



**SAN RAFAEL**  
THE CITY WITH A MISSION

**rhaa**  
Landscape  
Architecture  
& Planning

City of San Rafael  
**CITYWIDE PARKS  
AND RECREATION  
MASTER PLAN**

Steering Committee  
Meeting #4  
January 18th, 2023

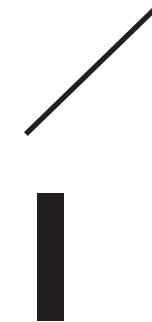




# AGENDA

- I. Goals, Policies, and Actions
- II. Draft Recommendations
- III. Public Comment, Questions, Discussion
- IV. Next Steps





# Goals, Policies, and Actions



Pickleweed Park



# Goals, Policies, and Actions

- San Rafael General Plan 2040

## Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Element (PROS)

## Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Element (EDI)

PARKS, RECREATION, AND OPEN SPACE ELEMENT

**Goal PROS-1: Quality Parks for All to Enjoy**  
Sustain high quality parks that meet the recreational needs of all those who live and work in San Rafael.

*San Rafael recognizes the essential nature of parks and recreation to its residents. Parks support health and wellness, protect the environment, add beauty to San Rafael neighborhoods, and are integral to life in the city. They should be maintained for all to enjoy.*

The City of San Rafael faces the challenge of adapting and improving its parks to meet the changing needs and priorities of the community. Well-planned, maintained parks can transform neighborhoods and provide positive experiences for children and families. But these outcomes require action, and new approaches to funding, operating, and programming.

One of the most important recommendations of this Element is to adopt a Parks Master Plan. The City of San Rafael has never had one, and as a result lacks a strategic framework for long-term decisions about land management, facilities, programs, maintenance, and financing. The Master Plan will provide an opportunity for San Rafael residents from all parts of the City to articulate their needs and desires for the park system. It will also provide a platform for collaboration with other service providers and partnerships with the private and non-profit sectors to fill unmet needs in the city.

**Policy PROS-1.1: Park Classification**  
Maintain a system of community, neighborhood, pocket, and special use parks (see Page 7-8). Parks should be complemented by larger region-serving parks and open spaces, and by other types of parks.

**Program PROS-1.1A: Parks and Recreation Master Plan.** Prepare a Parks and Recreation Master Plan, including citywide recommendations for park management, operation, development, potential acquisition, and recreation service delivery, as well as recommendations for each City-owned park.

**Program PROS 1.1B: Capital Improvement Program.** Use the Capital Improvement Program to identify funding sources and timing of parks and recreation capital projects.

See also Program PROS-3.3A on an Open Space Management Plan

**Policy PROS-1.2: Per Capita Acreage Standard**  
Maintain a citywide standard of 4.0 acres of improved park and recreation land per 1,000 residents.

**Program PROS-1.2A: Municipal Code Amendment.** Modify Chapter 15.09 of the City Code to establish a general standard of 4.0 acres of improved parkland per 1,000 residents, and formulas for dedication of land to reflect this standard.

**Program PROS-1.2B: Park In Lieu Fees.** Periodically adjust park in-lieu fees to reflect the prevailing costs of land and facilities. Any increases to existing fees should be determined through a public process in which potential cost impacts on development feasibility are considered, and measures to offset impacts on housing costs are considered.

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EQUITY DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION ELEMENT

**Policy EDI-1.5: Advisory Committees**  
Use boards, commissions, task forces, and committees to assist City staff and the City Council in decision-making processes. Such groups should reflect San Rafael's demographics and be representative of all segments of the community.

**Program EDI-1.5A: Board and Commission Diversity.** Monitor the composition of City Boards and Commissions, making efforts to provide representation that mirrors the city. When filling vacancies, focus recruitment and outreach efforts on under-represented populations.

**Program EDI-1.5B: Public Input.** Encourage public input at Board, Commission, and Committee meetings. Clearly identify issues, actions, and ways to comment, and provide information early enough to allow meaningful participation.

