

Introduction

The purpose of the Parks and Recreation Element is to identify and document present park facilities; compare those facilities with current and long-term needs; establish attainable goals to meet the community's recreation needs; and develop and adopt policies and programs that will accomplish those goals.

Standards

The criteria used to determine the size, type and location of parks and recreational facilities include:

- **Park acreage standards** based on acreage per 1,000 residents.
- **Location standards** based on the distance from a neighborhood to either a neighborhood or community park.
- **Neighborhood and Citywide recreational needs** to coordinate park user characteristics with specific types of facilities.

Assessment of San Rafael's Parks and Recreation Needs

Despite an abundance of citywide and regional park and open space land in San Rafael, there are several neighborhoods inadequately served by local recreation facilities. Deficiencies may result from inadequate space, lack of variety of facilities provided, or distance to a park. In San Rafael, space options are limited and cannot be addressed by general standards. The Recreation policies, therefore, include a map and a needs assessment identifying potential areas for recreation improvements.

Recreational programs and park facilities play a critical role in determining our quality of life. The City of San Rafael is committed to ongoing improvements to address the recreational needs of its residents.

San Rafael has a number of new, recently improved and planned recreation facilities:

- New soccer and baseball fields at Pickleweed Park;
- Two softball fields and a new playground at Bernard Hoffman;
- A renovated pool at the Terra Linda Recreation Center;
- Renovated playgrounds at Santa Margarita, Gerstle and Bret Harte Parks;
- Lighted baseball/softball fields at McInnis Park;
- New sections of the Bay Trail network along the Jean and John Starkweather Shoreline Park; and
- A new skate park at McInnis Park.



Children love the new water feature at Freitas Park.

Exhibit 25: Parks and Recreation Facilities in San Rafael

Neighborhood Parks

1. Arbor Park – 0.3 acres
2. Bayside Mini Park – 0.1 acres
3. Beach Park - 0.4 acres
4. Bret Harte Park – 0.5 acres
5. Fred Jensen Park – 0.3 acres
6. Freitas Park – 3.5 acres
7. Hartzell Park – 0.4 acres
8. Hillview Park – 0.2 acres
9. Munson Park – 0.4 acres
10. Oleander Park – 2.0 acres
11. Peacock Gap Park – 7.0 acres
12. Los Ranchitos Park – 2.7 acres
13. Riviera Park – 2.6 acres
14. Russom Park – 7.0 acres
15. San Rafael City Plaza – 0.2 acres
16. Santa Margarita Park – 5.0 acres
17. Schoen Park – 0.1 acres
18. Sun Valley Park – 2.1 acres
19. Victor Jones Park – 7.0 acres

Community Parks

20. Albert Park – 11.5 acres
21. Bernard Hoffman Field – 3.8 acres
22. Boyd Park – 42.0 acres
23. Gerstle Park – 6.0 acres
24. Pickleweed Park – 17.0 acres
25. Jean and John Starkweather Shoreline Park – 20.0 acres

Community Centers

26. Pickleweed Community Center
27. San Rafael Community Center
28. Terra Linda Community Center

San Rafael City School District

29. Bahia Vista Elementary School – 5.0 acres
30. Coleman Elementary School – 4.0 acres
31. Davidson Middle School – 15.3 acres
32. Gallinas Elementary School – 11.2 acres
33. Glenwood Elementary – 24.6 acres
34. Laurel Dell Elementary – 1.2 acres
35. McPhail Elementary School (closed) – 9.8 acres
36. Old Gallinas Elementary School – 7.8 acres
37. San Pedro Elementary – 7.3 acres
38. San Rafael High School – 29.7 acres
39. Short Elementary School – 1.0 acres
40. Sun Valley Elementary – 5.0 acres
41. Terra Linda High School – 30.2 acres

Dixie School District

42. Dixie Elementary School – 11.4 acres
43. Don Timoteo Elementary (leased to St. Mark's School) – 10.0 acres
44. Lucas Valley Elementary (closed) – 10.0 acres
45. Mary Silveira Elementary – 9.9 acres
46. Miller Creek Middle School – 17.0 acres
47. Santa Margarita (leased to Marindale School) – 11.0 acres
48. Vallecito Elementary – 25.0 acres
49. Nova Albion (Dixie School District Offices), Community Garden – 10.4 acres

