

# PARKS, RECREATION, AND OPEN SPACE (PROS) MASTER PLAN

**Parks & Recreation Commission**

January 10, 2024



## **PROS PLAN VISION**

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

# AGENDA

**Meeting Purpose:** Receive update on the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan (PROS Plan).

## MEETING TOPICS:

1. Framework + Approach of PROS Plan
2. Document Organization and Components
3. PROS Strategies + Recommendations
4. Recap + Next Steps

# INTRODUCTION

## PROS PLAN PURPOSE:

- Study the existing PROS system: parks (developed and undeveloped), joint-use schools, and open spaces
- Present system-wide and park-specific prioritized recommendations
- Identify opportunities to increase parkland
- Develop a decision-making framework and implementation strategy

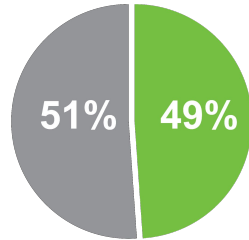
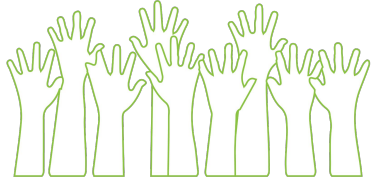
# GUIDING PRINCIPLES

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

# 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](mailto: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

**4** in 2021 + 2022

## Pop-up participation

**at City events**

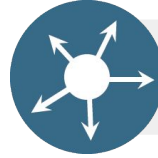
*Concerts in the Park  
Movie Night in the Park  
Egg Hunt  
Celebrate the Music  
etc.*

**Open Space  
Open House**

# 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**

# FRAMEWORK



# DOCUMENT ORGANIZATION

## PART 1.

### WHERE WE ARE

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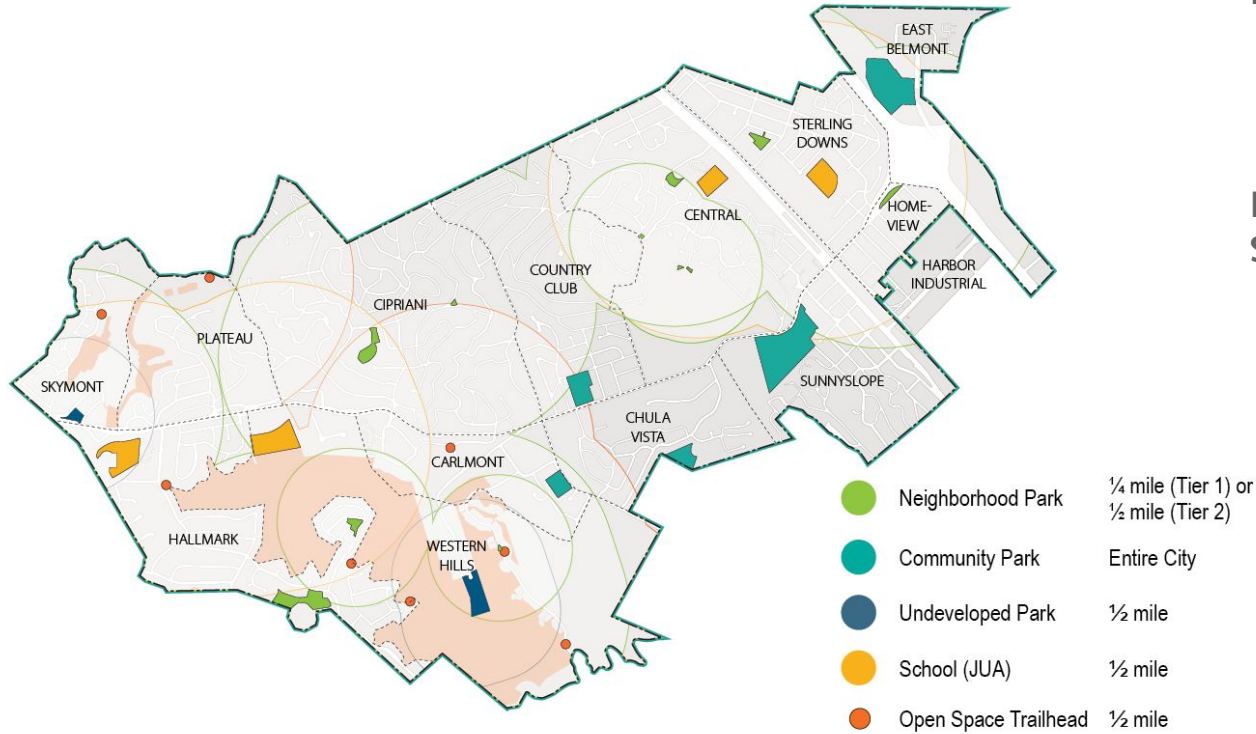
## PART 3.

