income families may spend more of their time at work, leaving less time for recreational pursuits.

According to the Census, the median household income of the City of Los Banos is \$46,994 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2017). The average California median income is \$71,805. Eighty percent of California's median income is \$57,444. According to California Senate Bill 350, a

disadvantaged community has a household median income below 80 percent of the State median income. Therefore, the City of Los Banos is considered a disadvantaged community. A significant number of households, roughly 60 percent, are living below the poverty line.

**Table 2-6
Income and Benefits**

Income and Benefits	2015	2017
Total Households	10,457	10,853
Less than \$10,000	839	834
\$10,000 to \$14,999	874	649
\$15,000 to \$24,999	1,249	1,140
\$25,000 to \$34,999	1,119	1,214
\$35,000 to \$49,999	1,844	1,852
\$50,000 to \$74,999	2,036	1,797
\$75,000 to \$99,999	1,083	1,526
\$100,000 to \$149,999	994	1,139
\$150,000 to \$199,999	290	490
\$200,000 or more	129	212
Median household income	44,292	46,994
Mean household income	55,187	64,720

Source: 2015 and 2017 Census Bureau American Community Survey Selected Economic, Table DP03

**Table 2-7
Education and Poverty Level for the Population 25 years and Over**

Poverty Rate with Education	2015	2017
Less than high school graduate	27.4%	25.2%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	15.4%	13.2%
Some college or associate degree	18.2%	13.8%
Bachelor’s degree	8.8%	6.6%

Source: 2015 and 2017 Census Bureau American Community Survey Educational Attainment, Table S1501

2.6 - Health and Related Factors

There are two major public health concerns facing Los Banos: air quality and obesity. A parks master plan can assist in reducing the effect of both these issues.

Air Pollution is a major issue in the San Joaquin Valley. Hemmed in by mountains and rarely having strong winds, pollution is exacerbated by stagnant weather, coming mainly from diesel and gasoline fueled vehicles and agricultural operations. The San Joaquin Valley has been deemed an “extreme non-attainment zone” by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for select pollutants. Although the inclusion of parks does not directly affect the air quality in Los Banos or the San Joaquin Valley, trees can sequester carbon in the atmosphere and convert it into oxygen in a process called photosynthesis. Diseases that may be caused by or exacerbated by poor air quality include asthma and asthma attacks, valley fever⁵, lung and heart disease, cancer, and more. Furthermore, the inclusion of parks does promote a healthier lifestyle, which can reduce the ailments that may be exacerbated by poor air quality.

Building and maintaining parks promotes a healthier and less sedentary lifestyle compared to the inverse. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation⁶ produces health rankings for states and counties. The foundation explores many aspects of health including quality of life, health behaviors, access to clinical care, socioeconomic factors, and environmental factors. According to the data compiled by this foundation in 2015, the County of Merced has an approximate 31 percent adult obesity rate; although, 68 percent of residents have access to available exercise opportunities (Open Data Network, 2015). This is roughly similar to a study prepared by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention referencing the California Department of Public Health, which estimates a 34 percent obesity rate (Zulema Valdez, 2016). Furthermore, there is a higher prevalence of obesity among people who are low-income and Latino than among people of high-income or people who are white.

One of the purpose of preparing this Parks Master Plan is to identify and maximize the resources available to the City of Los Banos and to better serve its constituents. With the following information contained within these sections, a more educated determination can be made by decisionmakers.

⁵ Center for Disease Control (CDC) claims **valley fever** is endemic in the San Joaquin Valley. This fever is caused by fungus in the soil getting trapped in the air and inhaled by residents. It can cause pneumonia and is especially dangerous for seniors.

⁶ The **Robert Wood Johnson Foundation** (RWJF) is the United States' largest philanthropy focused solely on health. The foundation's goal, through the use of grants, is "to improve the health and health care of all Americans." RWJF makes for a range of health issues, including access to care, childhood obesity, and training for doctors and nurses. Other topics of interest to the foundation include social and economic factors that can impact health, including quality of housing, violence, poverty, and access to fresh food.

SECTION 3 - COMMUNITY & STAKEHOLDER INPUT

3.1 - Community Engagement Plan

QK prepared a public outreach plan that was reviewed by the City staff for their input and acceptance before the outreach process began.

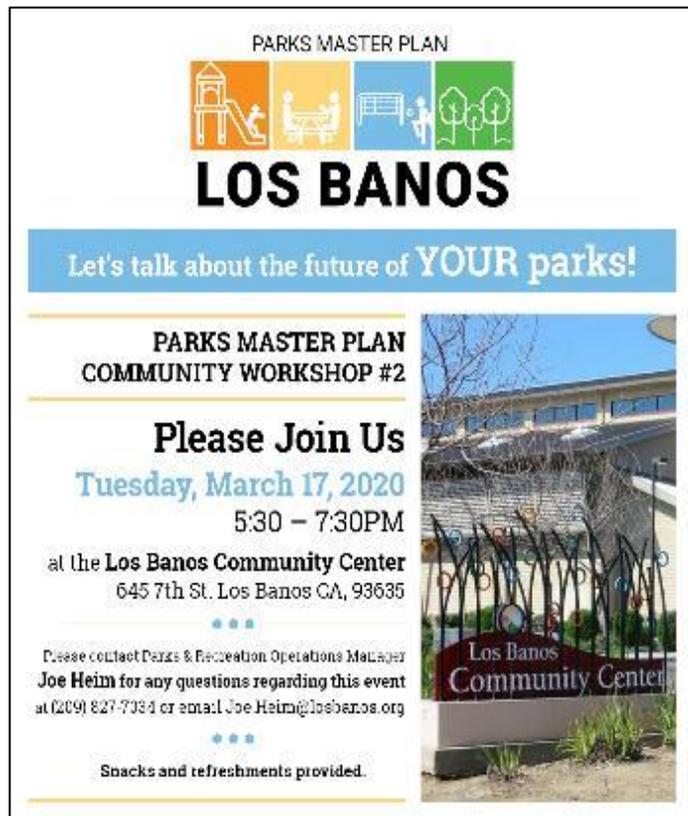
3.1.1 - LOS BANOS PARKS MASTER PLAN PUBLIC OUTREACH PLAN

Public Outreach Plan

The two workshops identified in the outreach plan provided a variety of methods for participants to interact, learn, and engage in ways that are meaningful and comfortable (by providing a range of written and verbal input options). QK facilitators helped guide the community through the workshops and ensure that all voices were heard and acknowledged.

All workshops were noticed in the 'Los Banos Enterprise' newspaper and with posters at a few of the larger and more popular park sites, City Hall, and the Community Center. A recognizable logo was created for the Parks Master Plan process that was included in all advertisements and repeated on all exhibits. QK prepared the advertisement for the newspaper and posters for the meetings. QK maintained a list of participants who were noticed via email for future Parks Master Plan public events as provided by the Parks Division and as additionally collected from the public workshops.

QK was responsible for providing meeting minutes for all public meetings related to the Master Plan process. QK provided Spanish translations for agendas, notices, and surveys if requested and necessary. The City provided a Spanish translator at public meetings.



The ad appeared in the Los Banos Enterprise newspaper. Attendance surpassed 100 residents.

During the project, QK’s main contact with the City was the Parks and Recreation Operations Manager. The City’s Parks and Recreation Operations Manager brought in other City staff into the project for discussion when needed.

QK prepared a parks and recreation survey and presented it to City staff for review and comment. The survey was based on input gathered from the site tours with Parks and Recreation Operations Manager and included questions about key issues such as Regional Sports Complex, Aquatic Center, Colorado Ballpark, and the potential for an aquatic center. Key issues, other than those noted, were included in the survey after further discussions with the Parks Director. Some of the questions were geared towards gathering both the stakeholders’ and community’s response to the following additional issues:

- Demographics of participants;
- Community attitudes/biggest issues facing Los Banos;
- Recreation behavior/frequency of use;
- Facility use/perceived barriers to participation at parks and recreation;
- Satisfaction towards facilities and programs; and
- Desired improvements.

The survey was also be distributed to the participants and/or as a survey embedded in the PowerPoint presentation at the public workshop. QK summarized the findings of the survey and reviewed it with City staff. QK team members also provided the opportunity for stakeholders who were unable to attend the interview to participate via an email survey.



Workshop Announcement in Spanish

Agendas and Minutes

QK was responsible for providing meeting agendas for all public meetings related to the Master Plan process. QK reviewed the agendas with City Staff prior to all public meetings. QK was responsible for providing meeting summaries and survey results for all public meetings related to the Master Plan process.

3.2 - Community Vision and Goals

3.2.1 - VISION

The City of Los Banos has held a long-standing vision to **“Create Community through People, Parks and Programs.”**

3.2.2 - GOALS

Prior to the kick-off of the Parks Master Plan with the City of Los Banos and the consultant team, the City wanted to achieve at least six goals during the course of this project. During the planning process and public outreach with the community and stakeholders, additional goals were identified as well as a list of policies to pursue to meet those goals. A review of past policies that were not yet implemented or policies that could be maintained that were identified in the 2030 General Plan or earlier City of Los Banos’ Parks Master Plans were reviewed and included in the goals and policies identified in Section 9 – Action Plan. The six initial goals are as follows:

GOAL. Increase capacity to meet future demand (population growth).

GOAL. Provide a system of park classifications and amenity requirements for future parks that serve their intended purpose.

GOAL. Develop a definitive program for renovation of existing recreation facilities and development of future facilities.

GOAL Improve connectivity to parks

GOAL. Expand financial opportunities.

GOAL. Address accessibility including park visitors with disabilities.

3.3 - Outreach Summary

3.3.1 - STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

QK met with the Parks and Recreation Commission, Parks Foreman, key sports organizations, educators, and other key stakeholders as defined by the City Parks and Recreation Manager to discuss the project and solicit comments, issues, problems, and preferences. QK interviewed the stakeholders on November 19, 2019, at the Los Banos

Community Center. The one-day event (approximately six hours) included prearranged timeslots to interview individuals and solicit responses. Interviewees also had the opportunity to offer their own input regardless of the prepared questions.

The six-hour scheduled interviews with the stakeholders identified in subsection 3.3.1 provided the interviewers with a highly useful perspective on the issues, concerns, needs, and desires of groups like sports organizations, law enforcement, educators, and the Parks and Recreation Commission. Below is a summary of their responses. More detailed responses and dozens of individual thoughts and ideas are located in the appendices of this Master Plan.

The most often used source for information about events and activities in the city was by far, social media. Emails and announcements at City Council meetings came in second and third, respectively. The most often used facilities by the participants in the City included, in this order, Oliveira Park, the Los Banos Community Center, and tied for third place: trails, Pacheco Park, and Little Page Park. The most popular activities were picnicking and tennis/pickleball.

The stakeholders identified the types of amenities that they would like to see added to the City's parks. They were ranked in this order:

1. Splash Park;
2. Outdoor Pool;
3. Expand Current Parks;
4. Increase the number and length of trails;
5. Teen Club;
6. More picnic areas and picnic shelters; and
7. More playgrounds.

The stakeholders were asked where they had a preference for locating a regional sports complex and the participants preferred to see one closer to Interstate 5 within the City. The west side near SR 152 was their choice. When it came to the location for an outdoor pool, the preference was downtown.

The stakeholders greatest concerns included, in this order, adequate parks and recreation facilities to meet the community's needs, education, homeless population, and crime and personal safety.

3.3.2 - COMMUNITY WORKSHOP #1

QK prepared for and conducted Workshop #1 that included an overview of the Parks Master Plan and the planning process; a brief tour with images of current City of Los Banos' parks; local, regional, and national trends; and, National Parks and Recreation Association (NRPA) guidelines. This meeting was held in the evening over an approximately two-hour period on January 9, 2020. The meeting was divided into three parts—exhibit boards with voting dots; a project PowerPoint presentation with real time response survey; and, a question and

answer period/open mic discussion by the consultant whereby participants can individually express their opinions, ideas, and concerns.

Exhibit boards with images of City parks were available for review at the entrance as participants walked in, and they were able to write comments and ideas on Post-It notes and attach them to any of the exhibit boards. Participants were able to view the boards before and after the event as well as during the break. Participants were asked to locate their neighborhood and the park they used most often using voting dots on maps. They were also asked



Kayla's design for a splash park in Los Banos

to use voting dots to select their preferred type of facility. The list of facilities included: teen club; indoor and outdoor pool; increase in trails; outdoor basketball courts; skate park; more playgrounds; tennis; dog park; splash park; more baseball fields; more soccer fields; outdoor volleyball (grass or sand); outdoor exercise equipment; disc golf course; community gardens; outdoor amphitheater/bandshell; and, a mix of pickleball courts, chess/checker tables, and bocce.

Following is the order of preference for the most desired facilities:

1. Skatepark (also called an Action Sportspark);
2. Tie: Splash Park & Pickleball/Bocce/Chess Tables and Similar Games;
3. Tie: Outdoor Pool & Indoor Pool;
4. Soccer Fields;
5. Baseball Fields;
6. More Trails; and
7. Community Gardens.

A TurningPoint Technology ‘clicker’ survey embedded within the PowerPoint presentation was prepared. TurningPoint allows participants to respond to specific questions including answers to ‘yes’ and ‘no’ or a multiple choice selection, select a preference or range preferences posed to them on a large screen. Real-time responses are provided after each question. For a list of the survey questions and the responses please refer to the appendices.

3.3.3 - COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR MEETING

The Consultant Team worked with the Parks and Recreation Division and community to develop a project Vision and a preliminary set of Parks Master Plan Goals and Policies based on input from the community at this first workshop. Meeting with Community Development Director

The City of Los Banos 2040 General Plan Update was underway at the time the Parks Master Plan project was in process. QK had one meeting with the Community and Economic Development Director to collect information on the General Plan progress and to gather input on possible locations for a regional sports park. The Community Development Director has suggested to the QK team that the goals and policies that are derived from the Parks Master Plan process will likely be included in the General Plan update.

3.3.4 - WORKSHOP #2: RENOVATIONS AND NEW PARKS

On March 19, Governor Gavin Newsom California ordered a statewide mandate for nearly all residents to stay home and limit social interaction until further notice to try to slow the spread of COVID-19. As a result, large gatherings such as a public workshop were postponed by the City of Los Banos. As a result, Workshop #2 was held on September 10, 2020 via a Zoom Video Webinar hosted by QK over an approximately one-and-a-half-hour period. Our team was assisted in the webinar with the help of Joe Heim, Parks Division Manager. Using a graphic presentation, survey questions, opportunities for comment, QK was able to solicit input and feedback from the public. The workshop included a recap summary of the surveys and input provided from the first workshop; concept site plans for two parks cited for future renovations and two concept site plans for new parks; survey questions on a variety of topics; and a timeline for completion of the master plan. The workshop included exhibits for improvements to Focus Area parks (see Section 7 – Focus Areas for exhibits of proposed new



Workshop participants used ‘voting dots’ to select recreational amenity preferences, favorite park, and where they live on a map of the city.

park sites and renovated parks) Colorado Ballpark, AG Sports Complex, and a new Regional Sports Complex and new aquatic center.

Participants were asked to prioritize types of facilities for new and renovated parks and to select their preferred locations for a skatepark, pickleball courts, and new restroom facilities.

The material was also provided for inclusion to the City's website for public consumption and comments.

The results of the Focus Area park's question and answer portion of the survey included the selection of the preferred Concept Site Plan for each park and the preferred amenities for each park as desired by the community. Some of the results of the Workshop and a simultaneous online survey hosted by the City included the following.

Regional Sports Park Results

- The preferred Concept Site Plan was Concept B with a meandering interior roadway and several central picnic areas.
- The preferred amenities most participants wanted to see were court games, soccer fields and ballfields, and restrooms with concession stands.

Colorado Ballpark

- Skatepark and pickleball courts were the most popular amenities desired for Colorado Ballpark followed by a close third with renovated ballfields.
- Although Colorado Ballpark was the most popular location for a skatepark, some kids want one on the east side like Talbott Basin Park or AG Sports Complex. Downtown was also selected as a popular spot.

Aquatic Center

- The preferred Concept Plan was Concept Site Plan B that had more amenities than Concept Site Plan A.
- An aquatic center with competition pool and space for kids to play and learn to swim was the most popular type of aquatic center. A large pool community building with large event room or rooms and kitchen was also highly desired.
- A downtown location is the most popular spot for an aquatics center.

Ag Sports Complex

- The preferred Concept Site Plan was Concept B with the meandering trails.
- The Ag Sports Complex was identified as another desirable site for more sports fields and an aquatic center.
- Tennis and pickleball and meandering trails through the park were the most desired amenities.

Other Survey Results and Comments.

- Bulk of survey participants were ages 35–65, although there is a fair representation from all age groups.
- Preferred locations for a skatepark were Colorado Ballpark and a site downtown near community center.
- Participants wanted to see lighting and areas to rest and shade at future skateparks.
- Preferred locations for pickleball courts were Pacheco Park and any basin park that had soccer games.
- The preferred site for a splash pad was Pacheco Park.
- A large playground was a preferred amenity at nearly all new parks.
- Lighting on the trails and seems to be the biggest thing people are asking for.
- Lighted fields are one of the most desired amenities.
- Specialty use parks are the most desired area to increase park usage (dog park, splash pad etc.,).
- Some kids want one on the east side and I think that's why you see Talbott and AG Sports Complex receiving votes. Downtown is also a popular spot.
- Exercise equipment was favored most at a park location. Perhaps Gardens V, which is near the trail would work. But it would need air space clearance noted.
- People would like more affordable programs at the Community Center. I think this is accomplished via Measure H.
- Renovate Pacheco Park is a huge priority. Build an Aquatics Center and a splash pad were both huge priorities.
- There was community interest in seeing public art in city parks (i.e., murals).

3.3.5 - PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING

QK met with the Parks and Recreation Commission to present the Draft Master Plan, along with comments received at Workshop #2 and other information received to date. This was an opportunity for the Commission to formally recommend the Draft Master Plan to the City Council.

3.3.6 - CITY COUNCIL MEETING

QK will present the Master Plan to the City Council for formal adoption.

3.3.7 - SUMMARY OF SURVEYS

A summary of the survey results of the community input and stakeholder interviews can be found in the appendices of this document.

SECTION 4 - TRENDS

Since the provision of public parks and recreation services can be influenced by demographic preferences, the Master Plan process identified local, regional, and national recreation trends that help define what Los Banos residents may be seeking either now or as the City grows. Resident demographics using local community input and research of relevant national trends, critical insights that help to plan for the future can be found. This section reviews local, regional, and national recreation trends relative to Los Banos' demographic and identified interests. Learning from new shifts in participation in outdoor recreation, sports, and cultural programs, a city can then adapt its park requirement planning and development focus.

4.1 - Local

Local trends are identified by listening to the residents of Los Banos to determine their interests and desires for recreation amenities in the City. A preference by the community is not necessarily a trend but a preference may result because it is a trend. The top three trends that the consultant team heard from listening and from survey input included the following:

- A skatepark that could hold regional competitions with a variety of design elements;
- Pickleball courts throughout all neighborhoods of the community; and
- Splash parks which is also a trend in many central valley communities due to the extreme summer heat conditions.

Recent park renovations in nearby communities in Merced County can also reflect the trends that are occurring locally. Examples include:

- The only park in Planada will be upgraded to include features such as a splash pad, outdoor stage, eight new benches welded by high school students, and a jogging path with lighting and an exercise station. The four-acre Houlihan Park's current amenities will be upgraded as well. The plan calls for its basketball court to be resurfaced, its lights replaced and a shade covering to protect the existing playground. Eleven graffiti-resistant metal picnic tables will replace old ones. Additionally, two picnic pavilions with six tables and barbecues as well as three new picnic shelters with four tables each will be added.



Splash Park at Inspiration Park in Fresno, California

- In Gustine, Pioneer Park will receive upgrades like a new basketball court, splash pad, playground, free-play area, picnic areas, and fencing installed around the park.
- A recently completed park in Merced, McNamara Park, included synthetic turf soccer fields, splash play, fencing and entry gate designed and welded by local high school students, mural on the blank wall of a new restroom designed and painted by the UC Merced art students, climbing play structure, and security cameras.

4.2 - Regional

This section looks at two approaches to Regional Trends. First, it identifies cities within three California regions and how each may have reached or is not reaching their park acreage ratios per 1,000 residents as identified in their General Plans and/or Parks Master Plans. Second, it looks at the recreational facility trends in cities throughout the San Joaquin Valley.

4.2.1 - REGIONAL TRENDS IN PARK RATIOS AND PARK ACCESS

Within Merced County and much of the Central Valley, many communities have much less park and open space designated acreage per 1,000 residents than more high densely-populated areas of the state. Furthermore, Merced and neighboring counties have higher rates of disadvantaged populations than other regions of the state. Disadvantaged communities typically include areas that have lower overall income levels but can also include deficiencies in local facilities, such as parks and recreational spaces.

For example, within the State, only 24 percent of residents live more than half a mile from a park. Within Merced County, approximately 46 percent or almost double the number of residents live more than half a mile from a park. Direct impacts associated with living further from parks and open space include decreased physical activity which in turn leads to increased poor health issues as well as health costs overall. With the region being disadvantaged in terms of income, reducing any ancillary costs, such as health care through promotion of exercise at parks or trails, would be beneficial. However, Los Banos appears to be the exception to the rule, as the City has 16 percent of residents living further than a half mile from a park and 27 percent living with less than three acres of park or open space per 1,000 residents, which would be closer to the ratios within the Bay Area despite a lower median household income.

The cities with similar populations to Los Banos include Danville and Newark. Danville's General Plan and current ratio of acres per 1,000 residents are 6.5 and 6.6, respectively. Newark's General Plan and current ration of acres per 1,000 population are 3.0 and 3.11, respectively. It should be noted also that cities like Hanford have General Plan policies that include a portion of the recreational facility acreage of school sites and joint use agreements to meet their park requirements.

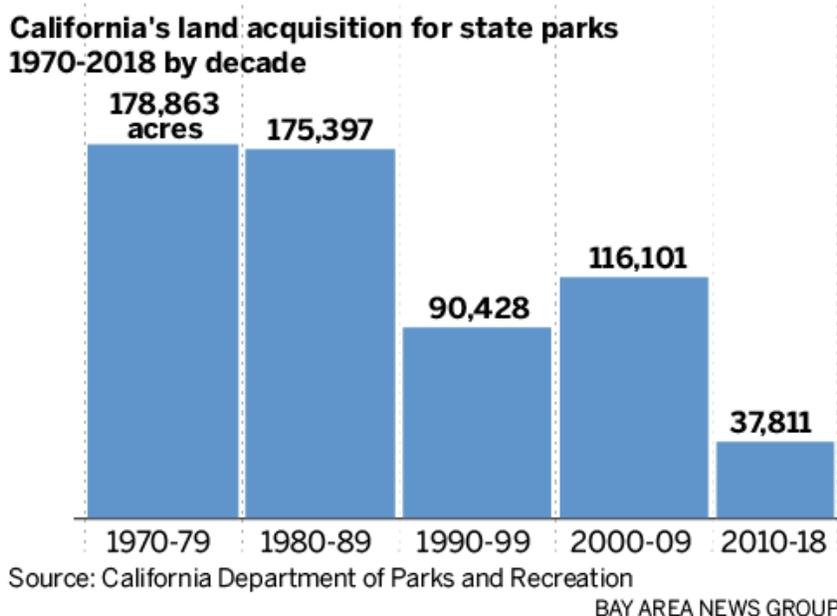
**Table 4-1
Comparison of Park Demographics between Regions and Cities in California**

Comparable City (County)	Percent of Residents further than a half mile from a park	Percent of residents living with less than 3 acres of parks or open space per 1,000 residents	Median Income per Household	General Plan Policy of Acres per 1,000 residents	Current Ratio of Acres per 1,000 residents
CENTRAL VALLEY					
City of Los Banos	16%	27%	\$48,410	7.0	6.3
Atwater City (Merced)	46%	50%	\$57,745	3.0	3.37
City of Madera (Madera)	62%	53%	\$56,305	3.0	2.52
City of Reedley (Fresno)	45%	78%	\$52,629	4.0	2.63
City of Patterson	24%	58%	\$60,321	5.0	No Parks
Hanford City (Kings)	54%	59%	\$61,663	3.0	3.08
Porterville City (Tulare)	47%	60%	\$48,817	10	5.1
Delano City (Kern)	43%	67%	\$51,579	3.0	1.89
Folsom City	11%	46%	\$69,767	5.0	6.21
BAY AREA					
Gilroy City (Santa Clara)	12%	73%	\$126,606	5.0	2.34
Santa Cruz City (Santa Cruz)	15%	28%	\$86,941	4.5	3.63
Newark City (Alameda)	8%	65%	\$102,125	3.0	3.11
Danville Town (Contra Costa)	19%	54%	\$101,618	6.5	6.6
SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA					
Redlands City (Riverside)	40%	61%	\$66,964	5.0	6.0
Arcadia City (Los Angeles)	24%	81%	\$68,093	2.43	2.38
Aliso Viejo City (Orange)	11%	61%	\$89,759	5.0	5.37
Hesperia City (San Bernardino)	41%	66%	\$63,857	5.0	7.3
Poway City (San Diego)	18%	49%	\$79,079	7.5	13
Imperial	34%	51%	\$48,984	5.0	3.0

Source: <https://www.parksforcalifornia.org/parkaccess>

City of Atwater General Plan 2000, City of Madera General Plan 2009, City of Madera Parks Master Plan 2009, City of Reedley General Plan 2013, City of Patterson General Plan 2010, City of Hanford General Plan 2030, Porterville City General Plan 2030, City of Delano General Plan 2005, City of Delano 2016 Parks and Recreation Master Plan, City of Folsom General Plan 2035, City of Gilroy General Plan 2002, City of Gilroy Parks Master Plan 2004, City of Santa Cruz General Plan 2030, City of Santa Cruz Parks Master Plan 2030, City of Newark General Plan 2013, Danville Town General Plan 2030, City of Redlands General Plan 2035, City of Arcadia General Plan 2010, City of Aliso Viejo General Plan 2014, City of Hesperia General Plan 2010, City of El Centro General Plan 2004.

Although California has seen recent trends in attempts to increase parks and recreational facilities through the implementation of acquisition provisions, such as the Quimby Act or the Mitigation Fee Act, on a statewide level, State operated park space has severely leveled off. In the 1970s, the total acreage acquired by California for state parks was almost 180,000 acres. Since 2010, the State has only acquired 37,811 acres. In 2017 and 2018, no new acreage was added to the state park system for the first time in almost 50 years.



There is limited space within the state to acquire land for such uses; however, the steep decline could be an indication that the state is nearing an end of acquiring new state lands and transitioning the responsibility of providing parks and open space to more local agencies, such as cities or special districts. With the increases anticipated in population growth and perhaps in-migration from other areas of the state, state park facilities are expected to be more impacted by overcrowding resulting in diminished quality of park facilities if measures are not taken in the form of funding or proper maintenance (Rogers 2019).

4.2.2 - REGIONAL TRENDS IN FACILITIES

Regional trends identify recreational facilities being proposed by cities throughout California, particularly in central California, southern California, and the Bay Area. Some of the more common themes include a focus on walking and hiking; outdoor pools with an emphasis on swimming and aquatic based activities including competition pools; and, team sports.

In order to minimize annual operational costs, the trend in aquatics development has been to create a combination of rectangular pools (racing pools), multi-purpose recreational pools, water slides, wet play/splash play areas, and shallow areas for swimming lessons. The facility should be located in a central part of town so as to be equidistant to all residents.

Hockey, rugby, and lacrosse have all experienced an increase of participation. Ultimate Frisbee, touch football, and fast pitch softball have seen a significant decline in the last five years. However, recent trends related to concerns over football concussions, has sparked a new interest in touch football.

Soccer as a year-round sport can have immense pressure on natural fields. Future recommendations suggest cities consider constructing a ratio of approximately one of every three sports fields as lighted, synthetic turf fields wherever sports complexes are being planned so as to obtain maximum usefulness of the investment. The long-term water savings and maintenance cost savings will benefit the sustainability of City operations. Artificial turf can also be used for a variety of sports including baseball, touch football, lawn bowling, and more.

Other regional facility and program trends include:

- Themed special events, social recreation events, fitness enhancement classes, and health and wellness education were all identified as the top five most commonly provided program areas offered regionally;
- Teen Club/Center ;
- Community Center;
- Dog Park including small dog parks;
- Gymnasiums;
- Sports Complexes;
- Indoor and outdoor basketball courts;
- Greenways/paths for running, biking and dog walking. Fitness walking remained the most popular fitness activity;
- Park restrooms and better lighting in all parks;
- An interconnected system of green belts, future trail segments;
- Renewable energy in facility design. Incorporate renewable energy opportunities where appropriate to reduce future operating costs;
- Incorporate new types of play elements and features when making playground improvements, such as:
 - Music gardens;
 - Nature play elements in existing parks, in addition to or as an alternative to traditional playground equipment in neighborhood and community parks. Consider incorporating nature play areas along trail corridors or in open spaces; and
 - Destination play areas, also called themed playgrounds, are those that are designed around a common theme, providing play opportunities that are hands-on, physically challenging and/or educational. The area shall be an inclusive playground for children of all ages and abilities.
- Diversified recreation opportunities, adding facilities such as bocce courts, a bike skills area/pump track, pickleball courts, exercise stations, a climbing structure;
- Outdoor events space for concerts and events; and
- Rental facilities at picnic areas.

Los Banos is doing well in providing a majority of the regional trending facilities such as baseball/multi-purpose fields, tennis/pickleball courts, basketball courts (lighted and unlighted), and playgrounds. The City offers numerous multi-purpose fields in the variety of fenced, unfenced and basin open fields. The quality of these facilities needs improvement and more capital investment. The City does not have an outdoor swimming pool, but this can be a long-range goal discussed with the aquatic center design. In some instances, the quantity of fenced facilities could be increased from two to eight or more depending on the available space. In recent years, Los Banos has revamped its playground replacement program, which should be ongoing.

4.3 - National

According to the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA):

- There are typically 10.1 acres of park per 1,000 residents, with a lower quartile of 5.2 acres per 1,000 and an upper quartile of 17.1 acres per 1,000 residents.
- There is typically one park for every 2,181 residents, with the lower quartile of 1,260 per park and an upper quartile of 4,298 residents per park.