**Policy EDI-1.6: Youth in Government**  
Encourage and support the engagement of youth and young adults in government, particularly on issues that directly affect them such as youth services, education, mobility, and climate change.

**Program EDI-1.6A: Youth-Focused Outreach.** Work with local school districts, schools, youth and student groups, colleges, universities, and community-based organizations to increase youth involvement in local government and public processes. This could include school "clubs" organized around topics of interest. Youth engagement should be inclusive and reflective of San Rafael's demographics (see also Program EDI-5.2A on "Buddy" programs).

**Goal EDI-2: Healthy Communities and Environmental Justice**  
Support public health and wellness through community design in all parts of the city.

*San Rafael's development pattern and transportation system should support the fitness of its residents. Physical activity such as walking and cycling can reduce rates of obesity, heart disease, diabetes, and other chronic ailments. Land use decisions should avoid further compounding health risks in disadvantaged communities, and should reduce exposure to unhealthy air, high levels of noise, contaminated soil, smoke, and odors. San Rafael will promote a safe environment for all residents and ensure that people in every part of the city can lead healthy, active lives.*

As the introduction to this Element observed, San Rafael is a healthy community, and its metrics indicate relatively low rates of asthma, heart disease, diabetes, and other illnesses, as well as long-life expectancies. In fact, Marin County is consistently ranked the healthiest county in California by several organizations. Nonetheless, the COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated that lower income communities in the city and county are far more vulnerable to public health emergencies than the general population, and have fewer resources available to cope with and recover from those emergencies. Moreover, San Rafael's lower income and immigrant residents have limited access to open space, while at the same time they live in the city's densest housing. There are few amenities such as street trees, gardens, and yards, and limited places for outdoor exercise and fitness. Having safe, healthy places to play, ride a bike, go for a walk, and experience nature are critical parts of childhood development.

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# Goals, Policies, and Actions

**GOAL A:** SUPPORT AND ENHANCE SAN RAFAEL PARKS

**GOAL B:** SUPPORT AND ENHANCE SAN RAFAEL RECREATION FACILITIES

**GOAL C:** SUPPORT RECREATION PROGRAMMING

**GOAL D:** PROVIDE EQUITABLE ACCESS TO SAN RAFAEL PARK AND RECREATION SYSTEM



# Goals, Policies, and Actions

## GOAL A: SUPPORT AND ENHANCE SAN RAFAEL PARKS

**POLICY A.1** Upgrade and modernize existing parks to meet the recreational needs of the community and to meet operational, accessibility and safety standards (PROS-1.6B)

Action A.1.1	Improve existing park amenities to enhance community use and create safe, attractive spaces that meet community demand (PROS-1.6B)
Action A.1.2	Ensure park amenities are accessible to all users on a system-wide and park level (EDI-6.3B)
Action A.1.3	Develop and implement consistent and inclusive branding, wayfinding, and interpretive signage for San Rafael Parks (PROS-1.5A)
Action A.1.4	Incorporate sustainability principles in the design and construction of San Rafael park projects and enhancements (PROS-1.18A)

**POLICY A.2** Continue regular assessment and provide a high level of maintenance that allows San Rafael Parks to prolong equipment life, ensure amenity safety, and serve as a valued community asset (PROS-1.15)

Action A.2.1	Improve maintenance of existing parks to meet community demand and park usage, including the development of maintenance plans and amenity replacement schedules
Action A.2.2	Provide maintenance practices that are environmentally and fiscally sustainable, including improved irrigation and natural pest management (PROS-1.18)

**POLICY A.3** Support park development, where feasible, to address recreational deficiencies

Action A.3.1	Identify funding and partnership opportunities for Parks development (PROS-1.16A, PROS-1.17)
Action A.3.2	Support park expansion in areas of need, including high density neighborhoods and identified neighborhoods that do not have a park within the Trust for Public Land (TPL) 10-minute standard (PROS-1.3A)
Action A.3.3	Explore options to address recreational amenity deficiencies that have been identified as a high priority to the community



