



COUNCIL AGENDA: 11/28/2017
ITEM: 5.1 (17-229)

Memorandum

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND
CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Toni J. Taber, CMC
City Clerk

SUBJECT: SEE BELOW

DATE: November 16, 2017

SUBJECT: GREENPRINT AND FINANCIAL FEASIBILITY STUDY.

RECOMMENDATION: As recommended by the Neighborhood Services and Education Committee on October 12, 2017, accept the report from the Department of Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services on the status of the Greenprint Update and Parks Funding Feasibility Study.



Memorandum

TO: NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES
AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE

FROM: Angel Rios, Jr.

SUBJECT: SEE BELOW

DATE: September 25, 2017

Approved

Date

10/4/17

COUNCIL DISTRICT: ALL

**SUBJECT: GREENPRINT UPDATE AND FUNDING FEASIBILITY STUDY
PROGRESS REPORT**

RECOMMENDATION

Accept the report from the Department of Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services (PRNS) on the status of the *Greenprint* Update (“Greenprint”) and Parks Funding Feasibility Study (“Funding Feasibility Study”).

OUTCOME

This report will provide the Committee with an update on the status of the *Greenprint* Update and Funding Feasibility Study, including 12 key themes that have emerged from community outreach. Committee feedback and approval of the report will help shape PRNS’ future direction on these projects.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Department of Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services (PRNS or “the Department”) is concurrently working on the *Greenprint* Update and a Funding Feasibility Study. Together, these documents will provide direction for the Department to move forward over the next 20 years, including both aspirational goals and a workplan to deliver them.

PRNS has conducted outreach with stakeholders, including residents, the business community and agency partners to better understand the community’s needs and wants for the future. The outreach process has begun to shape the future direction for PRNS, and will lead to the development of recommendations on key projects and policies. This memo provides an overview of 12 key topics of focus that have resulted from community outreach. In order to make progress towards achieving the *Greenprint*’s direction, particularly in these 12 key topics,

and working towards future goals, PRNS is exploring alternative sustainable funding sources which can support maintenance, operations, programs and projects (the Funding Feasibility Study).

BACKGROUND

Greenprint Update

The *Greenprint* establishes the vision and mission for the future of the Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services (PRNS) Department. The *Greenprint* is a 20-year strategic plan to guide the stewardship and expansion of parks, recreation facilities and community services. The *Greenprint* was originally adopted by City Council in 2000, and updated in 2009. It creates a policy and program framework to support day-to-day and annual decision making related to capital projects, recreation programs, and services. This framework lays the foundation for and provides the tools to assist in the delivery of facilities and programs that fulfill the PRNS mission, which is "to build healthy communities through people, parks and programs." The *Greenprint* provides the direction for PRNS to make San José a better, more livable community, with attractive public spaces, recreational opportunities, exciting community events and programs for people of all backgrounds, ages, and abilities.

Programs and projects implemented through the *Greenprint* are intended to support the General Plan, *Envision San José 2040*, and help PRNS reach its goals to create a high quality, sustainable park and recreation system that is built upon public enthusiasm and investment, and that contributes to a high quality of life in San José. The new *Greenprint* update will provide the Department with strategies and a workplan to address some of its most pressing modern issues including: drought, resilience, sustainable maintenance and operations, urban forestry and habitat, delivery of services and programs, land acquisition, and development of parks and facilities as San José grows.

Improving access to parks and increasing San José's overall park acreage was a core goal of both the 2000 and 2009 *Greenprint* documents. At the same time, PRNS' resources to maintain parks and operate its community centers have only just begun to rebound toward pre-recession levels and still are well below what is necessary for truly beautiful parks. The wear from more than a decade of deferred maintenance, drought, and cutbacks is widely visible within San José's park system. PRNS has estimated that park infrastructure needs rehabilitation worth more than \$259 million ("Infrastructure Backlog").