### HOW WE GET THERE

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# ENVISIONING CITY-WIDE PARK ACCESS



## Interconnected Park System

- Ensure amenities are well distributed across the PROS system

## Prioritize Access to Green Spaces

- Identify areas with low access
- Align with ongoing efforts to promote pedestrian + bicycle infrastructure
- Investigate new park opportunity sites

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Strategies

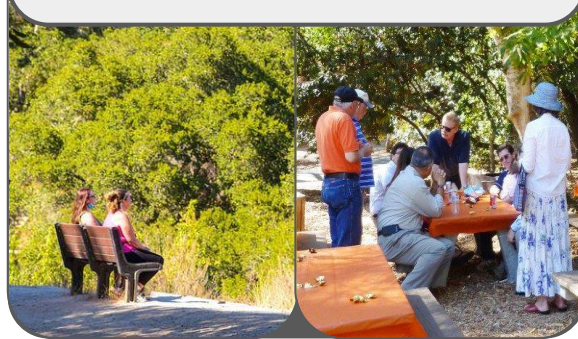
- **Broad strategies to impact the entire PROS system**
- **Organized under the Big Ideas and Goals**
- **Furthered by:**
  - System-wide Recommendations
  - Park-specific Recommendations
  - Open Space Recommendations

# SYSTEM-WIDE **RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Inclusive +  
All-Abilities Play**



**Social Gathering  
Space**



**“Pop-up” Park  
Installations**



**Interconnect  
Toolkit**

**PROS Activation  
Plan**

**Usage Study**

# PARK-SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Neighborhood Parks (Tier 1 and Tier 2)
2. Community Parks
3. Undeveloped Parks
4. Schools with Joint-Use Agreements
5. Opportunity Sites
6. Open Space

Recommendation magnitude is evaluated + contextualized by category:

- Implement existing master plan
- Minor improvement
- Upgraded or new amenity
- Park redesign
- Undeveloped park
- New park opportunity

# EXAMPLE: UPGRADED OR NEW AMENITY

O'DONNELL PARK

## O'DONNELL PARK

### RECOMMENDATIONS UPGRADED OR NEW AMENITY

#### NEIGHBORHOOD PARK TIER 2 STANDARD BASELINE AMENITIES

- a** Natural Environment
- b** Seating
- c** Play Amenity
- d** Picnic Opportunity
- e** Multi-Purpose Flexible Space
- f** Recreation Amenity

#### ACCESSIBILITY

No recommendations

#### AMENITY

- 1** Establish as a reservable picnic area (small)
- 2** Replace BBQs
- 3** Refurbish the existing half basketball courts
- 4** Add shade, tables, and outdoor games

#### LANDSCAPE

- Refresh planting areas with native plants
- Maintain high-quality landscape condition across the site

#### CHARACTER IMAGES



Reservable Picnic Area (Small)