Throughout the United States, facilities may vary depending on locale and local resources. Table 4-2 is a breakdown of the percentage of each type of facility present at parks and the number of residents per type of equipment/facility by public agency is as follows:

**Table 4-2
2019 NRPA Park Facilities Review**

Rank	Park Equipment/Facility Type	Percentage Present at Parks	Resident Per Facility Type
1	Playgrounds	94.4%	3,706
2	Basketball Courts	86.1%	7,375
3	Tennis courts (outdoor only)	79.7%	4,803
4	Diamond fields: baseball - youth	77.9%	6,608
5	Diamond fields: softball - adult	66.5%	12,619
6	Rectangular fields: multi-purpose	66.1%	7,878
7	Diamond fields: softball - youth	60.9%	11,160
8	Dog park	59.3%	44,330
9	Diamond fields: baseball - adult	54.7%	20,412
10	Swimming pools (outdoor only)	52.3%	36,266
11	Tot Lots	48.1%	12,226
12	Rectangular fields: soccer field - youth	48.1%	6,883
13	Community Gardens	46.3%	29,750
14	Multi-use courts: basketball, volleyball	42.0%	17,667
15	Rectangular fields: soccer field - adult	40.9%	13,031
16	Skate park	26.2%	49,250
17	Multipurpose synthetic field	19.1%	43,149

Rank	Park Equipment/Facility Type	Percentage Present at Parks	Resident Per Facility Type
18	Ice rink (outdoor only)	16.7%	18,500
19	Rectangular field: lacrosse field	11.7%	25,566
20	Rectangular field: cricket field	9.2%	126,945
21	Overlay field	7.5%	15,819
22	Rectangular field: field hockey	4.0%	33,112

Source: 2019 NRPA Agency Performance Review – Park Facilities

Depending on demographics and climate, the need and availability to use certain facilities will vary. However, this provides a glimpse as to what types of facilities are most common throughout the United States and perhaps the average residential population needed to fully utilize each specific facility. For instance, the likelihood of an ice rink being utilized within the City of Los Banos is low given the climate as well as the type of sports which are played. However, that does not eliminate the fact that a rink that was utilized for roller rather than ice hockey would not be an acceptable use within the City. The following national trends may have the tendency to influence park facilities and programs for the next 15 years.

Obesity Rates. According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OCED), the United States has had an obesity rate that has risen at rates for greater than other developed countries worldwide. The rate was approximately 14 percent in the mid-1970s but has grown to approximately 40 percent in the 2010s with no sign of leveling off. It is estimated that the obesity rate in the United States will reach almost 50 percent by 2030 without significant policy changes in regard to health-related sectors, such as nutrition but also available of facilities where fitness activities are possible, such as parks and trails. Combatting the increasing rate of obesity has become a national trend.

Increased Opioid Use. Given the rise in opioid use nationwide, the design of parks, where much drug use may take place after normal operating hours, is an important factor that could help stem the progression of opioid use. This trend has led to agencies revisiting their designs of park facilities in order to promote better visibility of employees, passing-by law enforcement and surrounding neighbors to discourage this type of behavior. These design changes include, but are not limited to, improving sight lines near restrooms, changing the placement or removing altogether benches, and installing additional safety lighting.

Nationwide Fitness Activity Trends. According to the Sports and Fitness Industry Association (SFIA), high impact intensity training (HIIT) and cross-training style workouts, or CrossFit, are two of the top trending aerobic activities. These workouts combine elements of gymnastics, weightlifting, running, rowing, and other sports to create a varied fitness regime. Regarding individual sports, off-road triathlons have seen a seven percent average annual growth for the last five years. These races, such as XTERRAs, consist of a competitive combination of swimming, mountain biking, and trail running. Pickleball, a paddle sport mixing badminton, tennis, and table tennis, is still trending, gaining an average eight percent growth each year. Growing even slightly faster is Cardio Tennis at 9.1 percent. Cardio Tennis is a fitness program that focuses on combining a full body workout with elements of tennis.

Generational Changes. Activity participation varies based on age, but it also varies based on generational preferences. Regarding generational activity, according to the SFIA report millennials had the highest percentage of those who were “active to a healthy level”, but a quarter also remained sedentary. Nearly 28 percent of Generation X were inactive, with one-third of Baby Boomers being inactive. Baby Boomers prefer low impact fitness activities such as swimming, cycling, aquatic exercise, and walking. At least 65 percent of Generation Z’s were at least casually active in 2017, according to the 2018 SFIA report. Table 2-2 demonstrates the breakdown of age groups in the City of Los Banos. In the City of Los Banos, the generational groups are as follows:

- Generation Z, ages 7 – 22: 27 percent;
- Millennials, ages 22 – 37: 25 percent;
- Generation X, ages 38 – 52: 20 percent;
- Baby Boomers, ages 51 – 71: 22 percent; and
- The Silent Generation, 72+ years old: six percent.

Technology. Technology is having a greater impact in parks than ever before. Lower costs, technological simplification and mass production are making high tech inexpensive and accessible to park and recreation agencies.

The most tantalizing tech developments for 2019 are monitoring systems, such as beacon counters and geofencing, that can be used in parks. Beacon counters are simple, relatively inexpensive bluetooth-enabled devices that can be mounted in a variety of locations, interior and exterior, that detect a person’s presence through their cellphone signal and relays that information to a central location. Geofences utilize RFID or GPS technology to locate people within larger areas.

Brian Albright, director of San Diego County Parks and Recreation, says, “Many of our parks are free without staff, so we have no way of monitoring and counting how many people are using the parks, what the most popular areas are, times of day, etc. The beacon counters attach to light poles, fencing and signs, and power themselves through photovoltaic cells. We can collect and monitor the data remotely from our headquarters office at any time.”

Recreational drones are becoming increasingly accepted in park settings. With advances in technology, reduced prices due to mass production and greater public acceptance, drones are becoming just another type of tech recreation. Fears of some park managers concerning privacy intrusions and safety violations persist, however. Likewise, the proximity of some parks to the local airport could also create a problem. In parks, the promise of drones in assisting in public safety missions and improving public security continues to make this specific type of technology more enticing. The future of drone use in Los Banos may be a distant opportunity. As elsewhere in similar communities, a policy for the use of drones in Los Banos should be in line with the Los Banos Municipal Airport policies.

Drones are currently being used for pollination. A U.S. firm is already using full-size drones for dropping pollen bombs on fruit and nut crops, increasing yields 20–60 percent. Could there be new applications for parks?

In the near or perhaps distant future, park and recreation agencies may embrace the use of technology in 2019 for a variety of purposes, including monitoring of park visitors, biometric identification at entrances to public facilities and programs, and scientific uses, such as surveying fire-prone landscapes and charting the spread of invasive species. Although it is not likely to occur in 2019, facial recognition software may be coming to parks and recreation sooner than we think, as it already has for retail businesses and law enforcement.

eSports. With revenue topping a half-billion dollars per year and a global audience of 400 million annually, eSports are more than a fad. In eSports, spectators essentially sit and watch individuals or teams of players compete in a variety of electronic games, cheering rabidly for their favorite champions or teams.

With slick marketing, intensive promotion and exciting competition for participants and audiences alike, this essentially sedentary recreational activity poses a conundrum for parks and recreation. It is problematic in combatting childhood obesity, getting kids on their feet, and being physically active.

Despite its sedentary nature, eSports is a form of recreation virtually guaranteed to draw crowds of young people into recreation facilities and venues. eSports events and tournaments have excellent potential for revenue generation and facility utilization. Is it possible for public parks and recreation to convert this enormous potential into a means of promoting health, physical activity and social cohesion for young people?

Several park and rec agencies are likely to sponsor eSports tournaments in 2019, combining digital gaming with supplemental events and physical activity challenges. For participants, this will offer maximum fun in combination with heart-healthy physical activities, gaining the best of what can be an outstanding opportunity for parks and recreation agencies to attract and engage youth.

Dog Parks. Dog parks are one of the fastest growing types of parks in the country. The more than 90 million dogs in the United States must have a place to run, play, and socialize with other dogs. Larger dog parks have become destinations and can contribute significantly to agency revenues and tourism. Increasingly, for many, dogs are regarded not just as part of the family but as their children. Currently, a one acre dog park is proposed for the Ag Sports Complex that could serve the entire community. A typical guideline for dog parks is a community should have a minimum of one facility for every 50,000 residents as identified by Statista “Sports & Recreation Parks & Outdoors 2018”. A typical dog park ranges from one half to one acre so the proposed dog park at Ag Sports Complex should serve the community well.

Themed Playgrounds and Splash Parks. Themed playgrounds and themed splash parks continue to be a popular trend. A splash park, also referred to as an aquatic playground, spray ground, splash pad, or waterplay, is a recreational area designed specifically for interactive water play. Unlike swimming, wading, or paddling pools, splash parks have no standing water. Splash parks improve public space and provide an ideal setting for family recreation. Another reason for their popularity is that splash parks are less expensive than

pools and require less maintenance and oversight. Whether they echo a medieval castle, pirate ship or outer space, these themed play spaces break the mold of traditional playgrounds to battle ever-shrinking attention spans. For example, Morgan's Wonderland Inspiration Island Splash Park in San Antonio, Texas, which carries a pirate theme allows children of all abilities to pretend to set sail on a pirate ship or search for buried treasure as they keep cool while playing in the sun. Large themed playgrounds should be components of flagship or larger neighborhood and community parks such as Pacheco Park. Sizes can range from 5,000 square feet to 10,000 square feet and larger such as the nearly 14,000 square feet Inspiration Park in Fresno.

Increase in Indoor Activities. Some traditional public park facilities are being replaced by indoor commercial recreation experiences. Some of the new indoor facilities that are growing by leaps and bounds include trampoline centers, climbing facilities, and multi-sports 'bubbles' that have turf-play areas for baseball, lacrosse, football, soccer and other field sports.

Most are private-sector, for-profit facilities that may supplant public park and recreation programs and facilities. With outdoor temperatures rising due to climate change and some areas of the countries experiencing extreme heat in the summer months, there is a growing market for such indoor pay-to-play recreation, which, in many cases, is overtaking the capacity of public parks and recreation to offer these recreation amenities but leaving such experiences out of reach for those who cannot afford it.

Outdoor Yoga. Yoga is one of the fastest-growing wellness trends, and its popularity is only expected to climb. Twenty million Americans currently practice yoga. Yoga Journal's latest "Yoga in America" survey shows that 8.7 percent of Americans are practicing yoga—that's more than 28 million Americans. Nearly one third of yoga enthusiasts practice the activity outdoors. The number of yoga practitioners over the age of 50 has tripled in the last three years.

Pickleball. More than 3.1 million players play pickleball in the United States and that number has been growing by more than 10 percent each year over the past decade. A lot of Americans play tennis, but pickleball is a lot easier on the body. Pickleball is a sport that anyone can enjoy. Approximately 75 percent or core players are 55 or older while 14 percent of casual players are older than 55. Another reason for the sports popularity is that many people are migrating from tennis to pickleball. Tennis courts can be



Pickleball is a sport for all age groups

easily striped for pickleball players. Utilizing tennis and pickleball courts for dual usage can be a highly effective cost savings approach for two sports on one court. Pickleball tournaments are local, regional, and national. Their popularity continues to grow. A park with six to eight pickleball courts for pickleball tournaments should be considered for the City of Los Banos.

Connectedness. Parks have long offered community-based walking programs and building and, connecting trails and greenways to parks and neighborhoods have become top priorities for regional planning boards and municipal agencies. The City of Los Banos has been successful with trails on irrigation canals and abandoned rail lines and have a more identified in their Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan (as well as bikeways). Several communities have greenways that connect to streets, neighborhoods, and parks, some with sidewalks and some without sidewalks. One of the trends, both past and future, has been for many public agencies to provide this connectedness throughout their community. Davis and Chico are examples of California communities well-connected by greenbelts and trails.

SECTION 5 - INVENTORY & NEEDS ASSESSMENT ANALYSIS

This section of the Master Plan provides an overview of existing parks, trails, and recreation facilities within the City of Los Banos. An understanding of existing resources is essential to beginning the needs evaluation process. A diverse combination of community parks, neighborhood and pocket parks, special use facilities, trails, and the recreation center provide opportunities for a myriad of community and personal activities for recreation, health, education, and cultural enrichment within the City.

5.1 - Methodology

The QK Team toured each of the City's park and recreation properties with Parks and Recreation staff members, digitally photographed the facilities, and listened to staff members regarding their issues, concerns, and likes and dislikes about each of the properties.

5.2 - Parks and Facilities by Classification

The City of Los Banos prides itself on providing the highest quality parks and recreation to its citizens. The parks and recreation facility inventory indicate there is a broad range of passive and active opportunities well dispersed throughout the city. The City of Los Banos currently includes approximately 266 acres of parks and facilities. This includes pocket parks or mini-parks, neighborhood parks, community parks, specialty parks, and recreation centers or buildings otherwise referred to as assets. The current park acreages are analyzed against a ratio of park or recreation amenity per population, typically per 1,000 population. Local agencies can adopt their own standards, but often agencies tend to look toward national and regional standards. The current population of Los Banos is 41,898 and an average size of 3.45 people per household. This averages out to 6.3 acres per 1,000 population. Unlike the cities of Hanford and Clovis, California, school recreation facilities are not included with the average per 1,000 population.

5.2.1 - PARK CLASSIFICATIONS

The Master Plan suggests the classification of park into five categories: Pocket Parks, Neighborhood Parks, Community Parks, Specialty Parks or Facilities, and Trails. A sixth classification, regional parks, are identified as parks larger than 50 acres, service the region and nearby cities, and provide a range of activities including passive and active recreation but primarily sports field games such as soccer, football, and baseball/softball. Los Banos does not have a regional facility.

Pocket Parks

For the purpose of this Master Plan, Pocket Parks in the City of Los Banos are most often found in residential neighborhoods developed as an amenity to serve the immediate neighborhood and can be reached by foot in around five minutes or less and are generally located less than one-quarter mile from the furthest residence. Pocket parks are usually less

than one acre and can be linear parks that separate the ends of cul-de-sacs or greenways that connect adjacent streets. Typically, pocket parks, at a minimum, include a playground, picnic tables and barbecues, benches, and shade. Lighting is usually available from the adjacent streets. Larger pocket parks (between one half to one acre) may provide basketball and/or volleyball.

Neighborhood Park

For the purpose of this Master Plan, Neighborhood Parks in the City of Los Banos are designed to meet local neighborhood needs and are intended to be within walking or bicycling distance of less than a one-half mile radius. Neighborhood Parks usually emphasize child oriented and family-oriented activities. They can range in size from one acre to ten acres and the size can generally be as much as 25 acres when attached to a storm basin. The storm basins are generally used for open play, sports field games, and perimeter walking/jogging trails.

Community Park

For the purpose of this Master Plan, Community Parks in the City of Los Banos are designed to serve both the City as a whole or a group of neighborhoods. While community parks may include neighborhood park amenities, and do act as neighborhood parks as well, the focus of a community park is often on meeting community-based recreation, athletics and open space needs. Two examples would be the Ag Sports Complex and the Colorado Ballpark. Typically, the service area ranges from one-mile to as much as a three-mile radius; patrons typically drive to community parks so off-street parking is required. The acreage ranges in size from seven to twenty. Community Park facilities are most often oriented towards family and adult activities such as tennis courts, community centers, swimming pools or splash pads, sports fields, walking paths, picnic areas and/or picnic shelters, and night lighting. In some cases, a park with a single athletic field or two athletic fields that provides a venue for community athletic organizations may fall into this category regardless of its small size. Community Parks should be reachable from the City's arterial roadways so that traffic can be avoided from travel through residential neighborhoods.

Ag Sports Complex has the ability to expand to an approximately 50-acre facility. Currently, Ag Sports Complex can service most of the City's north and east sides and the Colorado Ballpark can service most of the City's south and west sides. Only Meadowlands and the neighborhoods south of Pacheco Boulevard and east of Mercey Springs Road would be underserved by community parks because they are further than a two-mile radius from Ag Sports Complex or Colorado Ballpark. Despite its small size, Pacheco Park is considered a community park because of its many amenities, the library, the museum, and its proximity to a major arterial/state route.

Specialty Park or Facility

For the purpose of this Master Plan, a Specialty Park or Facility cover a broad range of specialized park and recreation facilities, often with a single major use. Golf courses,

historical sites, community center sites, theme parks, water parks and other special-use facilities fall into this category. These parks may also include neighborhood or community park elements, but with amenities that have a regional appeal to visitors from outside the boundaries of the Park District. can be a building used for meetings or recreational programs or a memorial park or plaza generally smaller than five acres. Specialty parks may also include a park that is meant to commemorate a fallen hero or heroes or a specific use such as a skate park, BMX track or dog park.

The size of the park off facility can vary significantly based on the needs of the amenity/facility. The park or facility can also draw visitors from well beyond the boundaries of the City.

Trail

For the purpose of this Master Plan, trails are linear paths usually along a canal or old railroad right of way or an easement that provides access to canal trails or rail trails. Trail easements can vary in width up to 100 feet as is the case with the City's rail trail. The paths are usually a paved or DG surface from eight to 10 feet in width. Shade trees, bench seating, and trash containers are preferred.

Park Needs Consistent Throughout the City

Overall each park needs: Most parks need ADA ramps to playgrounds, nearby public sidewalk ADA ramps, transition from old growth trees to newly planted trees (most), park ID signage and rules signage. Each park should target playground replacement every 15–20 years, or as needed. Playground wood chips or engineered Fibar are the preferred surfacing, but pour-in-place surfaces could be pursued in conjunction with a splash pad or as part of a larger park facility. Benches, trash cans, and picnic tables should be replaced and maintained. Lighting should be provided where possible, particularly solar lighting.

Equipment, too, is necessary for ongoing park maintenance. At a minimum, the City should include stump grinder and new aerial boom truck in this budget for park maintenance.

The City is adding Cartegraph software this year, which will be utilized as a park asset management system that will assist in tracking small asset conditions and replacement and will provide coverage for all areas of the Los Banos park system.

5.2.2 - DESCRIPTIONS OF EXISTING PARKS

Pocket Parks

BIG PAGE PARK. 1055 West I Street. Big Page Park is an approximately 0.9-acre pocket park located in the triangle formed by West I Street, West J Street, and Pennsylvania Avenue, and approximately 1,500 feet east of Los Banos Airport. Big Page Park does not have any sidewalks along any of the streets that it fronts. A new sidewalk should meander around the large shade trees so that they can be preserved to the extent possible. ADA pedestrian access is not available from the adjacent neighborhoods. ADA access ramps need to be installed to the playground (replaced in February 2020), at least one near the drinking fountain. The park has two picnic tables. The park has an adequate number of trees that provide sufficient shade. There is adequate space for open lawn play which also allows for other potential park features should the community request other amenities or playground expansion. The park should have a split rail fence on its perimeter at I Street to prevent children from running onto the busy arterial road.



Big Page Park has had new play equipment installed in February 2020.

CATHOLIC PARK. 1150 5th Street. The approximately quarter-acre Catholic Park is located 250-feet north of Cornerstone Catholic Church and is across Fifth Street from an artist studio. The park has a playground that lacks ADA access. L Street, which borders the park's southern boundary, lacks a sidewalk, and ADA pedestrian access to the surrounding neighborhood is not available. A sidewalk along L Street might require the removal of large trees which should be replaced if they are removed. The park would benefit from benches, picnic tables, an identification sign. Shade is adequate. Wood fencing along the park's northern border shows signs of aging.

CITRUS TERRACE I PARK. 226 Citrus Avenue. Citrus Terrace I Park is an approximately .29-acre park tucked in between five homes that borders Citrus Avenue. The park, located on the city's north central area, has play equipment that includes swings, but no ADA access. The park does not have benches, picnic tables, and signage. Shade trees are adequate for the size of the space but lacks active choices such as volleyball. The playground was replaced in April 2020 and the wood chips were applied for the fall surfacing. The park needs a sidewalk to the playground and a picnic area. Wood fencing along the park's shared boundaries with neighbors shows signs of aging.

CITY PARK (ON NINTH STREET). 450 9th Street. City Park is an approximately .81-acre park located within the triangle formed by D Street, 9th Street, E Street, and the backyards of homes along San Juan Avenue. Though a small park, the facility serves many purposes for the large apartment complex to the north. The tree shaded park lacks sidewalk access adjacent to the streets as well as ADA ramps at street intersections. the play equipment will be replaced in the Fall of 2020 and a volleyball court is targeted



City Park on Ninth Street is a small park with room for opportunities

for construction in 2022. The park has a basketball court and lighting. Benches, picnic tables, drinking fountains, and signage should be added to any improvement plan for the park.

GARDENS I PARK. 1540 West I Street. This park located between I Street and Alberta Drive on the city’s southwest side is approximately eight-tenths acres. The park has a playground, basketball court, lighting, drinking fountain, and two picnic tables. The playground will need to be replaced in the next 7 years. The playground could benefit from some shade trees and at least two additional picnic tables and at least three benches. A walkway is needed through the park to connect West I Street to the basketball court and the playground, and ultimately to Alberta Street.

GARDENS III PARK. 900 Daffodil Drive. Often called Daffodil Park because of its location at the east end of Daffodil Street, this 0.6-acre park is a greenway that connects Daffodil Street to West I Street and Birch Avenue. The park has ADA pedestrian access at Birch Avenue but none at its border with Daffodil and Garden Streets. The playground has play equipment, swings, two picnic tables, trash containers, and two benches. The playground is aging and

will need to be replaced within five years and a transition from sand to chips should be pursued. Two empty concrete pads lack picnic tables. The park has a tubular steel fence along Daffodil for safety. While there are a few shade trees scattered throughout the park, the playground lacks shade. Turf improvements are needed and a shared neighbor fence requires post replacements.



Entrance to Daffodil (Gardens III) Park

DAVIS PARK. 254 Santa Ana Street. Davis Park is located at the intersection of Santa Maria and Santa Ana Streets. The approximately six-tenths acre park has adequate shade and a playground but no ADA access to both the playground and the park’s perimeter roadways. The playground should be replaced, and signage, picnic tables and benches should be added. The park has two benches today. The park has adequate shade provided by large canopy trees onsite. ADA improvements seem to be the most needed, as well as a transition from old growth trees to new healthy trees.

DOS AMIGOS PARK. Located between San Luis Street and Huntington Drive about 140 feet from Ward Road. Dos Amigos Park, also called Rancho Dos Amigos Park, is approximately .66 acres and is on the city’s west side. The park currently has a playground with swings, climbing features, and slides. The play equipment has shade canopies. The swing-set will be replaced in August 2020 and the playground will need to be replaced in the next seven years. Although it has night lighting along a meandering walkway that connects San



Wide sidewalks in Dos Amigos Park

Luis Street to Huntington Drive, vandalism and graffiti has been an issue at this park. The park has two picnic tables with barbecues but could benefit from at least two benches and two shade trees. ADA access is needed from Huntington Drive and possibly to the

playground. The park lacks identification and rules signage. The turf requires some improvements in certain areas of the park.

LITTLE PAGE PARK. 600 Page Avenue. Little Page Park, .16 acres, has abundant shade, a playground, ADA access to the play equipment, three benches, a drinking fountain, and picnic tables. ADA ramps are needed at the park’s northwest and southwest corners. The playground is targeted for replacement by 2023.



Not every park has an identification sign like this at Little Page Park, but they should

MEADOWLANDS I PARK. 2600 Wood Duck Drive. Meadowlands I Park is an approximately .62 acre park located along Wood Duck Drive near its intersection with Sprig Way. The park has a playground with four benches, two picnic tables, and a drinking fountain. The playground will need to be replaced in the next seven to ten years. The park needs ADA access from Wood Duck Drive, lighting, and shade particularly near the picnic tables. The play equipment has some shade and as the trees mature nearby, more shade is likely. The park does not have signage.



Sidewalks connect residents to nearby streets and each other

MEADOWLANDS GREENWAY. Located between North Fallbrook Drive and South Fallbrook Drive on the city’s southeast side. Meadowlands Greenway is an approximately .60-acre park. The greenway also has pedestrian access to two cul-de-sacs, Cool Spring Court and Sun Stream Court. The park has two shade arbors that accommodate two picnic tables each. Sidewalks meander throughout the greenway and three benches offer places to sit. The park is anchored on both ends by gateway arches that need that need some repairs

OLIVEIRA COURTYARD (SOUTHBROOK PARK). This .70-acre park is located west of the seven-acre Oliveira Park in the southwest area of the city. The courtyard park has sidewalks, benches, a shade arbor, and shade trees. The park would benefit from the addition of two picnic tables and shade trees.



Oliveira Courtyard Park could use a few picnic tables in the shade structure.

PRESIDENTIAL PARK. 1043 Monte Vista Avenue. This approximately half-acre park has a playground, half-court basketball, picnic table, and fencing along the Main Canal on the park's west side. The park has abundant shade but lacks ADA access from Monte Vista Avenue and also to the playground. The park could benefit from picnic tables and some minimal re-landscaping. The major element to this park would be provide shade over the picnic area that was recently renovated. The playground should also be replaced in the next five years.



Presidential Park

REGENCY TOT LOT. 500 Block Addington Street. Regency Tot Lot is a 0.4-acre park providing the immediate neighborhood with a playground with adequate ADA access, covered shelter and picnicking, and benches. The site lacks landscaping and shade on the playground and sitting areas as well as ADA access from the adjacent streets, Chamberlain and Addington Drives. The playground will need to be replaced in the next seven years.

VILLAGE PARK (ON BELLFLOWER). 1150 Bellflower. Village Park is a 0.4-acre park located between Bellflower Way and Cattail Court. The park provides the nearby residents with playgrounds, open lawn play, four picnic tables, three barbecues, two benches, and a

drinking fountain. The facility lacks shade, but many of the trees that have been planted are fairly young. The park also has safety fencing along Bellflower Way and Cattail Court. The playground will need to be replaced in the next 10 to 12 years.

Neighborhood Parks

CITRUS TERRACE PARK II. 315 N. Second Street. The park is large turf covered basin-style park of 2.34 acres that spans the block between First and Second Streets just north of Mandarin Avenue in the 'Citrus' district. Anchored by a full basketball court on the east side and a large, round playground area with structures and swings on the west side, this park also has some significant planting areas, a few large shade trees near the play area, a meandering walkway along the south side of park and more landscaped areas along the north boundary. ADA access into the park from the surrounding community seems adequate but the playground area, picnic table, bench and one trash can adjacent to the playground area are located in a large turf area and not connected to any path of travel. They would all require new walkway installations connecting them to adjacent paths of travel in order to comply. The basketball area has a single pole light for serviceable nighttime illumination but only a single trash can and no benches or seating areas. This park could benefit from some replacement planting in the existing landscape areas, as well as the replacement and addition of many more shade trees in the areas outside the basin 'pool' level. There is an accessible bus stop located on the 2nd Street side of the park. The playground was replaced in June 2020.



Village Park – the quintessential pocket park that offers a little bit of everything – shade, playground, open lawn, picnic tables, and benches



Citrus Terrace Park II is a well-maintained basin park with multiple activities, trails, and landscaping



Swing sets are a fun option for kids at College Greens Park

COLLEGE GREENS PARK. 1815 College Green Drive. Just southwest of Scripps Drive and its intersection with College Greens Drive you'll find 5.3 acres of open green fields known as College Greens Park. This is a very well appointed park with two baseball backstops for informal play, multiple playground structures for smaller children, a full basketball court, sand volleyball court, several picnic tables, trash receptacles and a drinking fountain on the east side. A spacious parking lot off Scripps Drive fronts onto the park space and a fenced building that the City rents for receptions and other private gatherings. The College Greens Building at 1815 Scripps Drive has a

full kitchen, three restrooms, and an event/banquet space. The building will need interior wall improvements, interior ADA improvements, and mirror, soap dispenser, and other minor repairs and maintenance. ADA accessibility into the park is good; however, within the park there is limited access to some of the play structures and no pathways to the picnic tables, basketball, and sand volleyball courts which are located in the turf areas. Night lighting should be added to the park; currently, the park interior and nearby streetlights are nonexistent. Suggested improvements would include: Upgrades and repairs to the Irrigation system, turf renovation and grading in the baseball field areas, addition of two more ADA compliant picnic tables, covered benches or seating areas, additional trash receptacles, security lighting, a walking path around the backside of the park, and additional shade tree plantings would really enhance the look and function of the park. New restroom facilities should be included in a ten-year plan and be located in a well-lit, high-visibility area of the park to reduce vandalism opportunities. Playground repair and maintenance is scheduled for the next year; but the playground should be replaced in the next seven years.

CRESTHILLS PARK. 700 Pioneer Road. Cresthills Park offers a little bit of everything to the surrounding community. Currently nestled in the extreme south-central part of the City at Pioneer Road and Black Hills Avenue this 3.57-acre park is easily ADA accessible from the surrounding city sidewalks. A wide central walk enters the park from the east side and meanders past a generous plaza space containing picnic tables, benches, trash receptacles, a bike rack and planter wells with large shade trees. A spacious, wood chipped playground containing multiple play structures and swings abuts the opposite side of the plaza. The central walkway connects to a large paved area



One of the City's more popular parks to visit, Cresthills Park has a large picnic shelter for special events and plenty of activities

under a newly constructed, steel pavilion structure. This area is designed for large groups and contains multiple picnic tables, food preparation tables, two barbeque pits outside the structure and four new trash cans. This park benefits from a stand of mature cottonwood trees along the western and northern borders and several other large existing trees scattered throughout the rest of the perimeter turf areas. Some turf areas need repair. A permanent backstop at the edge of a large open playfield in the middle of the park begs for an improved baseball field. The existing full basketball court has been striped to accommodate pickleball play, which has become quite popular. Just to the west of the basketball court is a regulation play, sand volleyball court. Both courts and the baseball field lack any ADA access via connected walks. Cresthills would benefit from a restroom facility which is in the City's five year plan, an extension of the walkway that would encircle the perimeter of the park, improvements to the ballfield play surfaces, and a tree replacement program for the cottonwoods that have surpassed their effective lifespans. New housing developments to the west of the park have increased the intrinsic value of the park as an amenity but also a recently installed large, landscaped parking lot offers sufficient capacity for future demand.