The *Greenprint* is the plan for San José's public spaces, and it has the potential to directly shape San José's quality of life and to create a more inclusive community. To remain effective, the *Greenprint* must be updated for a city estimated to grow by 400,000 residents over the next 25 years and in which the existing population is aging. The *Greenprint* must consider what parks, public space, and recreation will look like in a more urbanized San José.

PRNS staff has retained a consultant, Moore, Iacofano, and Goltsman, Inc. (MIG), to develop the work plan for the *Greenprint* update, assist with outreach and analysis, and help guide the process of document development. The work plan for the Greenprint was accepted by City Council on February 7, 2017¹, and it consists of four phases: 1) What We Have; 2) What We Need; 3) What The Future Holds; and 4) Our Plan.

Phase 1 “What We Have” is complete, including reviewing background data and policies, and surveying of the public both in-person and online. PRNS staff conducted 24 “intercept” events throughout the City, surpassing the Department’s goals of hosting at least one event in every Council District. Intercept events allow staff to engage residents in settings outside the traditional community meeting format, in busy locations where the public is already gathered. The Intercept event materials were available in English, Spanish and Vietnamese.

Over 1,440 people participated via Mapita, an online community survey tool. Mapita asks users to identify where they live, work or visit in San Jose, what park, trail, and community center facilities they use, what activities they do there, and the condition of the facilities. The Mapita survey was available in English, Spanish and Vietnamese.

Additionally, focus groups and stakeholder interviews were conducted with various City Commissions and organizations, such as SPUR, school superintendents, developers, the competitive sports community, and the business community.

The Steering Committee was convened to offer strategic guidance and provide a key link to community-based partners and critical decision-makers within San José. A staff-level Technical Advisory Group (TAG) was also formed to provide technical research and guidance and vet issues to be addressed through the update process.

Phase 2 “What We Need” is nearly finished. It includes an analysis of parkland distribution and what issues are most important to San José’s parks and recreation system, based on the findings from the feedback received from the survey tools, Steering Committee, focus groups and Parks and Recreation Commission. Twelve (12) key topics have emerged from this analysis of feedback; the Analysis section of this memo provides a synopsis of each topic, and detailed reports are attached to the memo for further information.

Phase 3 “What The Future Holds” is currently in development, and includes discussion of early recommendations for projects and policies, and a mechanism for prioritization.

Funding Feasibility Study

On November 10, 2015, City Council directed staff to conduct a feasibility study for the potential formation of a special financing district or other sustainable funding mechanism for operations, maintenance and capital repairs. On February 7, 2017, City Council also directed

¹ http://sanjose.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?view_id=&event_id=2670&meta_id=614586

staff to explore a bond as part of the *Greenprint* work.² Exploration of these financing mechanisms has been incorporated into the Funding Feasibility Study, and this project is now proceeding on a concurrent timeline with the *Greenprint* in order to benefit from the park needs assessment therein and to better manage staff capacity. The *Greenprint* will provide the future plan for San José's parks and recreation system, and the Funding Feasibility Study is a complementary effort researching mechanisms to pay for it.

The Funding Feasibility Study provides analysis of potential funding mechanisms available to the City, which would support recommendations and initiatives identified in the *Greenprint*, such as operations, services, maintenance, and capital improvements for park and recreational facilities. Three components of the Funding Feasibility Study are:

- 1) Finance Feasibility Report (the "Report") – *Phase 1*;
- 2) Public opinion polling – *Phase 1*; and
- 3) Recommendations on whether to proceed with an implementation strategy – *Phase 2*

For the Funding Feasibility Study, PRNS has MIG, the consulting firm working on the *Greenprint*, and MIG is also working with the Trust for Public Land (TPL) and FM3 Research (FM3).

