



CITY OF SONOMA **PARKS NEEDS ASSESSMENT**

MARCH 2022 // PREPARED BY THE CITY OF SONOMA PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

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Introduction / Executive Summary

The City of Sonoma takes pride in overseeing and managing a total of fourteen (14) urban and neighborhood parks within its boundaries. Recognizing the importance of offering high-quality recreational spaces for its residents, the City initiated a comprehensive Parks Assessment to evaluate the needs of its parks. The primary objective was to gain a thorough understanding of the park system to effectively allocate staffing, resources, and capital improvement funds for park maintenance. This assessment also aimed to align with the recommendations put forth by the Recreation Task Force, contributing to the development of a robust list of park projects. These projects would strategically use Measure M funding and other general funds to enhance the infrastructure of the City's parks, creating an enjoyable experience for the community.

In March of 2022, a dedicated team from the City Staff carried out the Park Assessments, investing two full days in this crucial task. This staff team included the Public Works Operation Manager, Project Manager, and Parks Supervisor, ensuring a comprehensive and multi-disciplinary approach to the assessment process. Their collective expertise and insights were instrumental in identifying not only the immediate needs of individual parks but also recognizing opportunities for improvements that would benefit multiple parks and the community at large.

The field assessments were carefully conducted, with meticulous attention paid to every aspect of the parks. The team examined various elements, including park facilities, amenities, infrastructure, landscaping, accessibility, and community engagement opportunities. The focus extended beyond basic requirements, considering the unique characteristics and potential of each park. The aim was to develop a holistic understanding of the parks' conditions and identify areas where enhancements could provide the greatest value and impact.

Building upon the information gathered during the field assessments, the City Staff prepared a comprehensive report detailing the findings. This report serves as a valuable resource, outlining the specific needs and recommendations identified throughout the assessment process. To provide a clear overview, the report includes Table 1, summarizing the major infrastructure improvements recommended for the City-owned parks. This table serves as a guide for prioritizing and planning future projects, ensuring that allocated resources are used effectively and that the City's parks continue to evolve to meet the changing needs and expectations of the community.

The Parks Assessment represents a significant step in the City of Sonoma's commitment to providing exceptional recreational spaces for its residents. By conducting thorough evaluations, engaging with the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Commission, and incorporating public input, the City is well-positioned to make informed decisions that will enhance the park system and foster a vibrant and inclusive community environment.

Table 1 – Executive Summary of Parks Needs

Park	Replace Sand Substrate in Playground	Replace Existing or Install New Water Bottle Filling Stations	Repair or Improve Park Lighting	Prune, Replace, or Plant Trees	Repair or Improve Park Signage	Repair or Replace Bollards for Vehicle Exclusion	Repair or Improve Recreation Equipment	Renovate Restrooms	Renovate Picnic Areas	Install or Improve Bike Racks	Evaluate Dog Policy	Redesign or Reprogram Specific Park Area(s)
Armstrong Park	•	•			•	•			•			•
Brockman Lane Park			•								•	
Depot Park	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•		
Hertenstein Park	•	•			•				•	•		
Jean K.T. Carter Park	•	•	•			•			•			
El Prado Common												
MacArthur Park	•	•	•		•	•				•		
Madera Park		•										
Nathanson Creek Park	•	•	•			•			•	•		•
Nathanson Creek Preserve												
Olsen Park	•	•				•	•		•	•	•	•
Pinelli Park	•	•	•	•			•			•		
Sonoma Valley Oaks Park		•	•				•				•	•
The Plaza Park	•	•		•				•		•		•