GARDENS V BASIN PARK. 1525 Persimmon Way. (a.k.a. Persimmon Park) Really two parks in one this 16.15-acre green space is made up of a 4.65-acre, smaller, southern section bordered on the north by Birch Avenue, on the east by Mulberry Way and the busy Cardoza Road on the southern edge. Resembling a golf course fairway this long and narrow greenway is entirely appointed with irrigated turf, with just a few street trees planted along a short stretch of Cardoza, and a single serpentine walkway running approximately 1200 feet along the length of the open space's east side, adjacent to Mulberry Way. The larger, 11.5-acre, section to the north of Birch Avenue is primarily utilized as a stormwater retention basin and open green space, but regularly functions as an athletic practice field space. This section

contains a very generous system of tree-lined walkways, multiple, 10-foot wide connector paths linking to the surrounding residential areas and access to the H.G. Fawcett Canal Trail running along the north edge of the space. There is a large family recreation area with multiple play structures, swings, a covered pavilion, picnic tables, trash receptacles, benches, walkways, shade trees and a nearby set of restrooms. On the far north end of the park there is another grouping of picnic tables and barbecue pits that are well intentioned but, unfortunately, are located away from the walkways, in the turf making them potentially inaccessible for disabled users. At least one picnic table and barbecue pit in this group needs to be made ADA compliant and a walkway installed, connecting it to the rest of the circulation paths. One barbecue pit is missing and should be replaced at the table on east of main walkway. The remainder of the walkways in and around the park seem to all be in good condition and ADA compliant. This park could benefit from the installation of a handful more trees in strategic locations that won't interfere with the flight path, some wayfinding signage in and around the park, a more pronounced transition to the H.G. Fawcett Canal Trail, lighting on and shade sails over the playground areas, exercise equipment either in stations along the trail or as an outdoor fitness center area, and several dog mitt stations etc. The playground will need to be replaced in the next seven to ten years. The linear shape and layout of the park sections are dictated by their location in the flight line approach path to the Los Banos Airport just to the north. The park would benefit from a walkway that parallels the wall on the basin-side/west side of the park to create a loop trail around the basin.

JO-LIN BASIN PARK. 295 Ward Road. This 3.03 acre basin park is bordered by Ward Drive, Greenbriar Drive, and East B Street. Create a 'loop' walking trail around the flat, upper 'ring' of the basin that connects to existing walkways. Larger flat area to the east has good visibility and is located diagonally across Ward Road from the high school. There is an opportunity for some lighted basketball courts, picnic pavilion, picnic tables, monument sign for park and signage indicating where on street parking is allowed. Additional amenities should include basketball court with a nearby split rail fence.



Currently, there is not much to see or do at Jo Lin Park so it's an open palette

MEADOWLANDS II PARK. 2700 Snow Goose Street. Meadowlands II Park is an approximately 4.13 acre neighborhood park located on the City's east side. The park has basketball, three playgrounds, six picnic tables, a covered shelter, loop trail, lighting, restrooms, parking lot, benches, and drinking fountain. The restrooms are a target for graffiti. Trees along the park's northern and eastern boundary need to be replaced. The playgrounds need shade for the hot summer months and will need replacement in the next seven years. Irrigation appears to need replacement and turf needs improvements. The parking lot needs

resurfacing and restriping. The park has a 1.5-acre open play lawn area for pick-up games, Frisbee toss, and other field games. The playgrounds are not ADA accessible. The park is large enough to provide another popular recreational amenity in the future.

MEADOWLANDS III PARK. 2500 S. Fallbrook Drive. Meadowlands III Park is an approximately 3.11-acre neighborhood park located on the City’s east side. The neighborhood park has two playgrounds, restrooms, three picnic tables, benches, sidewalks, picnic pavilion, landscaping and shade trees, and lighting. The park has entry arches at street corners but no park name signage. The centerpiece of the park is a landscaped circle that could benefit the community if it were redesigned for active or passive recreation, i.e., shade pavilion, a hill with slides, etc.). Shade trees are located along the street edge but not interior to the park. The restrooms are a target for graffiti. The park needs turf improvements. The playgrounds will likely need replacements in the next seven to 10 years.

MEADOWLANDS BASIN PARK 2599 S. Creekside Drive. Meadowlands Basin Park is an approximately 23-acre neighborhood park located on the City’s east side. The neighborhood park consists of two basins (approximately 14 acres) separated by two playgrounds, a picnic shelter with four picnic tables and four benches, parking lot, lighting, sidewalks and restrooms. A second area with playgrounds, nine picnic tables, benches, half basketball court, lighting, and pavilion is located approximately 700 feet to the south. Because of its size and length, the park could benefit from a loop trail with possibly exercise station. A loop trail along the canal whether by asphalt, concrete or DG would be a valuable addition. The sidewalk along Creekside Drive and the addition of a trail (DG, asphalt or concrete) could create a 1.5-mile long trail. Because of its size, the park has opportunities for other recreation facilities. This park needs a large amount of shade trees in the non-basin areas of the park. In the flat area on the south side of the park a skatepark, exercise equipment or similar amenity could be added. Any of these amenities could benefit the nearby high school students. A split rail fence should be added to prevent cars from driving into the park. The playground should be replaced in the next seven years. The parking lot needs re-striping.



The entry arbors at Meadowlands Basin Park are familiar icons that should be preserved and maintained

NEIGHBORHOOD (SANDSTONE) PARK. 1538 Mayweed Drive. Sandstone or Neighborhood Park is an approximately one-acre park located in the southwest area of the City. The park is located between Mayweed Drive and Woodland Court. The park has two playgrounds, one with swings and the second with climbing equipment and slides. It has two picnic tables, one barbecue, drinking fountain, two benches, and ADA ramps at Mayweed Drive. The park could benefit from a fence along approximately 160 feet of Mayweed Drive frontage for child safety.



Playgrounds at Neighborhood (Sandstone) Park have multiple activities that are desperate for shade.

OLIVEIRA SOCCER PARK. 1115 Cardoza Road. Oliveira Soccer Park is a seven-acre neighborhood park that offers soccer, basketball, restrooms with concession stands that face the soccer fields, night lighting, a drinking fountain, seven picnic tables, four barbecues, playgrounds, and perimeter sidewalks. The soccer fields are fenced and the fields along Travertine Way have protective nets to stop errant balls. Ortigalita Road is a major arterial in the City and the playgrounds nearby could benefit from having some type of fencing (approximately 200 linear feet) to prevent children from darting out into traffic. The parking lot needs resurfacing and restriping; the basketball court needs restriping; the playgrounds need ADA ramps and should be replaced in the next ten to twelve years; some areas need re-sodding and a lawn maintenance program; picnic areas need shade; and, the protective netting along the north side of Travertine Way will need replacement. Oliveira’s popularity exemplifies the need for soccer fields and artificial turf to prevent over-use and high maintenance costs.



Oliveira Soccer Park has trails for jogging or strolling with attractive landscaping, picnic areas, and playground along the way.

ORCHARD TERRACE PARK. 303 Block Sunburst Street, this 1.1-acre park on the edge of the 'Citrus' district is bordered by Honeybell Street, Citrus Avenue, and Sunburst Street. As a newer park it meets ADA accessibility requirements for the walks and connectors but is lacking ramps into each of the two play areas. Orchard Terrace Park is one of the few parks in the park system that is provided with a park identification sign. Amenities include a picnic shelter, playground, sidewalks, shade trees, picnic tables, drinking fountain, and trash containers. Some shade will be needed in key locations throughout the park such as sidewalks, picnic tables, and near playgrounds. The play equipment is not anticipated for replacement for at least 10 years.



Orchard Terrace Park: One of the more recent parks with a monument sign.

RANCHO DOS AMIGOS GREENWAY PARK. Rancho Dos Amigos Greenway Park is a narrow 2.7-acre neighborhood linear park that simply provides dedicated pedestrian access route, free from any dangerous vehicular traffic, from San Luis Drive on the south to Jo-Lin Park approximately one-third mile to the north. This greenway is located between ends of cul-de-sac streets, and crosses Park View Drive and Racquet Club Drive and ends at Park Crest Drive. The greenway has shade trees but no sidewalks, benches, picnic tables or lighting. The park has approximately three-



Greenways are great ways to connect streets and neighborhoods and are opportunity sites for pathways, benches, and picnic tables

quarters of an acre of open play south of the playground. There are opportunities for additional court games west of the basketball court. Sidewalk or trail access throughout the park is limited to the parking lot to the nearby preschool building, basketball court, pavilion, and playground. The playground needs ADA access ramps. Solar lighting along the meandering sidewalk would help limit vandalism and solar would lower costs and avoid

large scale electric line trenching. Wayfinding signage would also be beneficial as there are multiple roads that cross through the park.

RANCHWOOD PARK. 515 Stonewood Drive. Ranchwood Park is an approximately 4.49-acre neighborhood park located at the northwest corner of Stonewood Drive and Driftwood Avenue. The park has a preschool facility and parking lot. Amenities include a basketball court, playground (that needs ADA access ramps), one picnic table, picnic pavilion with no picnic tables, benches, park ID sign, and lighting. The park is often used for “Parties in the Park” special events. The park needs turf improvements and landscape around the basketball court. The parking lot needs repair and restriping. A restroom building should be included in a ten year plan for the park. The Ranchwood Building needs ADA improvements on the interior, notably minor improvements to the restrooms and the interior walls need replacement.



Ranchwood Park is a popular place for special events and has plenty of room to grow and add more recreation

REGENCY LOT D PARK. 556 Rockport Drive. Regency Lot D Park is an approximately five-acre neighborhood park located on the City’s northeast side that is desperate for shade, especially the picnic tables. Regency Lot D Park is surrounded by public streets on all three sides. The park has two playgrounds with ADA access, basketball court, lighting, drinking fountain, five picnic tables with barbecues, and a parking lot. The park needs lighting, needs landscaping, numerous shade trees, the turf needs improvements, and the parking lot needs restriping. The playground will need to be replaced in the next seven years. A long term benefit for the park would be a restroom facility.

SKYLARK PARK. 648 Meadowlark Avenue & 700 Block Fairmont Drive. Skylark Park is approximately seven acres and is located on the City’s northeast side at the southwest corner of Dove Street and Fairmont Drive. The park has a new playground (2019), basketball court, two soccer/football fields, parking lot, picnic area with no shade, restrooms, drinking fountain, and large shade trees on the western side of the park. The soccer field turf areas need upgrades and additional nearby shade would benefit the players that use the park for exercise. The parking lot needs restriping. The park needs a sidewalk from Meadowlark Avenue to the playground. The park would benefit from a loop trail and lighting. There is no park ID sign or park rules sign. Some concrete pads need to have picnic tables replaced and the basketball court should be upgraded.



Skylark Park is a popular site for local soccer games

TALBOTT BASIN PARK. 1620 San Luis Street. Talbott basin Park is a 10.68-acre space on the north side of San Luis Street, just west of Place Avenue and the Los Banos Junior High School parking area. The City owned building on the south edge of the park are currently leased to a daycare provider. An ADA compliant, paved, loop trail encircles the perimeter of the basin area connecting the rest of the built amenities. There is a small play structure and sitting area near the southeast corner adjacent to the four regulation play horseshoe pits. The playground will need to be replaced in the next seven years. A few shade trees and a couple dozen palm trees line the perimeter walking trail but only offer sparse shade. The basin area is used for informal recreational activities. Irrigation upgrades and turf renovation programs would be recommended. There is room to host a short disc-golf course. The area on the southwest corner that is out of the basin and bordered by existing walkways would be a prime location for a skatepark and/or other park amenities like restrooms, pavilions, picnic tables, barbecue pits, larger play structures & etc. The park needs shade along the trails, playground, and wherever benches and picnic tables are added.



This iconic row of stately palms clearly signals you are at Talbott Park

VERONA BASIN PARK. 2200 Palermo Drive. Located on the north side of Palermo Drive, between Sorento and Castellana Streets. This 6.45-acre greenspace is another basin style park but with a more significant play area on the east side containing an intricate series of ADA compliant walkways, encircling a large play structure and picnic area. Additional walkways connect a series of picnic tables, benches and trash receptacles to a full basketball court in need of re-stripping. The rest of the basin is surrounded by city sidewalks and a few, recently planted shade trees. Planting more trees along perimeter walkways and amenity spaces would increase the usable hours of these spaces. Installation of a small parking lot, lighting and restroom facility and other upgrades would also increase usage. Upgrading the irrigation system and a re-seeding program are needed to re-vitalize the turf areas for free play or practice areas. There is a circular area created by walkways southwest of the play areas that seems to be a prime location for a splash pad, a shade structures or a large picnic pavilion with tables. The slide on the play structure will be replaced in the Fall 2020; but the playground will need to be replaced in the next seven years.



'Something' seems to want to go here in this empty circle at Verona Basin Park

VINEYARD BASIN A PARK. 480 Birchwood Avenue. Another of the city's shallow basin-style greenspaces, this 6.13-acre space is located on the north side of Birchwood Avenue in the newer development area of the north-central part of the city. The extensive space is often used for athletic practice fields but is underutilized because of the poor condition of the turf areas. Institution of an aggressive maintenance program, that includes upgrades to the irrigation system, aeration, re-seeding, and fertilization programs would be necessary to restore the turf to acceptable levels for practice and play fields. The ample parking lot needs resealing and re-stripping. There are only two existing benches on the site; both are located next to the play area. The play area would be more hospitable in the hot summer months with the installation of a shade sail type



Playground, picnic area, and parking lot at Vineyard Basin A Park

structure to cover the equipment. This playground will need to be replaced in the next three years. There are four picnic table stations along the southern perimeter, but none of them are ADA compliant. At least one of the tables needs to be upgraded to an ADA compliant model and an accessible walkway connecting it to existing sidewalks and paths. There is a single drinking fountain adjacent the playground area, but other sources of potable water would be beneficial when hosting larger groups. Installation of an ADA compliant, perimeter 'loop' trail with exercise stations, benches, informal play areas and dog mitt stations would increase utilization and cleanliness of the space. The installation of a generous amount of shade tree planting, benches and naturalized landscape areas may be key to changing the character of this space to a more inviting park-like setting, and heat island buffer zone, where children can enjoy cool play areas. Replacing the shade trees and shrub plantings along the south side of the parking lot would enhance curb appeal and create a screen for cars parked in the lot. Installation of a split-rail or other type of ornamental fence along the southern perimeter, between the parking lot and picnic areas, would serve as a safety barrier to help keep small children from easily wandering into the parking areas as well as defining the transitional boundary of the space.

VINEYARD BASIN B PARK. 640 Vineyard Drive. Located at Vineyard and Stonewood Drives on the north edge of a fast-growing residential area, this 8.72-acre expanse of somewhat, patchy turf is regularly utilized for sports practice and play fields. The shallower basin depth allows for the condition of the turf to fare better than most of the basin parks in the city but could still benefit from an intensive turf renovation and maintenance program. The parking area could use re-surfacing and re-stripping. The parking lot, the playground area which won't need replacement for 12 years,



Vineyard Basin B Park. These large picnic areas are difficult to enjoy during the warmer months without any shade

picnic areas, benches, walkways, open play areas and all the edges of the park all need shade. An aggressive shade tree planting and landscape program would help to transform this space into the multi-generational and multi-use space that would become a benefit to the entire community. The perimeter could be heavily mulched and landscaped to reduce the overall quantity of turf needing maintenance while providing places for shade tree planting. The median strip on Vineyard Drive should be renovated to re-establish the green visual buffer between park and residents. It's current, poor, condition detracts from the entire area.

Upgrades should include the installation of an ADA compliant perimeter ‘loop’ walkway with exercise stations, lighted basketball courts, benches and informal play areas. Installation of a split-rail or other type of ornamental fence along the Vineyard Drive frontage would serve as a safety barrier to help keep children from walking into busy travel lanes. Eventually, the same treatment would be needed along Stonewood Drive, when it becomes a through street. In the southwest corner of the park there is a 0.5-acre area that is out of the basin and could provide opportunities for the installation of amenities like large, family-style picnic pavilion(s), barbecues with prep areas, restrooms and supervised, small child play areas that are currently missing from the space

VINEYARD BASIN C PARK. 645 Santa Ana Street. The park is an 8.5-acre storm detention basin and open space with sides so steep as to make it difficult to access even informal play. The bottom of the basin; however, is a relatively flat four-acre rectangle that seems to be constantly wet in certain locations and parched and cracked in others, making maintenance a challenge. It also renders the space difficult to use with any consistency. One idea that might be considered is the bottom of the basin could be planted with a mixture of



Vineyard Basin C Park has plenty of available land to install a variety of recreational amenities

native grasses and sedges designed to survive fluctuating moisture conditions. This could ultimately reduce operating expenses by reducing, or nearly eliminating maintenance for the largest area of the park, while converting it to a ‘naturalized’ landscape area. Attention can then be focused on developing the usable spaces along the western edge that are above ponding level. There is about a half-acre along Monterey Street just north of Marsala Street that would be significantly improved with the installation of play equipment, covered picnic areas, and a lighted basketball court. An ornamental split-rail fence, along both street-exposed perimeters, would help prevent younger users from running into the streets and keeping ATV’s and other vehicles out of the basin. Installation of an ADA accessible walking path along the upper reaches of the basin’s perimeter may prove technically challenging to install. A completed perimeter trail would interconnect with existing city sidewalks offering healthy exercise options for neighborhood residents. Installing a significant number of shade tree plantings, benches and naturalized landscape areas would reduce the amount of turf needing weekly maintenance. Upgrades of this type may be key to changing the character of

this space to a more inviting park-like setting that gets used and supported by the surrounding users. The space offers picnicking, barbecue, and trash container.

Specialty Park or Facility

AIRPORT PARK. 1000 Airport Road. Airport Park is a small triangular park in the middle of the airport parking lot that offers a shaded refuge for the public and airport users. The park could also be used when the canal trail is constructed.

HENRY MILLER PLAZA. 600 H Street. This 2.25-acre semi-circular plaza opens onto H street at 6th street in the heart of the historic downtown business district. A large, formal, space, used for festivals, performances and other community events, with some surrounding turf areas, walkways, flagpoles, benches, ornamental lighting, decorative paving and a large memorial fountain dedicated to city founder Henry Miller all add vibrancy and character to a grand space. Located at the center of the city within part of the vacated rail corridor this unique plaza has direct links to the adjacent Rail Trail, the Community Center and the nearby historic Miller & Lux building. Future development along the rest of the corridor and adjoining downtown parcels will put this plaza at the heart of a revitalized and dynamic downtown district. Until the areas to the east and west of the plaza are built-out, it seems like a premium location for a weekend farmer’s market venue; centrally located, highly visible, easy access, available parking, available public transit routes and proximity to the disadvantaged sections of the city.

LOS BANOS COMMUNITY CENTER. 645 7th Street. Centrally located in the city at 7th and H Streets. Immediately adjacent to the Henry Miller Plaza and the Rail Trail running through the heart of the downtown district. This 5.7-acre site houses the administrative offices and several of the major activity venues for the City’s Park System. It is truly the heart of the Park System and a major hub for many of the educational and low-impact fitness programs the division has to offer. Its distinctive ‘barn’ style architecture evokes



The Los Banos Community Center

the agricultural heritage of the region yet is a completely modern recreational facility. The facility is not only the administrative center for the Parks and Recreation Division, but a hub for indoor and outdoor community events as well as lower impact types of recreation. A large central courtyard and other gathering spaces are surrounded by lush turf and planting areas, buffering them from noise and traffic. The Community Center, Rail Trail and Henry Miller

Plaza are so closely placed and interconnected that they essentially create one park area but with completely different functions. Revitalization and infill in this district will increase casual use of these facilities and create demand for more. The major capital remaining should be to complete and landscape the adjacent overflow parking lot, which will support the plaza, trail and center. Solar panels installed on the building's rooftops and solar panels mounted on shade structures in the parking lot would lower energy costs. The leaking courtyard fountain will need repair or consider repurposing to a planter. Other improvements that should also be considered include:



The gazebo at Veterans Memorial Park is a quiet retreat for local residents and visitors

- Perimeter fencing;
- Secured entries to the lobby and to the courtyard; and
- Mural wall along the northside of the parking lot

MILLER AND LUX BUILDING. 830 6th Street. This is a classic turn of the century office building facing 6th Street in the heart of the historic downtown district. Originally built by city founder Henry Miller as corporate offices for the Miller and Lux Cattle Company, the Parks Division now operates this two-story, .086-acre public use facility. The building enjoys proximity to two elementary schools, City Hall, the Community Center, a bus stop, and a number of businesses. A meeting and banquet hall with a kitchen and food prep area occupies most of the first floor, with some under-used administrative offices on the upper floor. An aging elevator provides the only ADA access to the upper floor. Narrow corridors, walls and structural columns on both floors create impediments to ADA travel throughout certain areas of the building. The structure seems reasonably sound but there is a tremendous amount of deferred maintenance that needs to be rectified to keep this property in safe, working order. A deliberate program of cleaning, painting, general maintenance and repairs would certainly create more hours of use and interest in updating the facility. In addition to preserving its historic architectural character, the City should consider dedication of the building to specific uses such as: a museum; coffee shop; teen club; and, government office space.

VETERANS MEMORIAL PARK. 2300 N. Creekside Drive. This well-tended 2.7-acre park is located in a quiet residential setting where it, unfortunately, gets little use as a park and little

recognition as a memorial from the general public. It is well-appointed with wide walkways, a large gazebo, flagpoles, memorial signage, decorative paving, lighting and a generous amount of landscaping. All of the bollard lights will need replacing. Several dead or missing plants should be replaced. Turf continues to be well irrigated and maintained. Structures and amenities continue to be kept in good condition.

FLAGPOLE PARK AND WOLFSEN’S PARK.

1301 W. I Street & 1275 I Street. Flagpole Park is .63-acre small but important triangular-shaped green space squeezed between busy Pacheco Blvd. (SR 152), the Main Irrigation Canal, and I Street, a wide four-lane collector roadway. Serving as a gateway to the City, this park welcomes eastbound Pacheco Blvd (SR 152) commuters and visitors to the western entrance of the City. Wolfsen Park is an approximately 2.3-acre park located north and adjacent to Pacheco Boulevard, south of Airport Road, and east of the Main Canal. The park serves primarily as the location for an identification sign for Los Banos Municipal Airport. Most of the area is lawn-covered. The vegetation there has aged and could possibly benefit from additional and updated landscaping. There is an opportunity north of the signage and landscaping for parking. If a future trail along the canal is ever considered here, the site could serve as an opportunity for a future canal trailhead. To save on irrigation costs and improve on water conservation, some of the turf might be replaced with decomposed granite and large stones and boulders, perhaps spelling out Welcome to Los Banos for people arriving by air travel.

A well-tended turf area and a raised landscape border ring the park area and frame the namesake flagpole. Civic organization placards and sponsor logos are located on a large display board near the middle of the park. Closer to the I Street intersection, on the northeast



Flagpole Park is a site for a large digital sign and listing of local organizations



Wolfsen Park is a large expanse of lawn area that could potentially serve other purposes such as a parking lot and an extension of Fawcett Canal Trail south of the airport with trail head and staging

corner of the park is a large, electronic monument sign flashing its welcome to travelers entering the City that likely may need future upgrades. This little park is more of a companion space to the larger Wolfsen Park, located directly across Pacheco Blvd to the north. Together they form a welcoming green gateway along the busy highway corridor. These two parks are prime locations for ‘Welcome to Los Banos’ entry signs. Signage indicating the two park names would also be beneficial. There should be park rules signage posted at all city park locations for liability and enforcement purposes. The flagpole and display board could both use upgrades to their lighting systems and some overall maintenance and repairs.

Currently, there is only a compacted decomposed granite pathway along the entire north side of the park. For pedestrian safety and ADA access, the City should consider completing the missing 615-foot section of concrete sidewalk connecting the existing walks at I Street to the existing sidewalk to the west.

Community Parks

7TH STREET BALLPARK. 401 7th Street. At approximately 9.52 acres the 7th Street Ballpark, between E and C Streets, is multi-use four ballfield facility in the north central part of the city. The fenced and gated park is used for organized activities such as Parks and Recreation Tee-Ball, PAL Softball, Flag Football and Junior Giants. As a County-owned park, the field is also utilized as a parking lot for the May Day Fair at the Fairgrounds activities. Gates can be



7th Street Ballpark – a popular spot for baseball

opened to the Fairgrounds to expand for large events that may be held there. The park has four ballfields, three softball and one baseball, and are heavily used and nearly always in service. Posey Field, a grant funded ballfield, is the only ballfield with a grass surface, the remaining three are dirt. Any striping on the fields would be for flag football. An existing building functions as the restroom, concession stand and storage area. A new restroom is planned for the south side of the park near the E Street parking lot. All the baseball fields have

regulation backstop fencing. The parking lots need resurfacing and restriping. There are two ADA ramps from the parking areas onto the compacted gravel surfaces that surround the perimeter of the complex. Any landscape improvements to this area should consider the high volume of foot traffic and transition from gravel surfacing to decomposed granite. The spaces immediately around the bleachers, backstops and dugouts are all concrete and compliant. This complex is leased from Merced County but is operated as part of the City recreation facilities, often making improvement decisions complicated. The primary needs for 7th

Street Ballpark are parking lot and field regrading and ADA sidewalks, concrete preferred, to access from the parking lot to the two north ballfields.

AG SPORTS COMPLEX. 700 N. Mercey Springs Road. Located on Mercey Springs Avenue at Del Rio Drive, this park is readily accessible from most parts of the city. At 49.87 total acres, this site has many opportunities for new and expanded facilities. Currently, the westernmost 8.25 acres is utilized as the AG Sports Complex. The existing park contains two improved baseball fields with compacted decomposed granite infields, lighting, regulation backstops, dugouts, field fencing, surrounding walkways and picnic areas. The deteriorating structure in the center of the plaza space is the former concession stand, storage areas and upstairs game room. The upstairs is closed due to deterioration and inaccessibility to the public. The structure and adjacent ramp support pillars should be removed or painted. Construction of a new restroom, concession and storage facility would be a high priority.



The entry plaza and concession stand at Ag Sports Complex



Many of the picnic tables at Ag Sports Complex are elevated on earthen mounds allowing for better viewing of baseball games

The batting cages at the western edge of the park, between the two outfields, are not used and could pose a safety hazard. The area should be repurposed such as a bullpen area or other similar use or it should be removed. Updates to outfield fences and foul-ball netting should be considered as necessary pedestrian and traffic safety measures. The transition areas between the infield and the outfield need immediate attention as the elevation differences between them can create a tripping or fielding hazard for players. Outfield turf areas should be re-graded and reconditioned to reduce any uneven surfaces that can interfere with play. The softball fields are in poor condition and

require regrading. The entire irrigation system should be examined and upgraded, as needed, to provide for the best and safest play surfaces. The irrigation system will need to be designed to service the proposed dog park and the existing field area just to its west. An

approximately one-acre parcel, just north of the parking lot, is planned for a fenced dog park area.

To allow safer movement of adults and children to and from the playground area, it would be advisable to enclose the remaining two sides with ornamental fencing that matches the existing fencing. Install a self-closing and latching gate with a safety push-bar facing the existing west side walkway. Additional lighting should be installed to improve security in the play areas, main plaza space, parking lot to extend hours of service into the evenings. Benches, tables and trash receptacles in the play areas appear to be adequate. All areas that besides the playing fields could benefit from more shade tree plantings and canopies for shade.

The existing storage building seems to be adequate for maintenance division needs. Staff has engineered the vandal resistant security upgrades they had been seeking.

The park should be considered as a site for green Infrastructure improvement projects as well as for the funding that might be pursued for them. Ideas include shade tree planting in the parking lot interior and around the perimeter that would help offset the heat island effect of such a large area of uncovered paving. The installation of overhead shade structures with solar panel installations could also provide respite to parking lot users in the heat of the summer. These units could also provide energy credits to the City, helping to offset a portion of the park's utility costs. The installation of permeable paving in the parking areas would help decrease load on local storm drain systems and increase water percolation back into the surrounding soil. Proposed development of additional recreational areas to the north and the east could change the dynamic of the parking lot and should be considered. The installation of solar powered lighting units in the play, plaza and parking areas would also be a green solution reducing overall energy usage for the site. Any or all proposed improvements associated with parking lot resurfacing, re-stripping new walks, lighting, utilities and drainage should be coordinated with an overall development plan for the park.

The open field area, east of the northern ballfield, could be developed to allow for larger, more informal gatherings, picnic facilities and a turf area accommodating pop-up tent structures and lawn blankets. The entire site should be reviewed for ADA compliance issues and a specific plan developed to address those concerns.

The remaining 41.62 acres comprises the eastern part of the site. Despite many parts of the space being located on a former City landfill site, the City is interested in converting the readily available space into a first-class recreational facility. Grading, excavation or land uses that could disturb underground debris are restricted in designated portions of the site, but perhaps with mitigation and cost and clever design a tremendous portion of the site can be made available for more passive features like large park-like green spaces, water features, turf play and picnic areas as well as the more active ballfields, courts and other intensive uses. Suggestions for park development features include an animal shelter, a new skate park, aquatics center, water play area, more sports fields, tennis courts, basketball, walking, riding, exercise circuit trails, a BMX track, disc golf, etc. New structures, facilities and uses should be

designed to interconnect with a series of internal walkways, ponding basins, shaded greenspaces, playgrounds, performance venues, gazebos, shelters and other amenities.

Implementation of a city-wide wayfinding signage program for City parks would be particularly beneficial to residents and teams visiting the area for games and tournaments. Improve monument signage along Mercey Springs Avenue that better identifies the park location and entrance. Install signage indicating park rules, identification of structures and directions.

A lighted promenade walkway along the southern edge of the park would create a distinctive destination for walking, riding, and other community interaction opportunities on summer evenings when it is cooler and more conducive to being outdoors. Improved sidewalks, lighting and access from the neighboring streets is highly encouraged as part of the enticement to draw residents out to the park in the 'after hours'.

Following is a summary of the needs and renovations for the developed acreage that should be included with an Ag Sports Complex improvement plan:

- Replace restroom/concession stand which will serve the dog park, softball fields, and other facility additions and renovations;
- The empty field between the softball fields and the dog park could be a valuable location for a splash pad, picnic pavilion or other community-identified need;
- Improve irrigation and grading on the softball fields;
- Remove batting cages and upgrade the outfield. Add large marquee sign on the north end of park, visible from Highway 165. Install outfield netting and extend it along foul lines;
- Renovate the parking lot, slurry seal, restripe and widen the entrance drive. Consider shade structures with solar panels, shade trees, and permeable surfaces.;
- Replace playground in the next three to seven years; and
- Consider artificial turf for one or both softball fields.