ANALYSIS

Greenprint Update

With *Greenprint* Phase 2, "What We Need", 12 key topics have emerged from the analysis of feedback gathered from in-person and online surveys, discussions with focus groups and stakeholder interviews, and feedback from the Steering Commission and Parks and Recreation Commission. These 12 key topics are:

- Community Engagement Themes
- Equitable Park Access
- Access to Nature
- Conservation and Resilience
- Interconnected Park System
- Regional Parks as Iconic Destination Points (Grand Parks)
- Recreation Facility Needs
- Support Public Life
- Methodology to Evaluate Park Quality
- Approach to Plants/Landscape
- Age-appropriate, Healthy, Fun, Programs and Services
- Need for Reinvestment

² http://sanjose.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?view_id=&event_id=2673&meta_id=619606

Addressing these key topics are critical to moving the Department forward in a sustainable manner that will serve San José's diverse population as the City continues to grow. A brief synopsis of each topic is provided below, and detailed reports are attached for further information³. Note that these are not in order of priority or perceived need.

- *Community Engagement Themes:* Through the *Greenprint*'s community engagement process, it has become clear that parks improve San José residents' quality of life. These include a strong interest in expanding public life in parks, with lively parks and streets, the introduction of public art to our parks and open spaces, integration of commerce into parks, and places that unite people. The community is also seeking multi-faceted parks and facilities, connections to nature, and an extensive trail system. Key themes are examined more in-depth in each of the topics below. Throughout these themes, participants frequently cited social issues and operations and maintenance as significant barriers to success.
- *Equitable Park Access:* San José aims to provide 3.5 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents, but we are currently far from that goal, with pockets of the City underserved by parkland. The City must invest in new parkland, actively pursue access to San José school lands, and improve connectivity to help residents reach nearby parks through safer trails and pedestrian-friendly streets.
- *Access to Nature:* Stakeholders have emphasized the importance of nature in parks, particularly native landscapes, both for human users and for wildlife. There is strong interest in optimizing use of the natural habitats within our park system and possibly creating more natural settings for our residents to access.
- *Conservation and Resilience:* Strategic conservation of land in San José can provide a buffer from flood events and future sea level rise, sequester carbon, enhance water quality from our rivers to the Bay, and improve habitat corridors for wildlife to move through and within the City. Having a resilient park system will allow PRNS to better prepare for climate change while still serving the needs of residents and providing natural habitat and open spaces.
- *Interconnected Park System:* *Envision San José 2040* sets a goal (Goal PR-7) of "an integrated system of parks connected by a citywide network of trails and pathways." Additionally, *Greenprint* survey respondents have indicated that trail and stream corridors and natural places are some of their favorite park settings. There is a need to connect recreation facilities throughout the city and across physical barriers like highways, rivers and railroads.
- *Regional Parks as Iconic Destination Points (Grand Parks):* San José's regional parks boast "destination" amenities and broad appeal, and have the potential to become iconic destinations on the scale of a "Grand Park" (e.g. Golden Gate Park in San Francisco). San

³ The detailed report for the topic of "Age-Appropriate, Healthy, Fun, Programs and Services" is still under development and is therefore not attached to this memorandum

José may be able to elevate the City's regional parks to Grand Park status with intentional and coordinated planning and design, and appropriate connections.

