

PARKS, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE MASTER PLAN

Parks & Recreation Commission

July 6, 2022



PROS Plan purpose:

*Set the **framework for decision makers** in the planning, maintenance, development, and/or rehabilitation of Belmont's Parks and open space system for a **15 year horizon**.*

AGENDA

Purpose *To review and recommend the PROS Plan to the City Council*

PROS Plan

- Process
- Vision
- Recommendations
- Open Space Management Plan
- Implementation Strategy



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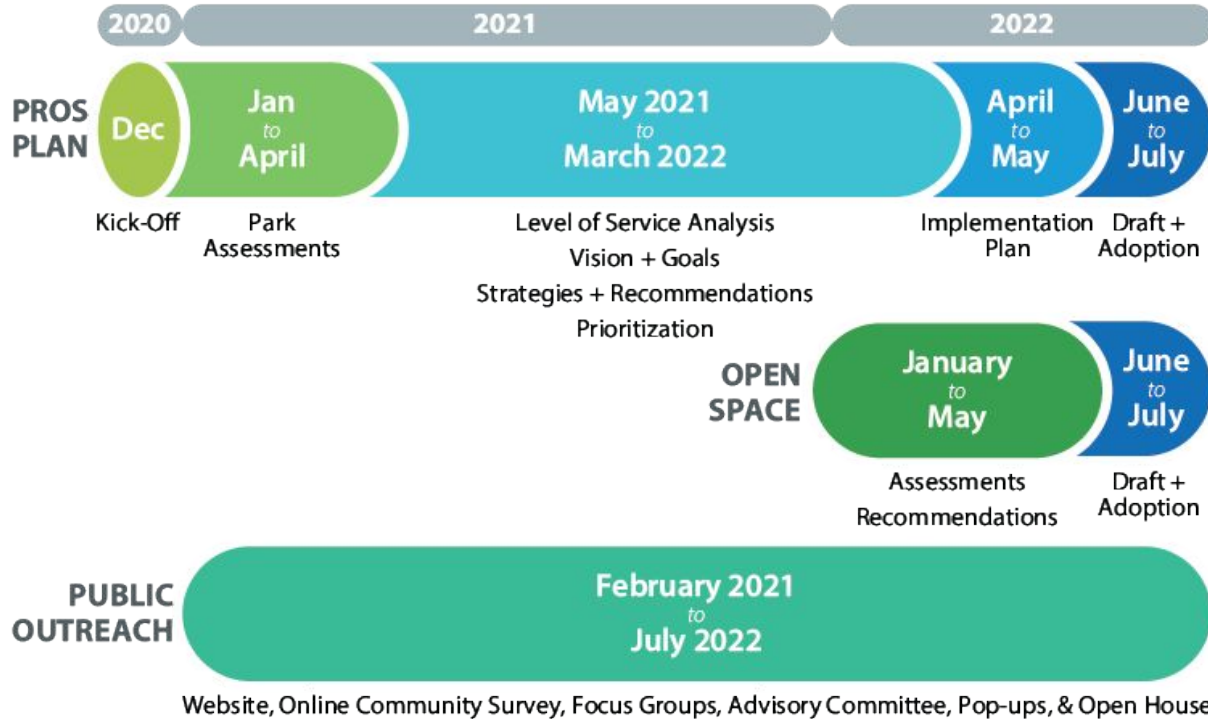
Info@belmontprosplan.com



Process: **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

1. Provide **equitable access** to resources and activities across the entire city
2. Promote **inclusion** to people of all backgrounds, regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic position, or physical/cognitive ability
3. Make all users feel **welcome and safe**
4. Offer services and activities across a **range of interests, abilities, and ages**
5. Reflect our commitment to **environmental resilience and sustainability**
6. Respect the beauty and importance of our **natural resources**
7. Advance community **health and well-being**
8. Foster a sense of community and encourage **social interaction**
9. Provide **well maintained** and actively managed facilities
10. **Adapt** to changing conditions and needs
11. Utilize **transparent community process** to inform decisions

