



Citywide Sustainable Park Maintenance Annual Report

Neighborhood Services and Education Committee

February 12, 2026

Avi Yotam, Deputy Director
Torie O'Reilly, Division Manager
Claire Cioni, Program Manager
Eddie Moreno, Parks, Recreation & Facilities Supervisor

SAN JOSE
PARKS, RECREATION &
NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES



Building Community Through Fun

Measuring Our Efforts

Park Condition Assessment

- Two assessments in 2025: Traditional and Higher Standard
 - 20 Categories
 - Pass/Fail Standards
 - Teams of 2-3 Staff

Community Perception

- Park User Survey
- City Manager's Community Satisfaction Survey
- Statistically Valid Voter Survey

Bridging Gaps

- Healthy Places Index to prioritize equity
- Contractors and volunteers to stretch resources



Annual Park Condition Assessments

- Park Condition Assessments provide a consistent, citywide view of park maintenance performance and resources.
- 2025 assessments used two service levels: Traditional and Higher Standards.
- Comparing the two standards highlights the gap between budgeted capacity and community expectations.
- Park quality is influenced by multiple factors, including maintenance, capital needs, and community values.
- Results inform maintenance priorities, resource allocation, and transparent communication with City leadership and the public.

Example

Traditional Assessment

6.16 Turf (natural turf only)

- 6.16.1 Cleanliness: Turf is free of litter. The standard allows for no more than ten pieces of trash per acre. Turf is free of organic debris that impedes mowing. The standard allows for no more than ten pieces of debris per acre. Unsafe litter is not acceptable.
- 6.16.2 Color: 80% of turf area is green.
- 6.16.3 Weeds: Weed levels are below 20% of total turf area.
- 6.16.4 Density: 80% of turf area is free of bare spots.
- 6.16.5 Drainage: 80% of turf area is free of standing water two days after rain or two hours after irrigation.
- 6.16.6 Edging: 80% of edges are clearly defined and have less than six inches of growth over adjoining landscape.
- 6.16.7 Mowing: Turf is mowed and kept at a uniform height of less than ankle height or 4.5-5 inches.

Higher Standards Assessment

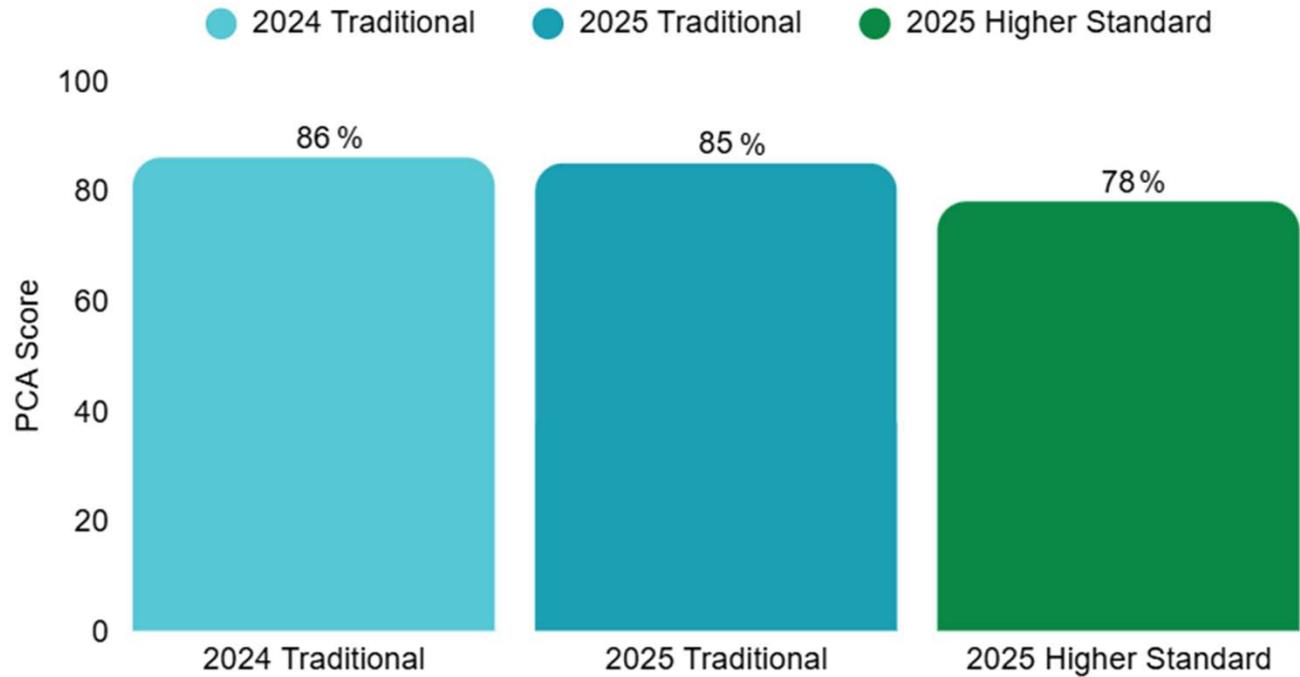
6.16 Turf (natural turf only)

