







### CITY OF FRESNO // DECEMBER 2016



# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The City of Fresno thanks the community members, stakeholders, elected officials, and public agencies who participated in the creation of this Vision Plan:

Action Change/ Accion Cambio Building Healthy Communities Central Unified School District City Council Members Community Planning Advisory Groups Council District Implementation Committees California State University, Fresno Cultiva La Salud Disability Advisory Committee Elected Officials Fresno Boys and Men of Color Fresno Unified School District Habitat for Humanity Kaiser Permanente Leadership Council for Justice and Accountability League of Women Voters Metro Ministries Neighborhood Groups San Joaquin River Parkway & Conservation Trust SEIU 1000 Shifting Gears ST. REST







with PROS Consulting, Precision Engineering, Urban Diversity Design, and Vernal Group

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# VISION



# **INTRODUCTION TO THE VISION**

Fresno Parks Vision 2050 is produced as the first phase of the Fresno Parks Master Plan update, a plan that will guide the growth and management of Fresno's park system into the future. Through community dialogue, stakeholder input, and the guidance of elected officials, the vision statement, themes, and strategies were formed. Work is ongoing to assess existing park conditions in order to direct future improvements. Preliminary analysis shows gaps in the park system – neighborhoods in Fresno where facilities are limited or nonexistent. The Parks Master Plan process, in partnership with stakeholders and residents, will continue to explore those gaps and articulate helpful strategies. This Vision will guide those efforts.

The Parks Master Plan comes at a critical time for the City. The General Plan, adopted in December of 2014, set forth policy guidance for open spaces and community facilities in Fresno. That plan established the overall goal for park acreage to be 5 acres per 1,000 residents with 3 acres per 1,000 residents for Community, Neighborhood and Pocket Parks. The parks plan is closely coordinated with the City's Active Transportation Plan (ATP). The ATP will establish a network that connects the current park system through bicycle and sidewalk facilities. Furthermore, opportunities for expanding a trail network are embraced by the vision. Finally, work conducted nationally by the Trust for Public Land (TPL) to evaluate the park systems of individual cities served as an important catalyst. The City and interested stakeholders recognized Fresno could do more to strengthen its system and improve park resources.

The Fresno Parks Vision 2050 is an important milestone in the overall Fresno Parks Master Plan. This document summarizes many of the current planning activities and initial findings. For example, the section titled "Where We Are" describes results of the park assessments. Outreach and community input forms the basis of the vision. From in depth stakeholder meetings to mobile workshops and a detailed user survey, the input received was translated into an aspirational vision statement, one that will guide the next phase of the Fresno Parks Master Plan.



FRESNO PARKS 2050 ENVISIONS A ROBUST PARK SYSTEM MADE UP OF INNOVATIVE RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES, PRESERVED NATURAL AREAS, MULTI-MODAL TRAILS, AND EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS THAT EQUITABLY SUPPORT A DIVERSE, HEALTHY POPULATION FORMING A VALUABLE BASIS FOR OUR THRIVING COMMUNITY.

Since the adoption of the 1989 Fresno Parks Master Plan, little has changed for the park system despite continued population growth and changing demographics. Fresno Parks 2050 will respond to the continued geographic and demographic conditions while identifying clear strategies for strengthening the park system. Analysis reinforces the gaps in service - neighborhoods lacking parks - that the community has described. The ongoing planning effort is carefully addressing how parks are measured and prioritizes neighborhood park amenities within walking distance of population centers. The Vision has been organized around three key questions: Where Are We? Where Do We Want To Go? and How do We Get There? The first question "Where Are We?" assesses the challenges to the current park system and the emerging needs based on demographic and geographic futures for the city. "Where Do We Want To Go?" is about the key themes and strategies for the Vision. Fresno 2050 is developed around six themes: access, equity, health, design for beauty, funding and operations, and safety. Vision strategies include preliminary recommendations for physical and programmatic improvements to the park system, including four sample strategies to be replicated throughout the system. These inlcude:

- Maintain Existing Parks
- Renovate Existing Parks
- Partner with Local Agencies
- Build New Parks

"How do We Get There?" is centered around clear fiscal policies defining ongoing commitments and opportunities for leveraging funding. The final section summarizes the next steps in this exciting, on-going process to create a park system that makes every resident proud. "A SPECIAL PLACE THAT INVITES OUR DIVERSE COMMUNITY + NEIGHBORHOODS TO GATHER AND ENJOY EACH OTHER."

- Community comment in response to "Tell us about Your Ideal Park"



Community Members provided feedback during the October open house.

## **OUTREACH FOR THE VISION PLAN**

Reaching out to community stakeholders and residents was an immensely important step to craft a holistic vision for the Fresno park system. Outreach occurred at several levels, from stakeholders interviews and group stakeholder meetings, to mobile workshops on nights and weekends at parks in Fresno, to a community-wide meeting where feedback was solicited regarding specific issues within the current park system, to a detailed online survey available to the public.

#### STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS

Stakeholder meetings were held with key, engaged residents who have an interest in parks, recreation, public health, and Fresno's civic identity. Community and institutional leaders, City Council members, and community advocates were some of the people involved in these meetings. Stakeholders were given an overview of the Parks Master Plan process and current strengths and challenges. Stakeholders were encouraged to voice their opinions and discuss park issues while their feedback was recorded onto a graphic poster like the one displayed to the right.