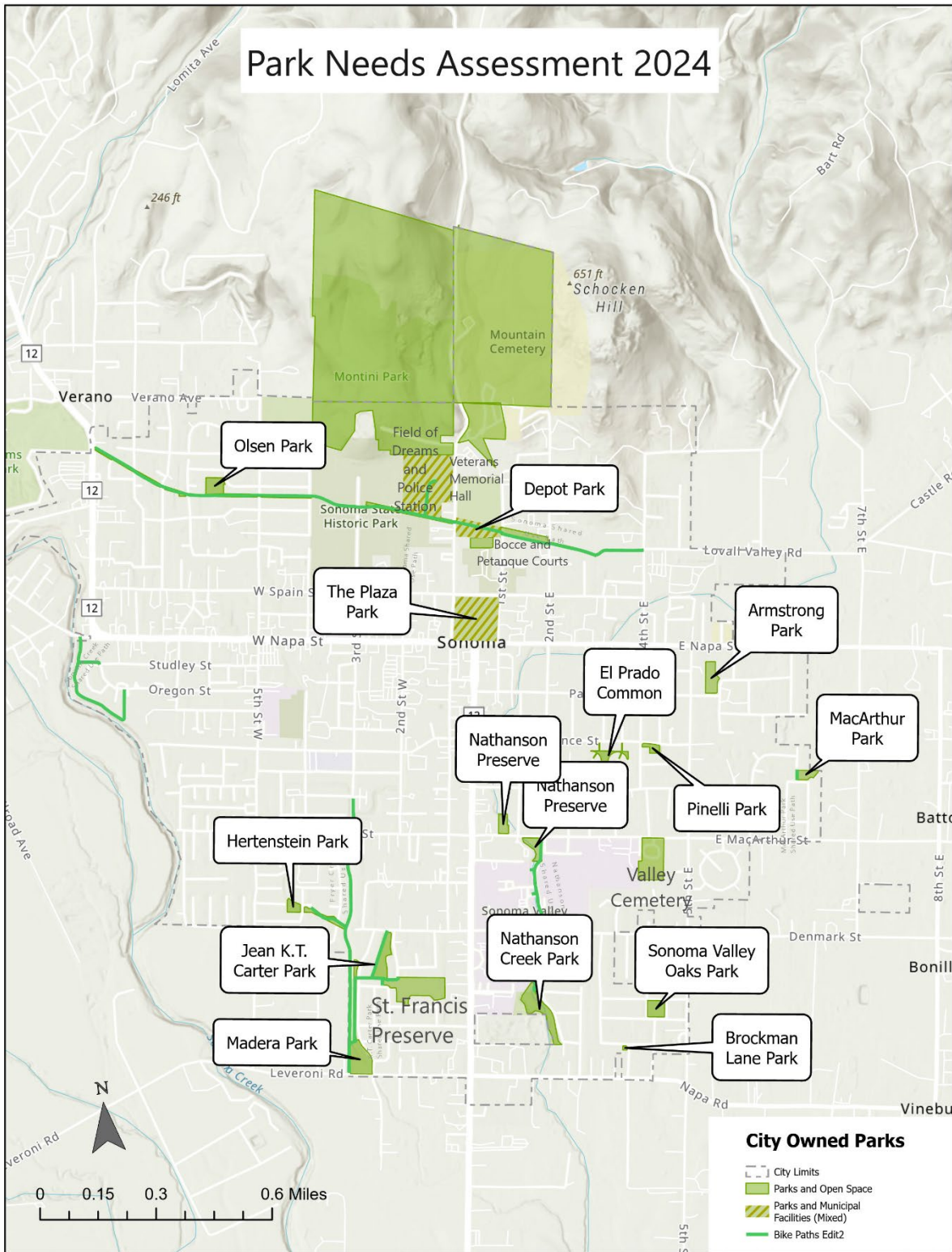


Figure 1. Map of City of Sonoma Parks

Assessment Methods and Criteria

The assessments, conducted over two days by City Staff, aimed for a thorough evaluation of each park facility. The staff scrutinized fourteen (14) different types of features, encompassing essential aspects such as vegetation/landscaping, significant trees, picnic areas, playgrounds, special events spaces, parking/ADA accessibility, cyclist/connectivity infrastructure, restroom facilities, lighting, drinking fountains, solid waste management systems, and signs/bollards. Each feature underwent careful examination, with evaluators providing independent notes and assessments to capture the nuances of each park.

Throughout the assessment process, City Staff conducted a detailed evaluation of the existing infrastructure within the parks. This involved assessing operational and maintenance needs, identifying safety concerns, evaluating overall aesthetics, functionality, and examining any potential longevity issues. The staff ensured a comprehensive analysis of each park, considering the condition and quality of the existing facilities. Special attention was given to parking facilities and ADA accessibility to ensure compliance with existing codes and regulations. This evaluation of the parks' infrastructure yielded valuable insights that will guide the department's decision-making process and future planning to enhance and maintain the parks effectively.

In addition to assessing the existing park facilities, City Staff adopted a holistic approach to identify any gaps in park amenities across the city. A vicinity map was generated to gain a comprehensive understanding of the neighborhoods with existing park facilities, playgrounds, and connectivity throughout the City. This holistic evaluation allowed Staff to pinpoint areas where park features were lacking or could be improved with additional amenities. By analyzing the connectivity and distribution of parks, the City Staff gained insights into opportunities for expanding and enhancing the park system to better serve the needs of the community.

To visually represent the assessment findings, Figure 2 was created. This figure illustrates all parks within a reasonable walking distance of 0.25 miles, which was assigned as a radius. Overlaying this radius on the map revealed that the residential neighborhood surrounding Fifth Street West presents a prime opportunity to expand park facilities and create a more accessible recreational space for residents. This finding not only underscores the potential for improvement but also emphasizes the City's commitment to meeting the evolving needs of its residents and enhancing the overall quality of life in the community.

This assessment played a crucial role in evaluating the parks' current condition and identifying areas for improvement. By considering various features, infrastructure elements, and overall park distribution, the assessments provide valuable guidance to the department for future planning, resource allocation, and decision-making processes. The City of Sonoma remains dedicated to creating exceptional park spaces that cater to the diverse recreational needs of its residents and promote an active and engaging community environment.