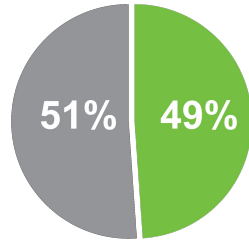
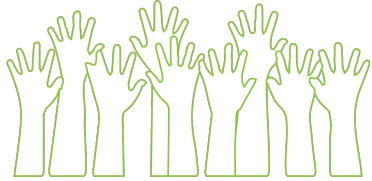
Process: **SCHEDULE**



Process: **AN ENGAGED COMMUNITY**

Community Survey

2800+ Responses



■ Non-Residents
■ Residents

Focus Groups

11 in 2021

Project Website

3,800+
unique visitors

Emails + Comments

Over **1,500** (2020 to June 2022)
Emails to Info@BelmontPROSplan.com and/or P&R Commission, and Comments via project website

PROS Advisory Committee

5 meetings in 2021 + 2022

Parks and Recreation Commission

Updates at **every** P&R Commission meeting

19 meetings in 2020 + 2021 + 2022

City Council presentations

3 in 2021 + 2022 * Next Meeting:
July 12th

Pop-up participation

at City events

*Concerts in the Park
Movie Night in the Park
Egg Hunt
Celebrate the Music
etc.*

Open Space Open House

Process: **AN ENGAGED COMMUNITY**



How the **COMMUNITY** informed and influenced the PROS Plan (a sample)

1. Open Space Management Plan
 - a. WRA Environmental Consultants
 - b. PROS Plan schedule extended
2. Proposed uses at undeveloped parks
 - a. Hidden Canyon Park + Ralston Ranch Park
3. Opportunity Site: Oak Knoll Drive
4. Additional Advisory Committee meeting

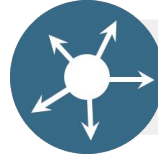
PROS PLAN VISION

Re-imagine the Belmont Parks, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) system to **create the City's Backyard** that fosters **inclusive, experiential, and nurturing public spaces** by setting the framework for decision makers in the planning, maintenance, development, and/or rehabilitation, implementable over a **15 year horizon**.

Vision: **COMMUNITY THEMES**



**Amenities for Social
+ Physical Activity**



**Create More
with Less**



**More Seating
Opportunities**



**Connecting
with Nature**



**Physical
Connections**



**Available for Many
Uses + Users**



**Amenities for
Diverse Interests**



**Natural
Resources**



**Accessible for
All Abilities**



**Honor Belmont's
Unique Landscape**

Vision: **BIG IDEAS** + GOALS



**The City
as Your
Backyard**



**Outdoor
Recreation
for All**



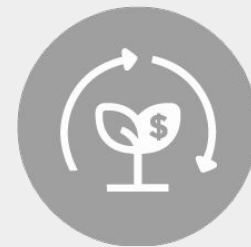
**Celebrate
the Outdoors**



**Prioritize
Environmental
+ Financial
Sustainability**

The Ideas: **BIG IDEAS + GOALS**

The City as Your Backyard

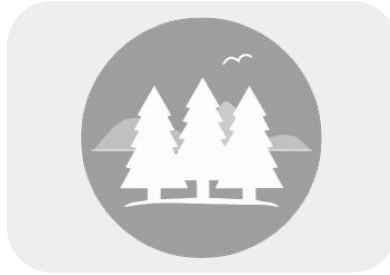


- Goal 1.** Support a **connected Belmont** by encouraging a **robust pedestrian, bicycle, and public transit network** unifying PROS sites across the City.
- Goal 2.** Foster a **healthy community** through spaces, amenities, programs, and public art to encourage **physical activity, social interaction,** and highlight Belmont's **culture and history.**
- Goal 3.** Expand and enhance the existing PROS system to **meet evolving community needs** by establishing **new uses, improved spaces,** and recreation amenities that **highlight the natural environment.**

Vision: **BIG IDEAS + GOALS**

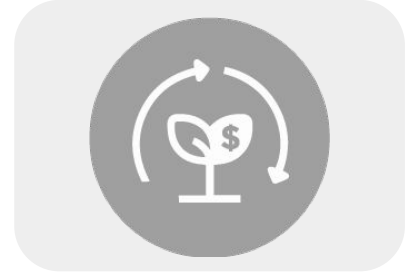


Outdoor Recreation for All



- Goal 4.** Leverage assets of the PROS system to **support community health** providing **diverse, equitable, and inclusive** spaces and amenities with **accessible routes**.
- Goal 5.** Revitalize the PROS system to be **adaptable, flexible**, and supportive of **many uses and users** now and into the future.
- Goal 6.** **Partner** with a variety of agencies, departments, volunteer groups, other entities, and the community to **actualize PROS Plan goals** and policies.

