City of
Santa Clarita
PARKS & RECREATION
5-YEAR WORK PLAN
CONTENTS

CITY MANAGER’S MESSAGE .............................................. 03
INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY ............................... 04
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ............................................ 05
SNAPSHOT OF WHERE WE ARE TODAY ............................... 06
THEMES AND ACTION ITEMS
   Equitable and Inclusive Programming ................................ 08
   Innovation ..................................................................... 10
   Park Features and Facilities ............................................ 12
   Open Space and Outdoor Recreation ................................. 14
MESSAGE FROM CITY MANAGER
KEN STRIPLIN

From the natural beauty of the mountain ranges that circle our City, to the expanses of green grass nestled in neighborhoods and lining paseos – the outdoors are truly something to celebrate in Santa Clarita. Our City boasts 34 parks, miles of off street trails and a green belt of open space surrounding our valley. These important amenities and natural resources did not happen by accident. Since our City was founded in 1987, the Santa Clarita City Council has placed a high priority on creating recreational opportunities for residents by providing active parkland and preserving natural open space.

The Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan, adopted by the City Council in 2008, provides a guide for the creative, orderly development and management of parks, recreation facilities, programs and open space within the City of Santa Clarita. The findings and recommendations outlined in the Master Plan have aided the City in its efforts to acquire additional parkland and open space, improve trail connectivity and increase resident access to recreational facilities. From basketball courts, sports fields, playgrounds, community centers, open spaces and trails, the City’s park system offers something for everyone.

Over the years the City has received numerous accolades for providing high quality parks, facilities and recreational programs. In 2019, the City was ranked among the “Top 20 places to Raise a Family on the West Coast” by SmartAsset.com, recognized as a “Better Sports for Kids Quality Program Provider” from the National Alliance for Youth Sports and received an “Innovation in Social Equity Award” from the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) for the Jakes Way Neighborhood Program.

As the City moves forward in addressing the changing needs, concerns and priorities of the community, updating the existing Master Plan into this fluid work document will allow for the City to remain flexible and innovative in its efforts to continue to provide the high quality of life our residents enjoy.

Sincerely,

Ken Striplin
City Manager
INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

This Parks and Recreation Work Plan outlines the City of Santa Clarita’s parks and recreation service. Findings outlined in this document will inform the City’s next 5-year strategic plan, which will guide the future of Santa Clarita’s park and recreation system.

In 2018, a Parks and Recreation Work Group (Work Group) was internally created of interdepartmental City staff to lead the creation of the Parks and Recreation Work Plan (Work Plan), and in January 2019, the process officially began.

The Work Group met on a monthly basis to collaborate and coordinate data collection efforts. This included information sharing with the City Council, regular update meetings with the Parks, Recreation and Community Services Commission and presentations to the City’s Leadership Team.

To ensure the Work Plan reflected the needs of the community, the Work Group employed four methods of data collection and community engagement. This included a competitive procurement process to hire a consultant to conduct a scientific community survey. In addition, City staff conducted two separate community surveys along with a series of focus group meetings consisting of community stakeholders, Parks, Recreation, and Community Services Commissioners and City staff.

The data and feedback gathered through this process was reviewed and analyzed by the Work Group and integrated into the themes and action items detailed in this plan.
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

SCIENTIFIC SURVEY - A consultant administered a survey to a random sample of 950 adults through a mixed-method design that employed multiple recruiting methods (mailed letters, email, and telephone) and multiple data collection methods (telephone and online). The survey was administered in English and Spanish between June 10 and 19, and the average interview lasted 16 minutes.

RECREATION PROGRAM USER’S QUESTIONNAIRE - The Work Group sent a 13-question questionnaire directly to 6,156 spring and summer City registered recreation participants. After having the questionnaire available for five days, the Work Group received 1,033 responses.

COMMUNITY WIDE QUESTIONNAIRE - The Work Group shared a 13-question questionnaire with the public for five weeks and received 1,111 responses. The City’s Communications Division promoted the questionnaire to the community through multiple media platforms and social media boosts.