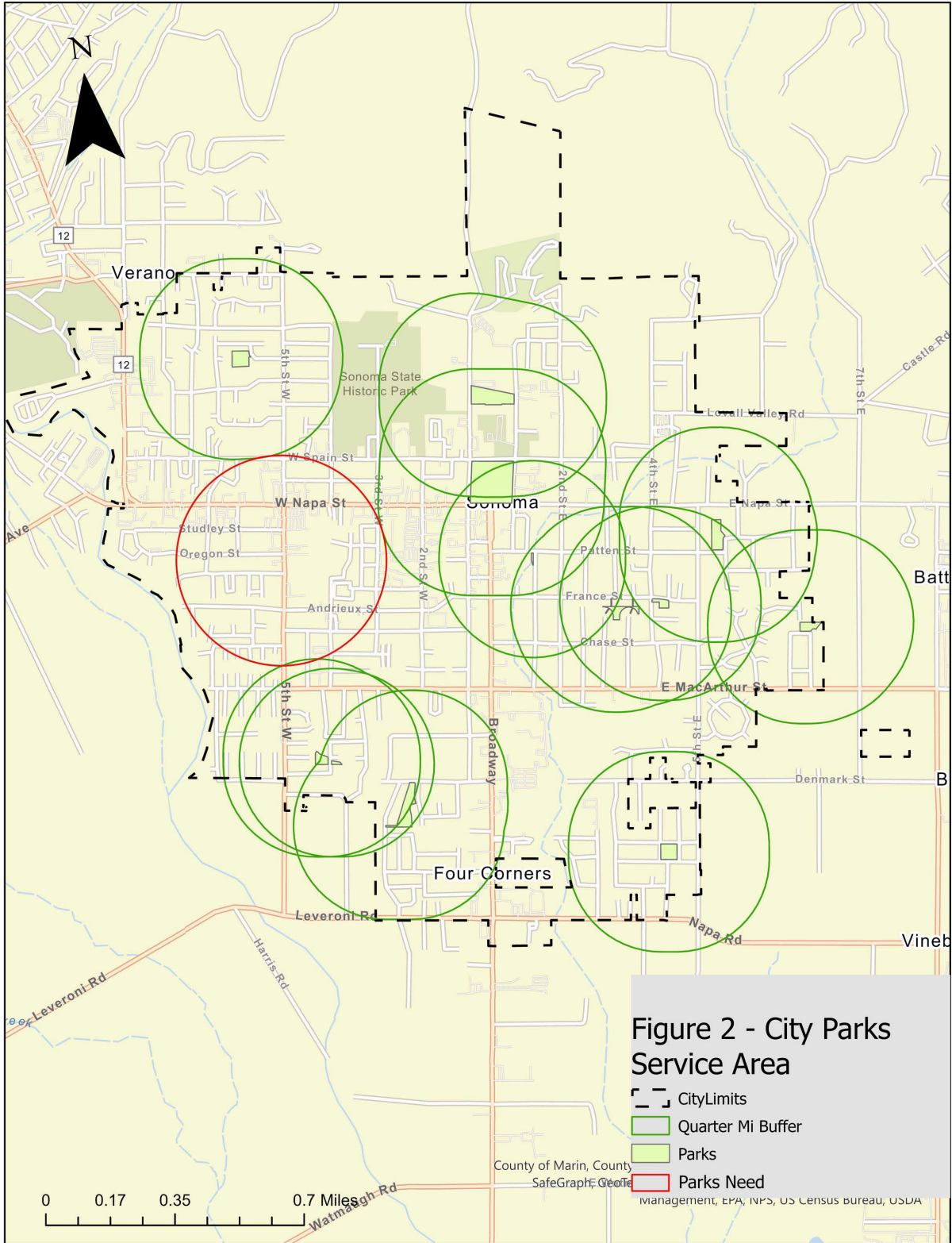


Figure 2 – City Parks Showing a Radius of 0.25 Miles

Existing Infrastructure Improvement Projects

Upon evaluating the current infrastructure, several deficiencies were identified across multiple parks. This recognition opens the possibility of consolidating these issues into larger projects, offering a more economically efficient approach to managing these elements in all parks requiring attention.

1. **Playground Substrate Replacement & Shade:** The existing sand substrate in most Sonoma parks is outdated and potentially poses safety concerns. Modern playground substrates, which provide a healthier alternative, are recommended to replace the outdated sand substrate across the entire Sonoma Park system. Additionally, a global playground improvement initiative suggests installing shade structures at playground features exposed to direct sunlight.
2. **City of Sonoma Park Branding:** Many park signs are outdated and accompanied by deteriorating wooden protective bollards. While these components may not individually be high-priority maintenance items, a future project is recommended to globally replace them throughout the City. This initiative aims to maintain consistency in the appearance and signage of the parks.

CIP Projects – New and Expanded

As outlined in the methodology, the assessment took a comprehensive look at the park system, addressing both current infrastructure needs and identifying elements lacking in the park system. The following are staff-prioritized recommendations for park improvements:

1. **Olsen Park Improvements**
2. **Development of a new park at Fifth Street West and West MacArthur Street**
3. **Addition of a playground structure at Sonoma Valley Oaks Park**
4. **Nathanson Creek Park improvements**
5. **Depot Park volleyball court replacement and exercise area expansion**
6. **Hertenstein Park picnic area improvement**
7. **Armstrong Park picnic area improvements & Northern expansion**
8. **City-wide expansion of bathroom facilities**

Armstrong Park

Location

550 Charles Van Damme Way

Park Overview

Armstrong Park is a 1.5-acre neighborhood park located in northeast Sonoma. The park was developed concurrently with the Armstrong Estates subdivision in 1993.

Vegetation and Landscaping

The irrigation at the park is functional. The turf is rough in places with tree roots growing through the turf on the east side of the park adjacent to the sidewalk.

Significant Trees

Trees in the developed park areas are healthy with no significant maintenance issues. *Recommendation: Select tree removals or pruning to reduce deadwood and clear low-hanging limbs on trees in the undeveloped area near the northern perimeter of the park.*



Gathering Areas and Designated Picnic Area

The picnic tables and park benches are in acceptable condition but are showing signs of wear and tear. They have 3-5 years of remaining useful life before they may require replacement.

Recommendations: The picnic areas would benefit from resurfacing to restore their usability and appearance. Perform weed abatement to ensure a well-maintained and inviting environment for park visitors.

The northern picnic area featured a barbeque that has been removed. *Opportunity: Revitalize this space by relandscaping and creating a more appealing, functional area for park users.*

Sports and Recreation Areas

The turf areas in the park are large enough to accommodate informal sports or recreation. There are no formal sports areas in the park.

Playgrounds

The playground is in good condition. *Recommendation: Replace sand substrate with an alternative material.*

Special Event Areas

The park offers two developed picnic areas and a turf area suitable for picnics, family gatherings, or other small special events. Reservations are not required for the use of these areas.

Vehicle Parking Areas

On-street parking is available along Charles Van Damme Way. There is no ADA accessible parking for the park.

Cyclist and Pedestrian Facilities and Connectivity

The park offers a single bike rack for visitors to secure their bicycles. It is accessible through City streets, although it does not have direct connectivity to a designated path or bike lane.

Restroom Facilities

No restroom facilities.

Park Lighting

The park's lighting is in good condition and has been upgraded to energy-efficient LED fixtures. The park has sufficient lighting.