Vision: **BIG IDEAS + GOALS**



- Goal 7.** Develop and implement an **Open Space Management Plan**.
- Goal 8.** **Expand educational opportunities** in parks and open spaces to highlight the local ecosystems.
- Goal 9.** Continue to **enrich Belmont's outdoor recreation opportunities** with trail improvements, volunteer collaborations, and wayfinding features.

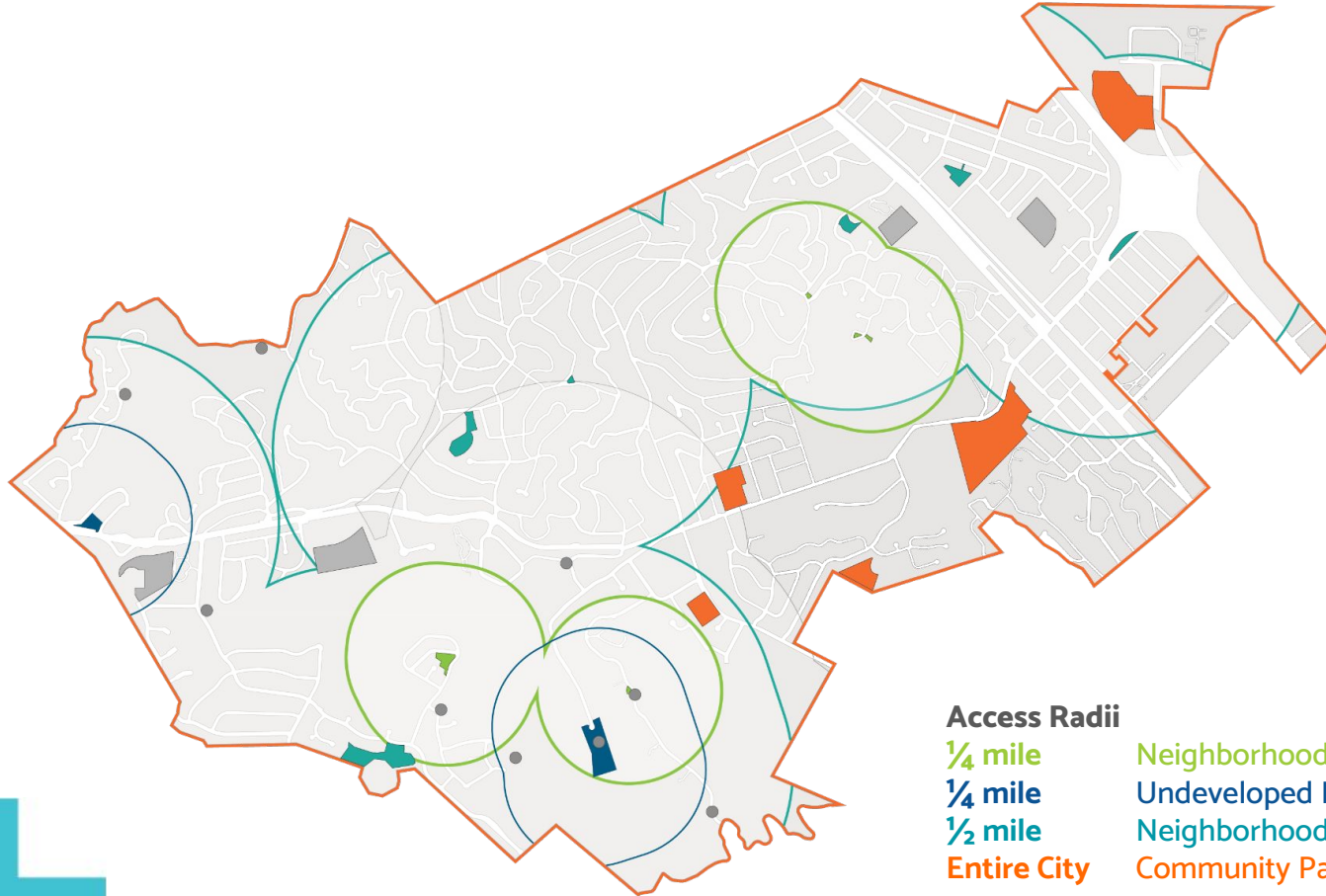
Vision: **BIG IDEAS + GOALS**



**Prioritize
Environmental
+ Financial
Sustainability**

- Goal 10.** Nurture the **ecological strength** of the City's natural resources through **resource-efficient landscapes** and operations.
- Goal 11.** Provide **high-quality, actively-managed,** and **well-maintained** PROS assets supported by a range of funding sources.
- Goal 12.** Prioritize **sustainable, resilient,** and **responsible management and maintenance** practices, improvements, and projects at PROS sites.

Vision: CITY-WIDE PARK ACCESS



- **Interconnected Park System**
 - Amenities distributed across the system
- **Prioritize pedestrian and bicycle access to green spaces**
 - Identify areas with low access
 - Promote ped and bike infrastructure to reduce areas with low access
 - Investigate new park opportunity sites in areas with low access

Recommendations: **SYSTEM-WIDE STRATEGIES**