- *Recreation Facility Needs:* Recreational facilities include amenities such as sports fields, trails, dog parks, playgrounds, and community centers, some of which serve local neighborhood needs and others which are a community-wide attraction. The *Greenprint* is examining demographic based development patterns for distributing recreational facilities; for example: providing more dog parks in the downtown urban core where residents may not have yards, and fewer in the more suburban areas of the city; or providing pools in areas of the City where residents are less likely to have access to backyard pools or private clubs with pools.
- *Support Public Life:* "Public Life" describes the casual interactions of diverse people in public spaces. As San José transitions from a suburban city to an increasingly urban one, Public Life may be promoted through dynamic integration of parks and commerce, provision of safe, lively public gathering spaces such as parks and sidewalks, and strategic activation events such as Viva CalleSJ.
- *Methodology to Evaluate Park Quality:* Stakeholders have emphasized that in addition to assessing acreage, maintenance conditions, and presence of amenities, it is important to assess the quality of our park facilities based on the user experience in the facility. Quality can be examined using GIS based analysis as well as other means.
- *Approach to Plants/Landscape:* San José is made up of many microclimates, and selecting appropriate plantings is essential to having a healthy and sustainable park system. Appropriate plantings provide habitat, resistance to extreme weather conditions, and create aesthetically pleasing places to visit.
- *Age-appropriate, Healthy, Fun, Programs and Services:* The park system is an essential contributor to overall quality of life for San José's residents. Promoting active, healthy lifestyles for all ages is a priority for PRNS programs and services. PRNS offers high-quality programs and services to support aging populations and has received the designation of an "age friendly city" by the World Health Organization. The Department also offers programs geared towards youth and teens, and provides essential programs and services related to gang prevention for at-risk populations. The Department also supports activation and placemaking efforts, such as Viva CalleSJ and Viva Parks.
- *Need for Reinvestment:* San José's parks represent an extensive system of recreational spaces and opportunities. However, many of the sites are not living up to their potential due to aging or degraded facilities, especially buildings and sports fields. Stakeholders have emphasized the importance of maintaining what we have to make parks safer and more enjoyable. While the City often has funds for new capital projects, a dedicated source of maintenance funding is lacking.

Funding Feasibility Study

The 12 key topics described above are critical to San José's stakeholders, which include residents, employers, and partnership agencies. The Department needs to further develop and encourage growth in these key areas in order to effectively serve stakeholders. Currently, the Department struggles to maintain and operate its current parks, trails, and community centers at the level that stakeholders want and expect, and the Infrastructure Backlog is estimated to be more than \$259 million. Moving forward, in order to achieve growth and success in these 12 key areas, the Department is exploring long term sustainable funding solutions to provide ongoing funding for operations, maintenance, capital repairs, and new capital projects. A sustainable funding solution will help fill the financial gap needed to go from where we are today, to where we want to be in the future.

The initial Report for the Funding Feasibility Study is attached to this memorandum. This Report has investigated a broad array of solutions available to address the Department's many financial needs including park maintenance, facility operations, recreational programming, and capital development, and provides initial estimates of the revenues that could be generated through several of the most popular funding options. The Report has surveyed common options such as general obligation bonds, parcel and soda taxes, special financing districts, and also includes overviews of less common financing tools. Some of the Report's analysis reflects requirements that general law cities are required to follow. The application of any of these tools in San José, a charter city, will need to be implemented in line with the City Charter and Municipal Code. For example, the requirements outlined in the Report for issuing general obligation bonds do not apply to San José.

FM3 has conducted public opinion polling, and analysis of the results is now underway. The polling questions were designed to evaluate public appetite for a variety of taxation levels, support for priorities, and general electability of key mechanisms. Polling language was coordinated with City staff and the Mayor's Office and evaluates public support for parks and recreation in comparison with many competing priorities.

The Funding Feasibility Study Project will include the continued involvement of the Stakeholder Group; this subset of the *Greenprint* Steering Committee includes a diverse group of community advocates and industry leaders, who will help staff to develop recommendations on how to proceed. It is envisioned that the Stakeholder Group members will act as champions should Council recommend that staff pursue Phase 2 of the Study.

Next Steps

Phase 3 of the *Greenprint*, "What the Future Holds," will result in recommendations on key capital project categories and key policy categories. Additional community outreach will be conducted, as well as public education about parks and recreation.

Phase 4 "Our Plan," will result in a final *Greenprint* document, which will be presented to Parks and Recreation Commission (PRC), NSE Committee and City Council for acceptance.

Final

After the *Greenprint* is complete, staff will begin a Nexus Study that will examine how parkland fees should be based, collected and distributed.