# Goals, Policies, and Actions

## GOAL B: SUPPORT AND ENHANCE SAN RAFAEL RECREATION FACILITIES

POLICY B.1    Rehabilitate existing recreation facilities to meet operational, accessibility and safety standards, and to meet community demand (PROS-1.6)	
Action B.1.1	Support safety of existing recreational facilities, including fire safety, seismic retrofitting, and required code upgrades (PROS-1.6A)
Action B.1.2	Renovate and/or retrofit recreation facilities to maximize community use (PROS-1.6A)
Action B.1.3	Ensure recreation facilities are accessible to all users (EDI-6.3B)
Action B.1.4	Incorporate sustainability principles in the design and construction of San Rafael recreation facility projects and enhancements (PROS-1.18A)
POLICY B.2    Continue regular assessment and maintenance of San Rafael recreation facilities to prolong structural life, prevent deferred maintenance, ensure safety, and support user enjoyment (PROS-1.15)	
Action B.2.1	Improve maintenance of existing recreation facilities to meet community demand and facility usage (PROS-1.15)
POLICY B.3    Support recreational facility planning processes to address unique facility conditions and respond to changing community needs (PROS-1.6A)	
POLICY B.4    Explore opportunities for additional recreation facility access through viable partnerships (PROS-1.12, PROS-1.17)	
Action B.4.1	Seek opportunities for joint use of recreational facilities with local service providers, including the San Rafael and Miller Creek School Districts, to provide additional recreation facilities to the San Rafael community (PROS-1.12, PROS-1.17)

# Goals, Policies, and Actions

## GOAL C: SUPPORT RECREATION PROGRAMMING

POLICY C.1	Maintain and enhance existing recreation programming to meet needs of San Rafael residents and support community identity (PROS-2)
Action C.1.1	Develop a Recreation Program Plan to guide long range program development and define focus areas based on user needs (PROS-2.1, PROS-2.2)
Action C.1.2	Continue to support recreation programming in high demand by the San Rafael community
Action C.1.3	Expand recreational programming to address deficiencies in program provision to meet community demand (PROS-2.2)
Action C.1.4	Support partnership opportunities for coordination and provision of recreational programming, including partnership opportunities with organizations in the arts, sports and leisure, aging populations, and disability care (PROS-2.3, PROS-2.6)





# Goals, Policies, and Actions

## GOAL D: PROVIDE EQUITABLE ACCESS TO THE SAN RAFAEL PARK AND RECREATION SYSTEM

POLICY D.1	Incorporate environmental justice and social equity as key elements in the operation and planning of San Rafael’s park and recreation network (EDI-2.5)
Action D.1.1	Ensure that San Rafael’s park and recreation programs and facilities are safe, inclusive, culturally relevant, and welcoming to everyone, with particular emphasis paid to communities that have been excluded from recreational programming (PROS-2.1)
Action D.1.2	Ensure access to San Rafael’s recreation programs is proportionally affordable based on income
Action D.1.3	Consider how resource allocation decisions can reduce historic and current inequities and address the most critical community needs in future planning processes for the San Rafael park and recreation system (EDI-4.1, EDI-4.2)
Action D.1.4	Support equitable distribution of parks and recreation amenities, prioritizing high density neighborhoods and areas where homes lack outdoor living space (EDI-2.2A, PROS-1.3A)
Action D.1.5	Pursue authentic community engagement in planning processes that share power, recognize and celebrate differences, and ensure inclusion (EDI-1, PROS-1.4B)