- 6.16.1 Cleanliness: Turf is free of litter. The standard allows for no more than five pieces of trash per acre. Turf is free of organic debris that impedes mowing. The standard allows for no more than five pieces of debris per acre. Unsafe litter is not acceptable.
- 6.16.2 Color: 95% of turf area is green.
- 6.16.3 Weeds: Weed levels are below 5% of total turf area.
- 6.16.4 Density: 95% of turf area is free of bare spots.
- 6.16.5 Drainage: 95% of turf area is free of standing water two days after rain or two hours after irrigation.
- 6.16.6 Edging: 95% of edges are clearly defined and have less than six inches of growth over adjoining landscape.
- 6.16.7 Mowing: Turf is mowed and kept at a uniform height of less than ankle height or 4.5-5 inches.

San José's park system is facing a widening gap between community expectations and the resources available to meet them.

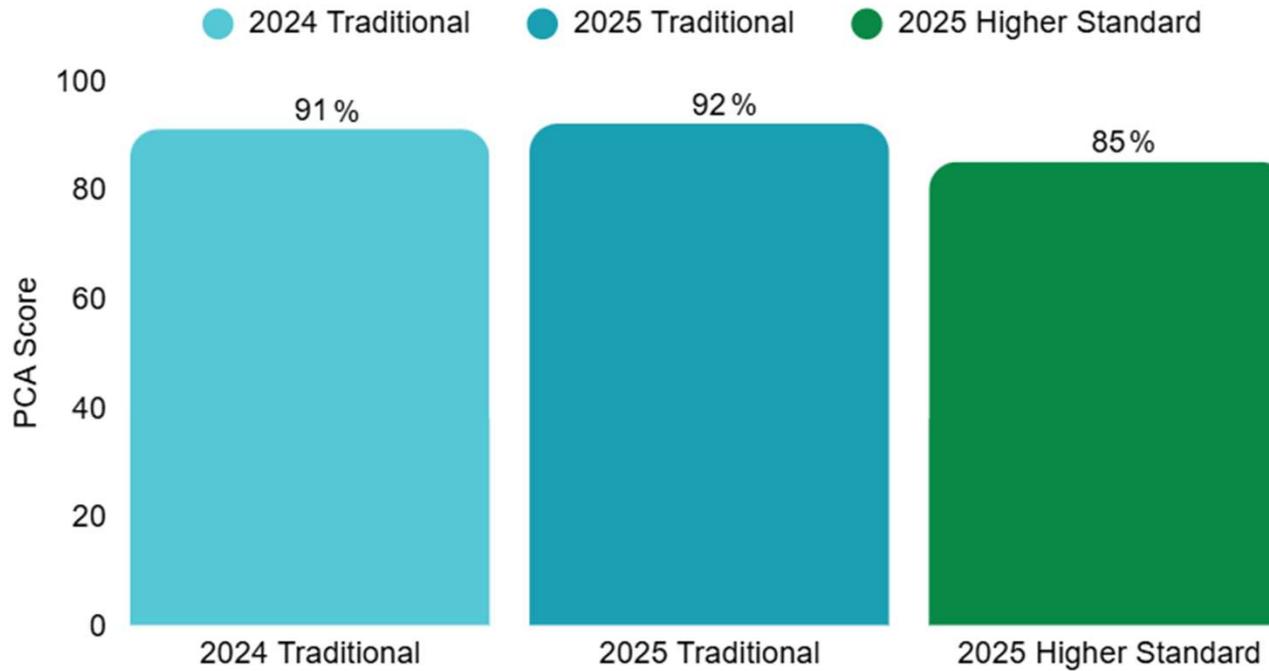


Average PCA Score for Parks



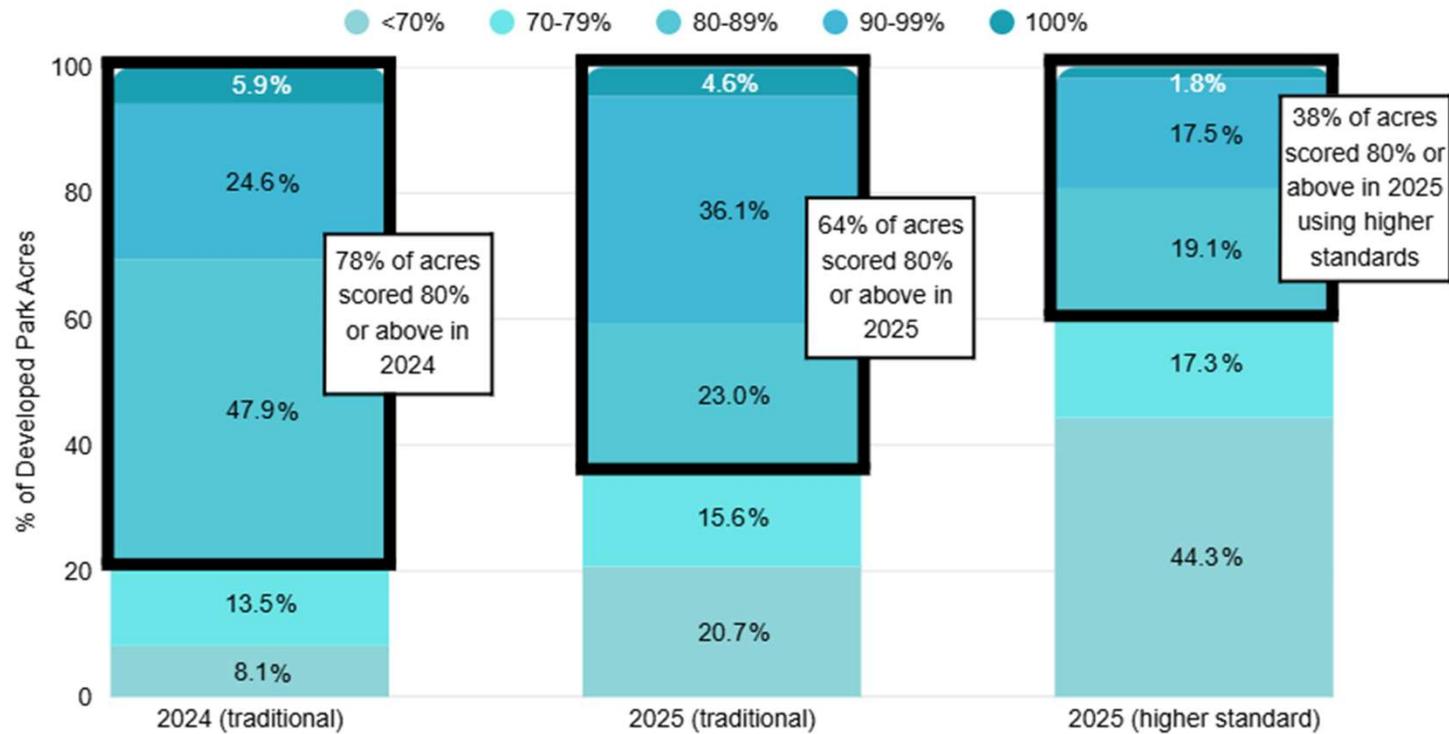
Higher standards reveal conditions not visible under traditional scoring.

Average PCA Score for Civic Grounds



Higher standards reveal conditions not visible under traditional scoring.