Drinking Fountains and Water Bottle Filling Stations

The park currently has one drinking fountain, which is in good working order. *Recommendation: Replace drinking fountain with a modern water bottle filling station for improved convenience and sustainability.*

Solid Waste Collection and Handling

The current solid waste collection system in the park is suitable. *Opportunity: Upgrade waste receptacles to accommodate three waste streams would improve waste management and recycling efforts.*

Signs and Barriers

There is an existing sign for Armstrong Park. There are existing wood bollards separating the park from the sidewalk. *Recommendations: Replace sign, remove bollard.*

Other

The northern boundary of the park is not delineated by landscaping or other architectural cues.

Dogs Allowed at Park

No.

Brockman Lane Park

Location

375 Brockman Lane

Park Overview

Brockman Lane is a small neighborhood park at just over 3,000 square feet and is in southeast Sonoma. The park was developed in 2004 concurrent with development of the Starr Ranch subdivision.



Vegetation and Landscaping

Small area of turf in good condition. Irrigation is functional.

Significant Trees

Trees are healthy with no significant maintenance issues.

Gathering Areas and Designated Picnic Areas

This park is a pocket park with three park benches. No developed gathering or picnic areas are available.

Sports and Recreation Areas

No recreational areas.

Playgrounds

No playground.

Special Event Areas

No Special Event Area.

Vehicle Parking Areas

On-street parking is available for this park. There is no ADA accessible parking for the park.

Cyclist and Pedestrian Facilities and Connectivity

Connectivity through City streets. No direct connectivity to path or bike lane.

Restroom Facilities

No restroom facilities.

Park Lighting

There is bollard lighting along the pathway which is functioning. *Opportunity: The back or southwest corner of the park is dark and could use additional lighting.*

Drinking Fountains and Water Bottle Filling Stations

There is an older style drinking fountain which is functioning.

Solid Waste Collection and Handling.

There is an established trash receptacle in the park. There is not a recycling container to accompany it.

Signs and Barriers

No sign or barriers.

Other

The park is not legally open to dogs but is primarily used as a neighborhood dog facility.

Recommendation: Evaluate the no dog policy at this park and if amended install a dog waste bag station to reduce pathogen loading.

Opportunity: Long range, this park could be redesigned to increase use and functionality.

Dogs Allowed at Park

No.

Depot Park

Location

270 First Street West

Park Overview

Depot Park is a 3-acre park located in central Sonoma. The park areas were acquired by the City in two phases between 1975 and 1977 from the Northwestern Pacific Railroad Company. The railroad alignment was converted to the current bike



path in 1975. The original train depot building at the site was destroyed by fire in 1975, but a replica building was constructed and opened in 1979 and has remained in use as a historical museum since. Park areas surrounding the museum and bike path were completed in 1980. The restrooms were rehabilitated in 1999 and the parking lot was rehabilitated in 2013. The drainage channel between the park and First Street West was improved in 2020.

Vegetation and Landscaping

Landscaping around the Museum needs increased maintenance, with trees overgrown and their branches extending over the roof of the museum building. Recommendation: Remove trees concurrent with planned replacement of the building's roof.

The turf irrigation system is in good condition.

The landscaping around the new restoration channel along First Street West is well-maintained and in good condition.

Significant Trees

A row of large eucalyptus at the center of the park will be selectively removed or topped consistent with an arborist's recommendations in 2023. *Recommendation: Remove trees adjacent to Museum.*

Gathering Areas and Designated Picnic Areas

Picnic areas in good condition.

Sports and Recreation Areas

Bocce ball and pétanque courts located south of the main park area and operated through lease agreements with the Sonoma Sister Cities Association and the Valley of the Moon Pétanque Club. Both facilities are in good condition.

Recommendation & Opportunity: Replace volleyball court in northeast portion of the park. This area could be rehabilitated to include a new volleyball court and potentially other exercise equipment to serve joggers along the bike path.

Playgrounds

The playground at the center of the park is in good condition. *Recommendations: Remove sand and replace it with alternative substrate and add shade.*

Special Event Areas

Special event area in the south portion of the park for large gatherings.

Vehicle Parking Areas

The parking area is in good condition. ADA access to the park areas is through the northern parking lot. The pathway from the ADA ramp area will be re-graded as part of the Depot Bathroom Renovation.

Cyclist and Pedestrian Facilities and Connectivity

As part of the Depot Bathroom Renovation, the existing bicycle rack near the restroom will be replaced, and an additional one will be installed, improving the facilities for cyclists. The Park is connected to the Sonoma Bike Path, linking it to various bicycle routes throughout the City.

Restroom Facilities

One existing restroom. Renovation planned as part of the larger Depot Park improvement project.

Park Lighting

The park lighting is currently functional. Recommendation: Replace the cage-style lamp covers that have been attracting bird nests.

Drinking Fountains and Water Bottle Filling Stations

The park has an older water fountain located near the bathroom, which is barely functional. *Recommendation: Replace the water fountain with a modern water bottle filling station.*

Solid Waste Collection and Handling.

Solid waste collection and handling appropriate.

Signs and Barriers

Currently, Depot Park lacks place name signage at the entrance. There are existing wood bollards that separate the park from the northern parking area. *Recommendations: Install signage at the entrance for better visibility and to help visitors identify the park easily. Replace or remove these bollards as needed to enhance the park's aesthetics and functionality.*

Dogs Allowed at Park

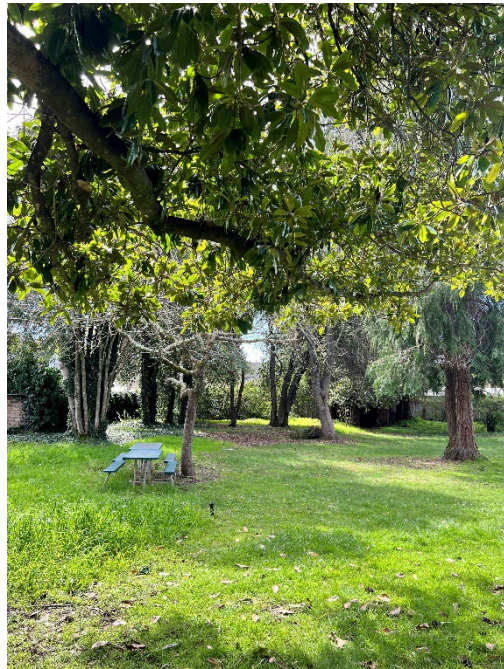
Yes.