Following is a summary for the undeveloped acreage that should be considered for future improvements:

- Add more sports fields;
- Consider a space for an animal shelter;
- Consider an aquatic center option;
- Consider a BMX course and/or looping DG trail, parking on the north side of the site, and low maintenance natural areas.;
- Tree grants could be pursued for large scale plantings. As the trees mature, a disc course could be a potentially popular addition to the Ag Sports Complex. A disc course has minimal construction and maintenance costs.

COLORADO BALLPARK. 815 Colorado Avenue. As one of the oldest parks in the system this 9.6-acre veteran continues to provide for the community. This baseball-oriented complex is located along the west side of Colorado Avenue in the northwest part of town. The entire site

is located on property owned by the City but the airport operates on a portion of the property. The City might consider a parcel split and, at some point in the future, sell off the portion that the airport is on. Sometime prior to 1950 this unit of land was unofficially ‘carved out’ of the larger airport parcel for use as a neighborhood ballpark. It has been enjoyed by several generations of Los Banos residents. If the airport is relocated, it may be in the best interest of the city to attempt to officially acquire the parcel. The park consists of three improved baseball fields and related facilities. The larger field to the south maintains a packed dirt infield while the two smaller fields to the north have compacted decomposed granite (DG) infields. All maintain reasonable turf outfield, lighting, backstops, dugouts, field fencing, bleachers and walkways. Generous, on-street, parking is bolstered by a large asphalt parking lot on the north end of the complex. Restrooms, picnic areas, a skate park, tennis courts, and a two separate concession stand facilities, are all components that make this the de facto ‘sports park’ for the city. Heavy use and time have rendered many of the aging facilities in need of upgrades and repair.

Regrading of the infield / outfield transition area should receive immediate attention as it can create a tripping or fielding hazards for players unfamiliar with the field. The outfields should be graded to reduce uneven surfaces that can interfere with play. Irrigation systems should be examined and upgraded as needed to provide the best play surfaces.

Green Infrastructure improvement projects could include converting the existing drainage ditch along the north property fence line into an active bioswale and filtration area for treating parking lot runoff; at least 550 linear feet can be converted to an attractive well-landscaped bioswale. Excavated and engineered shade tree planting in the parking lot interior and around the perimeter would help offset the heat island effect of such a large area of uncovered paving. The installation of overhead shade structures with solar panel installations could also provide respite to parking lot users in the heat of the summer. These units could provide energy credits to the City, helping to offset a portion of the park’s utility costs. The installation of permeable paving in the parking areas would help decrease load on local storm drain systems and increase water percolation back into the surrounding soil. Any or all proposed improvements associated with parking lot resurfacing, re-stripping new walks, utilities and drainage should be coordinated with the overall development plan. The vehicular entry into the parking lots should be widened.



There is an interest in making the connection between ballfields more pedestrian friendly with better surfacing and shade trees at Colorado Ballpark.

Adding tables, shade structures and play areas in existing and new picnic areas would provide more family spaces outside bleacher areas. Adding diversity of uses outside the traditional ballfields should increase use of the park as well as increasing activity levels in the peripheral neighborhoods.

The existing tennis courts need resurfacing, new nets, repairs to the fencing, lighting upgrades and repairs, and operational gates just to bring them up to useable condition. Restriping should also include striping for pickleball.



The local skateboarders wanted to see an improved skatepark either here at Colorado Ballpark or elsewhere in Los Banos.

The existing skate park is highly underutilized because it's size and design no longer offers the kind of challenging obstacles that hold the interest of users. Flooding has been identified by park staff and the skate park users. It could be demolished, and the space used for other facilities or it could continue as a practice venue for younger users. Skate park typically require higher visibility from adjacent streets or parking lot. The current skate park is virtually hidden behind baseball fields. Other replacement sites for a skate park are available at Colorado Ballpark.

The fenced area to the west, between the two main ball fields could continue to be utilized as a bullpen area but would need some improvements to make it a usable amenity. Outfield scoreboard units and sponsor identification display areas around the field fences need to be improved or replaced. The addition of some very secure, on-site storage units or buildings, located in high visibility areas, would be beneficial for storing site equipment and supplies.

North of the main parking lot, and east of the existing concession stand is an approximately quarter-acre open area that could be better utilized as a larger family picnic and playground area with pavilions, tables, barbecues, prep facilities, and play structures for larger 'tailgating' and visiting groups. The two existing concession buildings are well-used and in need of structural and safety upgrades. Any remodel or removal of the existing concession buildings may require investigation into asbestos contamination, abatement, and removal. The restroom facilities are also in need of some maintenance and renovation.

The entire site should be reviewed for ADA compliance issues and an ADA access plan developed to address those concerns.

Implementation of a city-wide wayfinding signage program for City parks would be particularly beneficial to residents and teams visiting the area for games and tournaments. Monument signage along Colorado Street could be improved to better identify the park location and entryways. Install signage indicating park rules, identification of structures, and directions.

A comprehensive plan that includes shade tree and landscape installation, signage, lighting, drinking fountains, pavilions, storage, and irrigation and utility upgrades, throughout the interior of the park in conjunction with parking improvements, paving upgrades, landscape planting, connector walks, lighting and other visual improvements along Colorado Avenue, will help to physically and aesthetically unite the entire facility with the community.



Colorado Ballpark: Tennis courts need resurfacing and pickleball enthusiasts want to see striping for their favorite sport.

PACHECO PARK. 903 Pacheco Boulevard. When this this 6.8-acre park was developed prior to 1955, it had a more decidedly bucolic ambiance. Pacheco Park has always been the City's Community Park. Located near the center of the City on the south side of Pacheco Boulevard, which is now the very busy State Route 152. That same bucolic location from the 1950's, has a more decidedly urban feel to it today. Despite the changes, this park still maintains a high profile in the community and is a heavily used space despite its lack of active recreation opportunities. Adding activities such as themed playground, splash pad, and court games would greatly benefit the park's users and truly make the City's Community Park.

As a true 'City Park' for Los Banos it tries to be all things to all people. It is expected to function as a neighborhood park, a busy rest area for travelers, a performance venue, play space, celebration space, staging area, parking lot and way station for hundreds of children passing along it's edges on their way to schools immediately to the north of the busy Pacheco Boulevard. Poised to be the premier park space in the City it has unfortunately become underutilized and somewhat forsaken because of mounting security concerns and the degrading condition of its facilities.

Located adjacent to the existing Los Banos High School track and football stadium the park, parking areas, local streets and facilities are heavily burdened during game and event seasons. Street parking in the surrounding neighborhood during games can become troublesome for residents.



There are three separate parking areas associated with the park and all need re-design, resurfacing, and re-striping. Another small lot has been proposed for the space just north of the Milliken Museum and Scout House building. This area currently remains unpaved with no plans for future improvements.

Parking could be radically improved along 7th Street by removing the existing curb and installing angled parking. Protections like curbs, planters, and high visibility striping should be included for the existing utility pole locations to avoid collision potential. New shade tree plantings and widened sidewalks and security lighting should be installed to accommodate the heavy pedestrian traffic travelling to and from the schools. Tree planting and installation of permeable pavements could help qualify this area for a Green Infrastructure project grants.

Create safer access from Pacheco Blvd. into the north side parking area by installing a single direction of travel from west to east and redesign for angled parking. Aesthetic upgrades to the 'face' of the park should include new shade tree plantings, improved walkways, site furniture, ornamental lighting, and the addition of a low, wall, fence or shrub plantings to define the entries into the space and double as a sound barrier from the traffic noise. Tree planting and installation of permeable pavements could help qualify this area for a Green Infrastructure project grant.

There are only two designated ADA parking spaces in the entire park area, including the stadium. Both spaces are located near the pedestrian bridge. Revise the parking design and add spaces near the library, in the north parking area off Pacheco Blvd., in the proposed Scout House lot and at the Milliken Museum lot near the front of the stadium and existing rec center. Any new facility development on the site should incorporate more parking and create better pedestrian access routes to the stadium from the surrounding parking areas and the neighborhood.

Many walkways, transitions and paving areas along the circulation paths are not ADA compliant and should be replaced. Many of these paths of travel are Safe Routes to School for a large number of students and their repair should be made a community priority. Twice a day, scores of students travel from the neighborhoods south of Pacheco Blvd., up and over the pedestrian bridge and on to the Junior High and Elementary schools located either side of 7th Street just north of the intersection at Pacheco Blvd.

There is a public library building located on the western side of the park facing 7th Street with a small veteran’s memorial plaza, two benches, a flagpole and a little grove of shade trees in the park, just to the east of the library. A public access Recreation Center (Hall) with kitchen facilities and large banquet room is located near the center of the park space and can be rented for large gatherings or events.

Implementation of a signage program would be particularly beneficial to this park as it is utilized by so many people who are just passing through the area. Wayfinding signage in other parts of the city, and along Pacheco Blvd (SR 152), specifically directing users to the park. Develop park monument signage that identifies the park and indicates how to get there. Install signage indicating park rules, identification of structures and points of interest.



The Los Banos Library (top) and the Milliken Museum (bottom) help make Pacheco Park a true civic park.

Twenty picnic tables are provided throughout the park, although, it appears that none of them may actually be ADA compliant table units. It also appears only one or two of the tables may be accessible from existing walkways. All are located in turf areas with no connections to existing circulation paths. At least three tables in the main area of the park should be upgraded to compliant status. More covered areas with tables should be provided. Larger dining shelters with several tables, barbecue and prep areas would be recommended.

In addition to table seating there are five benches provided throughout the park. It appears that three of those are ADA accessible. More covered/shaded seating areas would be desirable. There are 12 strategically placed trash receptacles, only three appear accessible from adjacent walkways. There are several monument and memorial structures located throughout the park that need to be evaluated, renovated and/or relocated. Relocating and

reconstructing them together in a memorial ‘grove’ or bosque has been suggested as a possible solution.

Trails

For a more extensive list of trails and bikeways, refer to the City of Los Banos Bicycle-Pedestrian Plan. Trails should be developed as recurring maintenance allows and its construction can be funded by trails and greenway grants. A few key examples include: the extension of the Canal Trail at the airport; extension of the Rail Trail along H St. and the old railroad; and, the “Trail to the College”. As Merced College develops, providing recreational access and amenities adjacent to the “Trail to the College” will be important.

HG FAWCETT CANAL TRAIL. W. I Street to Pioneer Street—this 19-acre linear park corridor extends approximately 1.8 miles in length along the south side of the existing Main Irrigation Canal. Beginning at the west side of I street near Pacheco Blvd (SR 152) and proceeding

southeast to its terminus at Pioneer Avenue. Nearly the entire length of the corridor is irrigated and lined, on both sides, with mature trees providing a generous amount of shade and a respite from the summer sun. The Raywood Ash trees have a short life span and will eventually require replacement. Benches and trash cans located along the trail provide resting locations for users. The regularly spaced lighting provides a sense of security during dusk and early evening hours, making



Pedestrian bridge crossing Fawcett Canal providing access from Bluff Drive to Los Banos High School

this one of the most travelled trails in the city. The eight-foot-wide asphalt paved trail meanders within a 100-foot-wide corridor and has several walkways connecting to it from adjacent subdivisions. Several street and pedestrian bridges crossing the canal allow easy access to the trail from north side residential areas as well. There are no turf areas along the trail to be maintained. While the addition of benches and trash receptacles would be welcomed by users, current issues with homeless encampments and vandalism discourage the installation of these items at this time. The entrance at Bluff Drive needs ADA and landscape improvements. Wayfinding signage and lighting are needed and replacements for existing signs are needed.

LINDEMANN TRAIL. Place Road to Ward Road. This half-mile long, 4.5-acre linear park contains an 8-foot-wide asphalt trail that is really intended as an extension of the downtown Rail Trail corridor. This part of the trail has fences and open gates installed at its Place St. and Ward St.

entrances. Large, irrigated, shade tree plantings line both sides of the trail and provide a cool break from the intense summer heat. There are no turf areas along the trail to maintain. The addition of benches, lighting, and trash receptacles would be welcomed by users as activity in the area and trail usage increases. The trail provides recreational and transit opportunities for an adjacent multi-family housing complex and nearby neighborhoods with connections to Pacheco Boulevard’s active commercial corridor.

PAGE AVENUE EXTENSION. Corner 11th Street to Page Avenue. At a diminutive 1.4 acres, this specialty ‘park’ is really a .22-mile-long connector walk from the southeast corner of the High School on 14th Street and Page Avenue, slipping between two agricultural fields, and extending across the very busy Mercey Springs Road corridor to the residential areas on the east side. This tree-lined mini-park acts as shortcut and a shady refuge for students travelling to and from the high school from the surrounding neighborhoods. A fence and a control gate have been installed at the 14th Street entrance, across from the high school; however, there is neither a fence, control gate, crossing zone or crossing guard at the Mercey Springs Road end. The City should address the need for a safe entrance point at Highway 165 for the local students. This could possibly be funded through a Safe Routes to School (SRS) grant. The installation of benches, trash receptacles, and lighting would be a welcome addition to the trail.



Page Avenue Extension provides a shortcut for local high school students to get to and from home to school

RAIL TRAIL AND EXTENSIONS. 152nd to Place Road. The main segment of this 11.7-acre linear greenway / park extends along the abandoned Santa Fe railroad corridor. Within the improved corridor is a gently curving 10’ wide asphalt paved trail that runs approximately a mile or more in length. From its current starting point at 2nd Street between G and H Streets, the trail and corridor move southeast, on a diagonal, through the historic downtown commercial and residential districts to its terminus at the very busy intersection of Pacheco Blvd (SR 152) and Mercey Springs Drive



The Los Banos Rail Trail links the city residents with the civic center, downtown, and local businesses

(SR 165). This highly visible segment of the trail does offer benches, trash receptacles, decorative lighting, signage and extensive landscaping to maximize the experience for the users. The corridor is designed as a means to, pick-up, and conduct pedestrians from the surrounding districts toward existing and proposed amenities developing along its length. The corridor currently links diverse places like the Henry Miller Plaza, the historic downtown business district, the Community Center, nearby municipal services, retail businesses, and a potential recreational amenity such as a splash pad, skatepark, pickleball/tennis courts or another recreational amenity. While creating a safer, alternate travel corridor that connects a variety of uses and services. The trail and corridor space become the nexus in a web of recreational and social opportunities for those living and working in the more urban downtown and surrounding districts. Unpaved sections of the trail should be improved with asphalt.

The Rail Trail Corridor and surrounding parcels could become integral parts of a plan to revitalize and re-orient the downtown district by establishing a corridor or zone for the purpose of consolidating City and County and State administrative Centers, Private utility Offices or Customer service Centers and other municipal services like Police, Fire and Ambulance into one centrally located and interconnected Spine along the entire one-mile length. Consolidation of City and County administrative and municipal services along a single 'spine' of newly developed, centrally located, mixed-use, public/private and government structures all interconnected with a mix of public use spaces, green infrastructure, and a pedestrian trail and mall.

Large established trees provide shade along a majority of the route. Understory plantings have been modified where possible to increase security and visibility along the trail without degrading the overall aesthetic of the trail. The trail is ADA accessible for its entire length.

Technically, the Rail Trail continues to the southeast, across the busy intersection at Pacheco Blvd (SR 152) and Mercey Springs Road (SR 165); however, after resuming its journey at the opposite corner, both the name and the character of the corridor make a drastic change. Users wanting to continue along the trail are, at this point, required to carefully navigate two frantic crossings before regaining access and continuing southeast from Pacheco Boulevard for approximately a half-mile until the end of this section at Place Avenue. Across Place Avenue the trail resumes its alignment and for another half-mile is known as the previously referenced Lindemann Trail.

Unlike the previous section of the Rail Trail, this portion is informally 'paved' in decomposed granite. This section is; however, nicely appointed with a double row of established shade trees for a majority of its length. Benches, trash receptacles or other amenities are conspicuously absent due to maintenance concerns. No turf or other understory plantings are present. No fence or access control gates are present at the Pacheco Boulevard entrance but have been installed at the Place Road terminus. This segment is currently the most underutilized portion of the trail. A lack of lighting, incomplete paving, and safety issues, have all contributed to a less than desirable reputation.

Dedicated pedestrian crosswalks for trail users and conspicuous trail terminus plazas on either side of Pacheco Boulevard would greatly enhance the connectivity and thus, the usability of the corridor. Improvements would bring more users, boost activity levels along this more isolated segment of the trail. Increased usage, law enforcement and lighting would help to reduce and possibly eliminate vandalism and litter issues. Perceptions regarding this part of the trail should then improve, increasing use accordingly.

The Rail Trail currently ends on the northwest side of town at 2nd street but in the event that the existing rail spur should become abandoned, the trail and corridor could potentially extend another 1.5 miles farther to the northwest where it would intersect with Los Banos Creek. Any proposed trail along the creek would, ideally, link up with the Rail Trail extension. The extension area should include asphalt and improved entryway.

Signage upgrades and a marquee sign at the crossroads of Highway 152-165 is needed. The exercise equipment stations have not proven to be very popular along the trail; thus, these areas should be discontinued and replaced with bench and picnic spaces. At trail locations near the Community Center, small train-themed playgrounds could offer activities for younger ages. The Community Center and Henry Miller Plaza do not currently have recreational amenities for children.

5.3 - Access to Parks and Facilities

Access to recreation facilities, including parks and playgrounds, swimming pools, trails, picnic areas, recreation and community centers, and sports facilities, is addressed in the ADA standards. This section also addresses the desired proximity and access to parks and recreation facilities for each park classification.

5.3.1 - PROXIMITY/STREET ACCESS

Community parks should have access from major or secondary arterial roadways. Neighborhood parks should have access from local streets or collector roadways. Pocket parks may be accessed from local streets or cul-de-sacs. Park sites shall also be located to provide maximum accessibility from the areas to be served, meaning that they shall not be inaccessible to adjacent neighborhoods by virtue of development patterns, street layouts, block walls or other obstructions to accessibility.

For the most part, trails (or Class I bikeways) in Los Banos are either rail trails or located adjacent to irrigation canals. The 2018 City Los Banos Bicycle-Pedestrian Plan proposes a Class I bikeway adjacent to Los Banos Creek west of the City. Trails typically provide access to regional and community parks. Access to neighborhood parks from the City's trail system is acceptable. A few exceptions may currently exist, but it is preferred that pocket parks should not be accessed from trails.

It is generally considered important for a community member to be able to walk to a park within one-quarter mile of his or her residence. The Exhibit (Figure 5-2) is a map of the City of Los Banos with all of the park facilities including the Los Banos Community Center with a

quarter to half mile walking radius identified around the center of each pocket or neighborhood park. Other parks on the map include community parks. The map clearly illustrates that for the broad majority of residents in the City there is access to some kind of park. SR 152 may be considered a barrier to walking, but the City still has sufficient access to parks on either side of the major thoroughfare. The City has provided the residents of Los Banos with a series of trails along irrigation canals and the abandoned rail line as well as the bikeways identified in the Los Banos Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. In certain neighborhoods in the City, greenways provide access to parks (i.e., Meadowlands Greenway and Rancho dos Amigos Greenway). Not all greenways have sidewalks but installing them to provide better connectivity to parks should be a priority. In areas where canal trails and the rail trail do not exist, the City should consider that any greenway that may be included should include sidewalks.

The Los Banos Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan identifies a much more extensive list of bikeways and trails. The extension of the Canal trail at the airport, the extension of the Rail Trail along H Street, and the “Trail to the College” will also provide important bicycle and pedestrian access and amenities for the residents of Los Banos. Trails should be developed as recurring maintenance allows and when construction can be funded by available grants.

5.3.2 - AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA)

Mandates

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a civil rights law that mandates equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities. The ADA prohibits discrimination in access to jobs, public accommodations, government services, public transportation, and telecommunications. The City of Los Banos Parks and Recreation Division has undertaken an evaluation of its facilities to determine the extent to which individuals with disabilities may be restricted in their access to City recreation and activities.

This section will guide the planning and implementation of necessary park facility modifications over the next fifteen or more years. The ADA Evaluation is significant in that it establishes the City’s ongoing commitment to the development and maintenance of policies, programs, and facilities that include all its citizenry.

The California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Part 2 mandates that all publicly funded buildings, structures, and related facilities shall be accessible to and usable by persons with disabilities. These regulations pertain to Los Banos’ public buildings, parks, and facilities that were constructed using state, City, or municipal funds or that are owned, leased, rented, contracted, or sublet by the City.

ADA Policies

Ensure that parks and recreation facilities are accessible to all citizens. Incorporate all design features, required by the Americans With Disabilities Act, which improve access to parks and park facilities for disabled citizens. Where necessary, retrofit existing park

facilities in order that they comply with the provisions of the Americans With Disabilities Act, affecting parking and access. To the extent practical, provide playground equipment which provides recreational opportunities to disabled children within Los Banos parks and provide features such as trails and signs for persons who are visually impaired and park structures which accommodate persons confined to wheelchairs. Where appropriate, provide park facilities which meet the recreational needs of senior residents.

To the extent feasible, ensure that trails are accessible to all residents. Incorporate design features, including suitable trail surface materials, which provide access to trails by disabled citizens.

Facility Evaluation

This master plan describes the process to complete the evaluation of Los Banos’ facilities and identifies the necessary modification of playgrounds and adjacent streets to ensure accessibility. Evaluations were conducted with QK staff and the Parks and Recreation Operations Manager at each park site with the use of digital photography to record both the availability of ADA access or lack of ADA access and field notes. Table 5-1, ADA Access Evaluation for Existing Facilities, is a summary of the evaluation.

**Table 5-1
ADA Access Evaluation for Existing Facilities**

Park or Facility Name	Needs Access from Nearby Street(s)	Needs Access onto Playground	Notes
7th Street Ballpark	X	OK	No playgrounds.
Ag Sports Complex	X	--	No playgrounds
Airport Park	OK	OK	No playgrounds
Big Page Park	X	X	
Catholic Park	X	X	
Citrus Terrace I Park	X	X	
Citrus Terrace II Park	X	X	
City Park (on Ninth Street)	X	X	
College Greens Park	X	X	
Colorado Ballpark	OK	--	No playgrounds
Cresthills Park	OK	X	
Davis Park	X	X	
Dos Amigos Park	X	X	Sidewalks from street to play area may be too steep
Flagpole Park	OK	--	No playgrounds. No access needed from nearby streets
Gardens I Park	X	X	
Gardens III Park (Daffodil Park)	X	X	
Gardens V Basin Park	OK	OK	

Park or Facility Name	Needs Access from Nearby Street(s)	Needs Access onto Playground	Notes
Henry Miller Plaza	OK	OK	No playgrounds
HG Fawcett Canal Trail	OK	--	No playgrounds
Jo-Lin Park	OK	--	No playgrounds
Lindemann Trail	OK	--	No playgrounds
Little Page Park	X	OK	
Los Banos Community Center	X	--	No playgrounds
Meadowlands Greenway Park	X	--	No playgrounds. All four streets need ADA
Meadowlands I Park	OK	X	
Meadowlands II Park	X	X	
Meadowlands III Basin Park	OK	X	
Meadowlands III Park	OK	X	
Miller & Lux Building			Restrooms need ADA
Neighborhood Park (Sandstone Park)	OK	X	Two playgrounds; one needs ADA access
Oliveira Courtyard Park (Southbrook Park)	OK	--	No playgrounds
Oliveira Soccer Park	OK	X	
Orchard Terrace Park	OK	X	
Pachecho Park	OK	--	No playgrounds
Page Avenue Extension Trail	--	--	
Presidential Park	X	X	
Rail Trail and Extensions	OK	--	No playgrounds
Rancho dos Amigos Greenway Park	X	OK	No playgrounds. Ten ADA ramps needed at streets
Ranchwood Park	OK	X	
Regency Lot D Park	X	X	
Regency Tot Lot	--	X	
Skylark Park & Expansion	X	X	Needs ADA ramp at Meadowlark
Talbott Basin Park	OK	OK	
Verona Basin Park	OK	X	
Veterans Memorial Park	X		Suggest 2 ADA ramps from Creekside. No playgrounds
Village Park (on Bellflower)	X	X	
Vineyard Basin A Park	OK	X	
Vineyard Basin B Park	OK	X	
Vineyard Basin C Park	X		No Playgrounds
Wolfsen Park	--	--	No playgrounds. No street access needed at this time
KEY: X Requires ADA ramp(s); OK No ramps needed; --Not applicable			

5.3.3 - SERVICE AREA ANALYSIS

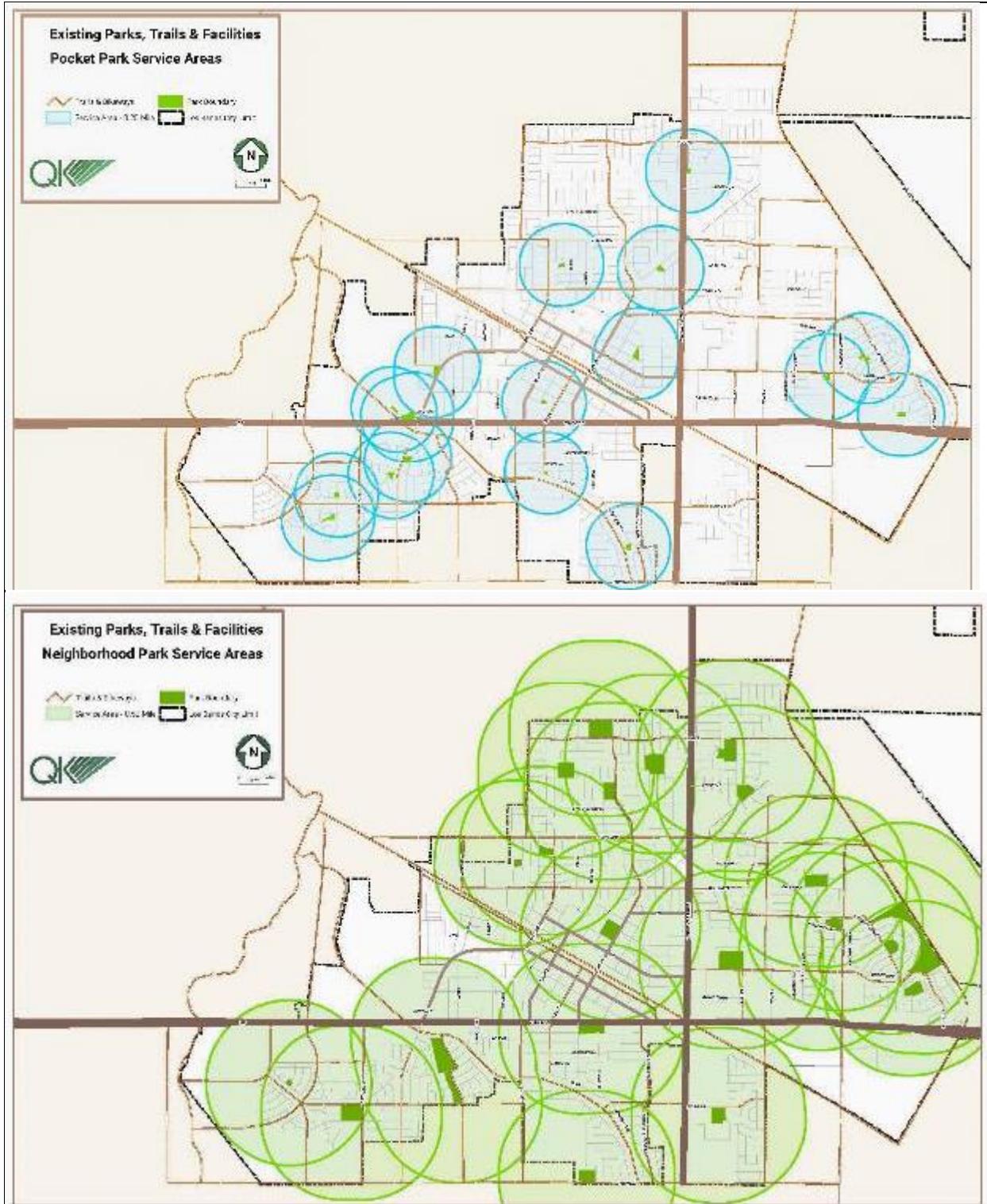
What is a Service Area? Service area distance radii are generated with the park location as the central radius point. When areas zoned for residential use fall outside graphic service area designations, that area may be underserved by existing parks. The service area analysis demonstrates that there appears to be adequate coverage across the City's residential areas with the current parks provided in the Neighborhood and Pocket Parks classification. Community Park service radius coverage indicates that in the future, the southeast portion of the City should be considered for an additional community park site if the City continues to grow in that direction. Currently, expansion to the southeast is hindered by the 7,400-acre North Grasslands Wildlife Area to the east. Gaps in service can be addressed by adding a new facility or expanding existing facilities. There does not appear to be an opportunity to expand an existing park facility in the southeast area of the City.

In addition to providing appropriate quantities and types of recreation facilities, the City strives to provide them in useful and appropriate locations. A Level of Service Area Analysis was conducted with respect to all parks in the City. Proximity to parks is more than a convenience issue. It helps to establish an excellent City-wide park system by providing improved air quality, circulation, opportunities for social engagement, community identify, and health benefits. Proximity to park land is one of the elements identified as predicting healthy levels of physical activity in the community, and a survey of U.S. adults finds that people with access to neighborhood parks were nearly twice as likely to be physically active as those without access to parks.

The service area analysis demonstrates that there appears to be adequate coverage across the City's residential areas with the current parks provided in the Neighborhood and Pocket Parks classification. Community Park service radius coverage indicates that in the future, the southeast portion of the City should be considered for an additional community park site if expansive growth occurs in this area. Gaps in service can be addressed by adding a new facility or expanding existing facilities. There does not appear to be an opportunity to expand an existing park facility in the southeast area of the City.

Neighborhood and Pocket Parks Service Area Analysis

When we view the service areas of neighborhood and pocket parks, Los Banos parks are clearly accessible to all areas and neighborhoods in the community (Figure 5-1). New residential development shall install new pocket parks and neighborhood parks based on a walkable service radius of a quarter mile for pocket parks and a half mile for neighborhood parks. A quarter-mile radius typically represents a five-minute walk whereas a half-mile radius is typically a 10-minute walk. Future neighborhood parks will be developed as new subdivisions are approved and constructed. For example, the new communities of Shaunessy Village near College Greens and Sunrise Ranch near Talbott Park/Los Banos Junior Middle School will include new parks to accommodate the residents there.



 **Figure 5-1**
Pocket Parks and Neighborhood Parks Service Area

Community Parks Service Area Analysis

When we view the service area of community parks, Los Banos parks are clearly accessible to all areas and neighborhoods in the community within a two-mile radius (Figure 5-2). When we take a closer look at a one-mile service area, the southeast section of the City appears to lack a community park to meet the recreational needs of the city. A community park may be a future need if the population of the City expands primarily to the south and southeast.

