



# 2016 Recreation Facilities Strategic Plan

## Part I- The Plan



## **Introduction- Overview**

This *Recreation Facilities Strategic Plan (RFSP)* establishes a vision and roadmap for the future of San Mateo's Recreation Facilities. As used here, Recreation Facilities include structures- recreation centers, community buildings and pools.

The need to re-envision the future of San Mateo's Recreation Facilities first emerged in the 2000's. A number of important studies were conducted that raised significant issues related to the existing facilities' infrastructure conditions and programming effectiveness and relevance. Among the key findings were:

- The quasi-neighborhood model, which includes numerous smaller multi-service centers providing neighborhood level services, and which was the foundation of the current system of Recreation Facilities, is outdated.
- The current system has an imbalance between multi-use and activity specific spaces. The lack of activity specific spaces limits the breadth and quality of services that can be provided. Moreover, many of the current spaces are of inadequate size or configuration to meet service needs.
- Those limitations also limit the potential for revenue generation, and the higher square footage cost of operating small facilities as full service centers reduces the rate of cost recovery.
- Collectively, there is inadequate space to meet the needs and interests of the community.
- The Aquatics Facilities have a number of infrastructure issues. They do not meet current codes or standards, which will require significant investment to rectify. The Aquatics Facilities also have programmatic limitations, and these limit both use and cost recovery.
- The Preschool Facilities are below acceptable standards.

As a result, efforts were begun during the 2000's to develop a plan for the future of Recreation Facilities. Fiscal challenges, however, put this and other City facility and capital improvement considerations on hold.

The *RFSP* efforts were re-initiated as a result of the City Council's May 2015 Study Session on the Central Park Master Plan. Among the key considerations was determining what type of community building, and serving what purpose, would be appropriate for Central Park. Rather than consider Central Park in isolation, the City Council preferred to consider it in the context of the overall system of Recreation Facilities, what the community's future facility needs are, and how any Recreation Facility in Central Park would best serve that overall system as well as the park itself. The consensus of the City Council was to first develop a system-wide strategic plan for Recreation Facilities, and through that to determine the highest and best purpose for any community building(s) in Central Park.

## **The Process**

There were three key components to the *RFSP* process:

- Review, consolidate and summarize the key findings and recommendations of the previous Recreation Facilities studies and planning efforts.
- Survey Recreation staff on their perspectives about current facilities, programming and facility trends, and the types of facilities that will be needed to serve the San Mateo community in the future.
- Engage the community in identifying needs and priorities for the future plan.
  - Community Survey
  - Community Advisory Committee

A Background Report was compiled that includes a summary of previous study and planning efforts, a summary of the staff feedback, and the community survey report. This Background Report was a key resource for the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) as it reviewed issues, needs and options, and developed recommendations. The Background Report is included as Part II of this *RFSP*.

The following studies and planning processes were previously conducted:

<b>Study/Plan</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Consultant</b>
Americans with Disabilities Act- Assessment of Accessibility and Compliance	1995	Winges Architecture and Planning
Facility Assessment and Longevity Analysis- Joinville Swim Center	2001	Jones Madhaven
San Mateo Parks and Recreation Parks, Community Facilities and Programs Strategic Plan- Draft	2004	Leon Younger and Pros
Swimming Pool Physical Operations Comprehensive Assessment and Management Plan for Joinville Swim Center and King Swim Center	2005	Commercial Pool Systems
Draft Facility Strategic Plan	2005	Sports Management Group
Bay Meadows 2010 Preliminary Masterplan Report	2010	Callander Associates
Comprehensive Facilities Condition Assessment	2013	Valley Facilities Management Corporation

Though both the 2004 Parks and Recreation Strategic Plan process and the Bay Meadows 2010 Preliminary Master Plan process included robust public feedback opportunities, and the consultants' recommendations were based on this feedback, the City Council felt that it was critically important to gather current community perspectives. This was done in two ways.

First, a survey was conducted in December 2015 that polled the community on a number of programmatic and facility topics. Broad participation was highly desired, and so it was

conducted as an open participation internet survey. Public information about the survey was widely disseminated. This included: an email notification sent to a merged list that included all Parks and Recreation active client accounts, the City's newsletter and interest group distribution lists, and the County Registrar's roll of registered voters, for a total of 20,200 email notifications; distribution through Next Door; posting on the City's website, Facebook Page and Twitter account; and hard copy distribution at Beresford Center, King Center, Senior Center and all three libraries. All notifications/flyers included a link to the internet survey. Both the notifications and the survey were provided in English, Spanish and Simplified Chinese.