74

Strategies

- **Broad recommendations to impact the entire PROS system**
- **Organized under the Big Ideas and Goals**
- **Furthered by:**
 - **Strategic actions**
 - **Park-specific recommendations**
 - **Open Space Management Plan**

Recommendations: **STRATEGIC ACTIONS**

**Inclusive +
All-Abilities Play**



**Social Gathering
Space**



**“Pop-up” Park
Installations**



**PROS Activation
Plan**

Usage Study

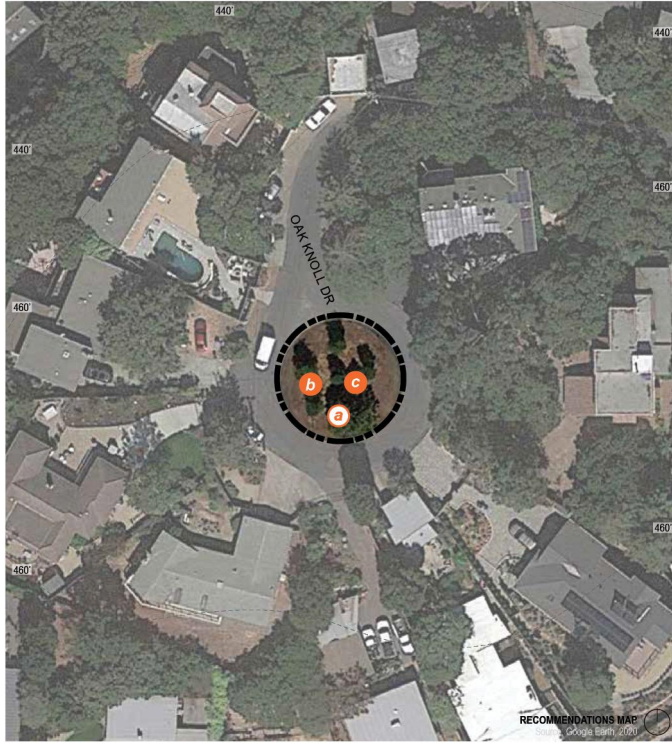
RECOMMENDATIONS SPECTRUM

INCREASING MAGNITUDE OF RECOMMENDATIONS 

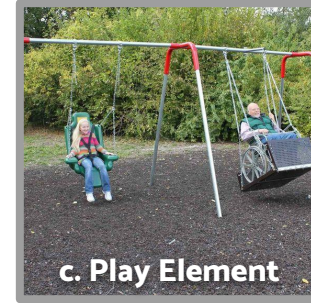
Magnitude	EXISTING MASTER PLAN	MINOR IMPROVEMENT	UPGRADED OR NEW AMENITY	PARK REDESIGN	UNDEVELOPED PARKS	NEW PARK OPPORTUNITY
Existing Condition	Master Plans recently adopted Created with extensive community input	Parks recently developed or in Very Good condition	Current park functioning well	Rethink accessibility and park layout No change-in-use	Existing park is undeveloped	Add Parkland To fill gaps in park access City-owned property
Recommendation	Implement Existing Master Plan	Minor improvements identified to maintain high-quality	Upgrade existing amenity or new amenity to meet identified needs or gaps	Undertake Park Master Plan	Develop and amenitize site	Create, develop, and amenitize site

