




CARSON CITY, NEVADA

CONSOLIDATED MUNICIPALITY AND STATE CAPITOL

To: Hope Sullivan, Community Development Director

From: Jennifer Budge, CPRP, Parks and Recreation Director 

Subject: Growth Management Impacts on Parks and Recreation Services

Date: May 16, 2023

Thank you for providing the opportunity to provide feedback on the Growth Management Plan. With an anticipated population growth rate of 3%, there will be a need to increase service levels provided by the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Department (Department) for Carson City residents.

Sustainable Maintenance Models

It is recommended to not limit residential permits, as it would be counterproductive toward continued economic growth. This is subject to a sustainable maintenance program for new parks and recreation facilities. Maintenance and infrastructure preservation should be 100% funded by Homeowners or Maintenance Associations (HOA), with a Landscape Maintenance District (LMD) as a secondary measure, that does not require funding from the City's general fund. Maintenance endowments are also recommended for new projects that require wetland mitigation or labor-intensive natural resource management. While the City already has more parks per capita than the national average, the Department operates at approximately 80-acres of parkland per park maintenance worker. ***HOA's and LMD's are a creative, sustainable alternative to ensure maintenance of new facilities, while not further impacting existing staffing levels.***

Water Resources

Additional growth in parks and recreation will also have impacts to the community's water system. Efforts should be made to reduce turf, incorporate low impact development best management practices, transition to artificial turf, install recycled water systems, and utilize reclaimed/effluent water resources, compliant with the City's Effluent Master Plan, whenever possible. Conservation efforts and floodplain management along the Carson River and tributaries are also a priority for the Department and should be considered as new growth occurs. ***A diversified approach toward water use will reduce the demand on the community's drinking water, while still providing a first-rate park system that supports wildlife habitat and the natural environment.***

Public-Private Partnerships

As new subdivisions are constructed, additional parks will be contemplated consistent with the City's Park Master Plan, and additional trail connectivity, as outlined in the Unified Pathways Master Plan (UPMP). While new neighborhood parks can be funded through Residential Construction Tax (RCT), RCT doesn't generate enough funds to adequately construct parks without a significant contribution from developers. The current RCT fund is entirely encumbered, with no available balance. Partnerships between the City and developers are critical to ensure creative outdoor recreation spaces and trails can be incorporated throughout the City. Unfortunately, RCT is not a sustainable funding source, as it does



not contribute to deferred maintenance and infrastructure preservation needs. ***Efforts to update the City's Parks and Recreation and Open Space Master Plans are a priority. Plan updates should provide the direction of limiting the number of new parks within the City, while reinvesting/reimagining existing parks, in cooperation with the development community.***

Infrastructure Preservation and Facility Needs

Increased growth will also contribute to the need for additional recreation facilities, especially athletic fields. The lack of athletic fields represents one of the Department's most serious service challenges. Increasing athletic fields at existing parks such as Pete Livermore Sports Complex and Centennial Park to accommodate traveling sports tournaments, will not only positively contribute to the City's economic vitality, but help meet the need for local youth and adult sports organizations. Creative partnerships with the Cultural and Tourism Authority, Youth Sports Association and others help supplement City resources to meet the recreational demands of this growing community.

There is also a need for additional recreation facility diversity such as dog parks. Efforts to construct the 3-acre dog park on Airport Road as part of the Lompa development will help meet that need, while the city adds new dog parks at Ronald D. Wilson Park and Mills Park and renovates the Fuji Dog Park. A large-scale interactive splash/spray park is proposed at Mills Park and is a recreation model for a financially self-sustaining operation, as demonstrated throughout other Northern Nevada park systems. ***Should growth occur, it is encouraged to focus on buildout of existing parks such as Pete Livermore and Centennial Sports Complexes, while rehabilitating and reimagining aging facilities, like Mills and Fuji Parks, rather than acquire additional land inventory.***