Marinwood Community Services District

50. Gallinas Ave. Mini Park – 0.1 acres
51. Marinwood Community Center
52. Marinwood Park – 25.0 acres

Lucas Valley Community Service Area

53. Lucas Valley Community Center – 2.0 acres

Marin County

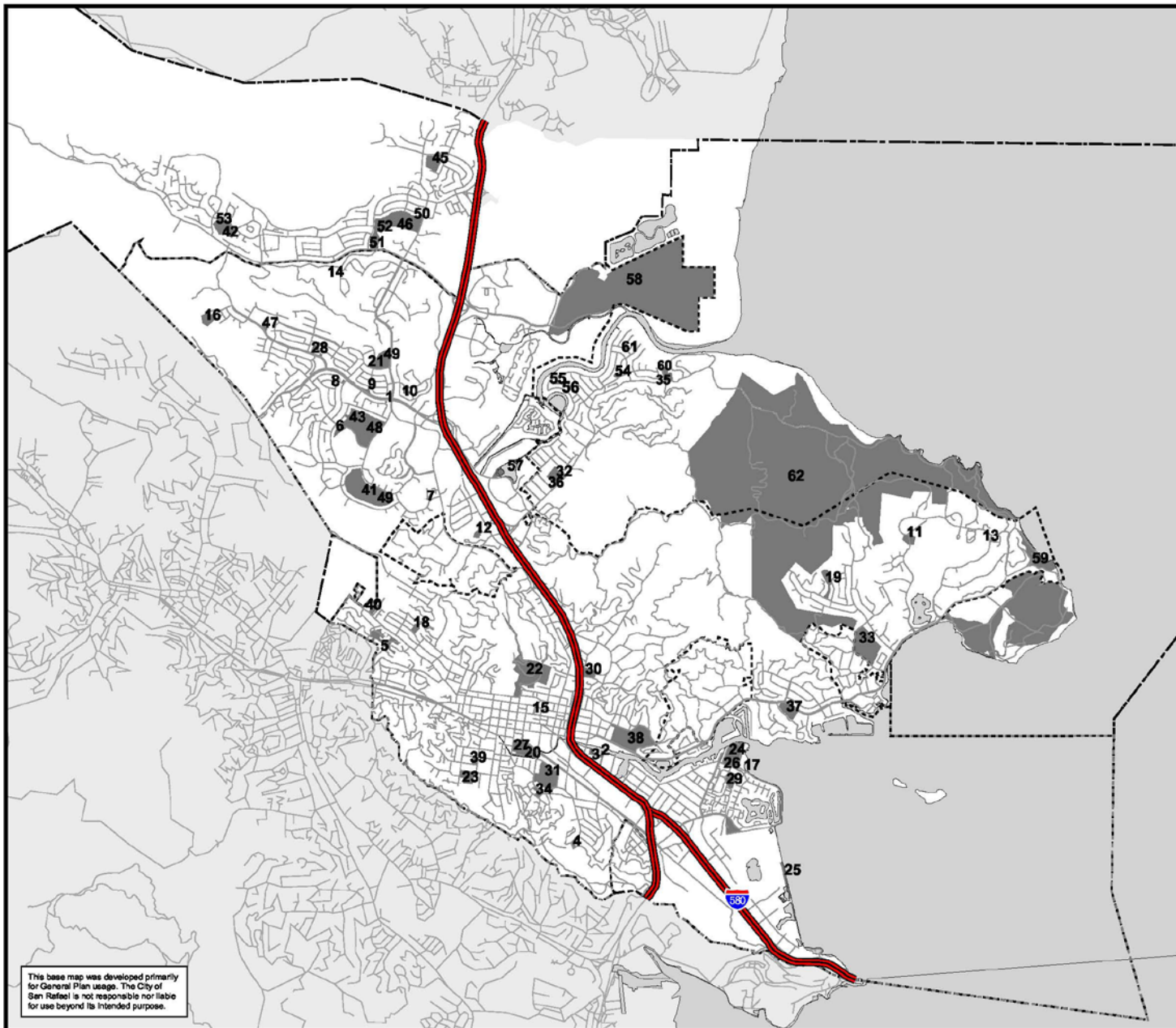
54. Adrian Rosel – 0.7 acres
55. Candy's Park – 1.5 acres
56. Castro Field – 1.5 acres
57. Marin Center – 20 acres
58. McInnis Park – 450 acres
59. McNear's Beach 55 acres
60. McPhail Playfield – 1.5 acres
61. Pueblo Park – 2.0 acres