Next steps for the Funding Feasibility Study including analysis of the polling results, and preparation of a Financing Strategy Implementation Plan to present to City Council. This plan will outline general recommendations for a funding mechanism, and will present a path forward with the next steps and a timeline for the development of the Strategy.

EVALUATION AND FOLLOW-UP

Staff will present the *Greenprint's* recommendations on key capital project categories and key policies categories, and on initial recommendations from the Funding Feasibility Study Phase 1 to City Council.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

This memo will be posted on the City's website for the October 12, 2017 Neighborhood Services and Education Committee meeting. Outreach for the *Greenprint* Update has also includes in-person (intercept events) and online surveying (Mapita); Steering Committee meetings; and previous reports to the City Council, NSE Committee, and the PRC. Outreach for the Funding Feasibility Study so far has included Stakeholder Group meetings and public opinion polling.

COORDINATION

This memorandum has been coordinated with the City Attorney's Office, the City Manager's Budget Office, and the Department of Planning, Building and Code Enforcement.

COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION/INPUT

A memorandum on the status update of the *Greenprint* and Funding Feasibility Study⁴ was accepted at the PRC meeting on September 6, 2017, where a workshop and discussion were held. This report to the NSE Committee builds on and updates the memorandum to the PRC.

⁴ <http://www.sanjoseca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/71351>

CEQA

Not a Project, File No. PP17-009, Staff Reports, Assessments, Annual Reports, and Informational Memos that involve no approvals of any City action.

/s/

ANGEL RIOS, JR.
Director of Parks, Recreation and
Neighborhood Services

For questions, please contact Nicolle Burnham, Acting Deputy Director, at (408) 793-5514.

Attachments:

- 1) Finance Feasibility Report
<http://www.sanjoseca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/71332>
- 2) Briefing Memo – Community Engagement Themes, dated June 15, 2017
<http://www.sanjoseca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/71333>
- 3) Briefing Memo – Part I Needs Assessment Topics, dated June 15, 2017
<http://www.sanjoseca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/71334>
- 4) Briefing Memo – Part II Needs Assessment Topics, revised August 10, 2017
<http://www.sanjoseca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/71335>
- 5) Briefing Memo – Approach to Plants/Landscape, Methodology to Evaluate Park Quality, dated August 3, 2017
<http://www.sanjoseca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/71331>

A photograph of children in yellow shirts fishing by a river. The scene is bright and sunny, with the water reflecting the light. The children are focused on their fishing rods.

SAN JOSE
PARKS, RECREATION &
NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES

Greenprint Update and Funding Feasibility Study

Neighborhood Services and Education Committee

October 12, 2017

Planning Process

CITY OF
SAN JOSE
GREENPRINT UPDATE

Phase I: What We Have	Phase II: What We Need	Phase III: What the Future Holds	Phase IV: Our Plan
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Briefing Memo ✓• Outreach ✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Outreach Results ✓• Assessment of Need ✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Confirm <i>Greenprint</i> Plan• Gather Publics Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Greenprint</i> Plan

Steering Committee Meetings

NSE

NSE

Phase I: “What We Have”