A total of 1,707 individuals participated in the survey, 94% of whom identified themselves as residents of the City of San Mateo, and very valuable insights were gathered from these responses. See Part II- Background Report for the survey results.

Second, a Community Advisory Committee (CAC) was created. The CAC was purposefully composed to represent a diverse cross-section of the community. It included community leaders who, together, have currently or previously served on the following bodies: City Council, Planning Commission, Park and Recreation Commission, Public Works Commission, San Mateo Parks and Recreation Foundation, San Mateo United Homeowners Association, San Mateo Foster City School District Board of Trustees, Neighborhood Watch Board. It included users, who, combined, had experiences with the City's Parks and Recreation Services in a wide variety of activities. It represented each of the major racial/ethnic groups in the community, a variety of ages and family types, and geographically represented 11 different neighborhoods throughout the City.

The CAC was asked to do the following:

- To critically assess the previous studies, assessments and recommendations
- To review the results of the 2015 Community Survey
- To visit the facilities to see first-hand their conditions, values and constraints
- To provide feedback and recommendations for the *RFSP*

In the course of its work, the CAC identified additional information that would be helpful to its considerations, and this data and information was provided prior to the completion of its recommendations.

## **The Plan**

This *RFSP* includes 18 Strategic Directions that are the result of the unanimous consensus of the Community Advisory Committee. The CAC's recommended plan was presented as study items to the Park and Recreation Commission on May 4, 2016, and to the City Council on May 16, 2016. Each body gave their informal endorsement, and this plan includes those Strategic Directions as recommended and presented to the Commission and Council.

This Plan provides a strategic vision for the future of Recreation Facilities and recommend that these proposals be studied further. Further site specific study and planning, including the intended activity mix and building program, will be required prior to the City's commitment to any site specific plan or project. This study and planning may include such things as determining the feasibility, size, layout, site location, or required support facilities. Environmental review, which is required once the City commits to a project, will be conducted as part of the site specific studies.

### ***Specific Facility Strategic Directions***

- 1) At the time of the Bay Meadows Community Park masterplan development, include a Lifestyle Center at Bay Meadows Park themed primarily around active recreation, fitness, health and wellness, and including as a major feature a Family Aquatics Center.
- 2) Provide 3 Multi-Purpose District Centers, including the current Beresford and King Centers, and developing a new District Center at the current site of Joinville Pool.
- 3) Remodel King Center to make better use of existing space, provide adequate space for the identified uses and make general improvements. Particular emphasis should be placed on improving the usability of the aquatics, gymnasium, after school care and preschool facilities.
- 4) In developing the building programs for King Center and the new District Center at Joinville Park, consider whether some form of aquatics facility is desirable and appropriate at each center, with King Center being the higher priority for providing continued aquatics facilities.
- 5) Replace Central Center and Central Studios with a new community building that meets two primary goals- providing a support facility for activities and events located at a future 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue plaza; providing a small meeting/event venue that would be broadly available to the community and support a variety of activities.
- 6) Conduct a study of the most appropriate re-use of Shoreview and Lakeshore Centers from among the following list of potential uses or others that may be subsequently identified:
  - a) Remove the building and convert to open or outdoor activity space
  - b) Keep, remodel or replace the existing building to support one of these special use purposes:
    - (1) Pottery or multi-arts facility at either location

- (2) After school child care at Shoreview Center
  - (3) Preschool facility at either location
  - (4) Small meeting/conference center at Lakeshore Center
  - (5) Small event center for rentals (eg. parties, wedding receptions, etc) at Lakeshore Center
- 7) Consider expanding Beresford Center if, as a result of developing specific building programs for the above facilities, it is determined that there remain additional critical unmet needs.
  - 8) Support the Senior Commission's preference to operate the Senior Center for aging and older adults, but re-position and re-brand it to be attractive to and provide activities for younger age ranges of older adults through facility improvements, program modifications and imaging changes.
  - 9) Attempt to provide licensed after school care and preschool facilities within the service area of each District Center either at the District Center or elsewhere if available (eg. school site; Shoreview Center, etc).
  - 10) The *Recreation Facilities Strategic Plan* should be responsive to the significant and growing interest in and value of fitness and health related activities, and future facilities should be designed to expand the breadth of activity types and the age and gender of participants.