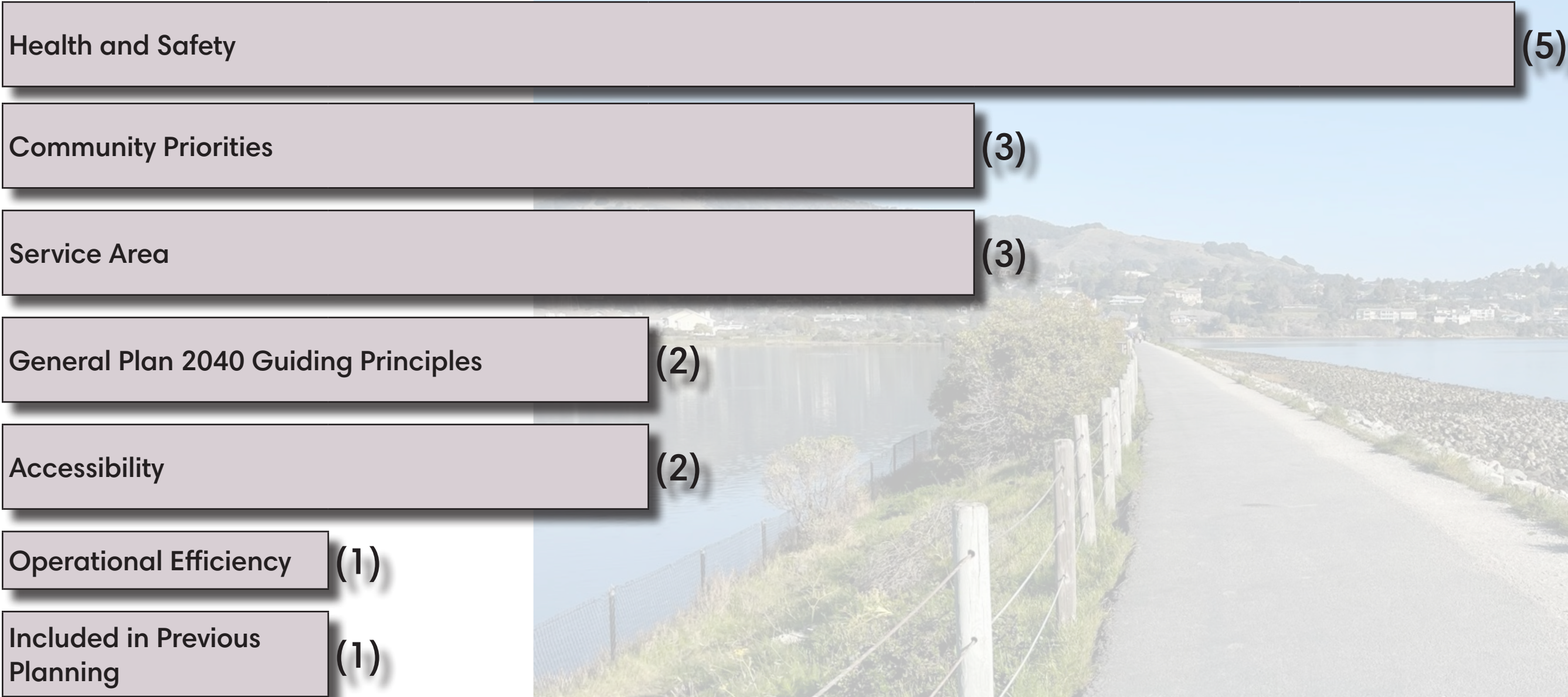
# Draft Recommendations



Jean & John Starkweather Shoreline Park



# Prioritization Criteria





# Recommendation Categories

Recommendation Type	Description	Total
Deficiency Improvement	Recommendations improves existing condition in a deficient area such as replacing or enhancing amenities at end of lifecycle, and ADA improvements to remove accessibility barriers	83
Expansion	Recommendation supports new recreation amenities, expanding San Rafael’s recreation system	36
Policy	Recommendation is administrative and supports the City’s delivery of parks and recreation services	31
Total number of recommendations		150



# Recommendation Priority

Recommendation Priority	Description	Total
<b>Near-Term</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 14 park improvements (deficiencies and expansions)</li> <li>• 12 policies</li> <li>• 5 ADA barrier removal to be folded in with projects</li> <li>• 15 recreation facility improvement recommendations to be folded in with other projects</li> </ul>	Potentially achievable in <b>0-5 years</b>	46
<b>Medium-Term</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 15 park improvements</li> <li>• 10 policies</li> </ul>	Potentially achievable in <b>5-10 years</b>	25
<b>Long-Term</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 21 park improvements</li> </ul>	Potentially achievable in <b>10 + years</b>	21
<b>Other</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing (10)</li> <li>• As resources allow (26)</li> <li>• To be addressed through larger projects (22)</li> </ul>	58
Total number of recommendations		<b>150</b>