El Prado Common

Park Overview

This park was developed as a landscaped common green serving 21 private residential lots in the El Prado subdivision in 1962. The City of Sonoma accepted maintenance responsibility for the landscaped green at the time. The common green is accessible to the public through four 10-foot-wide pedestrian walkways, but there is no signage at any of the entry points indicating that the space is open to the public.

A special district was formed concurrently with the City's acceptance of maintenance responsibility for the common green and a special tax was levied by the City annually upon each of the 21 private residential landowners with property abutting the green from the time the district was formed in 1963 until it was dissolved in 2008.



Following dissolution of the special district in 2008, the City continued to maintain turf, trees, and some irrigation in the common area. The decision to dissolve the special district in 2008 appears to have been motivated by a finding that, because the common area was in principle open to use by the public generally, the special tax levied on the abutting landowners was inappropriate.

Various encroachments into the common area by the abutting private property owners have been historically either tolerated or not recognized as encroachments by City staff. This was likely the product of ambiguity surrounding the special benefit tax and any special privileges that might have attached to the abutting property owners through that tax. There was also ambiguity about the City's interest in the land, which was at various times referred to as an easement only and not a fee interest.

The nature of the existing encroachments is limited to special landscaping improvements, extension of auxiliary irrigation into the common area from abutting private areas, and placement of small signs and personal items in the common area.

Recommendation: Research title and conduct community outreach before further assessment.

Vegetation and Landscaping

Assessment pending.

Significant Trees

Assessment pending.

Gathering Areas and Designated Picnic Areas

Assessment pending.

Sports and Recreation Areas

Assessment pending.

Playgrounds

Assessment pending.

Special Event Areas

Assessment pending.

Vehicle Parking Areas

Assessment pending.

Cyclist and Pedestrian Facilities and Connectivity

Assessment pending.

Restroom Facilities

Assessment pending.

Park Lighting

Assessment pending.

Drinking Fountains and Water Bottle Filling Stations

Assessment pending.

Solid Waste Collection and Handling

Assessment pending.

Hertenstein Park

Location

1055 Berryessa Drive

Park Overview

Hertenstein Park is a half-acre neighborhood park located in southwest Sonoma. The City of Sonoma acquired this property from the Sonoma Valley Historical Society in 1987 and it was developed into a City park in 1988.

Vegetation and Landscaping

The turf in the area is well-maintained and in good condition. The turf irrigation system is also functioning properly. No landscaping improvements are recommended.



Significant Trees

No significant tree issues. Tree roots are pushing up the sidewalk in spots. *Recommendation: Monitor.*

Gathering Areas and Designated Picnic Areas

The picnic area located in the northwest corner of the park, adjacent to the drainage channel, requires maintenance. Although the tables are old, they are still functional. *Recommendation: Replace the subsurface of the picnic area to improve its overall condition.*

Sports and Recreation Areas

No recreational areas.

Playgrounds

The playground is in good condition. *Recommendation: Replace sand with alternative substrate.*

Special Event Areas

No developed event area beyond picnic area and large grass area.

Vehicle Parking Areas

Vehicle parking along the City street. No ADA parking or access to the park. *Opportunity: Long range potential to develop the park frontage adjacent to Berryessa Drive to include ADA parking and access.*

Cyclist and Pedestrian Facilities and Connectivity

Currently, there is a bicycle rack located at the back of the park. The park is connected to both bicycle and pedestrian routes. Specifically, the park lies just west of a bike path that connects to Manor Drive and subsequently links to the Fryer Creek Bike Path. *Recommendation: Relocate the rack to the front of the park to enhance accessibility and encourage more cyclists to use it.*

Restroom Facilities

No restroom facilities.

Park Lighting

Park lighting is working.

Drinking Fountains and Water Bottle Filling Stations

One older style drinking fountain at the front of the park. Drinking fountain is functioning. *Recommendation: Replace the fountain with a water bottle filling station.*

Solid Waste Collection and Handling

Solid waste collection adequate for the park and adjacent to the picnicking areas.

Signs and Barriers

No barriers at the frontage of Hertenstein Park. No place name sign along frontage. *Recommendation: Install sign.*

Dogs Allowed at Park

Yes.

Jean K.T. Carter Park

Location

1135 Cox Street

Park Overview

Jean K.T. Carter is a 2.2-acre neighborhood park in southwest Sonoma. Jean K.T. Carter Park was constructed in 1991, and updated in 2010. The park was named for the long-time member of the Parks and Recreation Commission (1973-1985).



Vegetation and Landscaping

The turf is in good condition and irrigation is functioning.

Significant Trees

The roots of trees are causing damage to the sidewalk along the Cox Street frontage, resulting in uplift and potential hazards. Furthermore, there is a dead redwood tree located along the bike path on the eastern side of the park. *Recommendation: Remove dead redwood tree.*

Gathering Areas and Designated Picnic Areas

The picnic area is currently in good condition, with tables and benches that, although older, are still functional. The subsurface of the picnic area consists of turf at present. However, for long-term improvements, it is suggested to consider replacing the turf with an alternative subsurface.

Sports and Recreation Areas

Jean K.T. Carter has a half-court basketball court. The basketball court surface is in good condition.