#### ***Overarching Plan and Design Principles***

- 11) All existing and new facilities should meet or exceed all accessibility, building and health codes.
- 12) The Lifestyle/Family Aquatics Center and District Centers should be multi-generational and multi-activity.
- 13) The financial models for the development and operation of each facility and the system as a whole should be consistent with the Parks and Recreation Department Mission Statement that places high value on ensuring service for all ages, a variety of activity choices, and access for all.
- 14) The design of each facility should blend two important values: 1.) Ensuring that the spaces created are adequate to meet the needs/interests, and be consistent with the size and layout standards needed for the activity; 2.) Recognizing the high value of conserving open space by being as efficient as possible with the footprints of all facilities, including considering such things as underground parking, multi-story facilities, etc.
- 15) To the greatest extent possible, interior activity spaces should be designed and constructed for flexibility so that as needs change with time, spaces can be reconfigured as to size and use.

- 16) As the building program is developed for each facility, emphasis should be placed on achieving an optimum balance of multi-purpose vs. activity specific spaces based upon the needs of the anticipated activities to be included.
- 17) The Recreation Facilities Strategic Plan should be seen as a flexible planning document that can be modified in response to unforeseen future opportunities or challenges.
- 18) The phasing and timing of the improvements should be planned so as to result in as little disruption to current uses as practical.

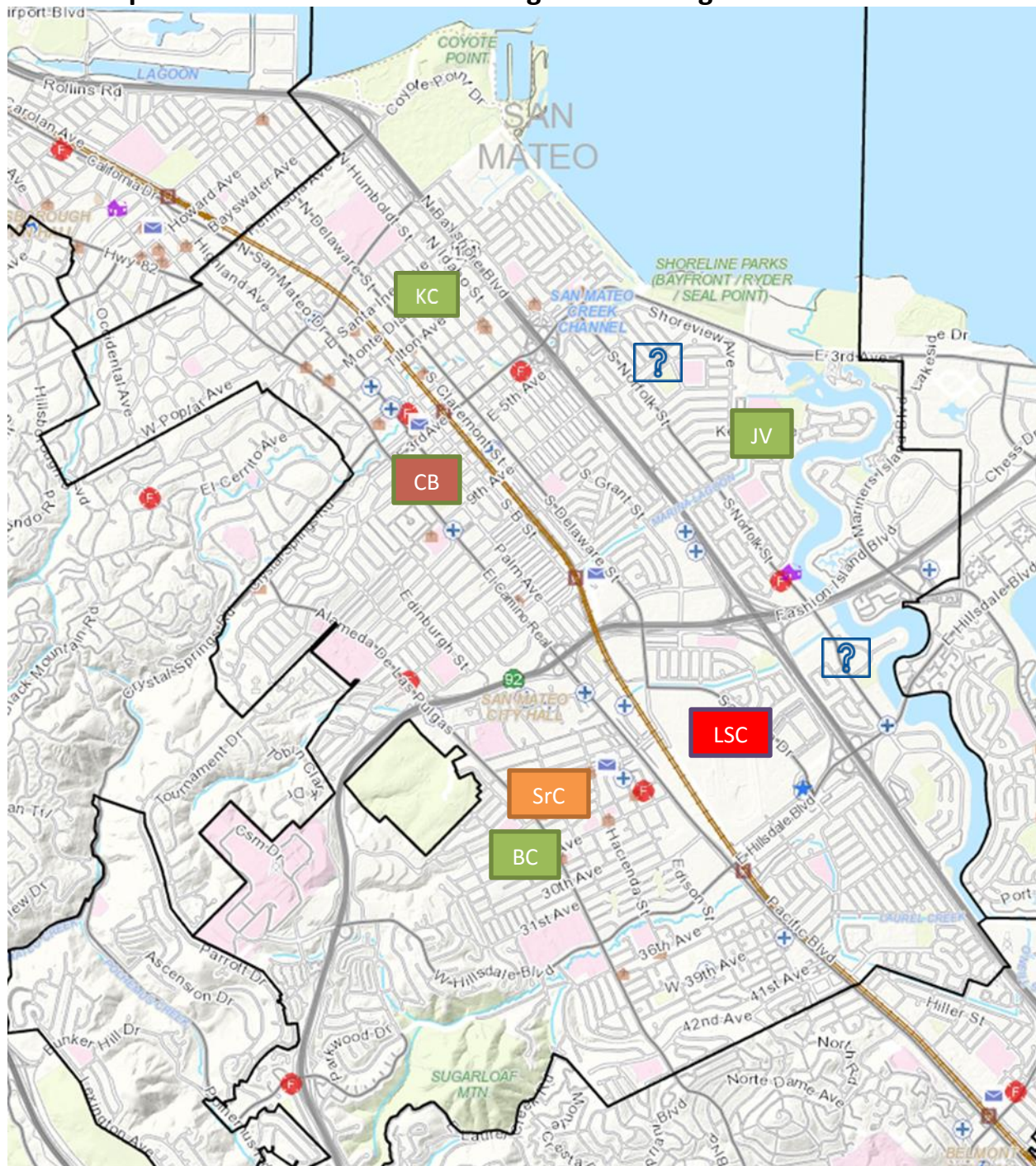
The following page provides a map of San Mateo that shows the configuration of Recreation Facilities as anticipated by this plan.