State Park

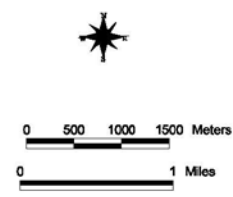
62. China Camp State Park – 1,640 acres

Parks and Recreation Facilities, 2004

 Existing Parks and Recreation Facilities



This base map was developed primarily for General Plan usage. The City of San Rafael is not responsible nor liable for use beyond its intended purpose.



Looking Ahead

The City of San Rafael faces the challenge of adapting and improving its parks and recreation resources to meet the changing needs and priorities of the community. Improvements to consider for the future are as follows:

- Sport fields and facilities.
- Community pool south of Puerto Suello Hill.
- Park upgrades.
- New recreation facilities in neighborhoods deficient in parks.
- Recreation programs and facilities to meet the needs of an increasing senior population.

This element addresses existing sites and possible future sites and opportunities for expanded recreational use. These include local school sites, private schools, county parks, and open space sites. Programs must be developed to address shared capital expense outlay and continuing maintenance costs. This is particularly important in light of past over-use and lack of maintenance resources that resulted in below standard recreational fields.

To maintain the City's public parkland-to-population ratio, developers are expected to dedicate land consistent with the City's standard. Schools contribute an additional 150 acres of existing local recreation facilities, providing most of the City's organized sports facilities. School sites may also be the only remaining land in a neighborhood suitable for intensive recreation use. To maintain levels of recreation service, it is important that the City promote retention of key school recreation facilities, particularly as schools are sold or leased.

The Parks and Recreation Element should be updated during the five-year General Plan review and amended to reflect evolving community recreational needs and resources.

GOAL 29: PARKS AND PROGRAMS FOR ALL

It is the goal for San Rafael to have recreation facilities and programs, parks and playfields for all age groups throughout the community. *San Rafael recognizes the essential nature of Parks and Recreational services to its residents. Numerous parks, public spaces, and playing fields are integral to the life of the City. Recreational facilities and playfield are well maintained and consistently upgraded. Attention to community need generates proposals for new facilities.*

Neighborhood and Community Park Standards and Needs

PR-1. Standards.

Maintain, and where possible exceed, a recreation standard of three acres of park and recreation facilities per 1,000 residents.

PR-1a. Recreation standard. Use the recreation standard when evaluating proposals for new parks. Consider the creation of neighborhood parks of less than three acres when it can be demonstrated that such a facility would satisfy an unmet neighborhood need, provide recreational value and be a sufficient size to support desired infrastructure.

Responsibility: Community Services

Timeframe: Ongoing

Resources: Staff Time, Grants, Fees and Dedications

PR-2. Park Development Criteria.

Use the following criteria as a guide to improving the park system:

- a. Neighborhood parks should serve populations of at least 3,000 within a radius of one-half mile, and have a minimum size of three acres.
- b. Community parks should serve a population of 10,000 to 30,000 within a radius of three to five miles, and have a size of 20 acres or more.

PR-2a. Park Criteria. Use the park development criteria when evaluating proposals for new parks and park improvements.

Responsibility: Community Services

Timeframe: Ongoing

Resources: Staff Time, Grants, Fees

PR-3. Neighborhood Recreational Needs.

Serve all neighborhoods with neighborhood and/or community parks that meet the needs of the community. Priority areas should include Canal, Dominican, and Montecito neighborhoods.

PR-3a. Neighborhood Recreational Needs. Develop individual park plans as opportunities become available, determining cost estimates and priorities.

Responsibility: Community Services

Timeframe: Short Term

Resources: Staff Time, Grants

PR-3b. Parks and Recreation Commission Priorities. On a periodic basis, work with the Parks and Recreation Commission to recommend priorities for park improvements.