Overall PCA Scores for Developed Acres of Parkland



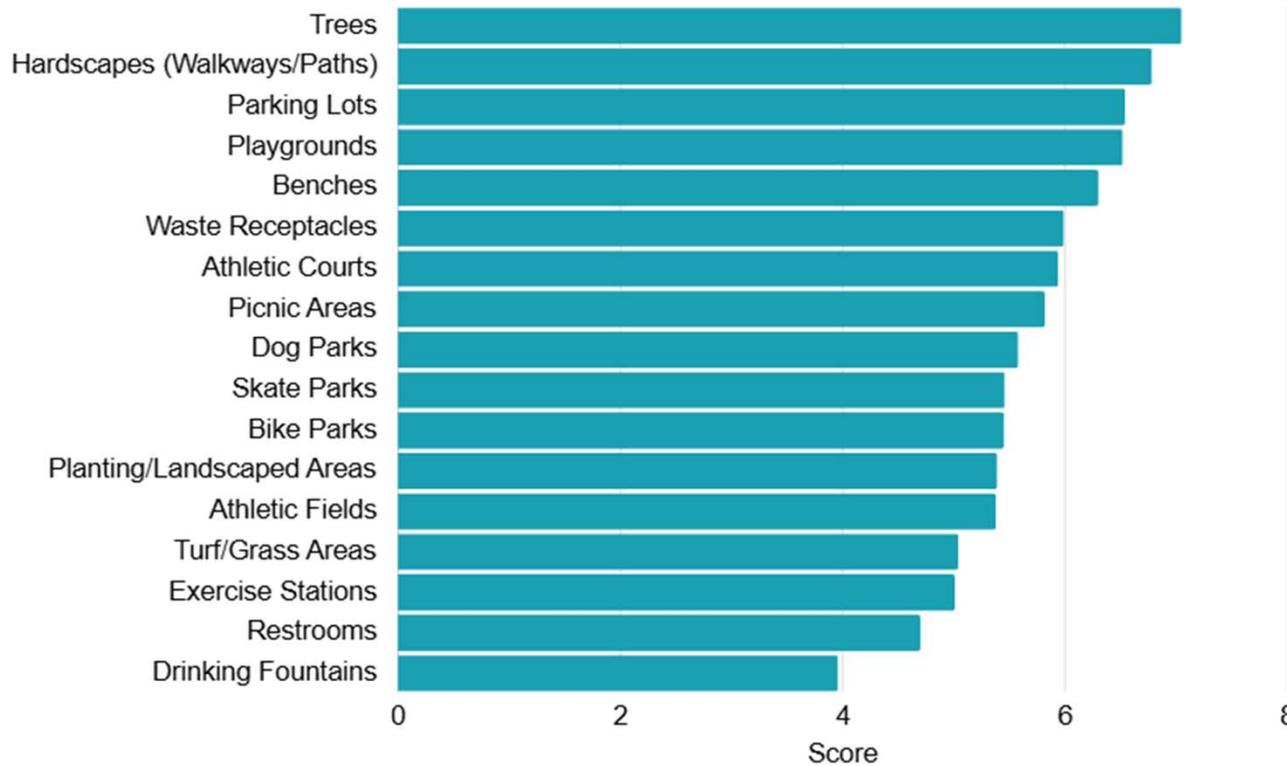
Comparing Traditional and Higher Standards by Council District and Healthy Places Index

Neighborhood Parks	2024	2025	
Council District	Traditional	Traditional	Higher Standards
1	87%	83%	78%
2	89%	83%	75%
3	89%	87%	76%
4	85%	84%	69%
5	88%	89%	79%
6	79%	86%	80%
7	88%	87%	78%
8	83%	75%	71%
9	88%	88%	83%
10	84%	90%	88%

Parks and Civic Grounds	2024	2025	
HPI	Traditional	Traditional	Higher Standards
9.9% or less	90%	88%	79%
10-19.9%	83%	85%	72%
20-29.9%	88%	86%	78%
30-39.9%	85%	85%	74%
40-49.9%	89%	86%	79%
50-59.9%	82%	82%	79%
60-69.9%	89%	91%	85%
70-79.9%	85%	86%	80%
80-89.9%	89%	89%	84%
90-99.9%	88%	88%	81%

Higher standards will be used in future assessments to ensure that true disparities in park condition are accurately reflected.