#### **MOBILE WORKSHOP MEETINGS**

Mobile workshops were hosted at preplanned parks events. PARCS and DARM staff engaged people of all ages to take the user survey, draw their ideal Fresno park, and give feedback on current park conditions. Mobile workshops took place at the following sites (participation numbers included below):

- September 16, 2016 | Romain Park (15 Participants)
- September 17, 2016 | Yokomi Elementary School (25 Participants)
- September 24, 2016 | Mosqueda Center (35 Participants)
- October 2, 2016 | CenCalVia (100 Participants)
- October 15, 2016 | Hoover HS (35 Participants)
- October 21, 2016 | Hinton Park (10 Participants)
- October 22, 2016 | Kidsfest at Holmes Park (60 Participants)
- October 22, 2106 | McLane HS (45 Participants)
- October 29, 2016 | Fresno HS (50 Participants)
- November 5, 2016 | Oso De Oro Park (25 Participants)
- November 5, 3016 | Jane Adams Elementary \*
- November 12, 2016 | Bullard HS \*
- November 19, 2016 | Edison HS \*

\* attendance numbers not yet counted

#### **COMMUNITY MEETING**

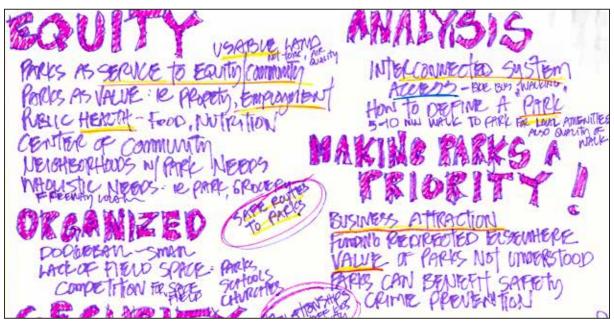
The community meeting for Fresno 2050 took place at Fresno High School on October 6, 2016. The event included a brief presentation of the Parks Master Plan. The majority of the activity took place around interactive boards in an openhouse style format. Community members were asked to provide their input on several issues including existing strengths and challenges, vision themes, and current opportunities for open space within their neighborhoods.

#### **USER SURVEY**

A user survey - still available online (https:// www.surveymonkey.com/r/FresnoParks) and at events - will continue to be used to gain input. The user survey is discussed in the "Where Are We Now?" chapter.



A mobile workshop at Kidsfest asked youth for their input on Holmes Park.



Stakeholder input was visually recorded during meetings to foster deeper discussion.



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# WHERE ARE WE NOW?

ASSESSING THE STRENGTHS & CHALLENGES



New parks, such as Inspiration Park pictured here provide much needed facilities for all ages.



Trips to the San Joaquin River are in invaluable part of the Life and Environmental Science Program giving some students their first trip to the river.



The Life and Environmental Science Program also holds learning demonstrations like the one pictured here.



BMX and skate park facilities are well used.

# **PARK CONDITIONS**

### STRENGTHS

The Fresno park system should be recognized for its strengths. Many recreational programs are widely used by all age ranges, from senior meals, to organized sports. Additionally, over the past five years, park staff have helped win over seventeen million dollars in grant funding, providing much needed funding to programs and facilities.

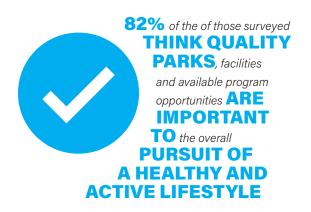
- Youth programming is a major strength for the park system. One of the most successful programs for the park system is the Life and Environmental Science Program that is operated out of Highway City Park. It exposes young students to regional and national science and ecological information.
- The Fresno park system has a wealth of well maintained BMX and skate facilities in regional and local parks. People from across the San Joaquin Valley and even the State, come to Fresno to use these amenities in parks.
- New parks in Fresno are some of the greatest assets to the system. Martin Ray Reilly and Inspiration are two parks that have been constructed within the last five years and have seen great success and popularity. Both of these parks are amenity rich and universally accessible.
- Programs that encourage young adult involvement in the park system are prevalent.
  From teenage staff at parks to the Junior Lifeguard Training Program, the parks system does an excellent job of mentoring, training, and employing youth.



n the Fresno Parks Aquation Program last year



Number of Hot Meals served to Seniors through the Parks Program





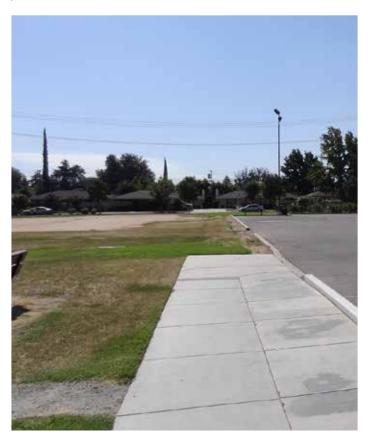
Signs of a poor irrigation system are displayed in the picture above.



Transients and drug users are present in the park system, creating an unwelcoming environment for other park users.



Lack of shade makes some amenities like the play structure pictured above unusable.