Recommendations: **NEW PARK OPPORTUNITY**

OAK KNOLL DRIVE



Community Feedback: Identified as an Opportunity Site via neighbor's input, strong community support for new park



ICON LEGEND



Existing Standard Baseline Amenity



Recommendation: Add Standard Baseline Amenity



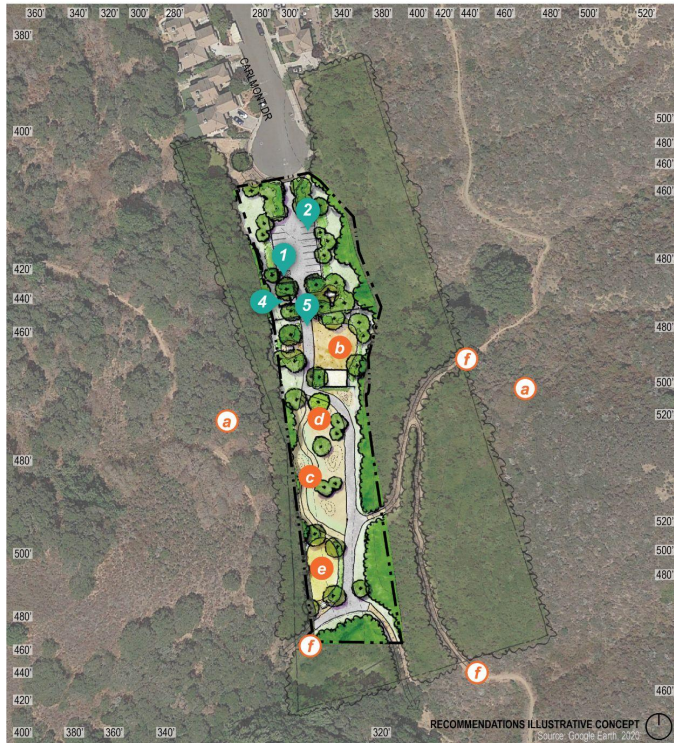
Recommendation: Add accessibility, amenity, or landscape

Accessible : Planting

Recommendations: UNDEVELOPED PARK

HIDDEN CANYON PARK

Community Feedback: Community revised Option A
Nature-oriented, phase improvements per community request



RECOMMENDATIONS ILLUSTRATIVE CONCEPT
Source: Google Earth, 2022

ICON LEGEND

For illustration purposes only. This graphic is conceptual in nature, and any park design decisions will require additional public review.



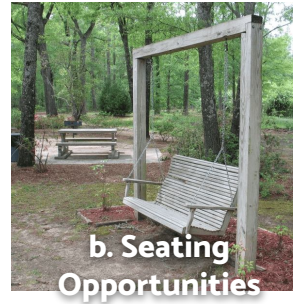
Existing Standard Baseline Amenity



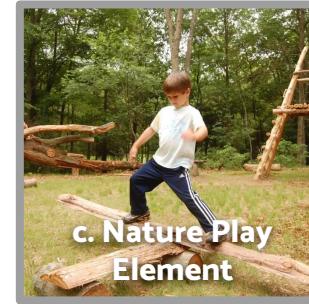
Recommendation: Add Standard Baseline Amenity



