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Parks and Recreation Master Plan Adopted

By Cathy Tyson

It took two long hard years of meetings and study, but in the end the Parks, Trails and Recreation (PTR) Commission along with city staff put together a Master Plan to meet the needs of Lafayette citizens. Adopted in late November of 2009, it provides a framework for finding suitable sites and looks at costs for development and maintenance.

"Currently, the city needs to acquire an additional 44 acres of parkland to meet its General Plan goal of 5 acres/1,000 people," stated the Lafayette Park and Recreation Facilities Master Plan. It's clear that as the population grows so must available parkland.

There are currently 91.3 acres of city-owned park and recreation facilities that are categorized into four types: neighborhood parks, community parks, the Community Center and downtown parks. They range in size from the compact .3 acre Plaza Park at the corner of Moraga Road and Mt. Diablo Boulevard to the spacious 68 acres of Lafayette Community Park. Although that sounds large, in order to preserve riparian habitat, oak woodland and more, 70% of the Community Park will remain in its natural state.

After gathering extensive input from the public and analyzing the results, a priority list was developed based on community need and the location of existing parks. A public workshop was held, press releases were generated, a survey was completed and local neighborhood groups hosted a series of presentations by PTR Commissioners.

Bottom line, 90% of survey respondents wanted the City to provide more parks, with the number one preference being additional sports fields, and secondly neighborhood parks.

The Park and Recreation Facilities Master Plan came to the conclusion that parkland should be developed to provide the following facilities:

A new sports field facility to accommodate soccer, lacrosse, softball and/or baseball

One or two active or passive neighborhood parks, to be located in Northeast Lafayette or West Lafayette

Downtown parks to be identified in the separate Downtown Specific Plan

A bike park to accommodate motocross (BMX) and mountain bicyclists

An off-leash dog park with separate areas for large and small dogs

A nature park to support nature education and appreciation

The Master Plan spells out exactly the minimum acreage required along with facility options, minimum width, length and slope and whether or not parking and restrooms are required - making it easier to look at parcels that may become available in the future.

For more information about funding for parks and to read the complete Master Plan, go to www.lovelafayette.org and click on Master Plan.

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