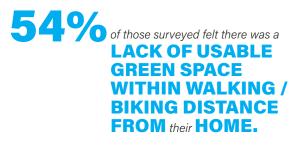
ADA accessibility is a major challenge in several parks, as some accessible paths do not lead to any park facilities.

# **PARK CONDITIONS**

## CHALLENGES

One of the most critical challenges of the current Fresno park system is the lack of access to park space for all residents of Fresno. Currently, only half of the Fresno population is within a half mile of a park, which means that roughly half of the population does not live within walking distance to a park. As the population continues to grow, this will become an even larger challenge for the current park system. More specific challenges related to the parks are outlined below:

- Several parks in the system are in poor condition with major repairs needed in such areas as pools, irrigation systems, buildings, and fields. Poor conditions exacerbate the challenges to provide basic maintenance and compete with resources for other programs.
- Many parks lack clear and direct access due to missing sidewalks and fencing. Accessibility is a concern at some parks though the City is actively working to identify and address those needs.
- Crime and safety is a city-wide issue that is also reflected in the park system. Homeless encampments and crime related theft and vandalism issues have created a negative public perception for the parks.
- Only 13% of the park system has shaded areas, and a lack of shade, comfort and beauty contribute to park usability in this extreme climate.





 Limited adult programming is another challenge for this park system. Strong programming exists for children and seniors, however, parks should be oriented to all ages and users.

# **TRENDS & EMERGING NEEDS**

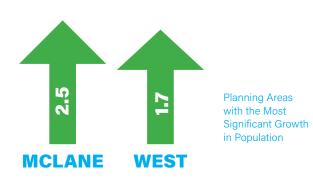
#### **DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS**

The City of Fresno is growing. By 2030, there will be a 15.4% increase in population. According to the 2010 U.S. Census, all age ranges will increase in population size. Significant population growth will occur in two main areas: McLane Community Plan Area and West Community Plan Area. Growth will not occur uniformly, potentially focusing more demand in some areas. For example, McLane's growth rate will be 2.5 times greater than the average U.S. growth rate while the West area will have a rate that is 1.7 times greater than the annual U.S. average based on the U.S. Census projections. Fresno's population will continue to diversify. By 2030, the population is projected to be 50% Hispanic, 29% White, 13% Asian, and 7% African American. The only population that may see a decrease over time is the African American population.

#### **RECREATION TRENDS**

The recreation trends in Fresno were measured using the Market Potential Index (MPI). The MPI measures the probable demand for service in the targeted areas. The demand for recreation in Fresno falls into the general sports category. The demand for Baseball, Volleyball, Basketball and Football are in higher demand in niehgborhoods within Fresno than the U.S. average. However, Soccer is in the most demand locally with participation ranging from 11-34% higher than the national average.

#### **POPULATION GROWTH FOR 2050**



#### HIGHEST DEMAND FOR RECREATION

(Ranked Lowest to Highest)



**BASKETBALL** 2-9% Above National Average



**BASEBALL** 4-19% Above National Average

1-25% Above National Average

VOLLEYBALL

2-24% Above National Average

FOOTBALL





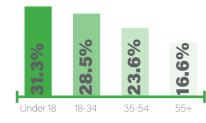


#### **USER SURVEY**

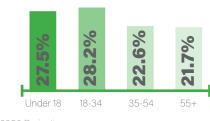
A comprehensive user survey was created to assess the current park system from the perspective of Fresno residents. The survey is still available through the City of Fresno website and at Mobile Workshops in English, Spanish and Hmong. Over 600 surveys have been compiled and analyzed in order to inform Fresno Parks 2050 to date. Survey respondents were asked about the usability of the current system, from amenities to access to security issues. Residents were also asked about what they would want out of a future park system, ranking indoor and outdoor recreation amenities and programming.

Survey respondents recognize the importance of parks with 90% of responses placing a high importance on quality parks, facilities and available program opportunities to the overall pursuit of a healthy and active lifestyle. Of those surveyed, the top five needs for park amenities starting with the most popular include: Picnic Areas, Paved Multi- Use Trails, Community Gardens, Playgrounds and Splashpads.