FOCUS GROUP MEETINGS - The Work Group conducted three focus groups with community members including program participants, non-profit organizations who serve special needs populations, youth, school representatives, coaches, instructors, parents, Parks, Recreation and Community Services Commissioners and City staff.
CITY SNAPSHOT
WHERE WE ARE TODAY

POPULATION
225,512

420 ACRES
OF DEVELOPED PARK

34 PARKS

NEARLY 11,000 ACRES
OF BEAUTIFUL OPEN SPACE

40 CHILD PLAY AREAS

61 MILES
OF MULTI-USE TRAILS

21 FULL BASKETBALL COURTS
PARKS AND RECREATION WORK PLAN

RECREATION PROGRAMS OFFERED:
- Adult Sports
- Aquatics
- Camp Clarita
- Contract Classes
- Inclusion Services
- Primetime Preschool
- Youth Sports

COMMUNITY CENTERS

COMMUNITY/ BANQUET ROOMS

MULTI-PURPOSE FIELDS

PICNIC TABLES

TENNIS COURTS

SOFTBALL FIELDS

PICKLEBALL COURTS

POOLS

*Data is reflective as of December 2019 and includes City amenities only.
EQUITABLE AND INCLUSIVE PROGRAMMING
ENHANCE RECREATION BY PROVIDING EQUITABLE AND INCLUSIVE OPPORTUNITIES FOR EVERYONE

ACTION ITEMS:

Enhance multi-generational programming.

Expand access for unstructured, drop-in play at sports fields and facilities.

Increase access to programmed class offerings and recreation opportunities.

Introduce new tools to expand interactive recreational activities.

Enhance facilities for multi-functional use and programming.
SANTA CLARITA RESIDENTS SAY...

- 50% OF RESPONDENTS ARE INTERESTED IN CLASSES FOR THOSE WITH DISABILITIES AND SPECIAL NEEDS.*
- 63% ARE INTERESTED IN CLASSES FOR SENIORS.*
- THE MOST COMMONLY SUGGESTED PROGRAM OR ACTIVITY IN THE SCIENTIFIC SURVEY WAS ARTS AND CRAFTS, FOLLOWED BY DANCE CLASSES, MORE CLASSES AND ACTIVITIES FOR SENIORS, YOGA AND PHYSICAL FITNESS/EXERCISE CLASSES.

“WE NEED MORE ACTIVITIES FOR ADULT/SENIORS.”
- (Community Wide Survey, Question 11)
INNOVATION
INNOVATE PARK AND RECREATION EXPERIENCES

ACTION ITEMS:

Install creative playground features and amenities.

Explore the feasibility of creating mobile applications that engage residents and promote City programs, events and park amenities.

Integrate technology into parks, facilities and programming.

Create and implement a marketing plan to increase awareness of the City’s recreational offerings and engagement of the community.
SANTA CLARITA RESIDENTS SAY...

• Respondents rated recreation brochures or newsletters sent by email as the most effective way for the city to communicate with them about recreation programs, classes and opportunities (83% very or somewhat effective), followed by the city’s website (80%) and recreation brochures or newsletters mailed directly to their home (80%).

• 68% of residents are interested in technology classes.

• Focus group suggestions:
  - Digital City information boards
  - Fitness mobile applications
  - Increased marketing of programs, parks and facilities
  - Interactive light displays
  - Outdoor musical play

“UNIQUE, UPGRADED PLAYGROUNDS AND PLAY STRUCTURES WOULD BE AMAZING!!”

- (Rec1 Survey, Question 13)
DEVELOP, ENHANCE AND REHABILITATE PARK FEATURES AND FACILITIES
FOCUS ON SUSTAINABLE FACILITIES THAT MEET THE DIVERSE NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY

ACTION ITEMS:

Reinvest in existing parks and facilities by making enhancements to maximize comfort and convenience for the community.