Full implementation of this *RFSP* will:

- Address deficiencies in ADA and other codes currently out of compliance
- Align with community feedback on programming and facility desires
- Expand programming opportunities to better serve community needs
- Restore geographic equity for facility access
- Enhance revenue generating capacity
- Provide direction for a community building within the Central Park Master Plan



## Map of Recreation Facilities Strategic Plan Configuration of Facilities



- District Centers: KC- King Center; BC- Beresford Center; JV- Joinville Center (new- replace JV Pool)
- LSC** Lifestyle Center (Bay Meadows Community Park- new)
- CB** Community Building (Central Park- new- replace Central Center and Studios)
- SrC** Senior Center
- ?** Shoreview and Lakeshore Centers (to be determined based upon further study)



## **Key Considerations in Support of the Plan**

The *RSFP* Strategic Directions were the result of a formal process in which the CAC reached unanimous consensus supporting the Strategic Directions as written. The discussion below provides insight and explanation of some of the key considerations that led the CAC to its recommendations.

The CAC noted the strong support in the Community Survey for the City providing a diverse and multi-faceted program of activities. In one question, the survey provided a list of 25 activities and asked respondents to rate the importance of the City providing that activity:

- 5- Extremely Important
- 4- Very Important
- 3- Moderately Important
- 2- Slightly Important
- 1- Not at all Important

Eight of the 25 activities received average ratings of 4-Very Important or above. Another six activities received average ratings of nearly Very Important (3.9 or above). All but one of the 11 remaining activities received ratings above 3.5.

Aquatics facilities and programs became a key consideration in the *RSFP*, and the CAC's recommendations were strongly influenced by the concerns and limitations noted in the previous studies, the high level of interest shown in the community survey, and their own observations on the facility tour.

CAC members expressed concerns about the current state of the Aquatics Facilities, which do not meet current codes or are substandard, and they felt strongly that the City should not only meet, but should exceed all current codes. The CAC later broadened this into Strategic Direction #11, which applies this expectation to all Recreation Facilities. Among the key concerns regarding Aquatics Facilities were the substandard circulation and sanitation systems, the lack of accessibility at King Pool, inadequate path of travel, the lack of adequate restroom and change facilities- in particular the lack of private/family change/rest rooms, and the condition of the decks, particularly at Joinville Pool. The CAC recognized that the Aquatics facilities cannot be brought up to current codes and standards without significant capital investment.

The CAC noted the high value placed on Aquatics in the Community Survey. Swimming Lessons was the 6<sup>th</sup> highest ranked Activity and rated above Very Important. Water Exercise/Therapy was the 3<sup>rd</sup> highest rated adult Activity, and Family Recreation Swim was rated at nearly Very Important. In the open-ended question, in which respondents were asked what facilities they would like to see enhanced or added, 131 of the 264 respondents identified Aquatics Facilities. To put that in context, the next highest number of mentions for a particular type of facility was nine for Gymnasium. In another set of questions, respondents were asked to rate the overall quality of those facilities they had visited in the last two years from lists of all City Recreation

Facilities, and 12 other private, non-profit or other community facilities. The three lowest rated facilities were King Center, Joinville Pool and King Pool.

The CAC reviewed the concepts of Family Aquatics Centers and Lifestyle Centers and concluded that the community's expressed interests in Aquatics would be best served by developing a new Family Aquatics Center as part of a Lifestyle Center (see Strategic Direction #1). They also considered locations for the Lifestyle Center, and concluded that Bay Meadows Community Park was the best location for a number of reasons-

- The site includes interim improvements only, and so would not supplant an existing established use in another park. No other undeveloped parkland exists that would be of sufficient size and appropriateness to support such a facility.
- The park is located with convenient access via several significant roadways and public transportation.
- The park is adjacent to but not embedded within a dense residential neighborhood, providing convenient and walkable access for nearby residents, and resulting in minimal traffic impact within the neighborhood by visitors from outside the neighborhood.
- The park is nearby significant commercial and office buildings, providing convenient and walkable access for their workforces. Moreover, these include large businesses that may be potential sponsors or partners.
- The park is located adjacent to a private high school, creating potential for a cooperative shared use partnership.