#### **AGE PROJECTIONS FOR 2050**



2010 Census



)50 Projectior

#### Over **60%** of those **SURVEYED** said that the **CURRENT PARK SYSTEM** was either **UNSATISFACTORY OR POOR.**

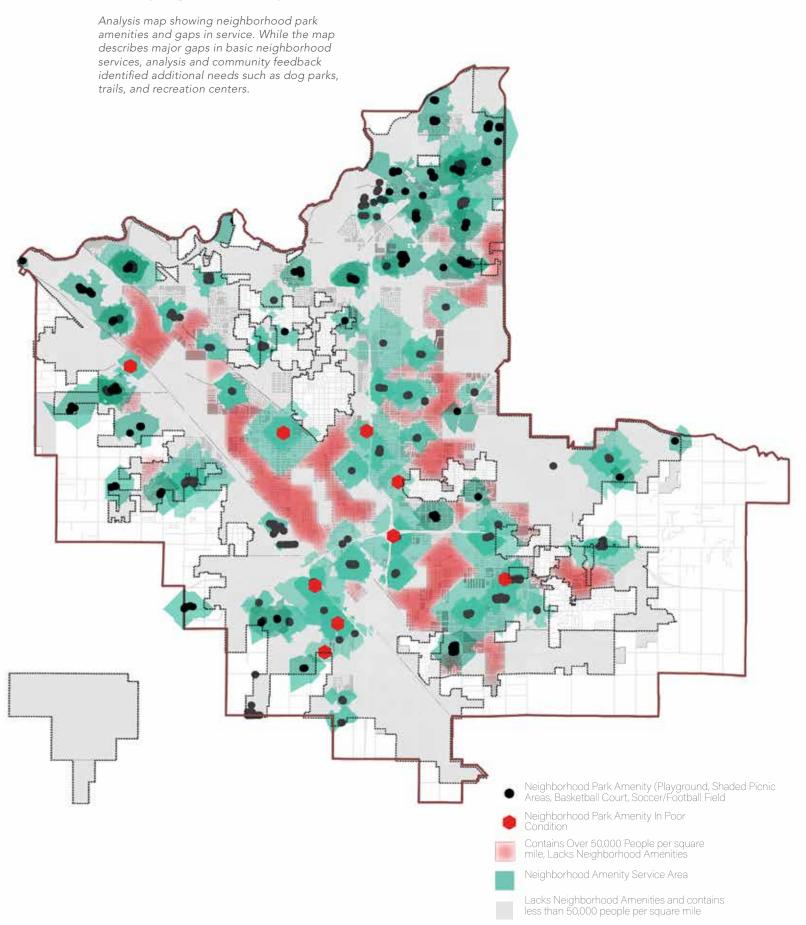
#### PARK SPENDING PER RESIDENT





Source: TPL

Preliminary Neighborhood Amenity Gaps

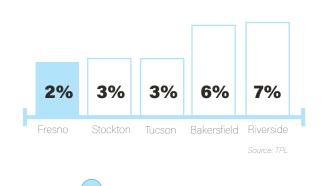


## **GEOGRAPHIC AREAS OF NEED**

Geographic areas of need were determined by mapping park amenities and their access. Park amenities (e.g. playgrounds, shaded picnic areas, etc.) were given a 1 mile, 2 mile, or 5 mile buffer for access radius depending on the typical catchment area for the amenity. This buffer conformed to the street grid so that barriers such as railroad tracks, freeways and waterways were taken into account when calculating accessibility measurements. Once this exercise was completed, gaps were observed and noted with areas that have the average density of 50,000 people or more per square mile. Amenities in poor condition were also noted because these amenities are not usable and should also be considered gap areas.

Several areas in Fresno lack parks with neighborhood amenities (playgrounds, shade structures, picnic shelters, basketball courts, soccer and football fields). These areas are generally located in the west, southeast and northeast of the city. A concentration of parks with neighborhood amenities in poor conditions are located in the south and southwest. Areas in the west and southeast lack recreation centers. Areas in the west, southeast, and northeast lack water features (pools and splash pads) and several parks in the southwest have these facilities but they are in poor condition. Areas that lack all community and neighborhood amenities are located in the west and southeast, generally, these are the areas that have dense populations and lack any form of park space with amenities.

#### PARKS AS A PERCENTAGE OF CITY AREA



Roughly Half of Fresno's Population Does Not Live Within Walking Distance of a Park

#### PARKS AND OPEN SPACE AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC

The following is a list of open spaces that are available for residents:

- Fresno County Parks
- PARCS Inventory
- FMFCD Ponding Basin/Parks Maintained by PARCS
- FMFCD Ponding Basin Parks
- Additional Parks Maintained by DPW(CFD)
- San Joaquin River Parkway
- Vista Point Properties
- Public Schools with Open Campus
- Private Schools with Open Campus
- Higher Education with Open Campus
- Private Parks Not Gated



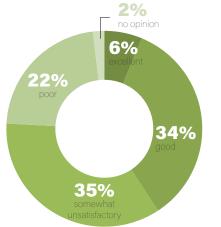
# WHERE DO WE WANT TO GO?

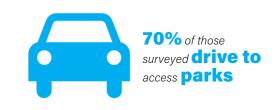
# **VISION THEMES**

## INTRODUCTION

The following themes reflect more specific goals of the Fresno Parks 2050 Vision Statement. The themes were carefully articulated from interviews with PARCS staff, stakeholder meetings, community meetings and survey results. Each of the themes focuses on a different goal that can be applied to the entire park system and will guide the overall framework for the Parks Master Plan. The Vision themes include: Access, Equity, Health, Safety, Design for Beauty, and Innovation. The themes are reflected in corresponding images that display the successful applications of these goals.









**52%** of those surveyed are willing to **support an increase** in **public funding for parks**.

#### **TOP PARK PROGRAMS**





youth

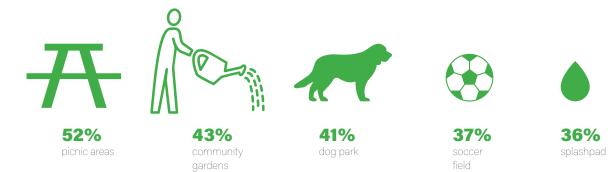
sports



junior giants youth program

after school programs

HIGHEST DEMAND FOR RECREATION FACILITY (Of Those Surveyed)



# VISION THEMES CONTINUED

## ACCESS

In the future, all Fresno residents are able to easily walk to a park to access community and neighborhood amenities. Parks are welcoming with clear entries, signage, and attractive perimeters.