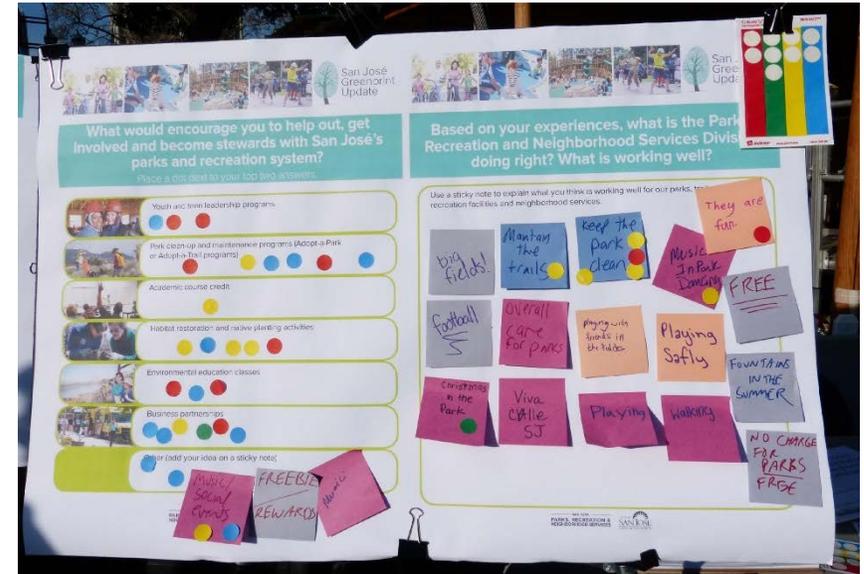
Public Outreach Goals

What is working with Parks?

What Facilities or Programs Should We be Considering?

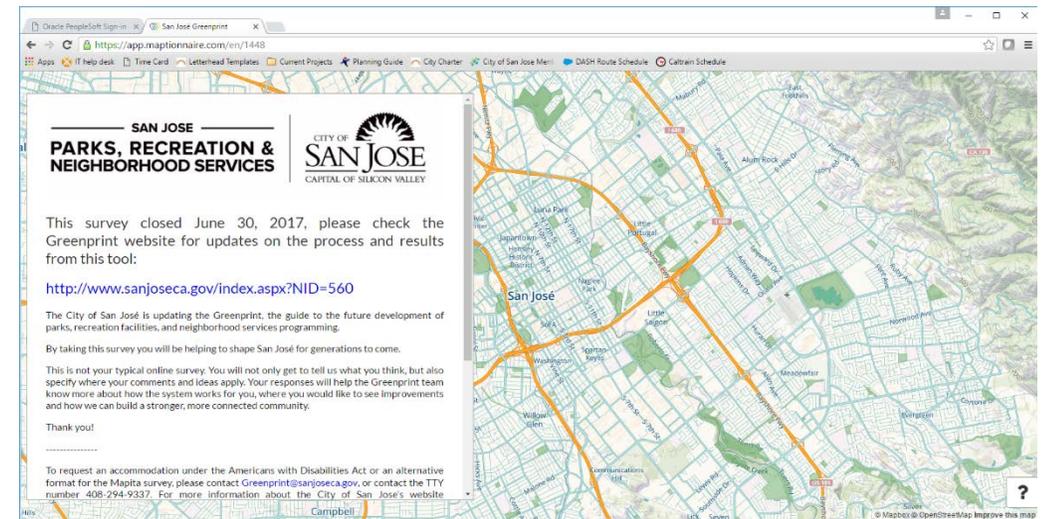
What is Important to the Public in their Park System?

Tri-lingual outreach – English, Spanish and Vietnamese



Phase I: “What We Have”

- Outreach Surveys – 24 Events Held Across all Council Districts
- Online, Interactive Survey
- Steering Committee
- Technical Advisory Committee



Phase II: “What We Need”

Common Themes

Interactions



Equity



Nature



Grand Park



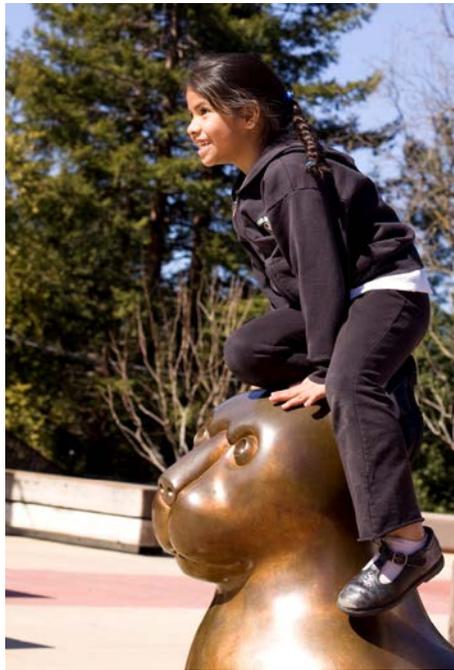
Manage



Interactions

PRNS Should:

- Engage the Community and Enhance Public Life
- Provide Age and Population Appropriate Programs and Services



Equity

The City Should:

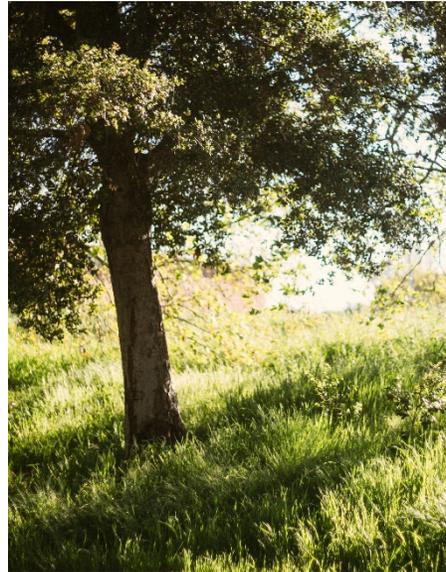
- Invest in New Park Land
- Provide Connections to Improve Access
- Address Recreation Facility Needs



Nature

Parks Should:

- Provide Access to Natural Environments
- Plan for Resilience
- Provide Native Landscapes



Grand Parks

San Jose Needs:

- Iconic Destinations



Manage

PRNS Should:

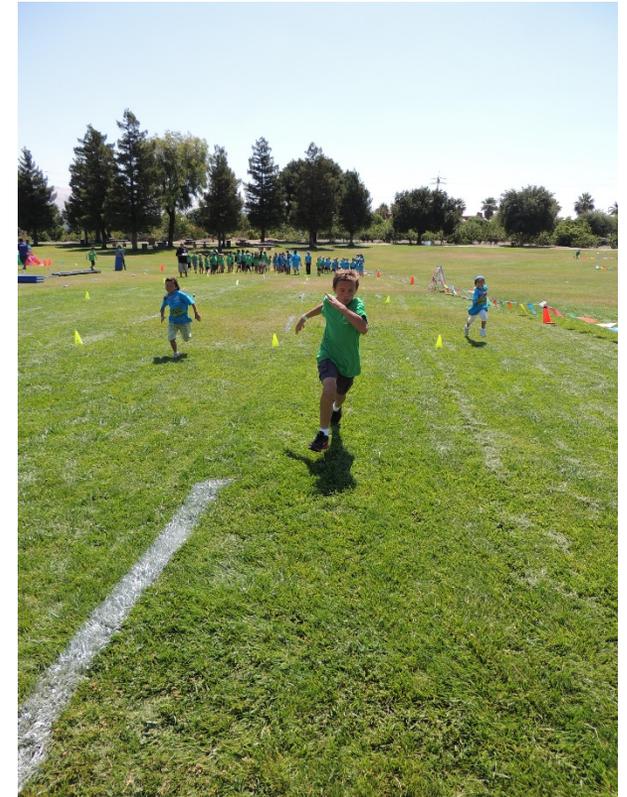
- Evaluate Parks Based on Quality of Experience
- Reinvest in Current Facilities



Funding

Funding Feasibility Study (Phase I):

- Evaluate Funding Strategies
- Perform Public Opinion Polling



Next Steps



Greenprint Phase 3: “What the Future Holds”

- Recommend key capital project and policy categories
- Additional community outreach & education

Greenprint Phase 4: “Our Plan”

- Final *Greenprint* document
- Acceptance by PRC, NSE Committee, City Council

Funding Feasibility

- Polling results analysis
- Implementation strategy recommendation