## Near-Term Recommendations

## Park Improvements

Site	Recommendation Description	Type
<b>Pickleweed Park</b>	Continue development of the Pickleweed Park Enhancement Project with support of public grant funds	Expansion
<b>Albert Park Stadium</b>	Address fencing deficiencies around Albert Stadium and Field	Deficiency Improvement
<b>Terra Linda Park</b>	Prepare a master plan for Terra Linda Park and Community Center to determine future improvements based on planning efforts	Expansion
<b>Peacock Gap Park</b>	Update play areas - replace playground structures, replace sand with fibar	Deficiency Improvement
<b>Boyd Memorial Park</b>	Evaluate historic water cistern system for structural integrity	Deficiency Improvement
<b>Gerstle Park</b>	Update play areas - replace play structures, replace sand with fibar	Deficiency Improvement
<b>Oleander Park</b>	Update play area - replace play structures, replace sand with fibar	Deficiency Improvement
<b>Peacock Gap Park</b>	Resurface tennis courts	Deficiency Improvement
<b>Freitas Park</b>	Resurface tennis court	Deficiency Improvement
<b>Gerstle Park</b>	Evaluate and improve pathways	Expansion
<b>Albert Park</b>	Improve tennis courts - restroom access, padding around tennis lights (4), lighting	Expansion
<b>Terra Linda Community Garden</b>	Explore options to increase plot capacity and improve infrastructure of garden plots	Expansion
<b>Citywide</b>	Repair identified priority physical deficiencies at park restrooms	Deficiency Improvement
<b>Falkirk Cultural Center</b>	Develop a comprehensive assessment of the Falkirk Cultural Center's unique historic and architectural qualities to guide future planning and programming	Expansion



# Medium-Term Recommendations

# Park Improvements

Site	Recommendation Description	Type
<b>Santa Margarita Park</b>	Resurface tennis court and pathways for ADA accessibility	Deficiency Improvement
<b>Boyd Memorial Park</b>	Replace play structure	Deficiency Improvement
<b>Oleander Park</b>	Resurface asphalt and concrete paving	Deficiency Improvement
<b>Peacock Gap Park</b>	Resurface asphalt paving	Deficiency Improvement
<b>Riviera Park</b>	Evaluate best recreational purpose for this site – playground structure is near end of life span and should be addressed	Expansion
<b>Oliver Hartzell Park</b>	Evaluate best recreational purpose for this site – playground structure is near end of life span and should be addressed	Expansion
<b>Albert Park</b>	Address parking lot paving for safety and tripping hazards	Deficiency Improvement
<b>Gerstle Park</b>	Evaluate feasibility of and pursue tennis court renovation	Expansion
<b>Boyd Memorial Park</b>	Evaluate recreation options for tennis court – resurface or repurpose	Expansion
<b>Boyd Memorial Park</b>	Resurface asphalt paving	Deficiency Improvement
<b>Freitas Park</b>	Resurface asphalt paving	Deficiency Improvement
<b>Falkirk Cultural Center</b>	Evaluate alternative uses for reflection pond	Expansion
<b>Canal Community Garden</b>	Consider options for improved maintenance	Expansion
<b>Terra Linda Community Garden</b>	Consider options for improved maintenance	Expansion
<b>Citywide</b>	Explore locations for self-directed fitness equipment	Expansion