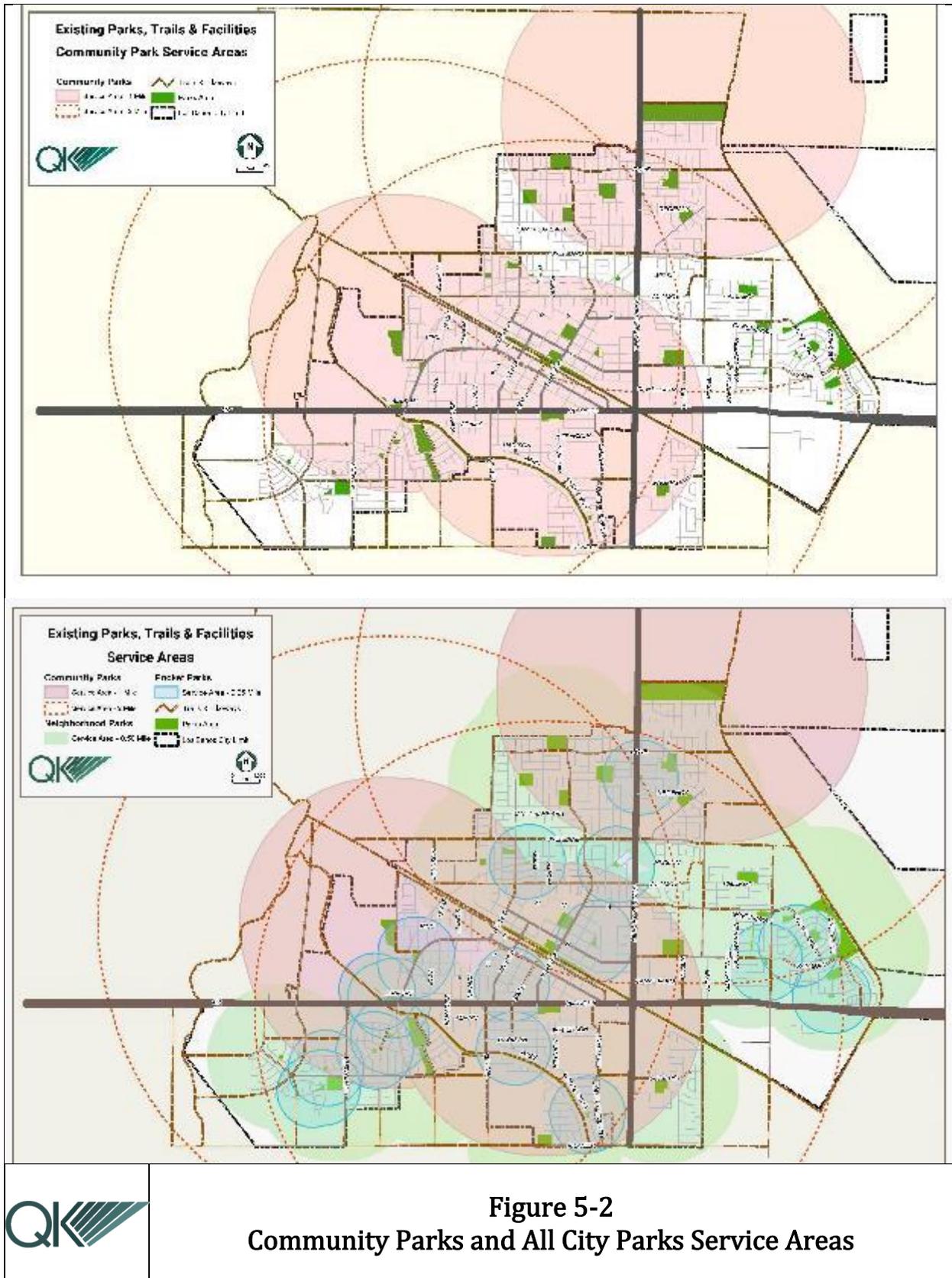
All City Parks Service Area Analysis

When we view the service areas of all city parks, Los Banos parks are clearly accessible to all areas and neighborhoods in the community (Figure 5-2). New parks should be based on the criteria identified in this Master Plan.

5.4 - Parks Maintenance and Operations

Parks Maintenance and Operations. Continuing to maintain and improve the parks and facilities at the expected high level for residents is costly. Currently there is no reliable source of funding to pay for all of it. The Landscape and Lighting Districts (LLD's) provide funding for some parks and recreation facilities. The Ballot Measure H is a half-cent sales tax that provides for some additional funding. The Parks and Recreation Commission makes recommendations to the City Council for some upkeep and capital repairs every year, but the need for greater funding still exists.

One of the needs identified by the community was the need for clean and well-maintained parks and facilities. Safety and vandalism issues are connected to this maintenance issue as the better maintained and well-used parks and facilities are typically less likely to experience vandalism and crime. Without adequate staffing and funding these needs could not be met. The City has many parks that are aging (or have aged) and need regular maintenance as well as replacement and improvements to overall amenities and park elements. Some of the work may be able to be funded through general funding, but many of the smaller items like replacement of water fountains, new trash receptacles, and bench or picnic table replacement, are not.



The Parks and Recreation Division will need to closely monitor resources to ensure that the assets of the park system reach the anticipated lifecycles. It is recommended that the Parks Division maintenance funding grow to accommodate new park development in the future. As the system grows, the following guidelines should be utilized to identify annual operational funding required to maintain additional park acreage:

- Athletic Field Parks:
 - \$12,000 - \$15,000 per rectangular field;
 - \$18,000 - \$20,000 per diamond field;
 - \$5,000 per acre
- Community Parks: \$7,500 - \$9,000 per acre
- Neighborhood Parks: \$8,500 - \$10,000 per acre
- Pocket Parks: \$10,000 - \$12,000 per acre
- Special Use Parks: Costs varies dependent upon amenities
- Trails: \$5,000-\$5,500 per acre

Note: Maintenance costs typically increase 2-3% annually to as much as 6% during a highly robust economy.

SECTION 6 - LEVEL OF SERVICE (LOS) ANALYSIS

Overall, the level of service (LOS), accessibility to parks, quality of facilities, and type of facilities available are excellent. While it is unlikely that the City will need substantial new parkland except as the City grows and to meet the residents desire for a regional sports complex, there are areas for improvements and the need to revisit the existing park facilities and amenities to better serve the community, meet new trends, and provide the types of facilities that residents want. Section 5 goes into depth about the needs and opportunities for the City.

Level of Service (LOS) standards are guidelines that define service areas based on population that support a city's investment decisions related to parks, facilities, and amenities. LOS standards can and will change over time; as the population increases, the need to acquire additional land and develop parks also increases as will the costs to do so.

LOS standards for the City of Los Banos were evaluated using a combination of local, regional and national resources, including:

- General Plan Policy Document; Parks, Open Space, and Resources Element;
- National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) Guidelines;
- Other standards from Parks Master Plan from communities in the region; and
- Community stakeholder and city staff input and general observations. This allows standards to be customized specifically for the City of Los Banos park system.

In order to effectively determine the City of Los Banos' needs for park acreages and facilities, a number of inputs are required to have a complete understanding of what the community needs. The following are the areas evaluated in this section.

- The collection of available information provided by City Parks and Recreation and additional research such as community profile and demographics.
- Site visits and recordation of each visit using digital photography and field notes of all city parks and facilities with Park and Recreation staff.
- Data analysis to determine inventory and condition of current facilities.
- Evaluating local interests, regional and national trends, and determining what Los Banos can extract from nearby communities.
- Determination of supply and demand within the community including acres of parks per resident.
- Community input using stakeholder and community participation and community surveys.
- Developing recommendations for meeting the needs of the community through an analysis of programs and facilities.
- A review of national and regional guidelines and standards as a tool to help determine a suitable and comparable approach to meet the needs of Los Banos residents.

6.1 - Guidelines Comparisons

6.1.1 - NRPA GUIDELINES

According to the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), the typical park and recreation agency offers one park for every 2,181 residents served, with 9.9 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents. But park and recreation agencies are as diverse as the communities that they serve, and what works well for one agency may not be best for every agency. Historically, NRPA has created a hierarchy of park types, as well as a set of acreage standards for different park types. For years, nationally accepted standards called for 9.9 acres of parkland for every 1,000 residents. But by the 1990s, the National Recreation and Park Association relaxed that, suggesting instead that each city establish its own standard based on its growth patterns. This information for cities within California are shown in Subsection 6.1.2 – Regional Guidelines below.

6.1.2 - CURRENT CITY OF LOS BANOS

Current Los Banos Standards

The Los Banos General Plan had established a goal of providing seven acres of developed park land per 1,000 residents within the city limits (five acres provided by the development community and two acres provided by the City). The City currently has a population of 41,898 and 264.35 acres of park land. This translates into a ratio of 6.3 acres of parks per 1,000 population. With this current ratio of 6.3 per 1,000 residents, the City has been able to maintain a favorable proportion of parks within a walking or biking distance to a vast majority of residents in the City. In order to meet the growing population of the City for the target date of 2035, a projected population of 57,517, and a ratio of seven acres per 1,000 residents, the park acreage needs to increase to 402.6 acres, an increase of 138.3 acres or an average of 9.2 acres per year. If the city wishes to maintain its current ratio of 6.3, then the park acreage needs to increase to 98 acres, an increase of 6.5 acres per year. **This Master Plan recommends that the City maintain its current ratio of 6.3-acres per 1,000 residents since it is currently working for the community, is equal to or better than other California cities of comparable population and land area, and parks are in a comfortable walking or biking distance from a majority of the people who live there.** A new regional park facility, addition of more trails, development of the additional area of Ag Sports Complex, and the city's requirement for private development to build parks in the communities they develop would likely help the City of Los Banos achieve its preferred park acreage goals. Following is the recommended target ratios of new park land for the 2035 Los Banos Parks Master Plan:

Current Acreage per 1,000 Population by Classification.

- *Neighborhood and Pocket Parks:* 3.35 acres per 1,000 residents
- *Community Parks:* 1.8 acres per 1,000 residents
- *Specialty Parks and Trails:* 1.15 acres per 1,000 residents
- *Regional Parks:* No standard available

Park Acreage by Classification Summary.

- *Neighborhood and Pocket Parks.*
 - Los Banos has 37 Neighborhood and Pocket Parks containing a total of 140.61-acres resulting in 3.35-acres per 1,000 residents.
 - At the City's projected 2035 population, the City should include, at a minimum, an additional 52.1 acres of neighborhood and pocket parks to continue to meet this level of service standard; however, neighborhood and pocket parks should be located within a walking distance of one-quarter to one-half mile of residents in **new residential communities.**
- *Community Parks.*
 - Los Banos has three Community Parks containing a total of 75.79 acres resulting in 1.8-acres per 1,000 residents.
 - At the City's projected 2035 population, the City should include an additional 73.8 acres of community parks to meet this level of service standard. A new regional park will fulfill the needs for community parks.
 - Ag Sports Complex is a community park of nearly 50 acres but only 8.25 acres have been built out.
 - The acreage for a new regional park could meet or exceed the acreage needs for the community park standards.
- *Special Use Parks and Trails.*
 - Los Banos has five Specialty Parks containing a total of 48 acres resulting in 1.15 -acres per 1,000 residents.
 - At the City's projected 2035 population, the City should include an additional 18.1 acres of specialty parks and trails to meet this level of service standard. However, the types of facilities found in a special use park, i.e., dog park, skate park, disc golf course, etc., can often be found in neighborhood and community parks thus negating the need for additional area to meet the special use park acreage requirement.
- *Regional Parks.* The City currently has no regional park or regional park standards.

6.1.3 - REGIONAL STANDARDS

In an effort to establish a consensus of what the average level of service for each park classification is, specific cities were selected due to their similarities to the City of Los Banos. Similar criteria used to choose these cities were: demographics, population, and size.

- The City of El Centro (Imperial County)
 - 11.08 Square Miles within City Limits
 - 44,079 population (2019)
- The City of Hollister (San Benito)
 - 7.29 Square Miles within City Limits
 - 40,740 population (2019)
- The City of Manteca (San Joaquin County)
 - 17.73 Square Miles within City Limits
 - 83,028 population (2019)

- The City of Delano (Kern County)
 - 14.30 Square Miles within City Limits
 - 53,573 population

Each city may have different classifications for park spaces, nonetheless, most cities share designations. The park designations of neighborhood, community, regional, and special use parks contain specific amenities particular to each park type. Typically, a local agency that provides municipal services, including Parks and Recreation, would have a service Master Plan. This allows the City to establish goals and policies specific to that particular service in order to manage an adequate level of service as the demand increases (population growth). This allows the City to establish a new level of service criteria, if needed, for park facilities. Many factors can be attributed to a municipality’s level of service for Parks and Recreation. As mentioned previously, the cities in the table below, were chosen due to their similarities with the City of Los Banos.

**Table 6-1
Regional Park Examples–Classifications and Standards**

Comparison City	Type	Service Area	Desirable Size	Acres/1,000 population
City of El Centro	Pocket Parks	No Applicable Standards	No Applicable Standards	No Applicable Standards
	Neighborhood Parks	¼ to ½ Mile	5-10 Acres	2.5 acres
	Community Parks	>½ Mile	20-40 Acres	2.5 acres
	Regional Parks	50-60 Miles	500+ Acres	No Applicable Standards
	Special Use Parks	No Applicable Standards	No Applicable Standards	No Applicable Standards
City of Hollister	Pocket Parks	¼ to ½ Mile	<2.5 acres	4 acres
	Neighborhood Parks	¼ to ½ Mile	2.5-10 Acres (5 Min)	4 acres
	Community Parks	½ Mile	>10 Acres	4 acres
	Regional Parks	No Applicable Standards	No Applicable Standards	No Applicable Standards
	Special Use Parks	No Applicable Standards	No Applicable Standards	No Applicable Standards

Comparison City	Type	Service Area	Desirable Size	Acres/1,000 population
City of Delano	Pocket Parks	No Applicable Standards	No Applicable Standards	No Applicable Standards
	Neighborhood Parks	< ½ Mile	3-5 Acres	3 acres
	Community Parks	<1 Mile	15-30 Acres	3 Acres
	Regional Parks	No Applicable Standards	No Applicable Standards	No Applicable Standards
	Special Use Parks ⁷	No Applicable Standards	No Applicable Standards	No Applicable Standards
City of Manteca	Pocket Parks ⁸	No Applicable Standards	No Applicable Standards	No Applicable Standards
	Neighborhood Parks	<¼ Mile	1-10 Acres	3 acres
	Community Parks	<3 miles	15-50 Acres	1 Acres
	Regional Parks	No Applicable Standards	No Applicable Standards	No Applicable Standards
	Special Use Parks	No Applicable Standards	No Applicable Standards	1 Acres

The average consensus of the four parks identified with similar populations and area to Los Banos and a comparison to current Los Banos standards is as follows in the table below.

**Table 6-2
Comparison of Park Acreage Regional Standards by Classification**

Classification	Current Los Banos Standards	Average Standards of Four Regional Cities Identified
Pocket and Neighborhood Parks	3.35/1,000	3,2/1,000
Community Parks	1.8/1,000	1.6/1,000
Specialty Parks and Trails	1.15/1,000	No Standard Available
Regional Parks	No Available Standard	No Available Standard

⁷ The City of Delano has six parks/open space areas designated as a Special Facilities. However, the City’s Recreation Master Plan does not designate applicable standards for the development of these facilities.

⁸ Pocket Parks are considered to be a subtype of Neighborhood Parks and therefore, does not have specific design standards.

Conclusion: The City's current standards are equal to or better than the regional standards of comparable cities.

6.1.4 - PROPOSED CITY OF LOS BANOS STANDARDS

Park Acreage Standards and Distance Requirements by Classification

- *Neighborhood and Pocket Parks*: 3.35 acres per 1,000 residents
- *Community Parks*: 1.8 acres per 1,000 residents
- *Specialty Parks and Trails*: 1.15 acres per 1,000 residents
- *Regional Parks*: Typically, one per region based on 2.5 acres per 1,000 population of the region although the standard can vary from region to region. The population of communities, both incorporated and unincorporated within a 20-mile radius (30-minute drive) of Los Banos is approximately 67,000 (Santa Nella, Volta, Dos Palos, Gustine, Newman, El Nido, Newman, and Stevinson, not including Merced with a current population of approximately 79,000). One regional park, which could ultimately service the City of Los Banos and surrounding communities, would meet or exceed the typical park standard of 2.5 acres per 1,000 population. The City of Merced has a twelve-acre Youth Sports Complex. A larger regional facility like the one being proposed for Los Banos could also serve the City of Merced.

Size and Distance Requirements by Classification

- *Pocket Parks* should have a minimum area of 5,000 square feet and a general service area of one-quarter mile radius.
- *Neighborhood Parks* should have a minimum size of one to seven acres and a general service area of one-half mile radius.
- *Community Parks* should have a minimum size of seven to 25 acres and a general service area of one- to two-mile radius; three-mile radius is acceptable but not encouraged.
- *A Regional Park* typically averages between 25 and 100 acres and serves the city and surrounding communities (i.e., Gustine and Los Palos.)

6.1.5 - STAFFING AND OPERATING EXPENSES GUIDELINES

Staffing Needs. A typical park and recreation agency is staffed with 41.9 full-time equivalent staff (FTEs) that include a mix of full-time and part-time staff. One way to view agency staffing is to measure it relative to the population of the area that the agency serves. The typical park and recreation agency has 8.1 FTEs⁹ on staff for each 10,000 residents living in the jurisdiction served by the agency. The following tables suggest the FTEs that may be considered for staffing the City of Los Banos Parks and Recreation Division.

⁹ 2020 NRPA Agency Performance Review

**Table 6-3
Full Time Equivalent (FTE) Staffing Needs by Population**

Year	2020	2025	2030	2035
Population	41,898	47,104	52,310	57,517
8.1 FTE's/10,000 residents	34	38	42.4	46.6

Operating Expenses. According to the 2020 NRPA Agency Performance Review, the typical park and recreation agency has annual operating expenditures of \$4,342,495. The typical park and recreation agency have annual operating expenses of \$81.19 on a per capita basis. The median level of operating expenditures is \$7,160 per acre of park and non-park sites managed by the agency. The typical park and recreation agency spend \$97,093 in annual operating expenditures for each employee. At the typical park and recreation agency, staffing costs account for 54 percent of the operating budget. The typical park and recreation agency dedicate 44 percent of its operating budget to park management and maintenance and 43 percent to recreation.

The typical distribution of annual operating expenses is as follows:

- 55% on personnel;
- 37% on operating expenses;
- 6% on capital expense not in the CIP; and,
- 3% for other.

**Table 6-4
Operating Expenses by Population**

Year	2020	2025	2030	2035
Population	41,898	47,104	52,310	57,517
\$81.19 per capita	\$3,401,698	\$3,824,373	\$4,247,049	\$4,669,805

How does this money get spent? What is the typical target for capital expenditures? The distribution of capital is as follows:

- 55% for renovation;
- 30% for new development;
- 7% for acquisition; and
- 8% for other.

SECTION 7 - FOCUS AREAS

The City of Los Banos Parks and Recreation Division wanted to gauge the community's interest in a several new facilities and renovations to existing facilities. The following summaries are conceptual studies to gauge the community's needs and desires for regional sports facility and an aquatic center. Renovations for Colorado Ballpark and expansion of the Ag Sports Complex are described and pictured in the paragraphs that follow in this Section.

7.1 - Regional Sports Facility

The Central Valley should leverage its position between several major airports and highways, as well as its year round sunny weather for a project such as this. Los Banos is the ideal location to connect the Central Valley and the Bay Area. This would be a crucial project for the future financing of the Parks and Recreation Division and its impact on the General Fund. The project would provide significant return on tourism and provide youth and adults in the area a space to play year-round.

The following studies and the site as indicated are for conceptual purposes only and not to suggest a preferred location for a regional sports complex. The purposes for a regional facility would be to encourage tourism, provide revenue to the City, and create quality playing fields for local and regional teams. The revenue produced by the sports complex would help fund additional staffing, and could also be used to offset the costs of other park venues such as an aquatic center. A site for an aquatic center has not yet been selected, but the regional sports complex could also include an aquatic facility. The two conceptual studies as indicated do not include an aquatic center, but its future location could be here or another site in the City.

Due to its vast size and numerous amenities, a regional sports complex will most likely be a phased project, several fields could eventually include additional fields, fencing, and concession buildings. A fenced project and concessions will provide additional revenue to the City.

Two conceptual studies were prepared for a Regional Sports Facility on an approximately 210-acre site located south of Pioneer Road, west of Ortigalita Road, and north of the irrigation canal for presentation to and to select a preferred option by the residents of Los Banos. Although a site for a regional sports facility has not been selected or determined, the location was used as an example, not a recommendation or a preferred site, of what a regional sports facility might look like. The site as depicted was shown in the concept studies here because of its size, location, and potential for future trail access along an irrigation canal. The site is located on the west side of the city and one-mile from SR 152. A Class I bikeway is planned for Pioneer Road and a Class II bikeway is planned for Ortigalita Road. The two studies are conceptual only and the site itself was used only for a concept purposes. Further investigation will need to determine the number of facilities for the proposed project. The two studies and the components of each study are as follows:

7.1.1 - CONCEPT STUDY DESCRIPTIONS

Option A

Approximately 75 to 80 acres were being proposed for the first phase of the regional sports facility with additional room to expand as the city grows and sporting events become more popular and expand to include other communities. The plan was developed around a grid system of drive aisles parallel to the public streets that frame the northern and eastern boundaries of the site. The two-lane drive aisles provide access from Pioneer Road and Ortigalita Road. Tennis courts, four picnic shelters, and a large open play area for volleyball were located central to the picnic pavilions and easily accessible at the northeast corner of the subject property. Baseball fields for both little league, teenagers, and adults were located in the northeast section of the site. Soccer fields were located south of the private drive that extends west from Ortigalita Road. Parking lots, large enough to serve traffic for multiple events were centrally located amongst both baseball and soccer fields. Basketball, a plaza with benches, and restrooms were located near Ortigalita Road and west of the baseball fields. Fencing will enclose the park. The picnic area, tennis/pickleball courts, and open space in the northeast corner of the site could be used separately from the fenced larger sports complex. This area will have its own parking lot.

Option B

The meandering drive that circulates through the regional park and provides access to each of the recreational amenities and the parking lots creates a more park-like or pastoral setting for Option B. Parking is proposed both on the drive aisles as well as in the lots near one of the main entrances at Ortigalita Road. Ten soccer fields are located on the east side of the park and baseball fields are located on the west side. Between the soccer and baseball, the plan proposes tennis and basketball courts. Two well-defined large picnic areas with shade trees, restrooms, and picnic shelters (one picnic area depicts a splash pad) are placed so that all court games and field games have access to each of them making it convenient for attendees to plan a day of picnicking and spectator sports. Fencing will enclose the park.

Community Preferences

- The preferred Concept Site Plan was Concept B with the meandering interior roadway, trails throughout, and several central picnic areas.
- The preferred amenities most participants wanted to see were court games, soccer fields and ballfields, and restrooms with concession stands.



Figure 7-1
Regional Park – Option A

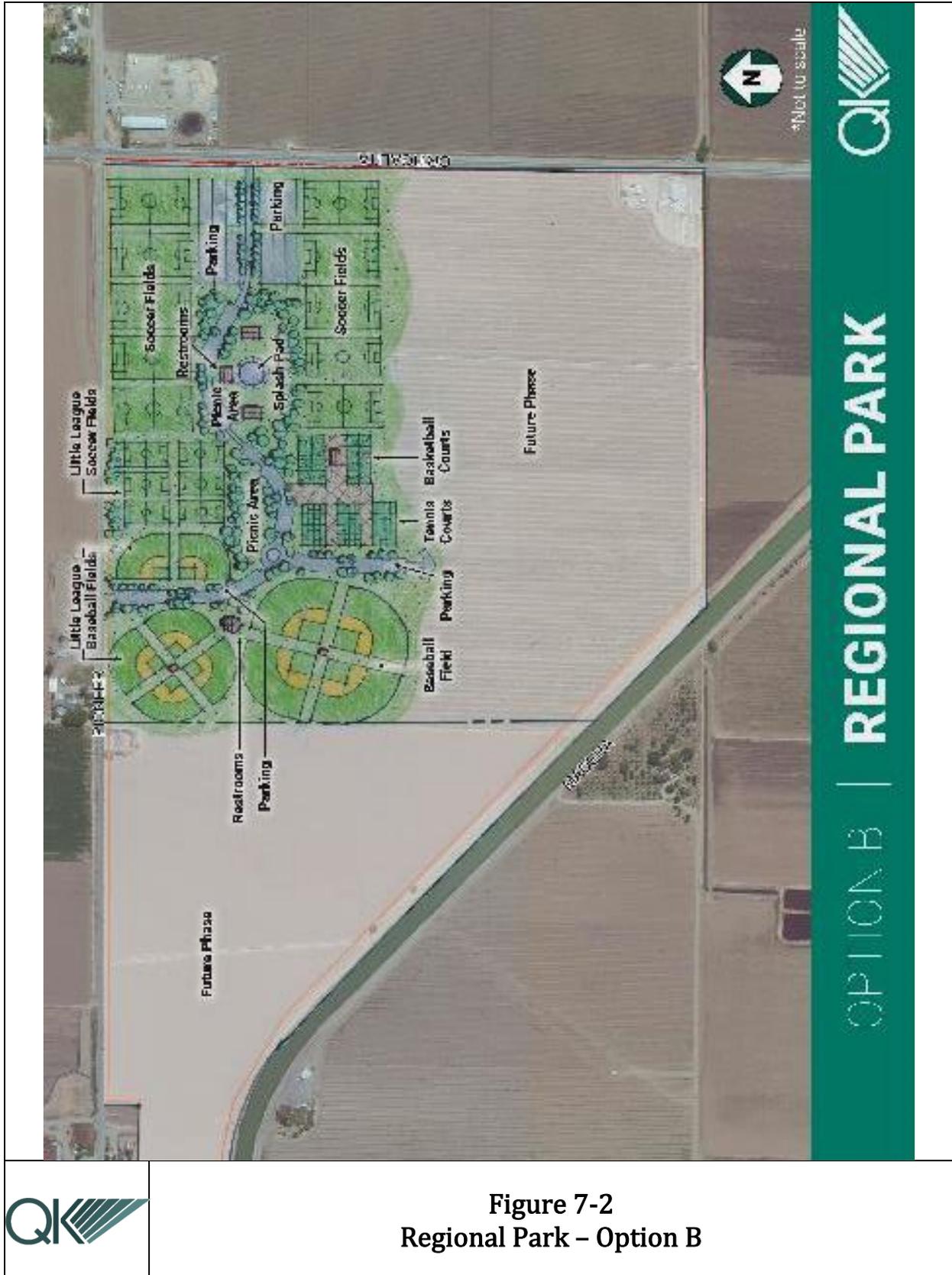


Figure 7-2
Regional Park – Option B

7.2 - Aquatics Center

The need and interest to develop an aquatic center was identified in the 2006 Los Banos Parks & Recreation Master Plan. Los Banos' only public pool was closed in 2009 and there has not been a public pool to use since then. Only two Fitness Centers and one high school in Los Banos provide pools. Despite their popularity local swimming teams appear to be struggling due to a lack of accessibility to a swim center. A competition element and a kids/fun element are two essential ingredients for an aquatic center; a pool should be available for both



Aquatic Center example, Dinuba, California

public recreation and competition. Two conceptual studies were prepared for an approximately three-acre aquatic center with a preferred site located near the Los Banos Community Center and Henry Miller Plaza. Adjacent roadways are H Street to the south and Fourth Street to the west. The Rail Trail lies on the proposed site's northern boundary. A parking lot for Henry Miller Plaza is located on the site's eastern boundary. Two existing businesses are located on this site but are not included in the total acreage. Although a site has not yet been determined or finalized, the Fourth and H Street location was selected to depict an example of what an aquatic center might look like. The two studies are conceptual only and further investigation will need to determine the types of facilities for the proposed project. As a means to increase revenue for the city, any proposed building should have adequate rental space for special events like birthday parties. The two studies and a summary of the community's preferences follow below.

7.2.1 - CONCEPT STUDY DESCRIPTIONS

Option A

The concept study includes an Olympic size swimming pool, a zero entry kids pool; a building for administration, lockers, pool house, restrooms, and rental space for birthdays, parties, and other family and group events; restrooms and pool house; plaza; parking lot; landscaping; and, fencing.

Option B

The concept study includes an Olympic size swimming pool; diving boards including high dive; bleachers; splash pad with numerous features; main building for administration, lockers, and rental space for birthdays, parties, and other family and group events; restrooms and pool house; plaza; parking; landscaping; and, fencing.