Responsibility: Community Services
Timeframe: Ongoing
Resources: Staff Time

PR-4. City Recreational Needs.

Provide opportunities for recreational activities for boys and girls, teens, and adults through the creation of additional facilities such as fields for active sports, a public pool south of Puerto Suello Hill, and a community Senior Center.

PR-4a. All-Weather Fields. Provide cost-effective all-weather fields to optimize year-round use of community sports facilities. As fields are rebuilt, consider the feasibility of using year-round surfaces.

Responsibility: Community Services
Timeframe: Short Term
Resources: Staff Time, Grants, Donations

See also PR-11b (Public Pool) and PR-12a (Senior Facilities).

PR-5. Review of Needs.

Conduct a review of San Rafael's recreational, facility and program needs, as part of the five-year update of General Plan 2020, and amend policies as needed.

PR-5a. Needs Survey. Prepare an updated citywide recreation needs survey to help provide direction for future park and program development.

Responsibility: Community Services
Timeframe: Short Term
Resources: Staff Time, Grants



San Rafael's parks have been improved for safety and accessibility.

Parks and Recreational Facilities

PR-6. Community Center Improvements.

Upgrade or expand San Rafael's community centers to meet the passive and active recreational needs of the population.

- a. **Pickleweed Community Center.** Renovate and expand the facility according to the Pickleweed Expansion Plan (April, 2002).
- b. **San Rafael Community Center.** Complete implementation of the Albert Park Master Plan.
- c. **Terra Linda Community Center.** Prepare a site master plan addressing buildings and grounds.

PR-6a. Community Center Improvements. Prepare plans, seek funding and improve community center facilities

Responsibility: Community Services
Timeframe: Short Term- Pickleweed and San Rafael Centers
Long term-Terra Linda Center
Resources: Staff Time, Grants, Donations

PR-7. Community Park Improvements.

Upgrade San Rafael's community parks to meet the recreational needs of the served population.

- a. **Albert Park.** Complete implementation of the park master plan with the addition of group picnic facilities, basketball court, water play feature and the Downtown Promenade (from Mahon Creek at Albert Park Lane to Andersen Drive with views of Mission San Rafael Archangel).
- b. **Bernard Hoffman.** Complete field improvements and restroom installation.
- c. **Boyd Park.** Implement the Boyd Park Master Plan (including History Museum). Explore uses for vacant parcel on Robert Dollar Drive adjacent to the Park.
- d. **Gerstle Park.** Prepare a master plan that addresses renovation and development needs.
- e. **Pickleweed Park.** Complete construction of the Jean and John Starkweather Shoreline Park around Pickleweed Park.
- f. **Shoreline Park.** Complete implementation of the Jean and John Starkweather Shoreline Park Master Plan, continuing to oversee the development of the privately- and publicly-owned sections of the park consistent with the *San Rafael Shoreline Park Master Plan* and the *Shoreline Enhancement Plan*.



PR-7a. Community Park Improvements. Prepare plans, seek funding and improve community park facilities

Responsibility: Community Services

Timeframe: Short Term: Gerstle Park, Pickleweed Park and Shoreline

Park: Long Term: Albert Park, Bernard Hoffman, and Boyd Park

Resources: Staff Time, Grants, Donations

PR-7b. Marin History Museum. (Deleted per Amendment on 12/5/16)

Shoreline Park has been improved with grants from ABAG and partnerships with the community.

PR-8. Neighborhood Park Improvements.

Upgrade San Rafael's neighborhood parks to meet the recreational needs of the served population.

- a. **Beach Park.** Prepare a master plan prior to expiration of the lease of adjacent City property to the San Rafael yacht Harbor. Consider possible expansion and improvements which would support the proposed Canal Waterway Vision.
- b. **Bret Harte Park.** Complete implementation of the Bret Harte Park Master Plan. Evaluate ways to improve access from the park into hillside open space land to the south to provide picnic and hiking opportunities.
- c. **Freitas Park.** Complete implementation of the Freitas Park Master Plan. Consider the sale of the northern parcel to provide funding for Freitas Park improvements.
- d. **Munson Park.** Improve the park consistent with the recommendations of the *North San Rafael Vision Promenade Conceptual Plan*.
- e. **Peacock Gap Park.** Update the Peacock Gap Park Master Plan as needed to improve trails and access to open space.
- f. **Ranchitos Park.** Build the park as part of approved subdivision improvements.
- g. **Riviera Park.** Improve playground equipment.
- h. **Russom Park.** Prepare a park master plan.