# Long-Term Recommendations

# Park Improvements

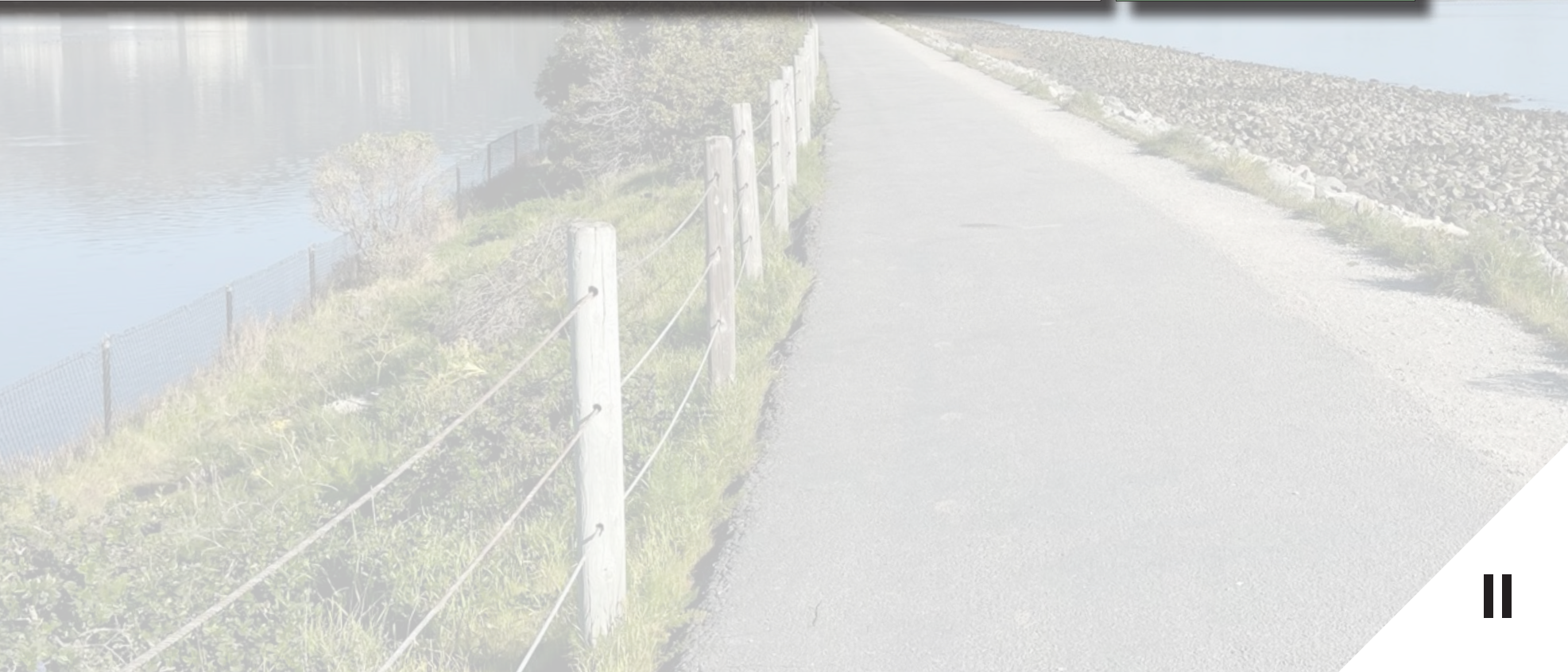
Site	Recommendation Description	Type
Gerstle Park	Resurface asphalt paving at basketball court and play areas	Deficiency Improvement
Boyd Memorial Park	Consider long term solution for restroom	Expansion
Jean and John Starkweather Park	Implement interpretive signage plans	Expansion
Peacock Gap Park	Repair and/or replace parcource equipment	Deficiency Improvement
Boyd Memorial Park	Pursue pathway and trail improvements on site and continuing up San Rafael Hill	Expansion
Bernard Hoffman Field	Evaluate potential recreation uses for former playground	Expansion
Bret Harte Park	Resurface asphalt paving, including basketball court	Deficiency Improvement
Canal Community Garden	Potential location for bio-preventative pest management practices	Expansion
Munson Park	Potential location for bio-preventative pest management practices	Expansion
Gerstle Park	Improve access from adjacent open space for hiking	Expansion
Jean and John Starkweather Park	Explore opportunities for additional boating and water sport access ramps	Expansion
Santa Margarita Park	Resurface asphalt paving at basketball court	Deficiency Improvement
Victor Jones Park	Assess sport court functionality and pursue improvements	Expansion
Victor Jones Park	Replace restroom	Deficiency Improvement
Peacock Gap Park	Replace restroom	Deficiency Improvement