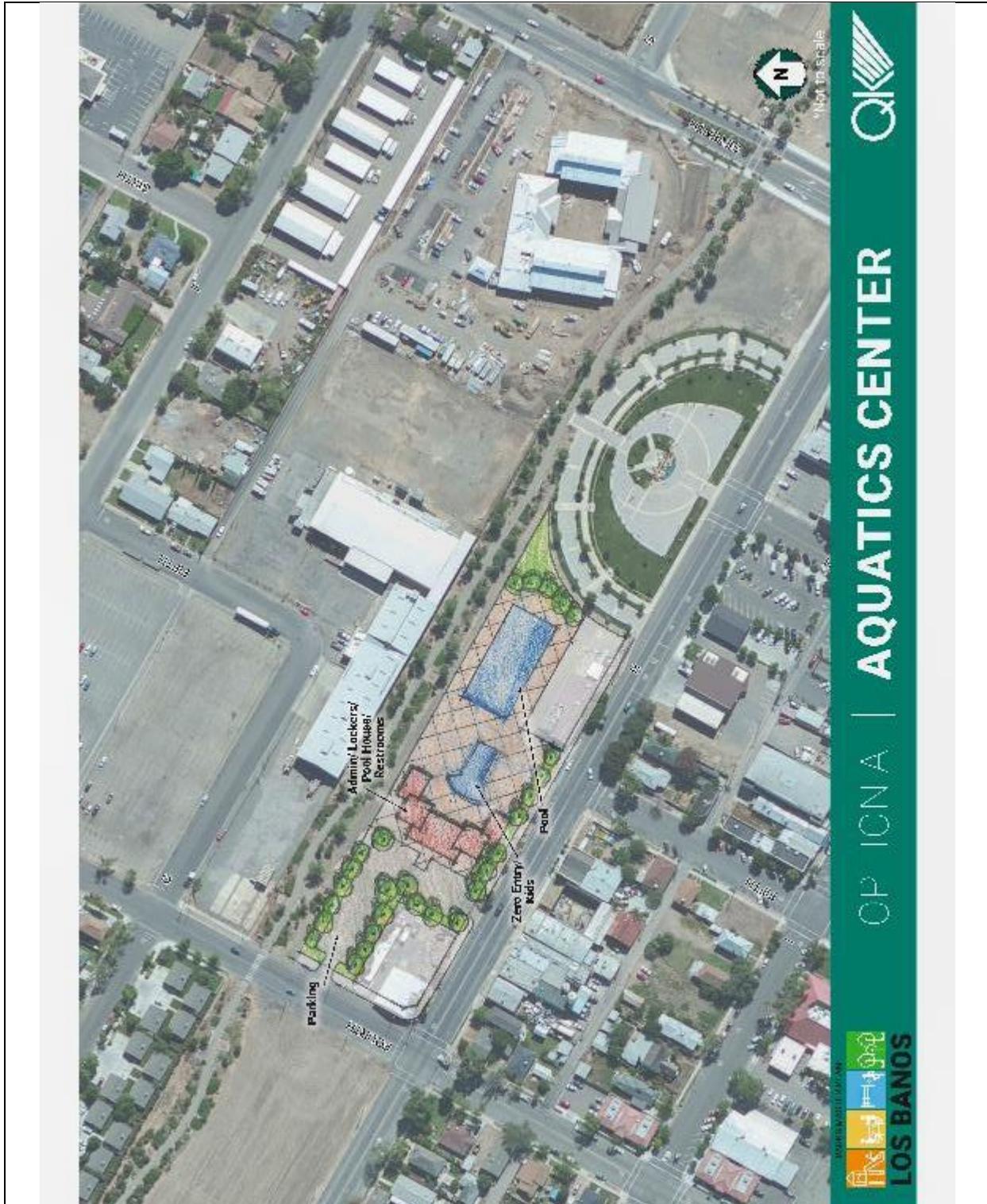


Figure 7-3
Aquatic Center – Option A

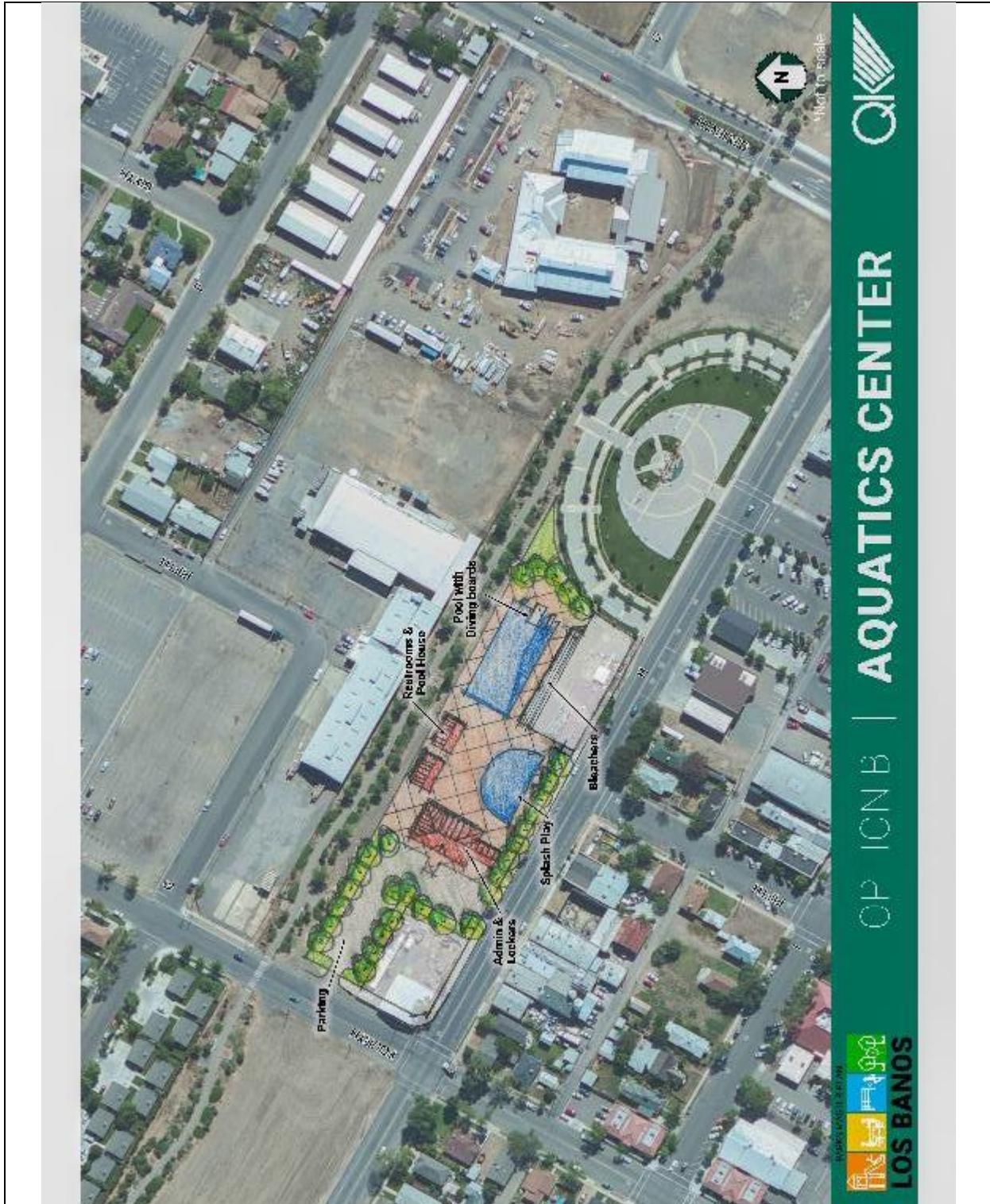


Figure 7-4
Aquatic Center – Option B

Community Preferences

- The preferred Concept Plan was Concept Site Plan B that had more amenities than Concept Site Plan A.
- An aquatic center with competition pool and space for kids to play and learn to swim was the most popular type of aquatic center. A large pool recreation building with large event room or rooms and kitchen was also highly desired.
- A downtown location was the most popular spot for an aquatics center

7.3 - Ag Sports Complex

7.3.1 - CONCEPT STUDY DESCRIPTIONS

Currently the park offers baseball, picnicking, playground, and horseshoes. The City has an interest in expanding the facilities at the park. The size, location along Mercey Springs Road, and the potential vacant land would create a new community park in an area where none currently exists. The nearest community park is Colorado Ballpark located approximately 4.5 miles from Ag Sports Complex.

Conceptual studies were prepared for the approximately 50-acre Ag Sports Complex located in the City’s northeast section east of Mercey Springs Road and north of Del Rio Drive. Del Rio Drive is the access road that connects the site to the adjacent subdivision via Los Felis Way, Place Road, and Del Rio Drive South.

Approximately 180 linear-feet of the northern portion of the site or nearly 10 acres may not be used for development, grading, and excavation due to the underground debris located here. Parking may be the one use that could be permitted here. Except for existing recreational uses and parking and the debris infill site in the north, the remaining two-thirds of the site or approximately 32-acres has the potential for new development. Del Rio Drive is a two-lane paved roadway that extends for approximately 2,800 feet along the southern border of the property. Del Rio Drive allows access to the residential neighborhood to the south via Los Felis Way, Place Road, and the continuation of Del Rio Drive. Del Rio Drive will remain, but concrete sidewalks should be installed where none currently exist, particularly on the north side of the roadway, to allow for greater pedestrian access.

The park has been identified as a location for a dog park, new concession stand and restrooms, and parking lot renovations. Below are descriptions of each of the concept study options.

Option A

Option A proposes a baseball field to supplement the two current fields, three little league soccer fields, and six basketball courts, four tennis/pickleball courts near the baseball field and parking lot, restrooms, and additional parking on the western half of the site. The eastern half includes two picnic shelters, picnic tables under shade trees, an open play area

for frisbee toss, volleyball, and other lawn games, more parking, and possible soccer fields in the existing storm basins.

Option B

Currently, soccer does not exist here. The concept study proposes to include four little league soccer fields. The study also proposes six tennis/pickleball courts and seven tennis courts. The existing parking lot is expanded to the east and a loop system of parking and drive aisles is proposed that connects Los Felis Way to Del Rio Drive South. Parking on the infill site is proposed. The eastern half of the park includes a skatepark, playground, restrooms, and picnic shelter. Additional parking is proposed at the extension of Place Road; a 29-car parking lot currently exists there now so additional parking may not be needed here. This plan proposed to reconfigure the storm basins to picturesque wet ponds that might attract waterfowl; a place for a charming stroll on pathways around the lakes; pleasant site for picnicking; and, fountains should be added to aerate the water.

Option C

A third option was identified that if the Regional Sports Complex was funded and constructed, the Ag Sports Complex would be renovated, the dog park built, and a trail would wrap around the park allowing the potential for exercise stations, mile markers for runners and walkers, places to view wildlife and landscaping, and benches along the way. The north side would be used for overflow parking and the remainder could be used for unstructured event space.

Community Preferences

- The preferred Concept Site Plan was Concept B with the meandering trails.
- The Ag Sports Complex was identified as another desirable site for more sports fields and an aquatic center.
- Tennis and pickleball and meandering trails through the park were the most desired amenities.



Figure 7-5
Ag Sports Complex – Option A

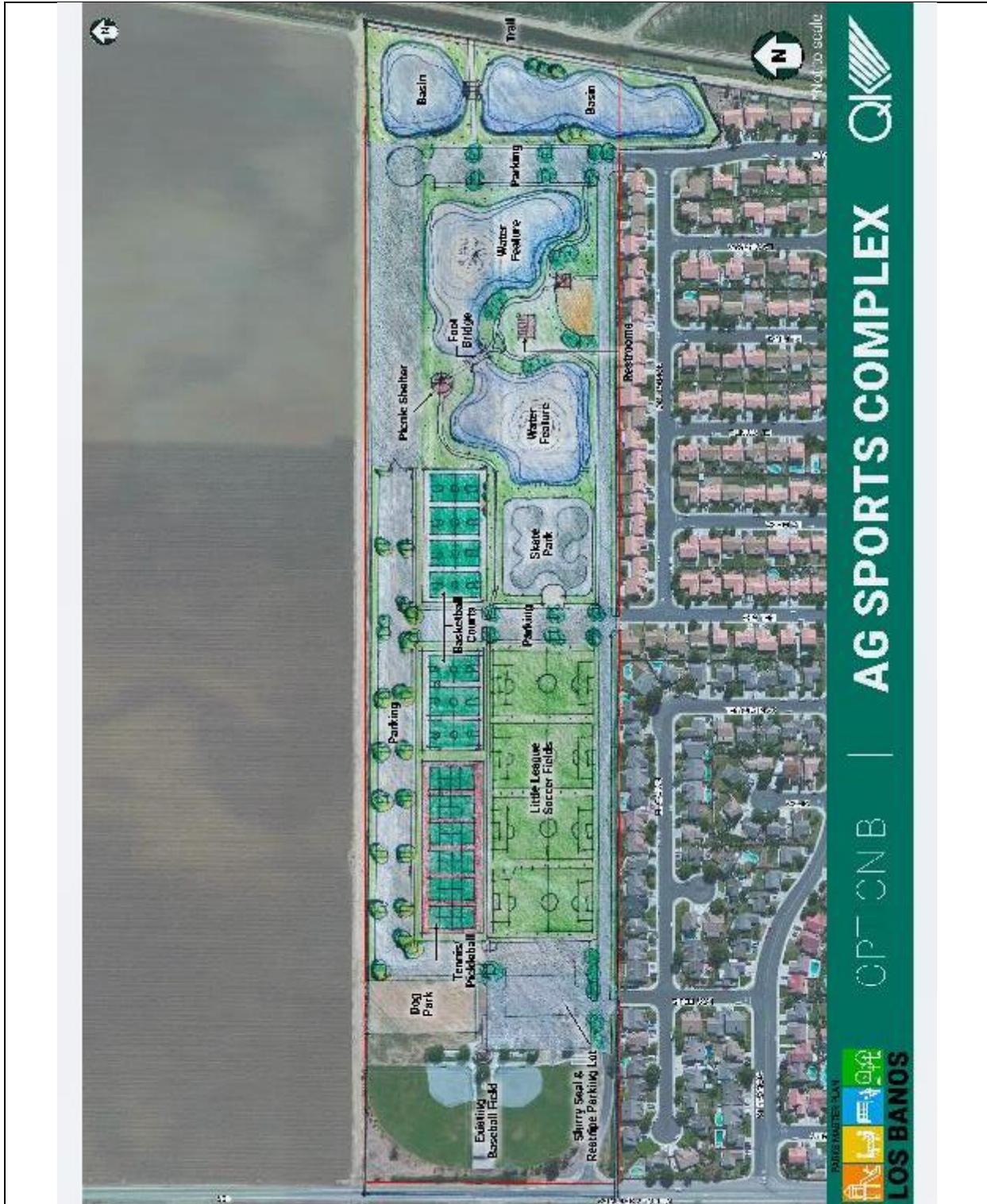


Figure 7-6
Ag Sports Complex – Option B

7.4 - Colorado Ballpark Renovation

A conceptual study was prepared for the renovation of Colorado Ballpark located west of Colorado Avenue and the western end of Pine Street.

7.4.1 - CONCEPT STUDY DESCRIPTION

The concept study for the Colorado Ballpark does not propose to relocate any of the ballfields, the parking lot, restroom or the tennis courts. The parking lot will need to be slurry sealed and restriped. The parking lot entrance needs to be widened.

To encourage more families to participate in being spectators, the skatepark is proposed to be located north of the parking lot. The location for a skate park north of the parking lot allows for visibility from both parking lot and Colorado Avenue and allows for 6,000 to 7,000 square feet of skatepark area with nearby shade pavilions, 10,000 square feet without the nearby shade pavilions. The current skatepark is around 6,000 square feet.

Colorado Ballpark currently has no playgrounds. The space between the outfields of two ballfields is a prime location for a picnic shelter and covered playgrounds—a spot for all ages. The nearby tennis courts will need to be resurfaced and re-netted and should include an option for pickleball. As another viable option, pickleball courts will fit in the area north of the existing tennis courts.

Community Preferences

- Skatepark and pickleball courts were the most popular amenities desired for Colorado Ballpark followed by a close third with renovated ballfields.
- Although Colorado Ballpark was the most popular location for a skatepark, some kids want one on the east side like Talbott Basin Park or AG Sports Complex. Downtown was also selected as a popular spot.



Figure 7-7
Colorado Ballpark

7.5 - Green Infrastructure Studies

At the time of the preparation of this document, the federal government (i.e., EPA) has green infrastructure funding opportunities; the state of California had grants available for an urban greening program; and, Proposition 68 has funding for a green infrastructure program. Two parks were considered for sites for green infrastructure and renewable energy: Colorado Ballpark and Ag Sports Complex. The following is a description of the features being proposed or suggested for each.

Colorado Ballpark

Green Infrastructure improvement projects could include converting the existing drainage ditch along the north property fence line into an active bioswale and filtration area for treating parking lot runoff; at least 550 linear-feet can be converted to an attractive well-landscaped bioswale. Excavated and engineered shade tree planting in the parking lot interior and around the perimeter would help offset the heat island effect of such a large area of uncovered paving. The installation of overhead shade structures with solar panel installations could also provide respite to parking lot users in the heat of the summer. These units could provide energy credits to the City, helping to offset a portion of the park's utility costs. The installation of permeable paving in the parking areas would help decrease load on local storm drain systems and increase water percolation back into the surrounding soil. Any or all proposed improvements associated with parking lot resurfacing, re-stripping new walks, utilities and drainage should be coordinated with the overall development plan.

Ag Sports Complex

The park should be considered as a site for green Infrastructure improvement projects as well as for the funding that might be pursued for them. Ideas include shade tree planting in the parking lot interior and around the perimeter that would help offset the heat island effect of such a large area of uncovered paving. The installation of overhead shade structures with solar panel installations could also provide respite to parking lot users in the heat of the summer. These units could also provide energy credits to the City, helping to offset a portion of the park's utility costs. The installation of permeable paving in the parking areas would help decrease load on local storm drain systems and increase water percolation back into the surrounding soil. Proposed development of additional recreational areas to the north and the east could change the dynamic of the parking lot and should be considered. The installation of solar powered lighting units in the play, plaza and parking areas would also be a green solution reducing overall energy usage for the site. Any or all proposed improvements associated with parking lot resurfacing, re-stripping new walks, lighting, utilities and drainage should be coordinated with an overall development plan for the park.

7.6 - Other Future Projects to Consider

The projects identified in the Focus Area studies represent short and long term needs and interests of the community as well as, in some instances, fulfilling the goals and policies of

previous Los Banos park master plans. Future projects should also be considered that have not been identified. They are:

- **Lighted basketball Courts near Police Station.** This would provide both recreation near the Police Station and access along the Rail Trail. Currently, there are no quality basketball courts open to the public and providing lighted courts would appeal to young adults and take advantage of Los Banos' weather throughout the year. In the past lighted courts at the corner of 7th and Highway 152 across from Pacheco Park were a very popular location for young adults to play. These parks have since been closed.
- **Corner of 7th and H St.** The corner of 7th and H has been discussed for numerous Parks and non-Parks projects. Whatever is ultimately developed at this corner supports the Plaza and the Community Center. As a highly visible corner it could benefit the area by having pickleball courts and a playground or a splash pad. This would provide active recreation to the area.
- **Merced College.** As the Trail to the College is developed and the College itself grows, the City should consider keeping up with the development by providing amenities that would support young adults such as exercise stations and other trails.

SECTION 8 - PARK DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

Design guidelines support consistency and quality in planning, building and maintaining new and updated parks and facilities. The guidelines support the Master Plan vision and goals and provide greater detail on plan recommendations from developers. The guidelines also allow for flexibility and creativity to respond to different conditions. Current and future Los Banos' parks and recreation facilities are different, with unique conditions and circumstances and design challenges. The guidelines encourage best practices in park design, custom tailored to the geography and climate of Los Banos.

8.1 - Use of Guidelines

The design guidelines should be used as the basis for discussing, reviewing and approving all new development or improvements to the park system. Los Banos should use the guidelines to measure all projects for conformance with the intent and direction of the Master Plan. Developers, designers and planners, decision makers, staff and members of the community should all use these guidelines when considering the following overarching question topics:

- Does the project exemplify the type of improvement or outcomes envisioned by the community as stated through the Master Plan vision, goals and recommendations?
- Will the project meet the intent of the respective park classification, with improvements that are compatible to the specific park type?

8.2 - Park Characteristics

8.2.1 - POCKET PARKS

The smallest classified park in Los Banos; the Pocket Park is defined by the City as a small open space area serving the immediate neighborhood and can be reached by foot in approximately five minutes or less. Pocket parks are located typically in small areas/parcels normally considered outlots, that would not otherwise be adequate for a neighborhood park. Pocket parks are no bigger than one acre and can be linear parks that separate the ends of cul-de-sacs or greenways that connect adjacent streets.

- Since pocket parks are intended to serve the immediate community, they will vary in size depending on availability of land.
- Pocket parks are not intended to service an entire community in the same way as a neighborhood park. Each should be created with the specific interests and needs of the immediate neighborhood.
- In addition to landscaping, pocket parks may include a small play area (tot lot), picnic tables, barbeque(s), benches, and shade. Lighting is usually available from the adjacent streets. Other elements may be implemented to encourage active use of the public open space.

8.2.2 - NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS

Neighborhood parks are small parks designed primarily for child-oriented and family-oriented activities. Located within walking and bicycling distance of most users, the parks serve people living within approximately one-mile radius from the park. Neighborhood parks provide access to basic recreation opportunities for nearby residents, enhance neighborhood identity and preserve open space. Neighborhood Parks are generally parks that provide both passive and limited active recreation.

- Neighborhood park sites should typically range from one to ten acres in size; and in some cases the size can be as much as twenty-five acres when developed with the intention of the park having a dual use (storm drainage basin/park). For that specific instance please see Section 9 – Action Plan for specific policies for dual use parks.
- The site should be reasonably central to the neighborhood it is intended to serve.
- Access to site should be provided via local streets with sidewalks (not an arterial) and by non-motorized trails.
- Access routes should minimize physical barriers, such as steep slopes and major arterials.
- In addition to landscaping, neighborhood parks may include playgrounds, picnic areas, basketball, volleyball, bocce, walking paths, and sometimes tennis/pickleball courts, and splash pad. Some neighborhood parks could include restrooms particularly if a splash pad is included.

8.2.3 - COMMUNITY PARKS

Community parks provide active and passive recreational opportunities for a larger and more diverse user group, typically it will serve the City as a whole or a group of neighborhoods. The primary focus for the park is for community-based recreation, athletics, and open space. Typical size for community parks can range from seven to twenty acres. The park will service an area range from one-mile to as much as a three-mile radius; residents will typically drive to community parks, so off-street parking will need to be addressed. Community park facilities are most often oriented towards family and adult activities such as tennis courts, community centers, swimming pools or splash pads, sports fields, walking paths, picnic areas, picnic shelters, and light fixtures. Parks that offer athletic field(s) and provide a venue for community athletic organizations may fall into this category regardless of its size. Arterial streets should be the primary path of travel.

- Access to site should be provided via collector or arterial street with sidewalks and bicycle lanes.
- Site should front a public street.

Examples of Community Parks:

- Ag Sports Complex and the Colorado Ballpark.

8.2.4 - REGIONAL PARKS

Regional parks provide a focal point and gathering place for a broader community. As larger parks in size, Regional parks are used by all sectors of the community, serving residents community-wide. Regional parks often include recreation facilities for organized sports and community activities, as well as passive recreation space. Regional park sites should typically range from 25 to 100 acres in size. Some regional parks can be up to 250 acres depending on area growth and community needs. Because of their large service area, community parks require support facilities, such as parking and restrooms. A regional park should be designed to serve those living within a 30-minute drive, which may be between 50,000 to 100,000 people.

- Access to site should be provided via provided collector or arterial streets with sidewalks and bicycle lanes.

8.2.5 - SPECIALTY PARKS

A Specialty Park or Facility covers a broad range of specialized park and recreation facilities, such as: Golf courses, historical sites, community centers, theme parks, water parks, tennis clubs, skate parks, dog parks, community gardens, disc golf courses, and other special use facilities. These parks may also include amenities shared from neighborhood or community parks and sometimes have regional appeal such as a skate park that holds competitive events. Special use sites may vary in size based on intended use. The site should be sufficient to accommodate the special use and necessary support facilities.

- Access should be provided via trails and collector or local streets.

Examples of Los Banos Specialty Parks:

- Henry Miller Plaza
- Veterans Memorial
- Los Banos Community Center

8.2.6 - TRAILS

Trails provide a linear path usually running parallel feature such as a canal or derelict railroad or an easement that provides access to canal/railroad trails. Trail easements can vary in width up to 100-feet wide.

8.3 - Design Guidelines

To ensure that future parks in Los Banos are the proper size and contain the appropriate amenities for their intended purpose, the following park classification guidelines are recommended. These classifications include recommended and optional amenities for each of the park classifications identified below.

8.3.1 - GUIDELINES FOR AMENITIES BY PARK CLASSIFICATION

Pocket Parks/Mini-parks (5,000SF to one acre)

MINIMUM RECOMMENDED AMENITIES & FACILITIES

- Irrigated small turf and landscaped area, including shade trees near benches and picnic tables
- Walking access via local neighborhood
- Signage to identify park name and park rules sign necessary for use
- Seating benches or seat wall
- Children’s playground for ages 0–5 (minimum 1,500 square feet) with shade structure providing shade for the play equipment.
- Trash receptacles (minimum one per half acre)
- Minimum of two picnic tables.
- Other amenities as may be required by Parks Division

OPTIONAL AMENITIES AND FACILITIES

- Family picnic area
- Bicycle racks on concrete slab
- Drinking Fountain

Neighborhood Parks (one acre to seven acres)

MINIMUM RECOMMENDED AMENITIES & FACILITIES

- Perimeter walking paths with security lighting (solar-powered preferred).
- Open turf area at least 125 feet x 200 feet or 180 feet x 300 feet for active recreation activities and youth/teen soccer for parks 3.0 acres to 5.0 acres. Minimum two open turf areas at least 125 feet x 200 feet or 180 feet x 300 feet each for parks larger than 5.0 acres or as determined by the Parks Division.
- Irrigated landscaped areas including shade trees near benches and picnic tables or shade structure(s).
- Signage for park identification and posting of use regulations.
- Park benches and/or seat walls.
- Two children’s play areas, one for 0-5 years (minimum 2,000 square feet) and one for 5-12 years (minimum 3,500 square feet) with shade structure providing shade for the play equipment.
- One large or two small family picnic areas; minimum of two picnic tables plus minimum one table for each additional acre over one acre.
- Basketball court (one court for every four acres and no more than two).
- Sand or grass volley court.
- Trash receptacles (one per half acre).
- Bicycle racks on concrete slab.

- Drinking fountain(s) (minimum one per acre not to exceed four fountains). Note: At least one fountain shall have bottle filler station and pet friendly fountain.
- Restrooms for parks larger than 3.5 acres.
- Security lighting.
- Other amenities as may be required by Parks Division.

OPTIONAL AMENITIES & FACILITIES

- Off-street parking including ADA stalls
- Spray pool feature
- Tennis courts with striping for pickleball
- Horseshoe pits and bocce ball courts
- Group picnic shelter for larger parties
- Chess/checker tables
- Restrooms for parks less than 3.0 acres
- Splash pad for parks greater than 3.0 acres.

Community Parks (7 to 25 acres)**MINIMUM RECOMMENDED AMENITIES & FACILITIES**

- Lighted sports fields. Install minimum four athletic tournament fields; softball, little league, soccer or football tournament or as directed by the Parks Division in parks less than 18 acres. Install five athletic tournament fields; softball, little league, soccer or football tournament or as directed by the Parks Division in parks greater than 18 acres and less than 22 acres. Install six athletic tournament fields; softball, little league, soccer or football tournament or as directed by the Parks Division in parks greater than 22 acres and less than 25 acres.
- Basketball courts (two courts for every four acres up to six courts)
- Tennis courts with striping for pickleball (two courts for every four acres up to six courts)
- Perimeter walking paths (five feet minimum width, eight feet preferred)
- Open turf areas for active recreation activities
- Irrigated landscaped areas with shade trees near benches and picnic tables

- Signage for park identification and posting of use regulations
- Park benches and/or seat walls
- Two children’s play areas, one for 0–5 years (minimum 3,000 square feet) and one for 5–12 years (minimum 5,000 square feet) with shade structure providing shade for the play equipment.
- Minimum three individual small family picnic areas
- Minimum two group picnic shelters
- Sand or grass volleyball court
- Restrooms
- Trash receptacles
- Bicycle racks on concrete slab
- Drinking fountain(s). Note: At least two fountains shall have bottle filler station and pet friendly fountain.
- Off-street parking, including ADA stalls. Eight spaces per acre; maximum 200 spaces.
- Pet station(s) along perimeter path
- Other amenities as may be required by Parks Division



Example of an outdoor exercise area, Meadowbrook Park, Tehachapi, CA

OPTIONAL AMENITIES AND FACILITIES

- Shaded patio (minimum 1,500 square feet) with benches for gathering
- Horseshoe pits and bocce court(s)
- Community Center
- Splash pad
- Skate park for parks larger than 20 acres
- Dog Park
- Community Garden
- Outdoor stage / amphitheater
- Outdoor exercise equipment/exercise par course

Regional Parks (25 to 100 acres, some may be larger depending on open space preservation or number of sports fields and amenities)

MINIMUM RECOMMENDED AMENITIES & FACILITIES

- Walking and hiking trails (minimum eight-foot width)
- League soccer, football, and baseball fields to be determined by Parks Director
- Two children’s play areas, one for 0–5 years (minimum 4,000 square feet) and one for 5–12 years (minimum 6,000 square feet) with shade structure providing shade for the play equipment.



Example of shade sail structure over play equipment.

- Basketball courts (one court for every six acres up to 10 courts)
- Tennis courts with striping for pickleball (one court for every six acres up to ten courts)
- Off-street parking including ADA stalls to be determined by City of Los Banos
- Trash receptacles
- Restrooms
- Concession stands
- Drinking fountains Note: At least three fountains shall have a bottle filler station and pet friendly fountain.
- Lighting for sports fields and parking lots
- Landscaped areas
- Signage for park identification and posting of use regulations
- Park benches and/or seat walls
- Minimum two group picnic shelters
- Minimum three individual small family picnic areas
- Bicycle racks
- Other amenities as may be required by Parks Division

OPTIONAL AMENITIES AND FACILITIES

- Nature or Activity Center
- Outdoor stage / amphitheater
- Basketball
- Tennis courts

- Volleyball (grass or sand)
- Splash pad
- Skatepark
- Off leash dog park
- Open space preserves

Trails (30-foot to 100-foot width)

MINIMUM RECOMMENDED AMENITIES & FACILITIES

- Signage/trailhead marker for trail identification and posting of use regulations
- Benches or seat walls placed at each major entrance or major street crossing and located no less than 1,000-feet apart
- Shade trees spaced approximately 25 feet to 40feet
- Bike racks on concrete slab
- Trash receptacles
- Dog waste stations
- Drinking fountain(s) (one at every trailhead marker). Note: Fountain shall have bottle filler station and pet friendly fountain.
- Concrete or steel bollards at street entrances
- Asphalt or concrete paving



Example of a dog waste station

OPTIONAL AMENITIES & FACILITIES

- Portable toilets at main entrances/major streets
- Off-street parking near trailhead
- Solar-powered lighting
- Interpretive signage
- Mileage/distance markers for walkers and runners
- Exercise equipment/par course equipment
- Pedestrian connection to nearby restaurant or retailer

Specialty Parks (typically one-use parks)

- Signage for identification and park rules
- Hardscape or turf area or both
- Landscape areas
- The primary use
- Any resource or use that supports the primary use

8.3.2 - GUIDELINES FOR TYPE OF FACILITY BY POPULATION

The top needs for city parks in the future include a regional sports complex and meeting the needs for neighborhood and pocket parks and community as the city grows. The City is close to meeting the existing General Plan standards for most recreational amenities except for the most desired needs or interests of the community. Typical guidelines for similar communities are as follows. These are recommended guidelines only and will ultimately depend on the community’s needs or interests. They are likely to differ by community.