Community Perception Annual Park User Survey

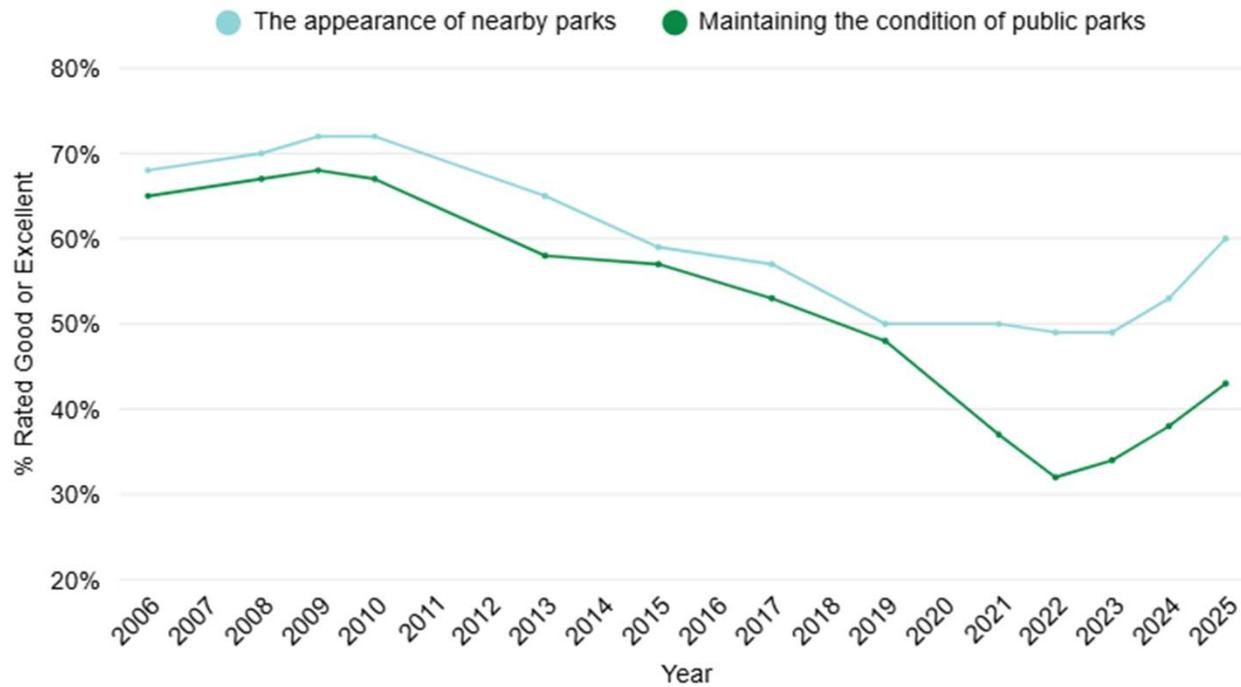


Voluntary survey
17 Categories
0-10 ranking

320 survey
responses

Community Perception Citywide Surveys

City Manager's Community Satisfaction Survey (2006-2025)



What Voters Say About Parks

- September 2025 survey of 1,000+ voters shows parks are widely used and highly valued
- **YET more than 1 in 10 voters associate parks with the need for better maintenance and care**
- Top priorities: clean parks, well-maintained restrooms, and weed removal to reduce wildfire risk (there is low satisfaction with these priorities)
- Results reveal gap between expectations and current conditions

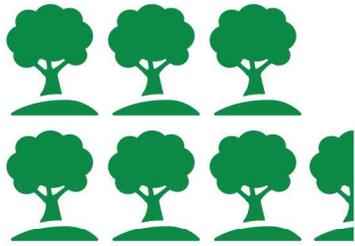
Taking Care of More With Less

2003



227

employees



1,475

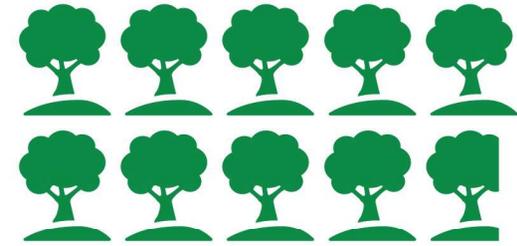
acres of park land

2025



183

employees



1,801

acres of park land

↓ 19% **↑ 22%**

Note: Contractors now provide the equivalent of 12 FTE for restrooms and maintain 150 acres of pocket parks, but this still leaves a 14% reduction in staffing alongside the increase in acreage.

Leveraging Resources

Contractors

- Park restrooms
- 150 acres of pocket parks
- Forestry
- Weed abatement for fire fuel reduction

Resilience Corps

- Partnership with San Jose Conservation Corps
- Support park maintenance
- Careers for young people

Volunteers

- 47,340 hours = 22.75 FTE
- Focus on lower HPI areas
- Limited scope but still helpful

Graffiti Removal

- Pilot with BeautifySJ
- Contractor proactively removing graffiti in highly impacted parks

Integrating Capital Data



Capital data will be integrated into Sustainable Park Maintenance Annual Report

- Improve transparency
- Better align resources and investments
- Strengthen planning

\$554 million

**for parks &
recreation facilities**

Deferred Infrastructure Maintenance Backlog

- Aging infrastructure drives reactive repairs over preventative care
- Reduced capacity delays routine maintenance, increasing long-term costs
- Refining the parks-specific backlog estimate to improve clarity
- Updated citywide estimate expected at City Council this spring

Moving Forward

- ✓ Use Higher Standards for Park Condition Assessments
- ✓ Develop a Parks and Recreation Master Plan to better coordinate maintenance and capital planning.
- ✓ Expand capital infrastructure assessments to better plan long-term investments and present a full picture of park conditions.
- ✓ Build the case for permanent and reliable funding for park maintenance to achieve the park system the community wants and deserves.
- ✓ Align current and future investments with community priorities for cleanliness, safety, and values.



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