Playgrounds

The playground is in good condition. *Recommendation: Replace sand with alternative substrate.*

Special Event Areas

No developed special event area beyond existing park facilities.

Vehicle Parking Areas

Vehicle parking along Newcomb and Cox Streets. ADA access to the park along Cox Street frontage.

Cyclist and Pedestrian Facilities and Connectivity

There is a bicycle rack located near the basketball court and bike path within the park. The park is well-connected to the bicycle path network throughout the City. The bike path runs along the western edge of the park, connecting to the Fryer Creek bike path through the Todd Avenue

pedestrian bridge. Additionally, the Newcomb Street Pedestrian bridge, which was completed Fall of 2022, further enhances the connectivity of the park to the cycling network.

Restroom Facilities

No restroom facilities. *Opportunity: Long range, this park could accommodate a restroom.*

Park Lighting

Lighting at the park is functional. *Recommendation: Add an additional light to the basketball court.*

Drinking Fountains and Water Bottle Filling Stations

At the basketball court, there is an older-style drinking fountain that is broken and non-operational. *Recommendation: Replace this non-functional fountain with a modern water bottle filling station.*

Solid Waste Collection and Handling

Solid waste appropriate for the park.

Signs and Barriers

Existing sign and barriers at Jean K.T. Carter Park. *Recommendation: Rehabilitate sign and replace bollards.*

Dogs Allowed at Park

No.

MacArthur Park

Location

758 Elliott Street

Park Overview

MacArthur Park is a 0.7-acre park in eastern Sonoma. MacArthur Park was completed in 1996 as part of the Laurel Wood Subdivision. The park ties together two neighborhoods.

Vegetation and Landscaping

The turf in the park is in good condition, and the irrigation system is functioning properly to maintain it. However, there is some overgrown vegetation along the northern edge that requires attention and trimming.

On Elliot Street, the landscaping strip appears

barren. *Opportunity: For long-term improvements, there is potential to redevelop the frontage.*



Significant Trees

No significant tree issues.

Gathering Areas and Designated Picnic Areas

Small picnic area along the northern portion of the park. It does not appear to be frequently used.

Sports and Recreation Areas

No recreational facilities outside of the playground and turf area.

Playgrounds

The playground is in good order.

Special Event Areas

No developed special event areas.

Vehicle Parking Areas

Street parking along Elliott Street. No ADA accessible parking. *Opportunity: Long range potential to rehabilitate street frontage along Elliot Street with ADA Parking access.*

Cyclist and Pedestrian Facilities and Connectivity

Bike Path connecting Elliot Street and Avenue Del Oro through park connects neighborhood. City street connection to other bike routes.

Restroom Facilities

No restroom facilities.

Park Lighting

The park's lighting is currently functional, providing adequate illumination. Recommendation: Install additional low bollard style lighting along the connector path.

Drinking Fountains and Water Bottle Filling Stations

One older style watering fountain in the park. The drinking fountain is not operational.

Recommendation: Replace and upgrade a bottle filling station.

Solid Waste Collection and Handling

Appropriate for the facility.

Signs and Barriers

There is an existing sign and barriers at MacArthur Park. *Recommendation: Rehabilitate sign and replace bollards.*

Dogs Allowed at Park

Yes.

Madera Park

Location

1 Fryer Creek Drive

Park Overview

Madera Park is a 1.8-acre park established along the southern end of the Fryer Creek Bicycle Path. The Madera Park was constructed along Fryer Creek concurrently with the Madera Park Subdivision in 1996. Creek habitat improvements to abate flood risks were made in parcel A and C that join with County water easements to optimize public space and habitat improvements. A bridge connects the bike path to Jean K.T. Carter Park and the Fryer Creek bike path.



Vegetation and Landscaping

Vegetation in good condition. Turf in good condition.

Significant Trees

No significant tree hazard issues.

Gathering Areas and Designated Picnic Areas

Picnic areas on the west and east side of Fryer Creek.

Sports and Recreation Areas

No recreational areas.

Playgrounds

No playground.

Special Event Areas

No Special Event Area.

Vehicle Parking Areas

Street parking available. No ADA accessible parking or access to the park.

Cyclist and Pedestrian Facilities and Connectivity

Fryer Creek bike path travels through the park which connects to other bike routes throughout the City.

Restroom Facilities

No restroom facilities.

Park Lighting

No park lighting other than streetlights.

Drinking Fountains and Water Bottle Filling Stations

There is an older-style drinking fountain in the park, which is currently functional.

Recommendation: Replace drinking fountain with a modern water bottle filling station.

Solid Waste Collection and Handling

Solid waste facilities adequate for the park.

Dogs Allowed at Park

Yes.

Nathanson Creek Park

Location

12221 Dewell Drive

Park Overview

Nathanson Creek is a 3-acre park established along the southern end of the Nathanson Creek Bicycle Path just near Sonoma Valley High School. Nathanson Creek Park was first identified in 1982 as part of the expansion of Sonoma Valley Bikeways Program. It was built in 1990 as a part of the Sonoma Meadows subdivision, and is part of the flood abatement channel. The Roland Hauck nature area is on the other side of the creek and has native plants on the upland areas of the floodplain.



Vegetation and Landscaping

The vegetation and turf in the park are in good condition, but there are significant areas that could benefit from landscaping improvements. *Opportunity: The northern area of the park could be redesigned to create a more functional and enjoyable space for visitors.*

Significant Trees

No significant tree health or hazard issues.

Gathering Areas and Designated Picnic Areas

Turf substrate under picnic areas. Sidewalks in need of repair. The surface of both pedestrian bridges is chipped and peeling. *Recommendations: Replace picnic area substrate with an alternative substrate. Address any trip hazards and other issues with the sidewalks and hardscape. Include bridges in a future Slurry Seal project for resurfacing.*

Sports and Recreation Areas

No recreational facilities outside of the picnic area and playground.