- Playgrounds: one playground per 3,500 persons
- Picnic Shelters: one picnic shelter per 5,000 persons
- Skate Parks: one skate park per 50,000 persons
- Basketball: one court per 7,500 persons
- Tennis/Pickleball: one court per 7,500 persons
- Diamond Fields: one field per 7,500 persons
- Soccer Fields: one field per 5,000 persons
- Restrooms: At least one restroom per 6,000 persons
- Aquatic Center: one pool per 35,000 persons
- Community/Recreation Center: one center per 30,000 persons
- Dog Park (off-leash): one per 50,000 residents
- Community Gardens: one to 1.5 gardens per 10,000 residents¹⁰

Based on NRPA standards, Los Banos may want to consider including the following amenities based on their current and future population in their 2035 plan:

- One dog park
- One and one half community gardens
- One lighted synthetic turf soccer field
- One large skate park
- One outdoor swimming pool
- Ten tennis/pickleball courts



Sketch for a dog park prepared by a Los Banos elementary school student.

¹⁰ www.statista.com/statistics. Statista. Sports & Recreation Parks & Outdoors 2018.

SECTION 9 - ACTION PLAN

9.1 - Goals and Policies

GOAL. Increase capacity to meet future demand (population growth).

POLICY. Provide a range of park and recreational facilities to serve the needs of all residents.

POLICY. Identify the community's needs and interests through a public participation process.

POLICY. Integrate and provide for the addition of facilities and amenities as identified in this Parks Master Plan.

POLICY. Maintain and improve existing facilities, parks, and trails as identified in this Parks Master Plan.

POLICY. Develop criteria for incorporating restrooms into parks. All new community parks and regional park shall have restrooms. Consider restrooms in neighborhood parks larger than 3 acres.

POLICY. Look at improving park user satisfaction in City of Los Banos by increasing shade for picnic areas and playgrounds, security enhancements, increasing maintenance staff, restrooms at specific locations, lighting where needed and appropriate, and other amenities.

POLICY. Integrate multigenerational activities, amenities, and events into new parks and existing parks where feasible.

POLICY. Pursue development of a skate park and tennis courts and slurry seal and restripe the parking lot in Colorado Ballpark. Consider including solar powered lighting, and new restrooms and concession stand.

POLICY. Implement area standards for dual use parks. For parks utilizing storm basins to meet the park acreage requirements, a minimum ratio of 5:1 must be used. For every five acres of storage, a minimum of one acre of upland use for park amenities shall apply. Basin depth shall be reviewed and approved by City of Los Banos Engineer.

POLICY. Increase programming for youth ages 12 to 18, add adaptive programs, diversify senior programming, and expand community events.

POLICY. Follow standards set forth by CAPRA accreditation and become recognized as a 'Better Sports for Kids' quality program by the National Alliance for Youth Sports (NAYS).

POLICY. The City of Los Banos should collaborate with local districts and agencies to implement a policy to acquire land and develop a regional park that will enhance the quality of life for the region.

POLICY. Establish and maintain a high-quality public park system for Los Banos.

POLICY. Develop new parks with high quality park facilities which are durable and require low maintenance, wherever possible.

POLICY. The City should develop a policy for the use of inflatable amusement devices or bounce houses in city parks that requires a reservation, limits the bounce house location, prohibits bounce houses that use water, and provides for the safety of its users.

POLICY. Involve citizens, especially youths, in maintaining park areas through participation in park watches, citizen-based graffiti watch, cleanup and repair.

GOAL. Provide a system of park classifications and amenity requirements for future parks that serve their intended purpose.

POLICY. Adopt a long-term strategy to acquire and develop neighborhood and community parks in the defined gap areas per the ½ mile to 2-mile service areas, respectively, to maintain the Parks Master Plan goal of 6.3 acres per 1,000 population.

POLICY. Pursue expansion of the Ag Sports Complex community park containing the types of amenities and facilities as outlined in this Master Plan to meet the future demand for recreation in Los Banos.

POLICY. Pursue the development of a new Regional Park on the city's west side.

POLICY. Continue to maintain an even distribution of parks throughout the city based on the preferred service area criteria.

GOAL. Develop a definitive program for renovation of existing recreation facilities and development of future facilities.

POLICY. Establish a plan for playground replacement at each park location where needed. Start with highest priority first.

POLICY. Renovation of existing parks shall be accomplished according to timing of available funding and prioritized as set forth in this document.

POLICY. The future of parks and recreation for the City of Los Banos for the next 15+ years shall be determined by the goals and policies as set forth in this document.

POLICY. Significantly renovate large park sites such as Pacheco Park, Colorado Ballpark, and Ag Sports Complex.

POLICY. Design park facilities to be as flexible as possible, so that they may adapt to changes in the population served and in the recreation program offered.

POLICY. Retrofit existing parks, as appropriate, to reduce maintenance cost and water use, and to improve safety and aesthetics.

POLICY. To improve the quality of life and health of our residents, consider a ban on the use of tobacco products at most if not all City parks and recreational facilities.

GOAL Improve connectivity to parks

POLICY. Continue to implement the City's Bicycle - Pedestrian Plan.

POLICY. Locate and fill in missing gaps in pedestrian and bicycle connectivity to parks, recreational facilities, and trails.

POLICY. A community well connected by trails shall be developed throughout the City of Los Banos. The City should pursue development of a trail along the following areas:

- South side of the airport that connects to the Los Banos Creek;
- Los Banos Creek;
- North-south trail along the irrigation canal on the city's east side connecting the Ag Sports Complex, Meadowlands Basin Park, and the Rail Trail; and
- Continuation of the Rail Trail.

POLICY. To motivate the development community to provide assistance in planning and developing the Los Banos Creek area, the City should consider a Los Banos Creek Conservancy, similar to the San Joaquin River Parkway.

POLICY. Prepare and adopt a Los Banos Creek Parkway Plan prior to development of creek side properties.

POLICY. To activate and better serve users, encourage retail businesses and restaurants to provide access and services directly onto the adjacent trail, as long as there is room for potential patrons to move out of the flow of trail traffic.

POLICY. Improve the equitable distribution and quality of trail amenities including drinking fountains, trash receptacles, bike racks, dog waste stations, shade trees, and benches.

POLICY. Pursue a system of solar-powered night lighting along the city's trails.

POLICY. When greenways are included in new communities to meet the park acreage requirements, at a minimum, sidewalks and benches shall be installed to connect streets and neighborhoods to parks and other facilities.

POLICY. Provide park and recreation facilities within close proximity to residents they are intended to serve.

POLICY. Provide a unified and consistently marked trail system throughout the city, including bikeways, pathways, sidewalks, and other trails that link key destinations in the city including parks and recreational facilities, community facilities, public schools, and downtown.

POLICY. Require developers to dedicate and improve any portion of a planned bike path or trail system that passes through their development project sites, including any needed linkages to the regional bike and trail system and include funding for trail acquisition and trail improvements in the Park Development Fee Program.

GOAL. Work at achieving sustainable landscapes, parks and facilities.

POLICY. Pursue the conservation of water in parks and facilities by updating irrigation systems, installing water-saving elements in buildings, and replacing high water use landscaping such as decorative turf with drought tolerant and low water-use planting and hardscape materials where appropriate.

POLICY. Pursue development of green infrastructure by incorporating pervious surfaces and bio-retention features to recharge and cleanse stormwater runoff.

POLICY. Pursue the incorporation of energy efficient features in parks and facilities, such as energy efficient lighting, integrating solar-powered lighting and solar panels on roofs and covered parking, and LED technology.

POLICY. Provide amenities that support sustainable behaviors such as recycling receptacles and bicycle racks.

POLICY. Increase shade and the number of trees within the park system.

GOAL. Improve signage and wayfinding for parks in the City of Los Banos.

POLICY. Seek to provide all new and unnamed existing parks a park identification sign and method to name them.

POLICY. Seek to provide park rules signage at all Los Banos parks.

POLICY. Pursue development of a wayfinding system for all community and regional parks in the City.

GOAL. Expand financial opportunities.

POLICY. Acquire and develop parks and open spaces, consistent with the ability of the City to finance acquisition and operation, to reach a functional goal of 7 acres per thousand residents.

POLICY. Develop a 15-year capital infrastructure and equipment plan that responsibly plans and guides park needs. A 5-year capital plan shall be formally adopted.

POLICY. Continue to track and pursue grant and funding opportunities.

POLICY. Investigate opportunities for donations, sponsorships, fees, and naming rights.

POLICY. Create a master plan that will successfully compete with other communities for funding opportunities.

POLICY. Determine methods for increasing park revenues such as fees to reserve picnic pavilions for family events and other large gatherings.

POLICY. Where feasible and beneficial to the City of Los Banos, the City should advance partnerships with other providers or organizations to help meet community needs, i.e., pursue viable partnerships with Boys and Girls Clubs, YMCA, Big League Dreams, and other sports and recreation organizations.

POLICY. Encourage volunteerism and community-built projects, such as community gardens, dog parks, and bicycle skill courses.

POLICY. Explore the feasibility of voter-supported funding measures. Land acquisition of airport property, aquatics center or the construction of a other facilities will require funding in addition to other available sources.

POLICY. Continue to pursue LLDs for operational funding. The Parks and Recreation Division has required Landscape and Lighting Districts (LLDs) as new development has occurred, in order to provide a dedicated funding source related to park development and maintenance.

GOAL. Address accessibility including park visitors with disabilities.

POLICY. Identify ADA access needs within and to City parks and make improvements.

POLICY. Work with Public Works to develop an ADA Transition Plan for the City that includes ADA access needs identified in this master plan.

POLICY. Ensure that pocket parks and neighborhood parks have access from local streets and residential collectors, community parks have access from arterial roadways or major collectors; and, regional parks have access to state highways or are located along an arterial roadway with proximity to a state highway.

POLICY. Pursue service area standards based on the following distance criteria for each park classification:

- Pocket Park: one-quarter mile radius;
- Neighborhood Park: one-half mile radius; and
- Community Park: one- to two-mile radius preferred, up to three-mile radius acceptable.

9.2 - Opportunities: Renovations and New Facilities

The city has over 264 acres of existing parks, trails, and facilities. Many parks need playground equipment, picnic table, and bench replacements, parking lot improvements, park identification signage and rules signage, landscape replacement, and turf and irrigation

management. In other parks, better access/sidewalks are needed and safety features such as lighting or fencing may be required. These renovations and improvements are identified in Table 9-1. Many of the needed improvements were identified on site tour, discussions with Parks and Recreation staff, and input from the Community.

9.3 - Prioritization

Prioritization of city parks, trails, and facilities is based on several factors:

- Urgent need, outdated or unsafe areas or equipment;
- Extensive/popular public use;
- History of vandalism;
- Input from the community;
- Input from City Parks and Recreation Staff; and
- Visual tour of all facilities.

Two facilities, Downtown Aquatic Center and Regional Sports Complex, are not included in the priority tables but a cost for each can be identified and the City will need to determine their priority based on available funding and grant opportunities. Land acquisition costs are not included. Those facilities are:

- **Downtown Aquatic Center:** \$12 million to \$20 million including design and engineering fees depending on the desired facilities. Staffing costs not included; and
- **Regional Sports Complex:** Based on comparable facilities in the central valley (i.e., Riverway Sports Park, Visalia), an average cost of \$185,000 to \$200,000 per acre including design and engineering fees. Staffing costs not included.

Tables 9-1 through 9-3 identify a listing of park renovations and improvements as ranked by high, medium, and low priority. The park name is identified in the first column as well as a list of recommended renovations and/or improvements. An estimated cost for the entire park project is identified in the column to the right. A detailed itemization of individual costs for each proposed renovation/improvement is located in the appendices. When determining costs for replacement playground equipment, consider the size of the desired playground. Medium to large playground equipment would cost between \$50,000 and \$80,000. Large themed playground equipment would cost at least \$100,000. All parks also require shade trees and ID and rules signage. Nearly all parks within the City of Los Banos Parks and Recreation Division have no park identification sign or monument or park rules signage. All parks should include a park identification sign or monument and a park rules sign. The cost for signage for all parks is \$150,000.

The Priorities Tables are meant to be flexible. The City may consider, at any time, that any one park may need to take priority over another park based on a number of factors such as timing for a grant, concerns and changing needs by local residents, available funding, and so on.

**Table 9-1
Projects for Existing Facilities – High Priority**

Recommendations	Estimated Costs	Notes
<p>7th Street Ballpark</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install landscaping, turf and shade trees • Install 1,200-linear feet DG Sidewalk 3-sides • Slurry seal and restripe parking lot • Install shade trees along 7th Street • If funding is available, consider new concrete sidewalks 	<p align="center">\$125,250</p>	<p>Includes \$28,750 for new sidewalks if funding becomes available</p>
<p>Ag Sports Complex</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ballfields (one synthetic turf field) • Install park ID, marquee, and rules signs • Demolish batting cages • Loop trail • Overflow Parking • Slurry seal and restripe parking lot • Replace outfield nets • Restroom and Concession stand • Playground equipment 	<p align="center">\$2.2 million</p>	
<p>Big Page Park</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install park rules signs • Install 2 picnic tables and 2 benches • Install new irrigation • Install 445LF fencing along West I Street 	<p align="center">\$52,700</p>	
<p>City Park on Ninth Street</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install 6 benches, 2 picnic tables, two trash containers, 2 barbecues • Install volleyball court • Install 550LF concrete sidewalk • Install park ID and rules signs 	<p align="center">\$78,925</p>	<p>Playground to be replaced Fall, 2020. Not included in estimate.</p>
<p>Cresthills Park</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install concrete sidewalk around 2 sides park perimeter • Install restrooms • Install pavers at empty tree well • Install park amenities such as one trash can, landscaping along Pioneer Road, and repaint fence • Stripe court for pickleball • Grade for low spots in baseball field 	<p align="center">\$221,500</p>	

Recommendations	Estimated Costs	Notes
<p>Citrus Terrace I Park</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replace wood fencing • Remove sand and install wood fiber surface • Install 3 benches, 2 picnic tables • Install park ID and rules sign • Install grass volleyball • Install 30LF concrete sidewalk from Citrus Avenue to playground 	<p>\$50,500</p>	
<p>Colorado Ball Park</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Renovate tennis courts and install new fencing • Install skatepark • Add playground with shade structure(s) • Slurry seal and restripe parking lot • Renovate restrooms and concession stand • Install park ID and rules signs • Install lighting at parking lot, tennis courts, and skatepark • Slurry seal and restripe parking lot • Install picnic pavilion and tables • Install playground • Create 600LF bioswale to Colorado Avenue • Renovate 3 ballfields and install new irrigation • Install 275LF concrete sidewalk from street to bullpen and tennis courts • Install 14,000SF landscaping between Colorado Avenue and ballfields and parking lot 	<p>\$2,058,312</p>	
<p>Davis Park</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replace play equipment • Install three picnic tables, three barbecues, two trash containers, • Install park ID and rules sign • Install sidewalk from Santa Maria to Santa Rita (200LF) 	<p>\$121,500</p>	
<p>Jo-Lin Park</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install 300LF concrete sidewalk from B Street to Greenbriar Drive <p>Install six picnic tables, six barbecues, six benches, and 3 trash containers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install two basketball/pickleball courts 	<p>\$206,550</p>	<p>Recreation amenity such as basketball courts</p>

Recommendations	Estimated Costs	Notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install 760LF fencing along Ward Road and B Street • Install 40 shade trees 		
<p>Little Page Park</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Playground replacement 	\$45,000	
<p>Pacheco Park</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed facilities listed in the Appendix 	\$7,385,445	See Appendix
<p>Regency D Park</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slurry seal and restripe 12,670SF parking lot • Install park ID and rules signs • Install up to 100 shade trees 	\$99,925	
<p>Skylark Park and Expansion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install 425LF sidewalk from Meadowlark Street to parking lot • Slurry seal and restripe parking lot • Install 750LF asphalt trail • Install two picnic shelters at picnic table pads • Install two picnic tables, two barbecues, six benches, two trash containers, on west side of park in expansion area • Install new irrigation, turf, and 40 trees • Install park ID (2) and rules (2) signs 	\$190,500	
<p>Vineyard Basin C Park</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reseed/resod where needed • Finish 225LF sidewalk • Install 1,525LF loop trail • Install playground • Install park amenities such as four picnic tables, four barbecues, four benches, trash container, drinking fountain, and shade trees • Install 270LF fencing along Monterey St. 	\$404,581	

**Table 9-2
Projects for Existing Facilities – Medium Priority**

Recommendations	Estimated Costs	Notes
<p>College Greens Park</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install restrooms • Add shade trees southwest corner • Add court lighting • New irrigation and landscaping • Install 290LF concrete sidewalk from parking lot to volleyball and basketball • Install two picnic tables east side of park • Install park ID and rules signs • Slurry seal and restripe 11,000SF parking lot 	\$149,925	
<p>Gardens I Park</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install new play equipment • Install 2 picnic tables, 2 barbecues, 3 benches, 2 trash containers • Install 200LF concrete sidewalk from Alberta St to I Street • Install 340LF fencing along both streets 	\$159,700	
<p>HG Fawcett Canal Trail and Wolfsen Park</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asphalt trail • Install park amenities such as shade trees, benches, trash containers, signage, and dog stations 	\$40,000	
<p>Rail Trail Extensions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install 2,740LF asphalt trail from SR 152 to Place Road • Install four benches • Install two trash containers • Install ID and rules signs • Install 40 shade trees 	\$107,775	

Recommendations	Estimated Costs	Notes
<p>Oliveira Soccer Park</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install park ID and rules signs • Resod areas where needed (TBD or 2,500SY to 12,500SY) • Install 225LF fencing along S. Ortigalita Road • Slurry seal and restripe 12,500SF parking lot • Replace nets along Travertine Way • Install shade structure over picnic table grouping (approximately 1,100SF) • Install 12 shade trees • Install 4,275SF landscaping and mulch along Cardoza Road 	<p>\$199,544</p>	
<p>Vineyard Basin A Park</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install park ID and rules signs • Install 2,500SF landscaping between street and parking lot • Install 25 shade trees • Install 1,800LF loop asphalt trail • Install exercise equipment (12 components) • Slurry seal and restripe 18,000SF parking lot • Reseed approximately 22,000SY • Install new irrigation 	<p>\$223,125</p>	
<p>Vineyard Basin B Park</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install park ID and rules signs • Slurry seal and restripe 10,500SF parking lot • Install shade structure over concrete picnic pad • Install shade sails at playground • Install 1,800LF asphalt loop trail • Install 12 exercise stations • Install basketball court • Install lighting • Install fencing along playgrounds • Install 30 shade trees 	<p>\$266,375.00</p>	

**Table 9-3
Projects for Existing Facilities – Low Priority**

Recommendations	Estimated Costs	Notes
Airport Park <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No renovations identified 	N/A	
Catholic Park <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Install 235LF concrete sidewalk Install 2 benches, 2 picnic tables, and park ID and rules signs Replace play equipment 	\$129,512	
Citrus Terrace II Park <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Install two 40LF concrete sidewalks to playground Install park ID and rules signs Install 9,600SF landscaping south and north property lines Install 470LF fencing along both streets 	\$73,600	
Dos Amigos Park <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Install fencing along San Luis Way, Pismo Way, and Huntington Way Install park ID and rules signs Replace swings Install 3 benches Install four shade trees 	\$37,100	
Flagpole Park <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Install 200SF landscaping around City organizations sign 	\$850	
Gardens III Park <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replace play equipment Install wood Fibar Install two picnic tables Install park ID and rules signs Install 6 shade trees 	\$125,400	
Gardens V Basin Park <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Install ID and rules signs Install 2 barbecues Install ten benches Install exercise equipment on north end of park along trail Install shade sail over playgrounds 	\$154,000	

Recommendations	Estimated Costs	Notes
Henry Miller Plaza <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No renovations needed as this time 	N/A	No improvements at this time
Meadowlands I Greenway <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No renovations needed at this time 	\$28,000	
Meadowlands I Park <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Install 235 LF fencing Install 6 shade trees Install lighting Install park ID and rules signs 	\$177,425	
Meadowlands II Park <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Install 16,000SF of landscaping and trees and mulch with new irrigation Install park ID and rules sign Slurry seal and restripe 9,700SF parking lot Reseed 95,000SF turf and new irrigation 	\$200,000	
Meadowlands III Park <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Install 5 picnic tables, 5 barbecues, 5 trash containers Recreation Amenity to be determined 	\$200,000	
Meadowlands III Basin Park <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Slurry seal and restripe parking lot Install park ID and rules signs 3,14LF DG trail Install 6 barbecues Install exercise stations Install playground 	\$409,425	
Neighborhood Park (Sandstone Park) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Install park ID and rules sign Install 170LF fencing along Mayweed Drive 	\$16,500.00	
Oliveira Courtyard <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Install 2 picnic tables Install park ID and rules signs 	\$13,000	
Orchard Terrace Park <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Install park ID and rules signs Install 20 shade trees 	\$13,000	
Page Avenue Extension <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Install 1,200LF asphalt trail Install forty shade trees Install 2 benches, 2 trash containers, one dog station 	\$70,500	

Recommendations	Estimated Costs	Notes
Presidential Park <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install picnic table and 3 benches • Install park ID and rules signs • Install 1,00SF landscaping • Grind and remove tree stump and install new shade tree 	\$17,750	
Rancho dos Amigos Greenway Park <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1,365LF asphalt trail • Install four benches • Install 20 shade trees 	\$58,244	
Ranchwood Park <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install four picnic tables • Install 20 shade trees • Install park rules sign • Slurry seal and restripe parking lot • Install 3,500SF landscaping and irrigation west of parking lot • Install basketball and sand volleyball courts • Install 435LF asphalt trail along the west side of park from Driftwood Avenue to basketball courts 	\$106,381	
Regency Tot Lot <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install shade trees • Install one picnic table • Install park ID and rules signs 	\$62,500.00	
Talbott Basin Park <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install park ID and rules signs • Install picnic tables with concrete pad and shade structure 	\$58,244	
Verona Basin Park <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install park ID and rules signs • Install restrooms • Install additional recreation amenity or amenities • Reseed fields and new irrigation (approximately 20,000SY) • Install 30 shade trees • Stripe basketball court 	\$547,000	
Veterans Memorial <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install bollard lights • Install 5,000Sf landscaping 	\$26,250	

Recommendations	Estimated Costs	Notes
Village Park <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Install park ID and rules signs 	N/A	No improvements at this time

9.4 - Facility Needs Summary

This section is a key portion of the Master Plan that brings together information from various public and staff input, as well as other relevant studies and analyses, and distills them into a broader overall picture of recreation in the form of recreation facilities that can support the needs of the residents of Los Banos to achieve the community vision, goals, and policies of the Master Plan. Since all the needs’ identification tools are directly or indirectly based on input from community residents, it is fair to assume that all of the needs identified are significant and important to some portion of the community. However, it is helpful to determine which needs have the highest priority level as perceived by the information collected. Input is derived from community surveys, stakeholder interviews, and listening to the public. Input is also gathered by comparing the City of Los Banos parks needs with guidelines and similar community data.

The Facility Needs Summary establishes relative priorities; the more input on a particular need identified by the public, the higher the ranking. From this list, the facility needs are (in order of highest priority):

1. Skatepark (Action Sportspark)
2. Tie: Splash Park & Pickleball/Bocce/Chess Tables and Similar Games
3. Tie: Outdoor Pool & Indoor Pool
4. Soccer Fields
5. Baseball Fields
6. More Trails
7. Community Gardens



Example: Lowell Community Garden, Fresno, California. Gardens can be a place where all ages can participate and learn.

A skatepark, tennis courts/pickleball courts, baseball fields could be achieved by renovating Colorado Ballpark. Soccer fields and baseball fields could be achieved through a Regional Sports Complex. The Regional Complex could also include an Aquatics Center or as a standalone facility near the Los Banos Community Center. Trails can be achieved by following recommendations from the Bicycle Plan. Many capital items can be funded by pursuing grants.

9.5 - Budget and Funding Analysis

9.5.1 - PARK ACQUISITION GUIDELINES

Neighborhood parks should be centrally located within the neighborhood it serves. Vehicular access should be provided through local neighborhood streets or residential collectors. Citizens should be able to walk to these parks without having to cross a major arterial street.

The quality of the available land for the uses anticipated should play a defining role in locating potential community park sites. They should be located adjacent to a major arterial or other collector street to provide easy vehicular as well as pedestrian and other multi-modal access. The proximity of other park types should also be considered as the types of activities found in a community park may overlap with other park functions. The service area for these other park types may be used, in part, as justification for or against a community park in a specific area.

Regional park facilities, because they span many jurisdictions, should be acquired jointly with other agency support when feasible, such as the County of Merced or other adjacent jurisdictions. The quality of the available land for the uses anticipated should play a defining role in locating potential regional park sites. They should be situated such that needed infrastructure could be developed or already exists to support a large number of visitors, including major arterials, buses and other mass transit capabilities. They should also have access to multi-modal connections.

9.5.2 - COST PROJECTIONS

Cost Projections for each of the park improvements identified in Section 9.3 are located in Tables 9-1 to 9-3. Cost data may vary based on cost of labor, time of construction, materials, equipment, various contractor methods of determining prices, the competitive bidding environment, and market conditions. The opinion of probable project construction cost provided herein has been made based on reasonable practice experience and represents best judgment as design professionals familiar with the construction industry. The Opinion of Probable Improvement Cost (OPIC) is subject to change based on revised quantities or changes in cost data. The estimate is not a guarantee that construction costs, bids or other costs will not vary from the OPIC contained herein. Prices may also vary depending on whether work is done by inhouse staff or a hired contractor.

**Table 9-4
Cost Assumptions for New Park Development Project Cost/Unit***

Project	Cost per Unit
Land Acquisition	\$60,000/acre
Planning and Design	
• Neighborhood or Pocket Park	\$25,000
• Community Park	\$50,000
Park Development	
• Neighborhood Park	\$375,000–\$550,000/acre
• Community Park	\$200,000–\$300,000/acre
• Regional Park	\$175,000–\$185,000/acre
• Trail System	\$150,000–\$300,000/mile
Additional Costs	
• Administration Fees	6% of development costs
• Architecture/Engineering	12% of development costs
• Contingency	15% of development costs

Source: Various. Notes: Should assume 4% annual inflation

9.5.3 - FUNDING

In order to continue to build and maintain a vibrant parks and recreation system, a sound and strategic funding strategy must be developed to fulfill the capital improvement and operational costs considerations of this Master Plan. Fiscally sustainable and realistic funding sources are essential to implementing a capital improvement plan and there are significant existing funding sources to fund the capital improvement and operational costs. These sources include public sector grants, fees and tax measures, assessment districts, non-traditional methodologies as well as a wide range of private and corporate foundation sources. The following is a comprehensive overview of those potential sources and funding mechanisms.

State of California Grant Programs

The State of California offers a wide range of grant opportunities designed to fund municipal parks and recreation needs. Many are directed only towards parks and related activity needs while some have a primary goal of other community needs, such as water conservation, but can be leveraged to support a park's need. Some are funded through bond issues passed by the legislature or electorate, some through general fund revenue, and others as a pass through of Federal funding programs. The following is a brief synopsis of those programs and their websites to obtain:

STATEWIDE PARK PROGRAM (SPP) – FOUR CYCLES FROM PROPOSITIONS 86 AND 68

[https://www.parks.ca.gov/pages/1008/files/Final_Prop. 68 SPP Application Guide 1.22.2019.pdf](https://www.parks.ca.gov/pages/1008/files/Final_Prop.68_SPP_Application_Guide_1.22.2019.pdf)

This competitive program will create new parks and new recreation opportunities in underserved communities across California. Assembly Bill 31, which created the SPP, was

signed into law on September 30, 2008. Funding for the grant program was first made available through the Proposition 86. Prop. 84 funded two rounds. Under the two Prop. 84 rounds, \$2.9 billion was requested for \$368 million in funding. Over one hundred new parks were created and twenty existing parks were improved. California. Subsequently, Prop 68, passed in 2018, has facilitated one round and another slated for 2021.

PER CAPITA PROGRAM: \$185,000,000 - FROM PROP 68

https://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=30095

Funds are available for local park rehabilitation, creation, and improvement grants to local governments on a per capita basis. Grant recipients are encouraged to utilize awards to rehabilitate existing infrastructure and to address deficiencies in neighborhoods lacking access to the outdoors. These funds will be available for Per Capita grants to cities and districts in urbanized counties (a county with a population of 500,000 or more) providing park and recreation services within jurisdictions of 200,000 or less in population.

RECREATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE REVENUE ENHANCEMENT (RIRE) PROGRAM - FROM PROP 68

https://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=30162

Funds are available for local governmental agencies that have obtained voter approval between November 1, 2012, through November 30, 2018, for revenue enhancement measures aimed at improving and enhancing local or regional park infrastructure. Funds will be awarded proportionally based on population, with a minimum award of \$250,000. Local agencies that have obtained voter approval between November 1, 2012, through November 30, 2018, inclusive, for revenue enhancement measures aimed at improving and enhancing local or regional park infrastructure.

REGIONAL PARK PROGRAM – FUNDING FROM PROP 68

https://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=29940

Competitive grants will create, expand, or improve regional parks and regional park facilities. Eligible Projects includes acquisition for new or enhanced public access and use, development to create or renovate trails, with preference given to multiuse trails over single-use trails, regional sports complexes, visitor and interpretive facilities, and other types of recreation and support facilities in regional parks.

CA RURAL RECREATION AND TOURISM PROGRAM – CA PARKS AND RECREATION DEPT

[https://www.parks.ca.gov/pages/1008/files/Rural Recreation and Tourism Program Application Guide 7.1.2019 Draft.pdf](https://www.parks.ca.gov/pages/1008/files/Rural_Recreation_and_Tourism_Program_Application_Guide_7.1.2019_Draft.pdf)

A new program funded under Proposition 68, competitive grants will create new recreation opportunities in support of economic and health-related goals in rural communities. Projects must be located in nonurbanized counties with populations of less than 500,000 people and low population densities per square mile, as determined by the Department.