- All existing parks are upgraded to be ADA compliant. Barrier-free designs are implemented wherever possible. Universal accessibility is designed into all new parks.
- Parks are connected through multi-use trails, transit connections and pedestrian routes. All parks have adequate mobility connections to enhance public safety including visible crosswalks, bicycle lanes and marked transit stops. Pedestrian connections within parks link to amenities with clear site lines and access points. Adequate lighting, comfortable sidewalk width, consistent bicycle lanes and visible transit stops will enhance access.
- Parks are clearly branded with consistent signage that is visible from outside of the park. Signage provides an opportunity for system branding as well recognizing each park by name. Wayfinding signage within the park helps facilitate accessibility and clearly direct users to amenities within the park.
- Entries are welcoming at new and existing parks. These entries have clear signage, pedestrian access, and respond to logical hierarchy of program areas.



Protected bicycle lanes that lead to parks through urban areas provide safe access like this one in Brooklyn, NY.



This park entry sign from Scottsdale, AZ is welcoming and legible.

### EQUITY

Parks in Fresno equitably serve the entire population. From creating new parks, to restoring amenities within existing parks, the Fresno park system of the future is available for all residents. Parks in Fresno will also serve its growing and diverse population and be inclusive of all age ranges, cultures and recreational needs.

- At a minimum, 5 acres of parks, trails, and open space amenities exist per 1,000 Fresno residents. This standard was established by the General Plan.
- Park facilities are multi-generational with facilities for every age group from children to seniors.
- Equitable park space in Fresno are a priority for the city to accomplish within the next five years.
- Programming in Fresno parks are inclusive of all cultures including adequate open space and facilities for outdoor programming for multicultural sports and games. Parks provide multicultural learning opportunities and places for celebration of our diverse heritage.
- New parks are built, existing parks are renovated and adequately maintained to provide quality service.



Multipurpose fields provide facilities for games including Takraw played by Hmong sportsmen in Romain Park.



Park equipment can be used for all ages, like this exercise course in a Los Angeles Park.

# VISION THEMES CONTINUED

## HEALTH

In the future, Fresno's park system is at the forefront of city initiatives to improve health and wellness for residents. A health and parks initiative can be more than providing places for exercise. This theme can extend to programming, design, and creating healthy lifestyles. Urban populations, especially low income communities, suffer health complications brought on by stressful lifestyle and environments. These conditions are improved by access to green space and the benefits of natural features such as trees, water, and shade.

- Comfort is improved and air quality is mitigated with a more robust tree canopy.
- The path and trails networks in Fresno's park system should facilitate healthy lifestyles for residents and provide places for people to walk around parks and from parks to trails.
- The themes of wellness and nutrition permeate all aspects of the park, from providing healthy snacks and meals for after-school programs and seniors, to creating programming that educates park users of various aspects of wellness, from stress release and mental health, to nutrition.
- Park amenities including play equipment are clean and safe places to play.



The multi-modal trail through Woodward Park creates continuous paths for walking and bicycling.



Lowell Community Garden is one of the many community gardens promoting a healthy lifestyle in Fresno's park system.

### SAFETY

Safety is a citywide issue that is manifested in several public spaces around the city, and it is especially evident in the Fresno park system. The Fresno park system is one where every person should feel welcome and safe regardless of time of day, neighborhood, or security presence.

- In order to make parks safer, it is important to have people, residents, and merchants surrounding the park, providing surveillance. "Eyes on the park" means that the more people we have in parks and surrounding them, the safer they become.
- Having clear sight lines is an important design consideration for safety in parks. Open spaces are less likely to be used for undesirable activity and allow accessibility across parks for emergency access and other needs. While shade is an important feature in Fresno parks, all spaces should be designed so that they are open and have visibility for park users and Staff.
- Coordination with social service providers to regularly visit parks can assist transient and homeless populations who seek temporary shelter and other benefits from the parks department.



Eyes on the park can include informal activities as seen in the above picture.



PARCS staff provide security, educate, and mentor kids.

# VISION THEMES CONTINUED

## DESIGN FOR BEAUTY

Fresno Parks are beautiful places that attract residents and tourists alike. They create comfortable spaces that showcase the ecology of the San Joaquin Valley and the unique history of Fresno.

- Parks are welcoming for all users. Fresno Parks have clear entryways and signage for all modes of transportation, paying special attention to gateway functions that are welcoming and comfortable.
- Planting in Fresno Parks is aesthetically pleasing, providing different textures, colors and scents for park users. Native planting is encouraged especially plants that are low maintenance and drought tolerant.
- The regional character of Fresno is expressed in the park system through architectural, planting and landscape materials. Multi-cultural programs are encouraged to showcase the diverse population. Historic sites within parks are showcased with interpretive signage and programming elements.
- All Fresno Parks provide elements of shade for users. From tree groves, to shade structures, the benefits of comfortable spaces offset the extreme summer temperatures and make park space usable year round.



Shade structures can provide educational information, like this one in a bird sanctuary park in Toronto, Canada



This park in Zurich Switzerland combines elements of light, water, and vegetation to create a beautiful experience at all times of day.