Playgrounds

The playground is currently in good condition. The fence along Dewell Drive surrounding the playground on the east side needs replacement. *Recommendations: to replace the sand with an alternative substrate. Add shade to the structure. Replace fence.*

Special Event Areas

No special event areas.

Vehicle Parking Areas

Street parking available across Dewell Drive, no marked pedestrian crossing available. No ADA parking or access to playground and park.

Cyclist and Pedestrian Facilities and Connectivity

The bicycle rack in the park is currently in disrepair and requires replacement. The park's bicycle path offers connectivity, linking the school situated to the north and various neighborhoods located to the west and south. *Recommendation: to install one bike rack near the playground and another in the picnic area to better accommodate cyclists.*

Restroom Facilities

No restroom facilities.

Park Lighting

Street lighting at the playground area. *Recommendation: Illuminate the pedestrian bridge and route through the picnic area.*

Drinking Fountains and Water Bottle Filling Stations

No drinking fountain at this location. *Recommendation: Install a modern bottle filling station.*

Solid Waste Collection and Handling

One waste collection station at the playground. *Recommendation: Add a station at the picnic area across the pedestrian bridge.*

Signs and Barriers

No existing sign for the park. Bollards are in disrepair. *Recommendation: Remove or replace bollards.*

Dogs Allowed at Park

No.

Nathanson Creek Preserve

Location

101 East MacArthur Street

Park Overview

Nathanson Creek Preserve is a 1.1-acre natural park established along the northern edge of the Nathanson Creek Bicycle Path. The Nathanson Creek Preserve started as a xeriscape project to exemplify best practices of landscape management in accordance with the City's Water Conservation Program. The park ties in with the public walkway through the Sonoma Valley High School property. The



project, begun in 2000 with the pathway through the high school grounds, was completed in 2010 with two public parks on either side of the path, a flood abatement structure to the creek terracing, and native plantings. Completed with regional grant money, partnership with Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District, City of Sonoma, and Sonoma Ecology Center Staff.

Vegetation and Landscaping

Landscaping in good condition. *Recommendation: Trim trees further back to maintain line of site and increase safety.*

Significant Trees

Trees over East MacArthur Street side sidewalk and right of way. *Recommendation: Perform maintenance and trimming.*

Gathering Areas and Designated Picnic Areas

The picnic area in the center of the preserve is in good condition. No additional gathering area.

Sports and Recreation Areas

No recreational areas.

Playgrounds

No playground.

Special Event Areas

No Special Event Area.

Vehicle Parking Areas

Street parking is available along East MacArthur Street and Second Street East.

Cyclist and Pedestrian Facilities and Connectivity

The bicycle route continues from East MacArthur Street adjacent to Preserve and southward to the high school.

Restroom Facilities

No restroom facilities.

Park Lighting

Lighting is functional.

Drinking Fountains and Water Bottle Filling Stations

No drinking fountain available.

Solid Waste Collection and Handling

Solid waste collection is adequate for this park.

Olsen Park

Location

569 Linda Drive

Park Overview

Olsen Park is a 1.3-acre park established along the western park of the Sonoma Bicycle Path connecting the neighborhood in northwest Sonoma. It was built in 1984 on City property as a parcel associated with the bike path and with the Olsen Subdivision.

Vegetation and Landscaping

Hedge along basketball court could be rehabilitated. *Recommendation: Remove hedge along the northern edge of playground.*



Significant Trees

Trees along the western edge of the park are overgrown. *Recommendation: Thin out western trees. Assess large eucalyptus along bike path.*

Gathering Areas and Designated Picnic Areas

Picnic area in northwest corner of the park. The picnic area has no substrate and heavy vegetation. *Recommendation: Rehabilitate the picnic areas with new surfaces and potential shade structure.*

Sports and Recreation Areas

Full size basketball court. *Recommendations: Replace backboards. Add exercise features along trail for recreational use.*

Playgrounds

Playground in good condition. *Recommendation: Replace sand with alternative substrate and add shade.*

Special Event Areas

No special event area outside of picnic area and large turf.

Vehicle Parking Areas

Street parking along Linda Drive. No ADA accessible parking.

Cyclist and Pedestrian Facilities and Connectivity

The park is located along the main bike path. One bike rack near basketball court.

Restroom Facilities

No restroom facilities.

Park Lighting

Park lighting and fixtures in good condition.

Drinking Fountains and Water Bottle Filling Stations

The older style drinking fountain is not functional. *Recommendation: Replace it with a water bottle filling station.*

Solid Waste Collection and Handling

Waste collection appears adequate for the park.

Signs and Barriers

There is an existing sign and barriers at Olsen Park. *Recommendation: Rehabilitate sign and replace bollards.*

Dogs Allowed at Park

No.

Pinelli Park

Location

433 France Street

Park Overview

Pinelli Park is half-acre residential neighborhood park located in the northeast section of the City of Sonoma along France Street. The park was created in 1978 by the City and dedicated to August Pinelli, a chairman of the Community Services Commission. The planting plan was supported by the Kiwanis Club throughout the following decades. During the 2010's there was an effort for the public to "Adopt a Park" through a City-led program. Swings once stood at this park but were removed because they were not ADA compliant in 2010.



Vegetation and Landscaping

Irrigation in good condition. Turf in need of additional aeration.

Significant Trees

The park features well-established large pine trees along its south side. These pines have grown too tall and dense and need to be thinned out.

Gathering Areas and Designated Picnic Areas

Small picnic areas. *Opportunity: Long term goal to improve picnic space.*

Sports and Recreation Areas

No recreational areas.