GREENHOUSE GAS REDUCTION FUND (GGRF)

<http://www.caclimateinvestments.ca.gov/about-cci>

The GGRF provides new state revenues created from the cap-and-trade auction for the purchase of allowances to emit GHGs. Revenues from the cap-and-trade auctions are deposited into the state's Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (GGRF), which are been appropriated on an annual basis.

This year, two bills worked together to enact the \$1.5 billion GGRF expenditure plan. Together, they appropriate funding for many priorities, including the new air quality program enacted by AB 617, healthy forests and fire protection, vehicle replacement programs, Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities program, transit capital and operations. A number of these programs can be leveraged to include parks related infrastructure.

Federal Grant Programs**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANTS – HUD CDBG**

https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/comm_planning/communitydevelopment/

The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program is a flexible program that provides communities with resources to address a wide range of unique community development needs. Beginning in 1974, the CDBG program is one of the longest continuously run programs at HUD. The CDBG program provides annual grants on a formula basis to 1209 general units of local government and States.

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE -OUTDOOR RECREATION- ACQUISITION, DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING GRANT

<https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1207/orlp-grants-2019.htm>

To provide financial assistance to the States and their political subdivisions for the preparation of Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plans (SCORPs) and acquisition and development of outdoor recreation areas and facilities for the general public, to meet current and future needs.

FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION RECREATIONAL TRAILS PROGRAM – RTP

https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/recreational_trails/

This program was created to fund construction and rehabilitation of trails for both motor and non-motorized usage. Although the program does not typically fund fitness equipment by itself, this can be included as a component of the overall project. There is a matching fund component to the grant, which can vary by state.

FEDERAL LANDS-TO-PARKS PROGRAM (FLP)

<https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1508/index.htm>

The National Park Service's Federal Lands to Parks Program assist communities in creating new parks and recreation areas. They accomplish this by transferring surplus Federal land to state and local governments. The program helps to ensure that public access to properties and stewardship of those properties' natural, cultural and recreational resources. The Federal Lands to Parks Program assists communities in acquiring land from the federal government. They advocate on behalf of each community by ensuring they acquire the appropriate land as well as making certain of its permanent public recreational use.

FEDERAL-AID HIGHWAY PROGRAM (NATIONAL)

National Highway System funds may be used to construct bicycle transportation facilities and pedestrian walkways on land adjacent to any highway on the National Highway System, including Interstate highways. Surface Transportation Program (STP) funds may be used for either the construction of bicycle transportation facilities and pedestrian walkways, or non-construction projects (such as maps, brochures, and public service announcements) related to safe bicycle use and walking.

Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program funds may be used for either the construction of bicycle transportation facilities and pedestrian walkways, or non-construction projects (such as maps, brochures, and public service announcements) related to safe bicycle use. Recreational Trails Program funds may be used for all kinds of trail projects.

LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND

https://www.nps.gov/ncrc/programs/lwcf/contact_list.html

The LWCF program gives matching grants to States and local governments to acquire and develop public outdoor recreation areas and facilities. The program's intent is to create and maintain a legacy of high-quality recreational areas and facilities and to stimulate non-federal investments to protect and maintain recreational resources across the United States.

TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM (TAP)

<https://www.adaptationclearinghouse.org/resources/fhwa-transportation-alternatives-program.html>

The Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act authorized the Transportation Alternatives Program to fund programs and projects defined as transportation alternatives. This would include on and off road facilities, community improvement activities, and recreational trails programs.

Benefit Assessment Districts

Assessment districts have been in use in California for the past 150 years. Local agencies, including cities, counties, and special districts, may establish assessment districts for the

purposes of financing all or a portion of the cost of certain public improvements and services such as parks and related facilities. Each property within an assessment district is assessed an amount sufficient to cover the proportional cost of the special benefit that it receives from the improvements or services that are paid for by the assessment. The following are some examples of assessment districts and their specific provisions:

MELLO-ROOS COMMUNITY FACILITIES DISTRICTS

The Mello-Roos Community Facilities Act of 1982 permits cities to establish a Mello-Roos Community Facilities District (a “CFD”) which allows for financing of 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.

A CFD is created by a sponsoring local government agency. The proposed district will include all properties that will benefit from the improvements to be constructed or the services to be provided. A CFD cannot be formed without a two-thirds majority vote of residents living within the proposed boundaries. Or, if there are fewer than 12 residents, the vote is instead conducted of current landowners. In many cases, that may be a single owner or developer. If bonds are issued by the CFD, special taxes will be charged annually until the bonds are paid off in full. Often, after bonds are paid off, a CFD will continue to charge a reduced fee to maintain the improvements

PROPERTY AND BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

In California alone, more than 100 property and business improvement districts have been formed. These districts are found in downtowns, industrial areas, commercial corridors, and shopping destinations. Property districts place an assessment on property owners within a distinct downtown or commercial area. The assessment is collected by the local government – but unlike property taxes, the assessment money cannot be used by the local government for general purposes; instead, it must be used for specific services and improvements desired by the property owners.

To form a BID, the city or county will propose a new district by adopting a resolution of intention. Types of improvements and activities to be financed are specified at this time. Then, public notice must be provided, and a public hearing will be held. If not protested by a majority of businesses, the BID is established, and an advisory board is appointed. Formation of a 1994 Act BID has stricter requirements including the mailing of individual notices to all business owners who would be affected, in addition to public notices published in local newspapers. Once formed, the BID is limited to those types of improvements or activities that were specified during formation.

COMMUNITY BENEFIT DISTRICT

In some cities, property and business improvement districts go by the name community benefit district. Typically, a community benefit district is created by local, rather than state,

legislation. Like property and business improvement districts, community benefit districts place an assessment on property owners that is used to fund ongoing services and improvements and must be periodically renewed with property owner approval.

LANDSCAPE & LIGHTING DISTRICT / MAINTENANCE ASSESSMENT DISTRICT

Some property improvement districts are formed with a limited purpose. Landscape and lighting districts are one such type of district. Landscape and lighting districts place an assessment on property owners in a commercial or residential area. The assessment is collected by the local government – but unlike property taxes, the assessment money cannot be used by the local government for general purposes; instead, it must be used for specific services and improvements desired by the property owners.

The City of Los Banos has 18 Landscape and Lighting Districts. While much of the funding covers landscape irrigation improvements and landscape repairs, a picnic arbor was installed at Cresthills Park in 2018 and new playground equipment was installed at Citrus II Park in 2020.

MULTI-FAMILY IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

The multi-family improvement district is another specialized property district. Based closely on property and business improvement districts, multi-family improvement districts focus on providing services to apartments, condominiums, mobile home parks, and similar high-density residential facilities. The district places an assessment on these properties – and any intermingled commercial properties – to fund security, maintenance, tenant attraction, marketing and improvements.

Tax Increment Financing

Designed to replace some of the uses of the old Redevelopment Act, EIFD's provide broad authority for local agencies to use tax increment to finance a wide variety of projects, including parks and open space facilities as well as traditional infrastructure projects. The EIFD provides broad flexibility in what it can fund. No public vote is required to establish an authority, and though a 55 percent vote is required to issue bonds, other financing alternatives exist.

COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION AND INVESTMENT AUTHORITY (CRIA)

The CRIA law authorizes tax increment to be used in combination with the powers of former redevelopment agencies. A CRIA focuses on assisting with the revitalization of poorer neighborhoods and former military bases. Similar in structure and function to redevelopment, a CRIA is more streamlined. Accountability measures are included to ensure that the use of the CRIA remains consistent with community priorities, and a 25 percent set-aside is included for affordable housing

ANNEXATION DEVELOPMENT PLAN (ADP)

ADP authorizes tax-increment financing to be adopted by consenting local agencies (city and/or a county or special district) to improve or upgrade structures, roads, sewer or water facilities or other infrastructure as part of annexing a disadvantaged unincorporated community. An ADP can be implemented by a special district either formed for this purpose or incorporated into the duties of an existing special district.

Local Sales Tax Measures

Local transaction and use taxes, known as sales taxes, are used by local governments to increase revenue and are always in addition to the state-imposed sales tax rate of 7.25 percent. California state law requires a two-thirds (66.67 percent) supermajority vote for approval of tax measures with revenue legally dedicated to a specific purpose. Tax measures designed to deposit revenue into the local jurisdiction's general fund require a simple majority (50% + 1 vote) for approval. Communities have used this method to fund the long-term costs of parks development and operational needs.

MEASURE H SALES TAX

In 2018, the City of Los Banos passed Measure H, a half-cent sales tax addition that will be used to maintain fiscal stability; neighborhood police patrols; police/firefighter recruitment/retention; rapid emergency/medical response times; anti-gang/youth violence prevention programs; pothole/road repairs; answer 911 calls; prevent theft, property, burglary, robbery, auto-related crimes; essential City services; raising approximately \$2,500,000 annually for 15 years, with citizens' oversight, independent audits, and all funds spent locally. Measure H will help maintain the Los Banos police force and the prevention programs that keep kids, neighborhoods, schools, and parks safe.

\$5,625,000, \$375,000 annually) is targeted for Los Banos Parks and Recreation for fifteen years. The funding has and will continue to be used to maintain park safety, cleanliness, and beautification through enhanced park maintenance; and expanded programs and special events that contribute greatly to the quality of life in the community. In addition, the funding will be used to promote health for all generations of residents; provide funding for recreation facilities such as a public pool for the community to use for exercise and play.

PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT (IMPACT) FEES

Development and impact fees are one of many infrastructure financing tools available to cities, to provide a funding mechanism for new public infrastructure and facilities required to serve new development in California communities. Development impact fees are not to be used to fund existing infrastructure deficiencies and are not intended to fund reconstruction of existing infrastructure currently serving existing development.

Under the current law, a development impact fee is a monetary exaction other than a tax or special assessment that is charged by a local governmental agency to an applicant in

connection with approval of a development project for the purpose of defraying all or a portion of the cost of public facilities related to the development project. A development impact fee is not a tax or special assessment; by its definition, a fee is voluntary and must be reasonably related to the cost of the service provided by the local agency.

Non-traditional and Other Funding Sources

There are a wide range of non-traditional revenue streams that can help fund a range of improvement and operational costs of parks development and maintenance. This is an extensive list with a brief explanation for each one.

Business Sponsorships – this revenue source allows businesses to invest in the development or enhancement of new or existing facilities in park systems. Sponsorships are also highly used for programs and events.

Partnerships - Partnerships are joint development funding sources or operational funding sources between two separate agencies, such as two government entities, a non-profit and a City department, or a private business and a City agency. Two partners jointly develop revenue producing park and recreation facilities and share risk, operational costs, responsibilities and asset management, based on the strengths and weaknesses of each partner.

Community Groups - many cities create and support community outreach efforts to develop Friends Groups that sponsor an individual facility, solicit private donations for park programs and facilities and provide volunteer efforts for a wide range of activities.

Specialty Agreements – many communities solicit agreements to grant special benefits to businesses seeking opportunities tied to parks or facilities. These can include naming rights to facilities, pouring rights to facilities providing food related services, dedicated user fees for access to certain facilities, concession management for food and drink related facilities, ticket sales and reservation fees.

Joint Powers Agreements – The city should consider involving school districts, special assessment districts, or the County of Merced to share costs of construction, for the maintenance of recreation facilities such as a regional park. Revenue sources can be a combination of existing tax sources or new sources established on an individual basis.

Bonds – Includes Taxable Municipal, General Obligation (GO), and Limited Obligation Bonds for funding or possible funding of improvements. For example, GO bonds give cities a tool to raise funds for capital improvement projects that are otherwise not funded by City revenue, such as bikeways and trails and parks. As a result, GO bonds are typically used to fund capital improvement projects that will serve the community. If voters approve a bond proposition on an election ballot, the City is authorized to sell bonds up to the amount indicated in the proposition language to fund capital improvement projects that meet the public purpose of that bond proposition. Most bonds for parks are usually issued through the assessment districts that have been created.

Supplier Grants and Contributions

Many suppliers of parks and playground equipment have long-standing programs designed to assist municipalities with the costs of park and playground development and equipment replacement. The actual list of suppliers who participate is lengthy and constantly changing, the following are some prominent ones who have historically assisted California communities:

American Parks Co.

<https://www.americanparkscompany.com/blog/get-grant-money-for-your-playground/>

Baseball Tomorrow

[https://www.mlb.com/mlb-community/?content=programs&program=baseball tomorrow fund](https://www.mlb.com/mlb-community/?content=programs&program=baseball%20tomorrow%20fund)

Fiskars Green Thumb

<https://www.fiskars.com/en-us/special-feature/project-orange-thumb>

Good Sports

<https://www.goodsports.org/frequently-asked-questions/>

Grant Watch Search Engine

<https://www.grantwatch.com/>

Kaboom

https://kaboom.org/?gclid=CjwKCAjwpqv0BRABEiwA-TySwY5-MMm7qBaifd9MXCSfxXroMxVi2dRKAGdtEZi8CjMJ7yQk4MptUBoCPAAQAvD_BwE

Korkat Resource Guide

<https://korkat.com/playground-grants/>

Landscape Structures Inc.

<https://www.playlsi.com/en/playground-planning-tools/playground-funding/online-grant-resources/grant-resources-request-form/>

Lowes Community

https://www.cybergrants.com/pls/cybergrants/ao_survey.form?x_gm_id=3659&x_section_id=1437240&x_quiz_survey_id=47594

National Fitness Campaign

[Fitnesscourt.com/2020-campaign](https://fitnesscourt.com/2020-campaign)

Noah's Play

<https://noahsplay.com/park-and-playground-grants/>

Playworld Playgrounds

<https://playworld.com/grant-guide>

Shade Structures

<https://www.aad.org/public/public-health/shade-structure-grants>

Private and Corporate Foundations

There are tens of thousands of private and corporate foundations who are established solely to grant resources and funding for a wide-reaching universe of causes. Within that wide universe are many who will grant funding for parks and recreation related programs and facilities. These grants can be highly competitive, and all have different criteria, geographic areas served and other qualifying guidelines.

Private foundations are usually established through the bequest of a large source of funds by an individual and family and are designed to make grants with annual proceeds from their core funding. Corporate foundations are established by operating businesses to provide funding for worthy causes in the areas and communities where they may have business operations or a customer base.

Each foundation must be independently researched but the following list includes many who fund parks or outdoor facilities and programs, fund projects within California and have a significant endowment upon which they draw.

An example of a foundation that offers grant funding is the Tony Hawk Foundation. Others listed below can be assessed at the websites identified.

The Tony Hawk Foundation

<https://tonyhawkfoundation.org/skatepark-grants/>

The Tony Hawk Foundation seeks to foster lasting improvements in society, with an emphasis on supporting and empowering youth in disadvantaged communities. In the U.S., the Foundation supports the creation of public skateboard parks that promote healthy, active lifestyles. The principal focus of foundation grants will be to encourage and facilitate the design, development, and construction of new quality skateboard parks and facilities, located in underprivileged communities in the United States. International organizations or those seeking to fund for anything other than the construction of a skateboard park in the U.S. may not apply for a Tony Hawk Foundation grant. Grants may range from \$1,000 to \$25,000 and are based on a one-time, single-year award, although they may be paid over more than one year, if appropriate. The foundation may offer technical assistance on design and construction, promotional materials, and other information. The foundation may also facilitate support from vendors, suppliers, and community leaders. Tony Hawk Foundation offers grants twice a year. Grants are made available approximately every six months and the grant application will be available approximately six weeks prior to each deadline.

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF)

<http://www.rwjf.org/en/grants/what-we-fund.html>

Land trusts play an important role in the conservation and preservation of natural assets in a community. By working with communities to protect green space, land trusts contribute to greater access, increased recreational opportunities, and healthier residents. With park and recreation agencies facing budget cuts as a result of COVID-19, working more effectively with local land trusts can increase a community's capacity to provide additional green space when it is needed most. By leveraging a land trust's special abilities and expertise in areas

such as legal work, fundraising, and real estate transactions, park and recreation agencies and other partners can help to bring important park and trail projects to fruition, which might otherwise have been impossible.

RWJF grants and grant programs generally have three aims:

- **Discover and Explore**—Seeking creative solutions through targeted solicitations and an ongoing request for bold ideas with transformative potential.
- **Spread Model Interventions**—Identifying and expanding public policies, community-based programs, system changes and other interventions that are having a meaningful impact on health.
- **Conduct Research and Evaluation**—Expanding the evidence around key health issues, and evaluating, learning from, and sharing key lessons both from our own grantmaking and from other health-improvement initiatives tied to our areas of interest.

Connected with these objectives, RWJF funds a wide range of activities, including but not limited to:

- Planning and demonstration projects;
- Research and evaluations;
- Policy and statistical analysis;
- Learning networks and communities;
- Public education and strategic communications;
- Community engagement and coalition-building;
- Training and fellowship programs; and
- Technical assistance

In general, the activities supported by RWJF are carried out by public agencies, universities, and public charities that are tax-exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. While we are focused on a healthier U.S., we also fund grants that help us learn from and adapt global innovations.

ACHIEVE Healthy Communities (National)

<http://www.achievecommunities.org/>

Aegon Transamerica Foundation (National)

<http://www.transamerica.com/individual/what-we-do/about-us/aegon-transamerica-foundation>

AETNA Foundation (National)

<http://news.aetnafoundation.org/press-release/foundation/aetna-foundation-opens-call-local-nonprofits-cultivate-healthier-communitie>

Aetna Foundation Obesity Prevention Grant Program (National)

<http://www.aetna-foundation.org/foundation/index.html>

Albertson Foundation (National)

<https://www.jkaf.org/about/>

Allstate (National)

http://www.allstatefoundation.org/foundation_agency_owner.html

American Express (National)

http://about.americanexpress.com/csr/comm_serv.aspx

American Trails (National)

<http://www.americantrails.org/resources/fedfund/index.html>

Art and Mary Schmuckal Family Foundation (National)

<http://www.schmuckalfoundation.org/application>

Bank of America (National)

<http://www.bankofamerica.com/foundation>

Better Cycling Community Grants (National)

http://www.performancebike.com/bikes/Content_10052_10551_-1_CommunityGrants

Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (National)

<http://www.gatesfoundation.org/>

BNSF Railway Foundation (National)

<http://www.bnsffoundation.org/how-to-apply/>

Challenge Cost Share Programs (National)

<http://www.nps.gov/ncrc/programs/ccsp/index.htm>

Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation - Quality of Life Grants (National)

http://www.christopherreeve.org/site/c.ddJFKRNoFiG/b.4435149/k.A6F7/Program_Overview.htm

CSX Beyond Our Rails – Giving Gateway (National)

<http://www.beyondourrails.org/index.cfm/community/giving-gateway/>

CVS Caremark Community Grant (National)

<https://www.cvshealth.com/social-responsibility/our-giving/foundation-giving/community-health-grants>

Darden Restaurants Foundation Grants (National)

<https://www.darden.com/citizenship/people/community-involvement>

Dog Park Fund – My Darling Theo (National)

<http://www.mydarlingtheo.org/dpfhowitworks>

Doris Day Animal Foundation (National)

<http://www.dorisdayanimalfoundation.org/grants>

Dorothy Patterson Foundation/Age Friendly Sarasota (National)

<https://www.thepattersonfoundation.org/age-friendly-sarasota.html>

Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation (National)

<http://www.kauffman.org/>

Ford Foundation (National)

<http://www.fordfoundation.org/grants/organizations-seeking-grants>

Funding Factory (National)

<http://www.fundingfactory.com>

Home Depot – Building Healthy Communities Grant Program (National)

<https://corporate.homedepot.com/grants/community-impact-grants>

KaBoom! Community Partnership Grants (National)

<http://kaboom.org/grants>

Kaiser Permanente (National)

<http://share.kaiserpermanente.org/group/grants/>

Lilly Endowment Fund/GIFT (National)

<https://lillyendowment.org/>

LL Bean Charitable Giving Fund (National)

http://www.llbean.com/customerService/aboutLLBean/charitable_giving.html

Lockheed Martin (National)

<http://www.lockheedmartin.com/us/who-we-are/community/philanthropy.html>

M. Edward Morris Foundation Grants (National)

<http://www.morrisanimalfoundation.org/about-maf/history.html>

Make An Impact (National)

<https://makeanimpactnow.org/>

Mattel Children’s Foundation (National)

<http://corporate.mattel.com/about-us/philanthropy/childrenfoundation.aspx>

May and Stanley Smith Charitable Trust (National)

<http://www.adminitrustllc.com/may-and-stanley-smith-charitable-trust/>

MetLife (National)

<https://www.metlife.com/metlife-foundation/index.html>

Muscle Milk Recovery Grant (National)

<http://www.muslemilkrecoverygrant.com/>

NRPA "Meet me at the Park" (National)

<http://www.nrpa.org/disney>

People for Bikes (National)

<http://www.peopleforbikes.org/pages/grant-guidelines>

Randolph Health Fund (National)

<https://www.randolphhealth.org/foundation/grant-funding/>

SD Bechtel Foundation (National)

<http://sdbjrfoundation.org/the-foundation/>

Shane's Inspiration (National)

<http://www.shanesinspiration.org>

SRAM Cycling Fund (National)

<http://sramcyclingfund.com/process.html>

Surdna Foundation (National)

<http://www.surdna.org/grants/how-to-apply.html>

The Annie E. Casey Foundation (National)

<http://www.aecf.org/>

The Coca-Cola Foundation (National)

<http://www.coca-colacompany.com/stories/community-requests-guidelines-application>

The David & Lucile Packard Foundation (National)

<http://www.packard.org/>

The Finish Line Youth Foundation (National)

<http://www.finishline.com/store/youthfoundation/guidelines.jsp>

The McCormick Communities Program (National)

<http://www.mccormickfoundation.org/grants.aspx>

The Nutro Company ROOM TO RUN Dog Park Appreciation Project (National)

<http://www.nutro.com/about-us/nutro-community-initiatives.aspx>

The Rite Aid Foundation (National)

<https://www.riteaid.com/about-us/rite-aid-foundation>

W.K. Kellogg Foundation (National)

<http://www.wkkf.org/what-we-do/overview>

Zanvyl & Isabelle Krieger Fund (National)

<http://kriegerfund.org/>

Citigroup Foundation Grants - Global (Global)

<http://www.citigroup.com/citi/foundation>

USGA Golf

<https://www.accessgolf.org/grants/>

9.5.4 - PARTNERSHIPS

Opportunities

Additional opportunities exist with Merced County Parks, nonprofit agencies, homeowner associations, colleges and universities, medical centers and hospitals, neighboring community facilities, and private facilities. These groups develop, manage and maintain a variety of programs and sites through independent, collaborative and joint-use initiatives. As a result, Los Banos residents can enjoy greatly expanded and enhanced parks and recreation experiences.

Private Entities

The City should evaluate opportunities to partner with private entities for public use of indoor programming space and gyms. For example, it may be possible to partner with private indoor gyms or sporting facilities to make amenities accessible to the public during certain days or time periods. In return, the City could help fund maintenance and/or upgrades/enhancements to the private facilities if they help meet the City's recreational needs.

Interagency Partnerships

Partnerships between agencies such as Merced County Parks are useful both in terms of providing increased facility access and programming.

Volunteers

Volunteers can increase the quality and quantity of public services at a minimal cost and provide an opportunity for citizens to contribute to the betterment of their community. Some studies suggest that for every \$1 invested in volunteers, a city can realize as much as \$10 in benefits. With limited budgets, more local governments are expanding volunteer programs. Volunteer programs include individuals or groups who agree to take on specific tasks or perform certain services, such as maintenance, restoration, programming, capital development and special event support. Volunteers may provide direct and indirect support to the park system. For example, a volunteer clean-up crew directly saves on paid maintenance tasks. Volunteer safety patrols (community groups) may indirectly reduce facility damage and vandalism, protecting city assets.

Community Organizations

The Parks and Recreation Division may craft agreements with various community organizations (clubs, HOAs, and others) for park improvements and sometimes operations and maintenance. Many park agencies have worked with organizations that have developed facilities such as dog parks, disc golf courses, bicycle skills courses, and conservation projects such as native plant restoration. Community gardens are another type of facility that are often built or operated by community organizations. In some communities, neighborhood groups fund projects such as new playgrounds and sports organizations help fund sports field improvements or in some cases will provide some maintenance.

9.6 - Parks Maintenance and Operations

Continuing to maintain and improve the parks and facilities at the expected high level for residents is costly. Currently there is no reliable source of funding to pay for all of it. The Landscape and Lighting Districts (LLD's) provide funding for parks and recreation. The Ballot Measure H is a half-cent sales tax that provides for some additional funding, but adequate and dedicated funding for maintenance and operations is not readily available. The Parks and Recreation Commission makes recommendations to the City Council for some upkeep and capital repairs every year, but the need for greater funding still exists.

One of the needs identified by the community was the need for clean and well-maintained parks and facilities. Safety and vandalism issues, particularly with homeless and transients, are connected to this maintenance issue as the better maintained and well used parks and facilities are typically less likely to be havens for these populations. Without adequate staffing and funding these needs could not be met.

The City has a large number of parks that are aging (or have aged) and need regular maintenance as well as replacement and improvements to overall amenities and park elements. Some of the work may be able to be funded through general funding, but many of the smaller items like replacement of water fountains, new trash receptacles, and bench or picnic table replacement, are not.

The Parks and Recreation Division will need to closely monitor resources to ensure that the assets of the park system reach the anticipated lifecycles. It is recommended that the Parks Division maintenance funding grow to accommodate new park development in the future. As the system grows, the following guidelines should be utilized to identify annual operational funding required to maintain additional park acreage:

9.6.1 - CIP

In order to continue to build and maintain the parks and recreation system, a number of sound and strategic funding options were identified for the capital improvement projects presented in this plan. Fiscally sustainable and realistic funding sources are essential to implementing a capital improvement plan. There is significant opportunity within existing funding sources to potentially fund much of the capital improvement plan items presented

in this plan. The following describes an approach to identify and allocate funding resources for a capital improvement plan.

What park maintenance costs should be included in a CIP budget and how much should be budgeted for it? Here are cost guidelines that the City of Los Banos might use in order to identify ongoing maintenance costs associated with park facilities.

The Parks and Recreation Division will need to closely monitor resources to ensure that the assets of the park system reach the anticipated lifecycles. It is recommended that the Parks Division maintenance funding grow to accommodate new park development in the future. As the system grows, the following cost guidelines should be utilized to identify annual operational funding required to maintain park facilities. The following table represents the type of costs typically associated with the maintenance of park acreage by classification for a similar Central Valley city.

**Table 9-5
Cost Guidelines per Park Classification¹¹**

Classification	Costs
Pocket Parks	\$10,000–\$12,000 per acre
Neighborhood Parks	\$8,500–\$10,000 per acre
Community Parks	\$7,500–\$9,000 per acre
Regional Sports Parks & Athletic Field Parks	
• Per Rectangular Field	• 12,000 - \$15,000 per rectangular field
• Per Diamond Field	• \$18,000–\$20,000 per diamond field
• Other Facilities	• Other facilities: \$5,000 per acre
Specialty Parks	Costs varies dependent upon amenities
Trails	\$5–\$5,500 per acre

Note: Maintenance costs typically increase 3-4% annually and as high as 6% during a robust economy.

Analysis indicates that current expenditures are not in alignment with best practice costs as recommended in the 2020 NRPA Agency Performance Review. The table below addresses the City of Los Banos’ Fiscal Year 2020 (FY20) budget compared with the recommendations of NRPA.

¹¹ City of Hanford Parks and Recreation Master Plan 2020

**Table 9-6
Comparison of NRPA Standards with Los Banos Standards**

Standard	Los Banos	NRPA
Average # Residents per Park	840 residents per park	2,281 residents per park
Operating Expenditures per capita	\$54.90 per capita	\$81.19 per capita
Parkland per 1,000 residents	6.3 acres	9.9 acres
Typical Agency Operating expenses	\$2,200,222	\$4,342,495
Operating Budget per Acre (Park and Non-park sites)	\$4,103 (park management & maintenance)	\$7,160
Average FTE per Agency	18.5 FTE's	41.9 FTE's
Average FTE per 10,000 City Residents	4.2 FTE's	8.9 FTE's (median) (20,000-49,999 pop.)
Operating Expenses per Employee	\$60,304	\$97,093
Percent of Operating Budget for Staff Expenses	50.7%	54%
Percent of Budget for Management & Maintenance	20.4%	44%
Percent of Budget from LLD's	29%	N/A
Median Five Year CIP Budget	\$2,709,875 based on Capital Budget X 5	\$5,000,000 X 5
Percent of CIP designated for Renovation	NA	50%
Percent of CIP designated for New Development	NA	32%
Percent of Budget from General Fund	20.4%	60%

The information contained is approximate and based on the most recent available information.

SECTION 10 - REFERENCES

- Department of Finance . (2019, May). *E-1 Population Estimates for Cities, Counties, and the State — January 1, 2018 and 2019*. Retrieved from <http://www.dof.ca.gov/Forecasting/Demographics/Estimates/E-1/>
- Open Data Network. (2015, January 1). *Merced County Health*. Retrieved from Open Data Network:
https://www.opendatanetwork.com/entity/0500000US06047/Merced_County_CA/health.health_behaviors.adult_obesity_value?year=2015
- Rogers, P. (2019, May 12). State parks standstill: Why California hasn't opened a new state park in 10 years. *The Mercury News*.
- U.S. Census Bureau. (2017). *American Fact Finder*. Retrieved from Community Facts:
<https://data.census.gov/cedsci/>
- U.S. Census Bureau. (2017). *Financial Characteristics*. Retrieved from U.S. Census Bureau:
<https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=CF>
- U.S. Census Bureau. (2017). *Selected Economic Characteristics*. Retrieved from U.S. Census Bureau:
<https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=CF>
- Zulema Valdez, P. (2016, December 15). *Community Perspectives on Access to and Availability of Healthy Food in Rural, Low-Resource, Latino Communities*. Retrieved from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:
https://www.cdc.gov/pcd/issues/2016/16_0250.htm

APPENDIX A

LOS BANOS CITYWIDE PARKS, TRAILS, AND FACILITIES MAP

APPENDIX B

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW RESULTS

APPENDIX C

WORKSHOP #1 SURVEY RESULTS

APPENDIX D

MEASURE H – LOS BANOS COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS MEMO

APPENDIX E

SURVEY MONKEY SURVEY (AUGUST – SEPTEMBER 2020)

APPENDIX F

DETAILED COST ESTIMATE BY CITY PARK AND PRIORITY

APPENDIX G

PACHECO PARK COST ESTIMATE

APPENDIX H

LOS BANOS PARKS LIST – RECREATION GUIDE