- i. **Santa Margarita Park.** Complete implementation of the Santa Margarita Park Master Plan.
- j. **Schoen Park.** Prepare a park master plan to finalize Shoreline Park link, and to provide appropriate recreation amenities.
- k. **Sun Valley Park.** Complete planned park improvements.

The following parks require no further park improvements at this time. During the five-year General Plan review, they will be assessed to determine if the situation has changed:

Bayside Mini Park	Oleander Park
Beach Park	Terra Linda Park
Hartzell Park	Victor Jones Park

PR-8a. Neighborhood Park Improvements. Prepare plans, seek funding and improve neighborhood park facilities. Encourage partnerships with neighborhood organizations and residents in projects to improve existing parks.

Responsibility: Community Services

Timeframe: Short Term: Bret Harte, Freitas, Ranchitos, Riviera, Santa Margarita,

Schoen and Sun Valley/Long Term: Beach, Munson, Peacock Gap, and Russom Park

Resources: Staff Time, Capital Improvements, Grants, Donations, and Partnerships.

PR-9. New Parks.

Provide additional park sites as identified below. Park sites should be in the service area and designed to meet the needs of the targeted population, giving priority to underserved neighborhoods. If sites are unavailable, consider alternative park sites that are within the vicinity of the service area. Encourage the development of new parks as follows:

- a. **Bellam/Windward Way site.** Prepare a park master plan that responds to the traffic and environmental constraints of the property. Explore passive and active recreational opportunities. Consider development on a portion of the site for private or public non-recreational use if it would benefit the neighborhood and provide funding for park improvements.
- b. **Montecito/Happy Valley.** Pursue opportunities to provide a neighborhood park. Encourage San Rafael High School or School District corporation yard to provide a neighborhood park with play facilities for toddlers and young children. Work with San Rafael City Schools to identify a potential park site.
- c. **Dominican.** Pursue opportunities to provide a neighborhood park and/or recreation facilities in Dominican/Black Canyon. For example, encourage Dominican University to provide a neighborhood park and/or access to recreational facilities. Work with Dominican University in conjunction with the future Master Plan to identify potential park and/or recreational facilities.
- d. **Lincoln/San Rafael Hill.** Pursue opportunities to provide a neighborhood park in the Lincoln/San Rafael Hill neighborhood.
- e. **Unincorporated Areas.** Encourage the County to provide on-site recreation facilities in new subdivisions due to their low-density character (i.e., lack of population to support additional public neighborhood park facilities) and the distance to existing neighborhood park and school facilities.

PR-9a. New Parks. Prepare plans, seek funding and create new neighborhood park facilities.

Responsibility: Community Services

Timeframe: Ongoing: Unincorporated areas/Long Term: Montecito/Happy Valley and Dominican

Resources: Staff Time, Grants, Donations

See NH-62 (Park and Recreation) and NH-124 (Improved Recreation).

PR-10. Onsite Recreation Facilities.

Require onsite recreation facilities in new multifamily residential projects and encourage construction of onsite recreation facilities in existing multifamily residential projects, where appropriate.

PR-10a. Onsite Recreation Facilities.

Continue to implement zoning regulations to require appropriate recreational facilities.

Responsibility: Community

Development

Timeframe: Ongoing

Resources: Fees



PR-11. Public Pools.

Address the need for more public pools south of Puerto Suello Hill in San Rafael.

PR-11a. High School and University Pools (Deleted per Amendment on 12/5/16)

PR-11b. Public Pool. Explore opportunities to construct a year-round pool in central San Rafael.

Responsibility: Community Services

Timeframe: Long Term

Resources: Staff Time, Grants, Donations

PR-12. Senior Recreational Facilities.

Provide dedicated facilities for senior recreational activities.