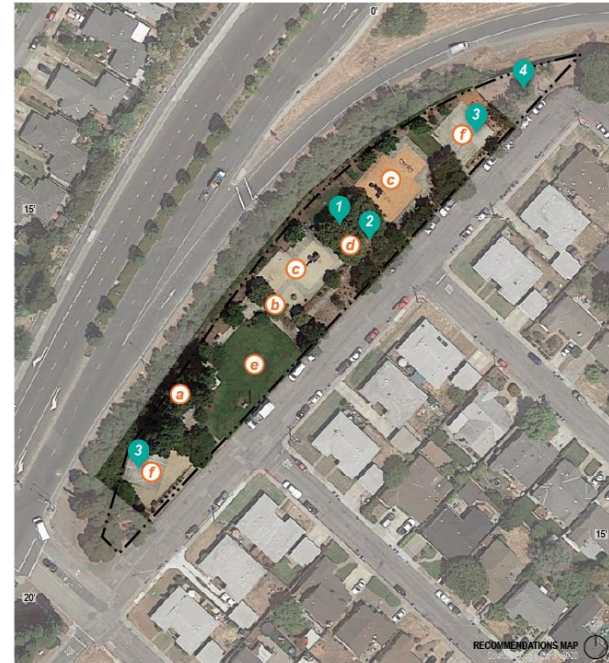
Shade, Tables, and Outdoor Games



Native Planting Areas

## O'DONNELL PARK

### MULTI-USE NEIGHBORHOOD SPACE



#### ICON LEGEND

- a** Existing Standard Baseline Amenity
- a** Recommendation: Add Standard Baseline Amenity
- #** Recommendation: Add accessibility, amenity, or landscape

# EXAMPLE: MINOR IMPROVEMENTS

## WAKEFIELD PARK

### WAKEFIELD PARK

#### RECOMMENDATIONS MINOR IMPROVEMENTS

##### NEIGHBORHOOD PARK TIER 1 STANDARD BASELINE AMENITIES

- a** Natural Environment
- b** Seating
- c** Identifiable Amenity  
*(Create overlook opportunity)*

##### ACCESSIBILITY

- 1** Improve existing walking path

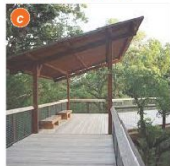
##### AMENITY

- 2** Add benches
- 3** Add entrance signage to increase park visibility

##### LANDSCAPE

- 1** Plant trees to increase shade
- 2** Add native planting areas
- 3** Public art opportunity

##### CHARACTER IMAGES



Identifiable Amenity



Trees for Shade



Walking Path



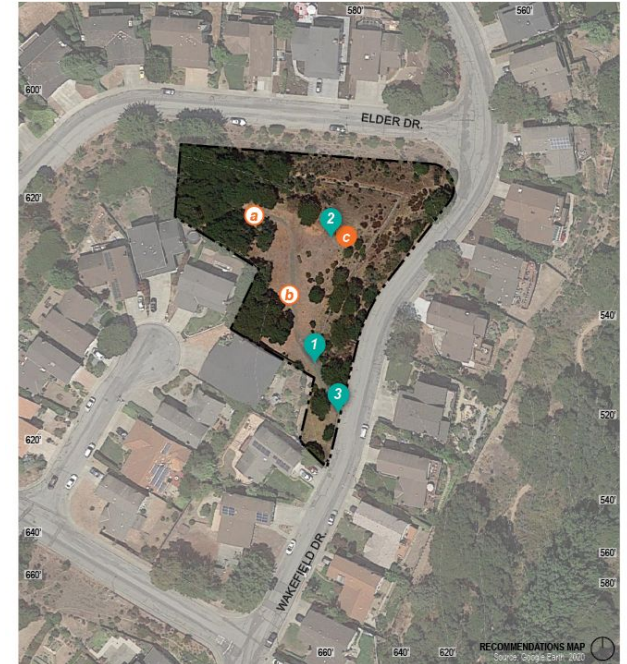
Native Planting Areas



Seating

### WAKEFIELD PARK

#### THE PARK WITH THE VIEW



##### ICON LEGEND

- a** Existing Standard Baseline Amenity
- a** Recommendation: Add Standard Baseline Amenity
- #** Recommendation: Add accessibility, amenity, or landscape

# EXAMPLE: IMPLEMENT MASTER PLAN

TWIN PINES PARK

## TWIN PINES PARK

### RECOMMENDATIONS TO IMPLEMENT EXISTING MASTER PLAN

#### 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 path(s)

#### AMENITY

- 5 Renovate and expand playground structure with Inclusive + All-Abilities Play
- 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



# OSMP PURPOSE

The Open Space Management Plan (OSMP) used a science-based technical approach to provide a comprehensive set of **objectives, policies, and recommended actions** designed to protect sensitive resources, guide trail and recreation management, and mitigate the risk of natural hazards.