Playgrounds

The playground structures are currently in good condition. However, the small sand and water table located to the east of the play structure is nonfunctional due to water restrictions.

Recommendation: Replace the non-functional water feature with a new item that does not require water.

Special Event Areas

No special event area other than picnic tables.

Vehicle Parking Areas

Street parking. The park does have ADA accessible parking and ramp.

Cyclist and Pedestrian Facilities and Connectivity

Currently, there is no bike rack available at the park. The park is connected through neighborhood streets to various bike trails throughout the City. *Recommendation: Install a bike rack to accommodate cyclists.*

Restroom Facilities

No restroom facilities.

Park Lighting

Recommendation: Install additional lighting along the back/south end of the park.

Drinking Fountains and Water Bottle Filling Stations

No drinking fountain. *Recommendation: Install water bottle filling station.*

Solid Waste Collection and Handling

Solid waste collection seems adequate for the park.

Dogs Allowed at Park

No.

Sonoma Valley Oaks Park

Location

443 Saunders Drive

Park Overview

Sonoma Valley Oaks is a 1.2-acre park established in the Engler neighborhood. Sonoma Valley Oaks Park was established with its development in 2001.

Vegetation and Landscaping

Vegetation in good condition. Turf in good condition.

Significant Trees

No significant tree issues.

Gathering Areas and Designated Picnic Areas

No picnic areas. *Opportunity: Potential area that could be developed into picnic area in outside corners of the circle.*

Sports and Recreation Areas

No recreational areas.

Playgrounds

No playground structure. The neighborhood has a desire for a playground structure in the park. *Opportunity: Potential to develop an area outside of circle path into a playground.*

Special Event Areas

No Special Event Area.

Vehicle Parking Areas

Adjacent street parking. No accessible ADA parking areas.

Cyclist and Pedestrian Facilities and Connectivity

The park is in a neighborhood. Neighborhood streets are used for cyclists. There is not a distinct way to get to established bike trails from this neighborhood, connectivity poor.

Restroom Facilities

No restroom facilities.

Park Lighting

Recommendation: Increase lighting under the trellis.



Drinking Fountains and Water Bottle Filling Stations

No drinking fountain. *Recommendation: Install water bottle filling station.*

Solid Waste Collection and Handling

Trash collection appears adequate for the park.

The Plaza Park

Location

No. 1 The Plaza

Park Overview

The Plaza Park is an 8.2-acre park located at the heart of Sonoma. The Plaza of is where Sonoma City Hall is located. This parcel is a part of the original downtown and records that go back to the founding of this site identify it as the headquarters of the City and the gathering place of the community. At the terminus of Broadway and located at the intersection with Napa Street, the second busiest street in Sonoma, the park is the heart of city life. The park was renovated, and the historical layout was revised in 1989 with standardized benches, play areas and pathways.



Vegetation and Landscaping

Irrigation working in main park area. Irrigation to City Hall not functioning.

Significant Trees

Major significant trees were trimmed in Spring of 2023. Public Works plans to continue with other maintenance items recommended by the 2022 Plaza Tree Assessment Report in FY 23/24.

Gathering Areas and Designated Picnic Areas

Picnic areas throughout the park. Long term goal to replace picnic tables and older style benches.

Sports and Recreation Areas

No recreational areas.

Playgrounds

Two full playgrounds. *Recommendation: Replace sand substate with an alternative.*

Special Event Areas

The amphitheater area serves as a venue for special events. The amphitheater is not ADA accessible, however, there is a long-term goal to improve accessibility and make this feature inclusive for all visitors with disabilities. *Recommendation: Install barricades along the stage edge when the area is not in use for added safety and security.*

Vehicle Parking Areas

Street parking surrounding the Plaza.

Cyclist and Pedestrian Facilities and Connectivity

Plaza Park is connected through surrounding streets to the bike path. *Recommendation: Add more bike racks at the Plaza.*

Restroom Facilities

Restroom Facility existing. *Recommendation: Remodel restroom.*

Park Lighting

Park lighting in bollards is in good condition. *Recommendation: Add more lighting in the amphitheater.*

Drinking Fountains and Water Bottle Filling Stations

Older style drinking fountain near amphitheater and water bottle filling station near duck pond. *Recommendation: Replace older style fountain and addition of another water filling station in the park.*

Solid Waste Collection and Handling

Waste collection stations scheduled to be replaced in 2023.

Other

Plaza Park Master Plan to evaluate long term recommendations for improvements to the Plaza.

Dogs Allowed at Park

No.

Summary and Next Steps

The City of Sonoma conducted a comprehensive Parks Assessment in March 2022, involving dedicated City Staff over two days to thoroughly evaluate each park facility. The assessment covered thirteen different features, including vegetation, picnic areas, playgrounds, accessibility, and signage. Building on this assessment, the City Staff compiled a comprehensive report outlining specific needs and recommendations, including a summarized Table 1 of major infrastructure improvements for City-owned parks.

Recommended Actions for the City of Sonoma:

1. **Prioritize Infrastructure Improvements:** The City should prioritize the recommendations from Table 1 and the CIP and systemic infrastructure project list in the report. This prioritization, based on urgency, project cost, and community impact, ensures effective resource utilization, allowing the parks to evolve in alignment with community needs and expectations.
2. **Engage with Parks Recreation and Open Space Commission:** Collaborate with the Parks Recreation and Open Space Commission to align with their recommendations and contribute to a robust list of park projects. This collaboration ensures that park projects are in harmony with community needs, contributing to a comprehensive and well-informed approach.
3. **Actively incorporate public input,** allowing the community to have a say in how Measure M tax dollars are used for park projects. Soliciting feedback through surveys, public meetings, and engagement activities will ensure that park projects align with community expectations, fostering an inclusive community environment. This inclusive approach will contribute to a community where everyone feels valued and involved.