# Long-Term Recommendations

# Park Improvements

Site	Recommendation Description	Type
Bernard Hoffman Field	Support drainage improvements on site	Deficiency Improvement
Sun Valley Park	Evaluate best purpose for upper terrace area, including wooden gazebo	Expansion
Terra Linda Community Garden	Consider addition of shared garden amenities – storage shed/lockers, seating areas, shade structure	Expansion
Terra Linda Community Garden	Enhance bio-preventative pest management practices	Expansion
Riviera Park	Wood columns at retaining walls require replacement	Deficiency Improvement
Bret Harte Park	Improve access from adjacent open space for hiking	Expansion





Near-Term Recommendations

Policies

Site	Recommendation Description	Type
Beach Park	Explore public-private partnerships to address needed oversight for site safety	Policy
Citywide	Dog Park program - assess options to address deficiency in spaces for off-leash dogs	Policy
Albert and Freitas Parks	Tennis court key access system to be managed by library and recreation department director or designee	Policy
Citywide	Reclassify City parks based on existing amenities - Jerry Russom Memorial Park (to open space), Bret Harte Park (to neighborhood park), Munson Park (to pocket park)	Policy
Citywide	Offer training opportunities for staff to support growth and understanding around diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging	Policy
Citywide	Evaluate restroom maintenance citywide	Policy
Pickleweed Park	Consider additional maintenance resources for Pickleweed Park field	Policy
Albert Park	Consider additional maintenance resources for Albert Field	Policy
Citywide	Develop systemwide irrigation replacement schedule	Policy
Citywide	Develop program for citywide fibar replacement at playgrounds	Policy
Citywide	Develop systemwide playground amenity replacement schedule	Policy
Citywide	Develop systemwide tennis court resurfacing schedule	Policy



Medium-Term Recommendations

Policies

Site	Recommendation Description	Type
Citywide	Develop a comprehensive maintenance plan for City parks	Policy
Citywide	Develop a comprehensive maintenance plan for City recreation facilities	Policy
Citywide	Develop unifying systemwide park and recreation signage	Policy
Citywide	Assess pickleball striping or pickleball conversion projects systemwide	Policy
Citywide	Consider entering into Joint-Use Agreements with San Rafael City Schools to provide additional recreation facilities for the San Rafael community	Policy
Albert Park Stadium	Explore opportunities such as public-private partnerships to refurbish athletic fields and develop new recreational facilities	Policy
Gerstle Park	Explore partnership opportunities for maintaining the historic nature of the landscaping	Policy
Freitas Park	Develop a policy for splash pad operations (consider closures for drought conditions)	Policy
Citywide	Develop a recreation program plan	Policy
Citywide	Evaluate historic water system resources	Policy



# New and Expanded Park Amenities

- Expand and improve the shoreline path network along the Jean and John Starkweather Park
- Address park deficiencies in the following neighborhoods through the development of dedicated park land:

*Montecito/Dominican*

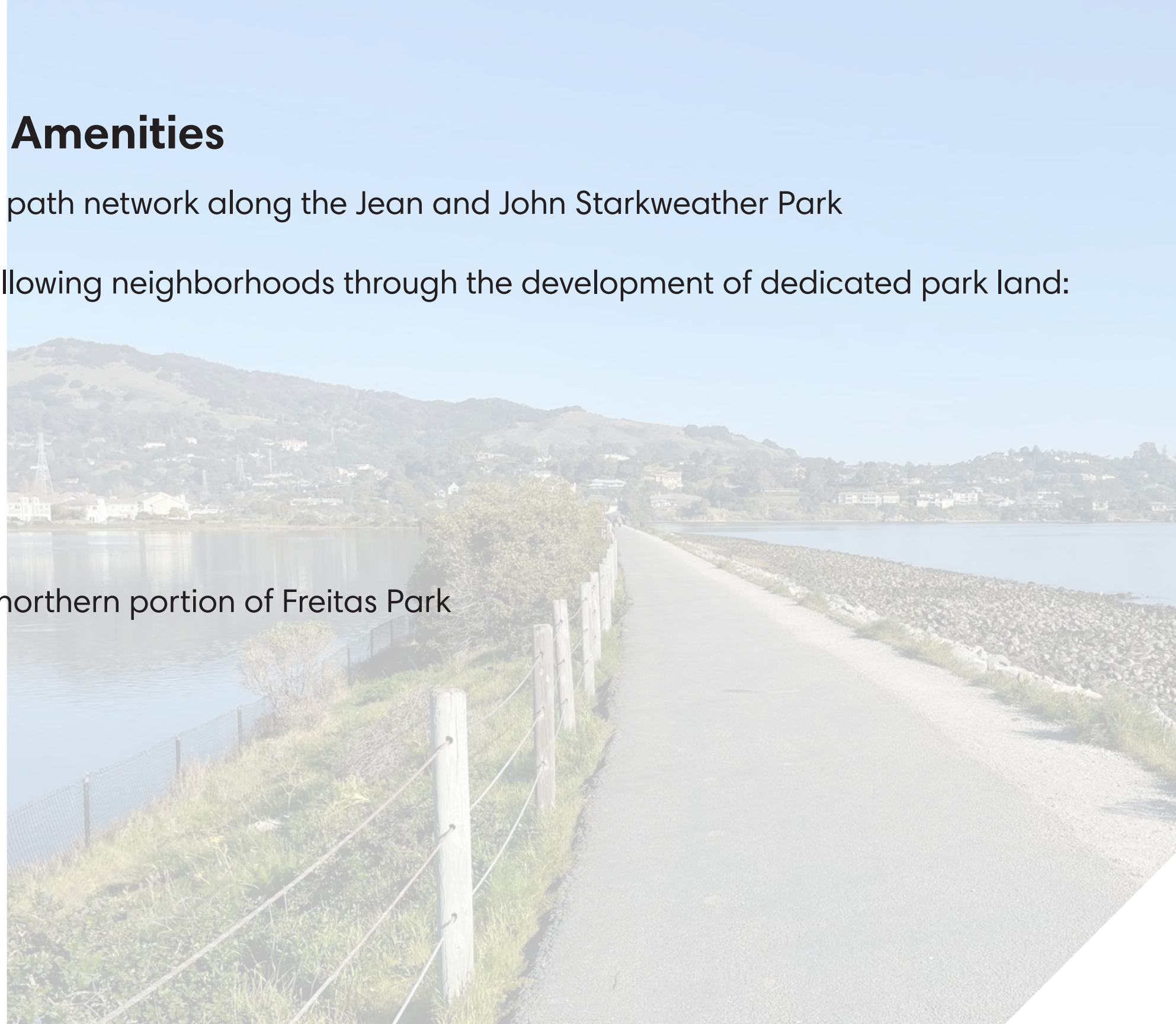
*West End/Fairhills*

*Lincoln/San Rafael Hill*

*Contempo/Deer Park*

*Northbridge/Marin Lagoon*

- Explore recreation options for the northern portion of Freitas Park





# Facility Improvement Recommendations

- Mack5 Facility Assessment – Architectural, Mechanical, Structural, and ADA recommendations to be included in San Rafael’s Department of Public Works *Facility Master Plan*

*Albert J. Boro Community Center*

*Albert Park Stadium*

*Falkirk Cultural Center*

*San Rafael Community Center*

*Terra Linda Community Center*

*Terra Linda Pool House*

*Park Restrooms*



# Additional Recommendations

- Ongoing

*Maintain in alignment with existing policies and/or previous planning*

- As Resources Allow

*Irrigation*

*Bench and picnic table replacement*

*May utilize public funds*

*May require significant resources*

- To Be Addressed Through Other Projects

*ADA barrier removal*







# Public Comment, Questions, Discussion



Terra Linda Park



# IV

## Next Steps



Freitas Park



# Master Plan Scope

- Financial Strategizing and Planning
- Draft Master Plan

