

I. COMMUNITY VISION

A critical issue addressed through the Green Space, Recreation and Parks Element and Green Space, Recreation and Parks Master Plan (hereafter called the Master Plan) is to define the role of parks and open space in the daily lives of Pasadena residents. Put simply, “What are Parks and Open Spaces for?” To some, parkland is an active sports field; others have images of natural green spaces where one can walk, rest, and enjoy nature; still others may envision parks as places for community gatherings and events. Indeed, green spaces are used for all of these purposes. A key outcome of the Element and Master Plan is to establish how Pasadena residents want these uses balanced and prioritized throughout the city both now and into the future.

Regardless of how they are used, our parks and open spaces create a sense of community and enhance quality of life for all Pasadena residents, promoting this sense of community both in neighborhoods and across demographic groups. Parks and open spaces can assist in the growth and development of people, families and community and, perhaps most importantly offer a vital respite from urban stress and allow recreational outlets for all ages.

An excellent park and recreation system grows out of and evolves from community identity and community vision. The Green Space, Recreation and Parks Element and Master Plan process included several visioning activities that served to clarify the community vision so that parks and recreation decisions can best reflect Pasadena. An overall community vision statement was developed as a result of the visioning activities that guide both documents:

To create, maintain, protect, and restore an interrelated system of parks, trails, and natural open spaces. To provide recreational opportunities which sustain a vibrant and healthy community with an emphasis on ecologically sensitive public enjoyment and education.

To achieve this community vision, the balance of uses of the City’s green spaces must be addressed. To better answer the question, “What are Parks and Open Spaces for?” a series of “Core Principles” have been developed out of the visioning process. These Principles are guiding principles for planning, implementation, and maintenance of green spaces throughout the City. They represent the common threads found throughout the issues identified by the community and provide a basis for the objectives and policies of the Element and Master Plan. Inherent in these principles is an underlying goal that Pasadena must continue to treasure and preserve, and work to expand, its parks and open spaces. The park and recreation system must be accessible to all Pasadenans, and should offer something for every Pasadenan.

Core Principles

NATURAL OPEN SPACE

- Pasadena will be a City that actively protects its natural open spaces and critical habitats.
- Pasadena's natural environment shall be thoughtfully preserved as an ongoing investment in the health, safety, and beauty of the City for the benefit of both present and future generations.

DEVELOPED PARKLAND

- All Pasadena neighborhoods shall have access to park, open spaces and recreation facilities that serve their unique needs.
- All Pasadena residents shall live within reasonable walking distance from a park, open space, or recreation facility.
- Pasadena will be a City that actively creates new green spaces by promoting creative partnerships with local and regional agencies, as well as private institutions in order to provide access to and development of both traditional and non-traditional parks, cultural and recreational opportunities, and open spaces.

RECREATION FACILITY USE AND DISTRIBUTION

- The City's parks and open spaces shall maintain a balance between active and passive uses (including casual, informal, or individual leisure activities), both citywide and within individual parks, to meet the recreation demands of residents.
- Pasadena residents, PUSD students, and people that work in Pasadena shall have priority in the use and programming of parks and open spaces.

RECREATION PROGRAM TYPES AND DISTRIBUTION

- Recreation programming shall be responsive to community needs and will promote a healthy and active lifestyle for residents.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE & AND ONGOING COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

- Planning for Pasadena's open spaces, parks, and recreation facilities will be an ongoing and inclusive community process.