

# Parks, Recreation and Open Space

## Goals, Policies, and Actions

### *OVERVIEW*

The Parks, Recreation and Open Space Element provides the framework to ensure that all Milpitas residents, employees, and visitors have safe, convenient, and equitable access to a diverse range of outdoor activities, naturalized open space areas, and recreational opportunities.

State law requires a General Plan to address open space issues, including the recognition of open space as a valuable resource for its own sake, the coordination of local policies with state and regional policies, and the use of open space to preserve environmentally sensitive natural areas and habitat. State Government Code Section 65560 defines open space lands as being essentially unimproved and devoted to the preservation of natural resources, managed production of resources, outdoor recreation, and/or public health and safety.

Background information regarding parks, recreation, and open space in Milpitas is presented in Chapters 1.1 and 3.3 of the General Plan Update Existing Conditions Report.

### **GOAL PROS 1 PROVIDE A DIVERSIFIED AND HIGH QUALITY PUBLIC PARK AND TRAIL SYSTEM THAT PROVIDES RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL RESIDENTS.**

**Policy PROS 1-1:** Provide a park and recreation system that is equitably distributed, safe, accessible, and designed to serve the needs of all residents of the community.

**Policy PROS 1-2:** Develop and maintain a high-quality system of parks, trails, and recreation facilities to create diverse opportunities for passive and organized recreation.

**Policy PROS 1-3:** Achieve and maintain a minimum overall citywide ratio of 5 acres of park land for every 1,000 residents outside of the Midtown Specific Plan Area and Transit Area Specific Plan Area. Within these Specific Plan Areas, achieve and maintain 3.5 acres of parks for every 1,000 residents, with at least 2.0 acres per 1,000 residents being publically-accessible.

**Policy PROS 1-4:** Park land acreage dedications and/or equivalent in-lieu fees shall be required for new development in accordance with the following standards:

- For areas outside of a Specific Plan, require land dedication or in lieu fees equivalent to the 5 acre/1,000 resident standard, but allow credit for private recreation space for up to 2 acres/1,000 residents for private open space. Private recreation credit will be given at the discretion of the City and pursuant to the criteria specified in the City's Subdivision Regulations (Title XI, Chapter 1, Section 9.08 of the Milpitas Municipal Code).

- For areas within a Specific Plan, require land dedication or in-lieu fees equivalent to the 3.5 acre/1,000 resident standard, allowing credit for private recreation space for up to 1.5 acres/1,000 residents for private recreation space. Private recreation credit will be given at the discretion of the City and pursuant to the criteria specified in the City's Subdivision Regulations (Title XI, Chapter 1, Section 9.08 of the Milpitas Municipal Code).

**Policy PROS 1-5:** Encourage the provision and dedication of parkland within future development projects, rather than the payment of in-lieu fees, in order to ensure that the City maintains an extensive network of neighborhood parks that serve all areas of the community.

**Policy PROS 1-6:** Encourage private owners to permit public access to all private parks, trails, and recreation facilities to the greatest extent feasible.

**Policy PROS 1-7:** Design parks to enhance public safety by providing visibility of all areas both to and from the street, adequate lighting, and access for public safety responders.

**Policy PROS 1-8:** Expand, renovate, and maintain high quality recreation facilities, programs, and services to accommodate existing and future needs; encourage traditional and non-traditional recreation; and support active and passive recreation, wellness, historic assets, cultural arts, environmental education, conservation, accessibility, inclusion, diversity, safety, and new technology that equitably serves the most vulnerable populations of the community.

**Policy PROS 1-9:** Prioritize funding and City resources to improve the condition, maintenance, and upkeep of existing City parks and recreational facilities.

**Policy PROS 1-10:** Require publically-accessible parks and recreational facilities that are owned and operated by homeowner's associates (HOAs) and special assessment districts to be maintained in a safe and aesthetically-pleasing manner.

**Policy PROS 1-11:** Pursue opportunities for cooperation and partnerships with other agencies to develop and enhance publically-accessible trails and linear parks along local drainages, creeks, and utility corridors.

**Policy PROS 1-12:** Encourage and support the expansion of an integrated trail network that connects users to neighboring local and regional trail systems and to community amenities such as schools, open space areas, park and recreation facilities, commercial and job centers and residential areas to encourage both recreational and utilitarian travel.

**Policy PROS 1-13:** Require new development to provide direct pedestrian connections, such as sidewalks, trails, wayfinding measures and other rights-of-way and infrastructure improvements to the existing and planned network of parks and trails wherever feasible.

**Policy PROS 1-14:** Further expand public access to a variety of park and recreational facilities through the pursuit of joint use agreements with entities and organizations that control existing non-city owned open space lands, such as public and private schools, Santa Clara Valley Water District, Santa Clara County and other public agencies, private entities and businesses and nonprofit groups.

**Policy PROS 1-15:** Design and maintain park and recreation facilities to minimize water, energy and chemical (e.g., pesticides and fertilizer) use. Incorporate the use of recycled water, native and/or drought-resistant vegetation and ground cover where appropriate. Pursue opportunities for multi-beneficial park developments that incorporate flood control facilities, stormwater management and groundwater recharge areas.