### INNOVATION

Fresno Parks serve as a model for innovation in resiliency and sustainability. Climate change requires a greater attention to landscape management to reduce resource inputs and maximize ecological function.

- New parks are designed and maintained for energy efficiency. Existing parks are evaluated for their resource use and modified through changes in maintenance practices, material and plant selections.
- Water efficient initiatives are explored including gray water and recycled water systems. Stormwater systems are designed into parks especially where there is room for

When possible, low water and xeriscaping is incorporated into new and existing parks in order to decrease resource inputs.

- Fresno parks feature planting and landscape features that support the Fresno ecosystem. Ecosystem restoration and creation is focused in areas that can revitalize habitats and native planting areas. Educational programs and signage is encouraged to educate the general public about their environment.
- Working landscape features are incorporated into existing and proposed parks as much as possible. Incorporating green infrastructure functions can help filter pollutants and capture stormwater.



treatment, detention and storage of stormwater. *cisterns in this park in Helotes, Texas.* 



Creating and restoring habitats can renew ecosystems for wildlife, like this Sandhill Crane spotted in the San Joaquin National Wildlife Refuge.



# HOW DO WE GET THERE?



## **VISION STRATEGIES**

### PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS

### INTRODUCTION

Through this Vision, preliminary strategies are identified. These ideas will be further discussed with the community and the recommendations refined through the Parks Master Plan process. The approaches address needed capital improvements, operations, and funding,

### **10 STRATEGIES**

#### ADVOCACY

A group of friends of Fresno's parks should be organized to support parks and advocate for their funding and successful operation. The group should extend to foundations, organizations, and individual residents who use and love the parks.



#### MAINTAIN

Parks need to be maintained at industry standards with steady funding levels that include lifecycle replacement cost for anticipated items that wear out and require repair or replacement.



### RENOVATE

Most parks are in serious need of renovation in order to make them usable and maintainable. Buildings, irrigation systems, planting, grass fields, pools, and signage are some of the priorities to be discussed in the Parks Master Plan.

#### **BUILD NEW PARKS**

Neighborhoods without adequate parks are ideal candidates for new parks and trails. The Parks Master Plan will help identify areas of greatest need through a community based approach.



### PARTNER

Fresno is not alone in its mission to provide excellent parks for recreation and open space conservation. Partnerships with allied agencies such as The San Joaquin River Parkway, Fresno Metropolitan Flood Control District, local unified school districts, State Parks, and FID should be accelerated. as well as strengthening the role of parks through community organizing, partnerships, and marketing. Several strategies are given spotlights to explore the opportunities in greater detail. Conceptual drawings illustrate what renovations, partnerships, and investments in new parks can yield.



#### SECURE

The parks should be made safe and secure for enjoyment by every resident. Park users, parks staff as well as police should be considered part of the solution. The social challenges of several disenfranchised populations in Fresno should not disproportionately burden other park users.

#### 5 FUND

The continued operation and maintenance of the park system requires a steady funding source. The Parks Master Plan will help identify appropriate funding levels and efficient administration. Capital costs to renovate and expand the system will also be proposed. This will be explored in conjunction with potential funding sources.

#### PROMOTE

Activities led by staff strengthen the role of parks by directly supporting youth in recreation, education, job training, and building leadership skills.

### 9 CONNECT

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A successful park system is connected to its community by well-defined safe routes that offer mobility choices from walking and biking to transit and private car. The Active Transportation Plan helps identify priorities.

#### 10 CELEBRATE

Fresnans should be proud of their parks. A branding strategy to promote the benefits of parks should be conducted online, through social media, and through new physical signage in parks.

# **SPOTLIGHT:** MAINTAIN EXISTING PARKS sample maintenance strategies

Taking care of the existing parks and open space resources is about investment protection. Parks are valuable assets which require tending. The maintenance actions taken the PARCS and DPW staff to care for the fields, irrigation system, trees, and ground cover keeps parks in usable condition and prolongs their life. Maintenance reduction due to budget cuts or other circumstances can erode the condition of parks to a point where normal maintenance practices cannot overcome the deficiency. The park system needs a major renovation in order to get normal operations back on track. The Parks Master Plan will guide the City to maintenance regiments and administration of staff to improve efficiency. The Plan will guide lifecycle replacement funding so that the maintenance budget factors in the cost of replacement after normal wear and tear.



Mosqueda Park



Frank H. Ball Park



Frank H. Ball Park



# **SPOTLIGHT:** RENOVATE EXISTING PARKS sample renovation plan

Fink-White is an 8.6 acre neighborhood park located in west Fresno. It is bound by residential streets to the west, east and south, and the 99 Freeway along its north edge. Generally, this park is used by surrounding neighbors. The park currently has a wading pool and learner pool, a small recreation building, basketball courts, multi-purpose fields, a baseball diamond, a shade structure and a playground. Amenities within the park are well used; however, several of the facilities including the building and aquatic facilities are in need of extensive upgrades. This park presents an opportunity to encourage more users from the neighborhood from all age groups and a variety of backgrounds.