Recommendation: Add accessibility, amenity, or landscape



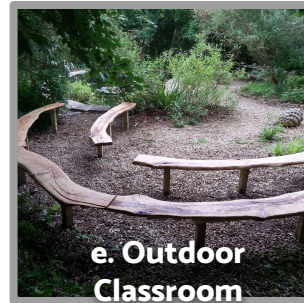
b. Seating Opportunities



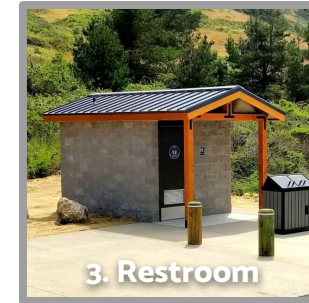
c. Nature Play Element



d. Picnic Area



e. Outdoor Classroom



3. Restroom



4. Open Space Gateway

1. ADA Parking : 2. Parking : Accessible : Seating : Planting : Shade

Recommendations: **EXISTING PARK MASTER PLAN**

TWIN PINES PARK

ACCESSIBILITY

- 1 Restructure arrival zone to strength visual and physical connections
- 2 Prioritize pedestrian experience in Town Square area
- 3 Develop trail connections beyond park boundaries
- 4 Add looped walking paths

AMENITY

- 5 Renovate and expand Playground structure
- 6 Add Water Play Element
- 7 Renovate Picnic Area
- 8 Add Bocce Ball Court
- 9 Add Teen Outdoor Space
- 10 Add Multi-use Lawn

LANDSCAPE

- 11 Establish and improve visual and access connections to Belmont Creek



OPEN SPACE MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Open Space Management Plan identifies objectives, policies, and implementation actions for:

1. Environmental sustainability
2. Balanced recreation use
3. Natural hazard mitigation
4. Vegetation protection
5. Wildlife protection
6. Water resources
7. Science based management
8. Expanded implementation resources



OPEN SPACE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Plan consists of:

1. Environmental Assessment
2. Recreational Use Assessment
3. Base Plan
4. Management Alternatives

Methods included:

- Desktop research
- Site visits
- Community and stakeholder input



Key Findings from Environmental Assessment, Recreation Use Assessment

1. **Over 90 percent of the open space lands consist of native biological communities.**
2. 11 special-status plant species and 7 special-status wildlife species have moderate/high potential to occur or are present.
3. Non-native species generally limited.
4. **Trails represent about 1.3 percent of open space lands.**
5. Approximately 50 stream crossings identified.
6. **Less than 10% of trail erosion ratings were considered “high.”**
7. Rates of participation in nature-based recreation are increasing.

FINDINGS

Key Findings Wildfire Hazard Assessment

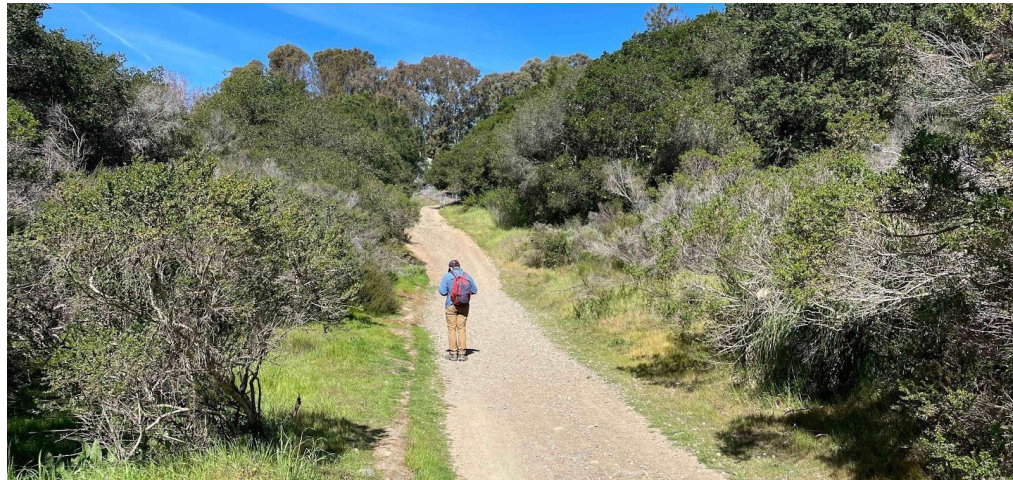
Steep topography, weather, and the potential to damage human life and structures

- Very high wildfire hazards for WDL
- High wildfire hazards for SJC



Key Takeaways

1. Overall habitat quality is high.
2. Existing nature-based recreational uses can continue on existing mapped and established, previously unmapped trails.
3. Continue wildfire fuel reduction efforts.