PR-12a. Senior Facilities. Identify a site(s) and seek funding for senior recreational facilities.

Responsibility: Community Services

Timeframe: Long Term

Resources: Staff Time, Grants, Donations

See PR-4. (City Recreational Needs).

The Terra Linda pool was renovated in 2002.

PR-13. Commercial Recreation.

Encourage private sector development of commercial recreational facilities to serve community needs by:

- a. Permitting compatible commercial concessions at community and regional parks to provide sources of funding for public parks.
- b. Encouraging major employers to provide for the recreational needs of their employees on site or in conjunction with City recreation facilities or programs.
- c. Encouraging commercial recreational facilities open to the general public.

PR-13a. Commercial Recreation. Consider amending the zoning ordinance to allow a floor area ratio exemption for on-site recreational facilities open to the public.

Responsibility: Community Development

Timeframe: Short Term

Resources: Staff Time

PR-14. Amateur Multi-sport Athletic Fields.

Strive for the development of publicly or privately funded, large multi-sport athletic field clusters to address the needs of the community.

PR-14a. Athletic Fields. Explore opportunities to construct multi-sport athletic fields in San Rafael.

Responsibility: Community Services

Timeframe: Long Term

Resources: Staff Time, Grants

PR-15. Downtown Recreation.

Encourage the creation of recreational facilities and gathering places open to the public, such as plazas, green spaces, and unexpected places such as the alley improvements behind Art Works Downtown.

See LU-2a (Development Review).

PR-16. Community Gardens.

Continue to support and maintain community gardens and look for ways to sustain the gardens.

PR-16a. Community Gardens. (Revised as SU-8c. Community Garden Standards)

PR-17. Park Design.

Design recreation facilities to be safe, attractive and easy-to-maintain in order to minimize conflicts with surrounding neighborhoods and to protect sensitive natural resource areas.

PR-17a. Park Plan Review. Work with qualified landscape architects, the Design Review Board, the Parks and Recreation Commission, and the Planning Commission when preparing and reviewing park master plans and designing park improvements. Review park plans and projects similar to the level of design review required of privately developed recreational facilities.

Responsibility: Community Services, Community Development

Timeframe: Ongoing

Resources: Staff Time

PR-18. Community Involvement in Park Planning.
Encourage and facilitate the participation of residents, sports groups and civic organizations in park planning and design.

PR-18a. Community Involvement. Work with park neighbors, user groups, civic organizations and neighborhood associations when preparing park master plans and designing park improvements.

Responsibility: Community Services
Timeframe: Ongoing
Resources: Staff Time, Grants

PR-19. Park Maintenance.
Maintain public recreation facilities and parks.

See I-1a (Capital Improvement Programming).

Coordination with School Districts and Other Agencies and Jurisdictions

PR-20. School Site Recreation Facilities.

Attempt to secure the continued public use of recreational facilities at schools that are closed, or that could be closed during the time of the plan. Refer to Appendix D for recreation facilities on school sites and acreage to retain.

PR-20a. Preservation of School Recreation Facilities. Allow clustering of development in order to preserve recreation facilities at surplus school sites.

Responsibility: City Manager, Community Services
Timeframe: Ongoing
Resources: Staff Time

PR-20b. School Site Recreational Facilities.

When a school site is proposed to be sold, designate a School Liaison Committee composed of two City Council and two School Board members to identify ways to acquire recreation facilities on the school site, after consultations with affected community and neighborhood residents, appropriate staff and advisory committees.

Responsibility: City Manager, Community Services
Timeframe: Ongoing
Resources: Staff Time

PR-21. City-School Cooperation.

Memorialize cooperation efforts between the City and school districts for the joint development, maintenance, and use of school facilities for educational programs, park development, and recreational use.

See G-15a (Joint Use of Educational Facilities).

Naylor Act

Education Code §39363.5 requires that whenever surplus school land is sold, the first priority is given for parks and recreation purposes. Naylor legislation (Education Code §39390 et seq.) requires that school districts first offer land for sale to public agencies. Through this legislation, the City may purchase certain outdoor school recreation lands at reduced prices. The City must adopt a plan designating portions of land proposed for recreation open space purchase. Purchase is generally a last option if other methods of recreation facility retention are inadequate.