Incorporate more fitness elements, walking paths and shade into park spaces.

Pursue opportunities to increase available fields and facilities.

Increase gathering spaces for community use that can be adjusted with shifts in user needs and trends.

Explore the feasibility of new aquatic elements and features in parks and facilities.

Increase sustainability efforts for existing parks and facilities by making energy efficient and water saving upgrades.

Enhance existing dog park amenities to provide a higher quality experience for dog park users.

Maximize accessibility by offering inclusive play elements and design principles for people of all ages and abilities.
SANTA CLARITA RESIDENTS SAY...

• OVER 90% OF SANTA CLARITA HOUSEHOLDS UTILIZE PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES.

• PARKS IMPROVEMENT:
  - 40% believe it is a high priority to renovate parks and recreation facilities to bring them up-to-date*

• COMMUNITY PRIORITIES:
  - 60% want the City to build additional multipurpose recreation centers*
  - 48% want the City to improve equipment, fields and facilities**
  - 40% want more shade structures**
  - 30% want water features, including splash pads**

• FOCUS GROUP SUGGESTIONS:
  - More multipurpose fields
  - Water features, such as streams and splash pads
  - Field lights
  - Outdoor exercise equipment
  - More trails throughout the parks and more dog-walking areas

*True North Survey
**All Community Survey
OPEN SPACE, PRESERVATION AND OUTDOOR RECREATION
ELEVATE CONSERVATION AND OUTDOOR RECREATION

ACTION ITEMS:

Increase access and opportunities for passive and active recreational programming in designated Open Space areas for people of all ages and abilities.

Create and implement a marketing plan for preservation efforts and outdoor recreation programming in Open Space.

Promote education and awareness on the use of multi-use trails, including additional signage and literature.

Collaborate with institutional partners, non-profit agencies, private entities and community members to promote and enhance preservation efforts.
SANTA CLARITA RESIDENTS SAY...

- AT LEAST 1 TIME PER WEEK:*
  - 24% visit a natural space area
  - 35% walk, hike or bike on a trail

- MULTIPLE TIMES PER MONTH:*
  - 16% visit a natural space area
  - 15% walk, hike or bike on a trail

- PROMOTE EDUCATION ON:**
  - Multi-use courtesy in open space
  - Nature walks
  - Preservation techniques
  - Survivalist training
  - Appreciation of nature

*True North Survey   **Focus Group

“I’D LIKE TO SEE MORE OUTDOORSY SKILLS OFFERED. TYING KNOTS, FISHING FOR KIDS, ARCHERY.”
- (Rec 1 Survey, Question 13)

“LOVE THE OPEN SPACES & HIKING TRAILS. KEEP WORKING TO PRESERVE AND INCREASE OUR PRECIOUS OPEN SPACES.”
- (Rec 1 Survey, Question 13)
Thank you to all who contributed time, expertise and suggestions throughout the Work Plan process.

Parks, Recreation, and Community Services Commission

Chair Victor Lindenheim
Vice-Chair Dianna Boone
Commissioner Don Cruikshank
Commissioner Ruthann Levison
Commissioner Kieran Wong

Director of Recreation and Community Services
Janine Prado

Parks and Recreation Work Group
Frank Oviedo, Assistant City Manager
Darren Hernández, Deputy City Manager
Phil Lantis, Arts and Events Manager
Damon Letz, Assistant City Engineer
Susan Nelson, Parks Manager
Lance O’Keefe, Recreation and Community Services Manager
Kevin Tonoian, Special Districts Manager
Wayne Weber, Parks Planning Manager
Tom Reilly, Trails and Bikeways Planning Administrator
Sarona Vivanco, Senior Management Analyst
Elena Galvez, Project Manager
Masis Hagobian, Intergovernmental Relations Analyst
Jennifer Del Toro, Management Analyst
Tyler Pledger, Management Analyst
Tracy Sullivan, Management Analyst
Rebecca Widdison, Management Analyst

Designed by Joe Redmond, Graphic Designer