- Site visits, mapping inventories, community input, City and County plans, relevant databases, peer-reviewed literature, an **Environmental Assessment**, and a **Recreational Use Assessment** informed three overarching themes:



Environmental Sustainability



Balanced Recreation Use



Natural Hazard Mitigation

Assessments evaluated the environmental conditions and risks to **trails, streams, habitat, vegetation** as well as the **impacts of current recreational use** on sensitive resources.



## Key Takeaways

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

## Priority - Tier 1 Recommendations

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

## Priority - Tier 2 Recommendations

- Nature-based recreation programs (Medium)
- Volunteer restoration programs (Easy)
- Trail calming features (Hard)

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

# OSMP RECOMMENDED STUDIES

The OSMP recommends **further studies** to guide open space improvements:

- Annual Fuel Reduction Plan
- Annual Trail Inventories
- Annual Recreation Usage Observation Studies
- Trail Design Guidelines (*Specific to Belmont, or adopt an existing set from the State or other reputable source that includes ADA standards*)
- Engineering Studies for Stream Crossing Projects



# RECAP: OSMP

## Base Plan: Initial Policies and Recommendations

### ADD ONS

#### +Recreation Emphasis Alternative

Additional policies and actions related trails and recreational use

#### +Habitat Emphasis Alternative

Additional policies and actions related to vegetation restoration and wildlife protection

## The Base Plan and Alternatives were combined into ONE Management Plan based on feedback

May 31, 2022 (Advisory Committee #5) 35 responses (8 AC members + 27 participants)

Poll: Which Management Alternatives do you support?	% of Vote
Base Plan (alone)	6%
Base Plan + Recreation Emphasis	37%
Base Plan + Habitat Emphasis	17%
Base Plan + Recreation Emphasis + Habitat Emphasis (combined)	40%

# IMPLEMENTATION

## PRIORITIZATION MATRIX

To prioritize park-specific recommendations based on its ability to..

- Further the 12 **PROS Plan Goals**
- Respond to **community priority**
- Serve an **existing deficiency**
- Address an **existing condition**

## FUNDING STRATEGIES + PARTNERSHIPS

Portfolio of funding for capital improvements, maintenance, and operations

## ACTION PLAN

Short term, long term, or ongoing

PARK SITE PRIORITIZATION RANKINGS *		
SITE (PARK + JUA)	AVG POINTS <sup>1</sup>	SITE RANK
Opportunity: Ralston + Old County <sup>1</sup>	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

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

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

# RECAP: REVISIONS

The PROS Plan was **recommended by the Parks and Recreation Commission** on July 6, 2022 to the City Council for **approval with the following amendments, now complete:**

1. **Consolidate the OSMP's** Base Plan and Management Alternatives objectives, policies, and implementation actions **into a single plan.**
2. Clearly present **priority recommendations in the OSMP** by theme - environmental sustainability, balanced recreation uses and trail management, and natural hazard mitigation.
3. Pursue the creation of **dedicated parkland in downtown Belmont** and the Belmont Village Specific Plan area in response to potential residential density increase in the area due to anticipated housing unit development as outlined in the 2023-2031 Housing Element update.
4. Apply consistent terminology to remove ambiguity.
5. Refine specific graphics for clarity.

# RECAP: CEQA

Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), an **Addendum to the General Plan Environmental Impact Report (EIR)** was prepared by WRA.

1. **Required Approvals, Agreements, and Permits** *(expected - not an exhaustive list)*
  - a. Adoption of the PROS Plan (City)
  - b. Grading Permit (City)
  - c. Trail Stream Crossing Improvement Permits
    - i. Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement (CA Department of Fish and Wildlife)
    - ii. Clean Water Act Section 404 Permit (US Army Corps of Engineers)
    - iii. 401 Water Quality Certification (CA Regional Water Quality Control Board)
2. **Addendum Analysis + Findings**
  - a. The Proposed Project would not result in new or substantially increased significant environmental impacts that were not previously disclosed in the 2017 EIR certified by the City.
3. **Technical Studies**
  - a. The Environmental Assessment is included in the OSMP. No further technical studies were required.

# NEXT STEPS

1. Post documents on project website for community review.
2. Present at February Commission meeting.
3. Present to Council following Commission recommendation.