Also influencing the CAC's support for a Lifestyle Center were the Community Survey results and current user data related to Fitness activities, resulting in Strategic Direction #10, which states that future facilities should be responsive to the growing interest and value of fitness and health related activities. On the previously noted Community Survey question asking respondents to rate the importance of the City providing the listed Activities, Fitness Group Exercise was the highest ranked adult activity, and was rated above Very Important. In addition, Fitness Equipment for Self-Directed Use was rated at nearly Very Important (3.9). In response to the open-ended question asking respondents what recreation programs they would like to see enhanced or added, the most frequently requested public activity was Fitness, at 57 respondents.

Current user data shows that the patron base in Fitness activities is significantly skewed to female and older adults. Current gender proportions: Female 94%; Male 6%. Current age proportions: 60 years and over: 56%; 50 years and over 75%. The CAC recognized that a broader program that appeals to both males and females as well as multiple generations will be necessary to remain relevant and to meet the community's needs, and that this is only possible with improved, diversified facilities and equipment.

While energized by the Lifestyle Center concept, CAC members expressed concern that improved facilities not be accompanied by aggressive pricing that might leave behind significant portions of the community. They felt that the Parks and Recreation Department mission that includes access for all is very important, and the result was Strategic Direction #13, which essentially states this.

The CAC strongly supported the District Center concept, which would include three well-placed multi-service centers throughout the community (see Strategic Direction #2). Though they understood that the old quasi-neighborhood concept on which the current system of facilities was built is no longer sustainable, they felt that geographic convenience is still a desirable feature. This was supported by the survey. In one question, respondents were asked to rank the importance of six considerations when selecting a facility to attend. Nearly 40% of respondents ranked Geographic Convenience as their first or second priority. In addition, the CAC felt that Joinville Park is the optimum location for a new District Center because it would restore geographic equity among the various sections of the City by returning a full, multi-service center to east of Highway 101, where there is currently none.

This priority for geographic convenience was also a foundation for Strategic Direction #4, which calls for considering the continuation of some form of Aquatics Facility at King Center and the new District Center at Joinville Park.

Another significant concern expressed by CAC members was the fact that a number of current facilities are of inadequate size or configuration to meet licensing requirements, safety guidelines or programming standards. They were surprised and disconcerted to learn that Beresford Center's Activity Room is the only licensed After School Care or Preschool facility, and that no other facility is licensable. The CAC noted that two of the top three rated Activities in the Community Survey were Licensed After-School Child Care and Preschool Activities, and observed that the hours and days of operation and program content should respond to users' needs, not artificially tailored to maintain a license exemption. The CAC recommended that there should be licensed facilities in each District (Strategic Direction #9).

The CAC was concerned that of all facilities rated in the survey, among both City and non-City facilities, King Center was rated lowest in the Community Survey. On their facility tours, many CAC members noted that King Center's spaces are undersized or inadequate. The King Center Gymnasium, perhaps the key feature of the center, was a notable example for them. The basketball court is 58% the size of a high school court, and does not meet the current standard for unobstructed out-of-bounds area. Previous discussions in this Section of the *RFSP* address the shortcomings of Preschool, Afterschool and Aquatics facilities at King Center. The CAC placed a high priority on remodeling and improving King Center (see Strategic Direction #3).

Though there were other considerations for these and other Strategic Directions, the above represent the key ones.

## **Next Steps**

The Recreation Facilities Strategic Plan will be refined in two phases- site specific study and planning; implementation plan.

### ***Phase I- Site Specific Study/Planning***

- Complete the Central Park Master Plan based on the recommended design
- Re-initiate and complete Bay Meadows Community Park Master Plan
- Conduct further study and establish the space/programming requirements at King, Beresford and Joinville District Centers
- Conduct further study of the options for Lakeshore and Shoreview Centers, and select a preferred option for each
- Develop a preliminary magnitude of cost for facility developments

### ***Phase II- Implementation Plan***

Develop a specific funding plan and implementation schedule