A strategy for rehabilitating Fink-White that applies to several existing parks including: Mosqueda, Vinland, Logan and Quigley is to update existing facilities and add new amenities that fill gaps within the surrounding access area. Sports facilities including soccer fields, multi-purpose fields and basketball courts are placed in the northern section of the park. The soccer fields are generally sited within the existing lawn area, and new basketball courts are along S. Trinity Street. A fully enclosed dog park is tucked into the northwest corner of the park. A new pool and recreation building are located below the basketball courts creating an active edge. Both of these areas also provide large shade structures. Adjacent to the pool and building are new playground facilities that capture wide age ranges from tot lots to older children. Within this area, a splashpad complements the pool and playground. South of the park, an unused traffic triangle is transformed into a community garden.

### **POTENTIAL COST: \$10-12 MILLION**

Conceptual illustration showing potential future improvements.

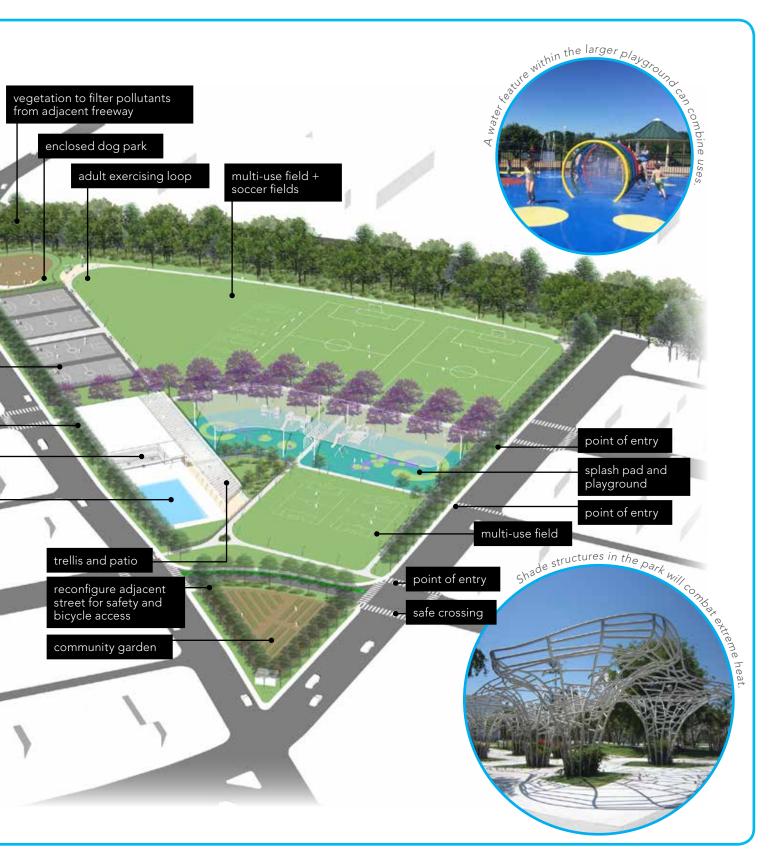
basketball courts

welcoming entry

new recreation

center building

pool with shallow learning zone



### SPOTLIGHT: PARTNER WITH LOCAL AGENCIE sample new basin park

Basin XX is owned and operated by the Fresno Flood Control District. It is located one block west of Highway 99, bordered by Hughes Avenue on the east side. To the north, it is bordered by Addams Elementary School to the northeast and residences to the northwest. The residences are separated from the basin by Hughes Avenue. It is bordered by residences to the south and west that do not face the park. The primary basin pool is on the west side, with overflow on the east side that also houses a baseball diamond. The only entrance is on Hughes Avenue.

The design concept for Basin XX, or other similar basins, works within the constraints that it continue to operate as a functional basin for the Flood Control District, therefore, the slopes of the primary basin are maintained with minimal change in topography in the secondary basin. The design minimizes fencing, using tree hedges as buffers instead. The primary basin is a beautiful and tranquil space. The design capitalizes on this with a path that meanders over the basin and includes an overlook as well. In the secondary basin, two soccer fields are housed in the lower portion. On the southern slope, a play area capitalizes on topography, with slides that transition from the upper path to the lower path, A picnic area is designed for the upper portion of this area as well. **This design idea could also be replicated at Corrazo, Rotary West Basin BE, and Basin O at 1st and Bullard.** 

In order to encourage recreation at functional flood basins throughout Fresno, in the future, signage is clear and access should be more transparent. Fence systems are created to allow for year round access while keeping safety in mind, therefore, the basin area does not need to be completely enclosed and can be fenced at critical points. Most basins have dynamic topography that can transform into a play area or an amphitheater.



### **POTENTIAL COST: \$3-5 MILLION**



### **SPOTLIGHT:** BUILD NEW PARKS *New park prototype*

This spotlight introduces a new park prototype to Fresno, where a five to ten acre site may become available for the park system. This design envisions building a park in an area where there are few amenities currently. It is seen as a park that is surrounded by residences and businesses that face the park and provide an active street presence.

This park design is based on the idea that there is a central green that can also operate as a soccer field. This green is bordered by a central loop path that connects to other amenities including a recreation building, large playground, splash pad, basketball courts and adult exercise area. The park is well connected to adjacent streets. Clear access points and paths lead to neighborhood streets and create clear visual linkages.

With all new parks, it is important to balance amenities with multi-use greenspace. Of primary importance are edge treatments and neighborhood connections with eyes on the park.