**Policy PROS 1-16:** Recognize the importance of regional facilities and continue to foster relationships with Santa Clara County, the San Francisco Bay Trail, and neighboring jurisdictions to identify opportunities for additional trail connections.

### **Actions in Support of Goal PROS 1**

*Action PROS 1a: Continue to monitor the condition of parks, trails, and recreation facilities throughout the community and prioritize the rehabilitation of existing facilities that are in the greatest need and that serve the greatest number of residents. When planning or significantly renovating park and recreation facilities, implement a park “Master Planning” process which includes public consultation and outreach, with an emphasis on outreach to the broad and diverse segments of the Milpitas population.*

*Action PROS 1b: Periodically review, and update if necessary, the City’s Park and Recreational Facilities Impact Fees in order to ensure that new development continues to provide a fair-share contribution towards parks, trails, and recreation facilities.*

*Action PROS 1c: Update the Parks and Recreation Master Plan to include and address:*

- *Needs for additional parks and sports fields to accommodate projected growth under the General Plan*
- *Need for and feasibility of a youth or teen center*
- *Updated asset and amenity analysis and prioritization for park facility upgrades and maintenance*
- *Activity upgrades and needs analysis for additional recreational assets and amenities including: sports fields (baseball, soccer, and cricket), and amphitheaters, to serve emerging activity trends and needs within the community, as well as analysis of the quality of the assets currently owned and maintained by the city.*

*Future updates to the Parks and Recreation Master Plan shall emphasize and prioritize public participation and workshops that enable close collaboration with a variety of members of the community in the design, and programming, of parks and recreation facilities to ensure that these facilities meet the diverse needs of all segments of the community, regardless of age, ethnicity, income, and activity level.*

*Action PROS 1d: Investigate and pursue a diverse range of funding opportunities for parks, trails, and recreation facilities, including but not limited to grants, joint use/management strategies, user fees, private sector funding, assessment districts, homeowners’ associations, non-profit organizations, funding mechanisms for the maintenance of older parks, and management assistance through Federal, State, and regional partnerships.*

*Action PROS 1e: Develop and maintain a comprehensive Parks and Landscape Standard Plans and Specifications document for parks, trails, and recreation facilities. The Parks and Landscape Standard Plans and Specifications document should address, at a minimum, the following:*

- 1. Facility size and service area;*
- 2. Location;*
- 3. Site characteristics;*
- 4. Basic design elements;*
- 5. Optional design elements;*
- 6. Accessibility standards;*
- 7. Detailed furniture, fixtures, and equipment (FF&E) lists for items such as trash cans, benches, BBQ pits, etc., in order to provide consistency, uniformity, and cost effective maintenance and replacement;*
- 8. Utility and infrastructure requirements; and*
- 9. Maintenance requirements.*

*Development standards shall be included for all types of parks, trails, and recreation facilities, including neighborhood parks, community parks, sports parks, special use parks, trails, natural open space, and detention basins managed by the City. These standards shall also apply to privately-owned parks and open space land for which credit was received towards a project's park land dedication requirements.*

*Action PROS 1f: Coordinate with the Santa Clara County Parks and Recreation Department on active and passive issues and opportunities related to Ed Levin Park. Pursue joint use and maintenance agreements where feasible to address issues and opportunities to preserve and enhance the recreational value of the park for all area residents.*

*Action PROS 1g: Pursue opportunities to cooperate with the Santa Clara Valley Water District and the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission to develop and enhance trails, linear parks and related infrastructure along local water drainages, creek, and utility corridors. "Related infrastructure" includes, but is not limited to, lighting, signage, benches, water fountains, and restrooms, where applicable.*

*Action PROS 1h: Implement recommendations in the Bikeway Master Plan that safely link trails and open space to neighborhoods and special areas and regional trail networks.*

*Action PROS 1i: Update the Trails Master Plan to identify trail new trail opportunities and trail connections throughout the community. Updates should include:*

- Analysis and quantification of which facilities are currently utilized to higher degrees than others, so that targeted improvements may be developed in order to benefit the greatest number of users.*
- Strategies to provide increased west-east pedestrian and bicycle trail development*

- *Opportunities for additional access across major transportation facilities (Interstate 880, and 680) throughout the city with special focus on opportunities for linking cross-freeway trail development to schools, parks, and open space areas.*
- *Opportunities to increase bike and pedestrian safety through the use of trails and dedicated paths throughout the city, including better connectivity to local parks, and schools. Such strategies should include the establishment of a Safe Routes to School (SRTS) network, and incorporation of “Vision Zero” mobility concepts.*

**Vision Zero** is a strategy to eliminate all traffic fatalities and severe injuries, while increasing safe, healthy, equitable mobility for all. Strategies may include: lowering speed limits; redesigning streets; implementing meaningful behavior change campaigns; and enhancing data-driven traffic enforcement.