The Naylor legislation is helpful in retaining school recreation facilities but is limited in scope. School gyms, multipurpose rooms, and the City's child care programs are also desirable to retain but do not qualify for purchase under Naylor legislation which limits purchases to land which is used for school playground, playing field or other outdoor recreation purposes and open space land particularly suited for recreational purposes. Bernard Hoffman Park was acquired by the City through the Naylor Act provisions.

PR-22. Relationship to Other Public Agencies.
Cooperate with Marin County and the State to coordinate the use and management of facilities and programs on City, County and State park lands.

PR-22a. Cooperative Ventures. Maximize opportunities to expand recreational facilities and increase recreational programming through cooperative ventures with the State and County.

Responsibility: Community Services

Timeframe: Ongoing

Resources: Staff Time, Grants, Donations

Financing Parks and Recreation

PR-23. Funding.

Establish and maintain a public and private funding program for park and recreation facilities development and maintenance.

PR-23a. Funding. Seek new and ongoing sources of funds for park development and maintenance. Pursue private donation and dedications, Federal, State and other grant sources, use of assessment districts, public/private joint ventures and all other available means to implement park and recreation policies. Sources of funding include user fees, the Capital Improvements program, Friends of San Rafael for specific parks, private foundations, and the Parkland Dedication Ordinance. Encourage the dedication of land for parks, as well as monetary contributions and gifts-in-kind for facilities and programs. Consider naming park facilities in exchange for significant donations to an ongoing maintenance fund.

Responsibility: Community Services

Timeframe: Short Term

Resources: Staff Time

PR-24. Contributions by Rental Residential Development.

Explore the feasibility of requiring contributions from rental residential development towards park improvements.

PR-24a. Rental Residential Contributions. Evaluate the feasibility of adopting an ordinance to require developers of apartments to contribute to park improvements.

Responsibility: Community Services, City Attorney

Timeframe: Ongoing

Resources: Staff Time

PR-25. Contributions by Ownership Residential Development.

Require developers of new residential housing to provide for the recreational needs of future residents of that development in accordance with Recreation Element standards and Quimby Act Subdivision Parkland Dedication Requirements. Needs would be satisfied by the dedication of land and development of recreation facilities to serve the new residents. In-lieu fees will be required if a finding is made that dedication and development of parkland is not a feasible or appropriate option.

Quimby Act

Section 66477 of the California Government Code provides local jurisdictions with the authority to acquire parklands in association with new residential land divisions. Commonly referred to as the Quimby Act, this provision of state law allows a city, by ordinance, to require the dedication of land, payment of an in-lieu fee, or a combination of both, for park and recreational purposes as a condition for approving a subdivision map.

PR-25a. Parkland Dedication Ordinance. Maintain and update as necessary the Parkland Dedication Ordinance
Responsibility: Community Services, City Attorney
Timeframe: Ongoing
Resources: Staff Time

PR-26. Sale, Lease or Contractual Agreements.

Provide that funds from the sale of City parks or open space shall be used for park or open space acquisition or improvements. Provide that funds from the lease of, or through contractual agreements involving, City parks or open space shall be used for capital improvements, or operation and maintenance costs.

PR-26a. Use of Funds from Sale of City Parks or Open Space. With the sale of parks or open space, ensure that the funds are used appropriately for park or open space acquisition or improvements, or that lease revenue is used for improvements, operations or maintenance.

Responsibility: Community Services
Timeframe: Ongoing
Resources: Staff Time

Recreational Programs

PR-27. Recreational Programs for Changing Community Needs.

Continually adapt recreational programs to meet changing community needs and interests.

PR-27a. Recreational Programs. As part of seasonal program planning, monitor, evaluate and develop appropriate recreational programs for the community.

Responsibility: Community Services
Timeframe: Ongoing
Resources: Staff Time

PR-28. Summer Recreation Programs.

Provide summer recreation programs at locations convenient to each neighborhood.

PR-28a. Summer Programs. Offer summer youth recreational programs at the Community Centers and other appropriate venues.

Responsibility: Community Services
Timeframe: Ongoing
Resources: Fees, Grants, Donations, Staff Time

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