### POTENTIAL COST: \$8-10 MILLION DOLLARS

(not including land costs)





Conceptual illustration showing potential future improvements.



### THE FISCAL SIDE OF PARKS

Having a park system to be proud of requires funding its operations and maintenance. The Parks Master Plan will establish recommended funding levels and potential sources of funds. The Vision identifies preliminary factors and approaches to the funding of a successful system. The concept of three "buckets" helps describe choices for expenditure and where Fresno may need to focus its resources.

#### MAINTAIN

Parks, like any investment such as a house or a car, require regular maintenance and planned repairs. Operations budgets should include the cost of maintenance as well as the planned lifecycle replacement of facilities and materials in the parks. Periods of cuts degrade the system and results in higher costs down the road as maintenance needs to "catch up". This is emerging as the challenge for Fresno. Current funding levels are not adequate to overcome the poor condition of parks. A secondary challenge is the inability to add needed new park acreage in established neighborhoods. Additional operational efficiencies may be identified through the Parks Master Plan to help the City maximize its available budget.

### **MID-TOWN TRAIL**

The Midtown Trail project will connect the Clovis Old Town Trail and Fresno Sugar Pine Trail with seven miles of walking and biking, providing much needed greenspace to Central Fresno. The trail will connect with 50,000 residents who live near the trail, providing extensive benefits to connect trails in Fresno and Clovis.

The Midtown Trail is a great example of how an interconnected trail system could serve a large population and connect with other city amenities. The ATP has created a robust bicycle and pedestrian network for the city, and the Parks Master Plan aims to capitalize on this, using the Midtown Trail as an example of how Fresno's park system can become even more successful with the advent of a well-connected, bicycle and pedestrian friendly city.

### **UPGRADE EXISTING**

Significant capital investment is needed in parks. A capital investment program can replace aging infrastructure like irrigation systems, pools, and building HVAC resulting in improved usability and substantial conservation of resources like water and energy. Conversion of facilities such as retrofitting tennis courts adds more popular programs in response to recreational trends. Park renovations are identified as a necessary action in order to create usable parks that can be maintained at a reasonable cost.

### **NEW PARKS**

Community feedback has reinforced analysis that identifies lack of parks and amenities in many neighborhoods. The third "bucket" will identify funds needed to expand the park system and address gaps in service areas. Some new parks can be funded through private development while others may require purchase of land in existing urbanized areas. The Parks Master Plan will guide program priorities for new parks and identify funding strategies appropriate for the location. In some areas, lack of available land may force more emphasis on creating connections to existing parks in nearby areas using trails and bike lanes.







### LEVERAGING FUNDING

To stabilize and grow the park system, expanded funding must be secured. A sustainable system relies on a dedicated core of funding from the local tax base that can be leveraged to attract outside funding from foundations, the state, and federal programs. Currently, Fresno parks rely heavily on grant funds for operation of programs and strategic repairs. While this yields successful results, over reliance on these types of irregular funds can present a challenge.

The Parks Master Plan will explore opportunities to make a sizable immediate investment and provide long term stability through the following funding measures:

- Efficiencies in current operations
- Transformative Climate Communities (TCC) Program – AB2722
- Minimum general fund allocation
- Local bond programs
- Maintenance districts
- Partnerships with allied agencies (school districts, flood control) to provide and operate recreation facilities
- Development impact fees
- Private foundations
- State transportation funds
- Cal Fire urban forestry grants
- PG&E energy and infrastructure funds

### SAN JOAQUIN RIVER PARKWAY

The San Joaquin River is a great ecological asset for the City of Fresno and it is something that has the potential for positive impact on the Fresno Park system. The San Joaquin River Parkway is planned to encompass 22 miles of natural and recreational areas as public access park land that will benefit the region. The San Joaquin River Parkway Master Plan, adopted in 2000, aims to "preserve, protect and restore" the river corridor and provide use for the public. Currently, there are strategic points of access into parks that border the river, but as the plan progresses, more can be done to link the two together. Additionally, strong programming such as trips down the river and ecological education about regional watersheds should continue to be a part of the Fresno park system.



# NEXT STEPS



### **COMPLETING THE MASTER PLAN**

Following the adoption of the Fresno Parks Vision 2050, the Parks Master Plan process will continue through mid-2017. The Vision is the foundation for future planning and implementation. A new phase of community outreach will fine tune the park recommendations and develop clear priorities for funding. The plan will create standards for parks that can result in greater efficiency of operation and a higher bar for quality. Next steps include the following:

- Community workshop to share preliminary recommendations gain feedback from residents.
- Stakeholder meetings to discuss recommendations and gain feedback.
- Mobile workshops to meet the community.
- Online and social media to broaden participation in the master plan.
- Focused gap analysis to target renovations and new park creation.
- Guide standards for park materials, features, and maintenance.
- Preparation of cost estimates for maintenance/lifecycle, renovations, and new proposed parks.
- Identification of potential funding sources.
- Continued advocacy for parks.
- Opportunities for innovations in parks such as tapping regional and social character, enhancing ecological function, and sustainable programs such as recycled water and net zero energy.

The Parks Master Plan team thanks the Fresno community for its energy and support of parks thus far. These ideas have inspired this vision and will continue to guide the master plan moving forward.