OPEN SPACE THEMES



Environmental Sustainability

Objectives

Policies

Implementation
Actions



Balanced Recreation Use

Objectives

Policies

Implementation
Actions



Natural Hazard Mitigation

Objectives

Policies

Implementation
Actions

BASE PLAN + MGMT ALTERNATIVES

Base Plan



Comprehensive set of objectives, policies and implementation actions designed to:

- Protect sensitive resources
- Guide trail management and manage recreation
- Mitigate the risk of natural hazards

Recreation Emphasis Alternative



Additional policy and implementation actions related trails and recreational use

Habitat Emphasis Alternative



Additional policies and implementation actions related to vegetation restoration and wildlife protection

Mgmt Alt: **COMMUNITY PREFERENCE**

Management Alternatives	% of Vote
Base Plan (alone)	6%
Base Plan + Recreation Emphasis	37%
Base Plan + Habitat Emphasis	17%
Base Plan + Recreation Emphasis + Habitat Emphasis	40%

Advisory Committee #5 (5/31/22).

Poll question: Which Management Alternatives do you support?

35 responses (8 AC members + 27 participants)

IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

Recommendations based on:

- PROS Plan Big Ideas + Goals,
- Findings from WRA assessments,
- Public feedback
- Clear next steps for the City



IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

An implementation action is a discrete, measurable action that achieves a desired outcome.



Environmental Sustainability

Ex. Improve stream crossings



Balanced Recreation Use

Ex. Monitor visitor use levels



Natural Hazard Mitigation

Ex. Using grazing reduce wildfire fuels

IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

Implementation Action Ratings

Easy	Medium	Hard
<p>These actions can be performed immediately under existing City programs, funding, or with minimal additional effort.</p>	<p>These actions require additional planning, equipment, staffing, funding – either internal or external, or other operational changes.</p>	<p>These actions may require substantial planning, interagency coordination, staffing, funding, or other operational changes.</p>

PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Improve stream crossings (Hard)
- Fuels reduction plan (Medium)
- Monitor recreation use (Hard)
- Seasonal/weather dependent restrictions on maintenance (Easy)



FURTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

- Develop recreation and volunteer restoration programs
- Examine portfolio of solutions for multi-use trail experiences



IMPLEMENTATION

- **PRIORITIZATION MATRIX**
To prioritize park-specific recommendations
- **FUNDING STRATEGIES + PARTNERSHIPS**
Portfolio of funding for capital improvements, maintenance, and operations
- **ACTION PLAN**
for short term, long term, or ongoing

PRIORITIZATION MATRIX

- To further **PROS Plan goals**
 - 12 goals
- To respond to **community priority**
 - N/A, Medium, High
- To serve an **existing deficiency**
 - Demographic group, Underserved area of Belmont, Anticipated Areas of Increased Residential Density, New use, Availability of amenity/use, Resolve access issues
- To address an **existing condition**
 - N/A, Good, Fair, Poor, Critical or unsafe

PARK SITE PRIORITIZATION RANKINGS *		
SITE (PARK + JUA)	AVG POINTS ¹	SITE RANK
Opportunity: Ralston + Old County ¹	21.9	1
Opportunity: Oak Knoll Dr	18.8	2
Ralston Ranch	18.0	3
Opportunity: Alameda de las Pulgas	17.4	4
Alexander	14.5	5
O'Donnell	12.2	6
Hidden Canyon	12.0	7
Belameda	11.5	8
Twin Pines	11.4	9
Barrett Community Center, McDougal	10.9	10
Cipriani, Hallmark, Wakefield	10.4	11
Hastings Tot Lot	10.2	12
Patricia Wharton, JUA: Central	10.0	13
College View	9.9	14
Belmont Sports Complex	9.4	15
JUA: Fox, JUA: Nesbit, JUA: Ralston	9.0	16
Davey Glen	8.0	17
Semeria	7.8	18

* Open Space Sites not included in rankings

¹ Avg Points calculated by dividing the total points for all recommendations at a site by number of recommendations for the site

² Improvements at this Opportunity site would be temporary due to expected development of the property

The Document: **PROS PLAN**

PART 1.

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PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

Q + A

PUBLIC **COMMENTS**

**PARKS & RECREATION
COMMISSION
COMMENTS**

BelmontPROSplan.com

Info@belmontprosplan.com