*Action PROS 1j: Implement the policies and actions in the Circulation Element that facilitate and promote safe, increased walkability, bicycle use, and connectivity between parks and trail systems, with a focus on areas currently not well connected or lacking basic infrastructure.*

## **GOAL PROS 2 PROVIDE RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES THAT MEET THE NEEDS OF ALL RESIDENTS, ESPECIALLY THE MOST VULNERABLE AND UNDERSERVED MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY.**

**Policy PROS 2-1:** Emphasize and prioritize public outreach and educational programs that inform the community of available parks, trails, and recreation facilities, programs, and services available in order to increase and enhance community use of these facilities, programs, and services.

**Policy PROS 2-2:** Emphasize and prioritize public participation and workshops when developing new park facilities, and/or substantially renovating existing parks, trails, and other recreation facilities. Provide diverse outreach resources that enable close collaboration with a variety of members of the community in the design, and programming, of parks and recreation facilities to ensure that these facilities meet community needs.

**Policy PROS 2-3:** Ensure that the City continues to offer a wide range of programs to serve diverse populations of all ages, abilities, income levels and cultural backgrounds. Develop programs, activities, and facilities that appeal to a broad audience, including but not limited to youth, young adults, and seniors and those of varying ethnicities, backgrounds, and abilities.

**Policy PROS 2-4:** Support recreational activities, events, organized sports leagues, and other programs that serve broad segments of the community.

**Policy PROS 2-5:** Encourage the development of private/commercial recreation facilities that are open to the public to help meet existing and future recreational demands.

**Policy PROS 2-6:** Pursue partnerships with organizations to enhance public-private partnerships that support youth and senior recreational programs.

**Policy PROS 2-7:** Consider Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to fund park and recreational facility upgrades. CDBG Upgrades should prioritize low and moderate income areas, and underserved areas within the city.

**Actions in Support of Goal PROS 2**

*Action PROS 2a: Continue to implement the recreation goals and objectives contained within the Park and Recreation Master Plan, and updated the plan as necessary to serve the recreational needs of the community.*

*Action PROS 2b: Continue to provide and develop a wide range of public outreach programs, including the City's website, newsletters, and other emerging communications technologies to keep the public informed about available parks, trails, and recreation facilities, programs, and services.*

*Action PROS 2c: Develop quantitative metrics and conduct periodic public surveys to ascertain the parks, trails, and recreation needs of the community.*

**GOAL PROS 3 ENSURE THE PROVISION AND PRESERVATION OF DIVERSE AND ACCESSIBLE OPEN SPACES THROUGHOUT THE PLANNING AREA**

**Policy PROS 3-1:** The General Plan land use designations of Permanent Open Space (POS), Hillside Very Low Density (HVL), and Waterways (WW) shall be considered open space. Additionally, lands designated as Public Facilities which are zoned Parks and Open Space shall also be considered open space as defined by this General Plan.

**Policy PROS 3-2:** Preserve open space for conservation, as well as active and passive recreation uses.

**Policy PROS 3-3:** Conversion of open space to developed urban uses (excluding park facilities), shall be strongly discouraged. Undeveloped land that is designated for urban uses by the General Plan Land Use Map is not considered open space and may be developed consistent with the Land Use Map.

**Policy PROS 3-4:** Where feasible, integrate open space, drainage and stream corridors with trails and other recreational open space amenities in an environmentally sustainable manner.

**Policy PROS 3-5:** Recognize and demonstrate through policy and practice that urban open space and hillside open space are essential to maintaining a high quality of life within the Milpitas Planning Area. Future planning decisions shall seek to preserve and maintain open space resources to the greatest extent feasible, as these resources are irretrievable.

**Policy PROS 3-6:** Support regional and local preservation plans and policies that retain and protect open space within the Milpitas Planning Area.

**Policy PROS 3-7:** Encourage public and private efforts to preserve open space.

**Policy PROS 3-8:** Encourage innovative open space and recreational amenities within urban activity centers including green roofs, rooftop parks and gardens, and support public access to these amenities.

**Innovative Open Space** could include features and amenities such as rooftop gardens, public plazas, outdoor amphitheaters, and other urbanized public gathering spaces.

**Policy PROS 3-9:** Encourage clustered development that preserves a sense of openness, particularly in areas adjacent to open spaces and scenic resources.

### **Actions in Support of Goal PROS 3**

*Action PROS 3a: Work with the Santa Clara County to ensure that open space/parks, agricultural grazing, and rural residential lands within the Milpitas Sphere of Influence continue to be designated appropriately in order to limit growth-inducement and development of the hillside areas adjacent to Milpitas.*

*Action PROS 3b: Review all proposals involving County land, within or adjacent to the Sphere of Influence, to ensure adequate preservation of open space resources near Milpitas.*

*Action PROS 3c: Update the Milpitas Municipal Code (Title XI, Chapter 1, Section 9.08 - Credit for Private Open Space) to develop standards for innovative open spaces, and develop park and open space credit standards for innovative open spaces including spaces that include private and public access.*