

# **PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION STAFF REPORT**

## **MEETING DATE: DECEMBER 20, 2016**

PREPARED BY: Chris Ghione, Community Services Director

### **..TITLE**

## **DRAFT BIKEWAYS, TRAILS, PARKS, AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN**

### **..RECOMMENDATION**

That the Commission

- 1) Receive the draft Bikeways, Trails, Parks and Recreation Master Plan;
- 2) Discuss next steps for Master Plan review and adoption; and
- 3) Provide recommendation(s) to the City Council on the draft plan.

### **..BODY**

#### **REPORT NARRATIVE:**

The Bikeways, Trails, Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update process began in the spring of 2015 and is nearing completion. This updated Master Plan will weave together three separate plans to create a current, comprehensive and community-driven tool for the City to use to prioritize improvements and investments. The Master Plan will also help support goals and programs to improve our city's health, environment, connectivity and recreation options. The City has hired MIG, Inc. to facilitate the update process and prepare the updated Master Plan document.

#### **OUTREACH AND COMMUNITY INPUT**

During the project, staff and MIG conducted extensive community outreach to identify how residents are using the current system as well as identifying the assets, challenges and opportunities for the updated Master Plan. The outreach and data collection built upon itself supporting more focused efforts as the plan moved forward.

Outreach efforts have included:

- Six "intercept surveys" were conducted, in which staff and consultants set up an interactive exercise in public places in order to gather input from people who might otherwise not attend an outreach event. These events were held at the CRC, in public parks and during meetings and events at the CCC. A total of about 150 community members provided input during these events. Attachment 2 provides photos showing what the intercept survey process looked like.
- An online map-based survey was completed by 400 community members. This survey provided detailed data about how residents use and travel to parks, trails and other recreational facilities. The data collected through the survey tool, Mapita, was linked to the project map, allowing the team to generate several maps illustrating the usage of parks and trails based on public input. Attachment 3 provides a visual representation of the most frequently used parks and Attachment 4 provides a graphic of the areas where trails are most frequently accessed.
- Five meetings of the Stakeholder Advisory Group were held. The Stakeholder Advisory Group is comprised of representatives from community-based organizations and interest groups including the Chamber of Commerce, the Historical Society, and sports clubs, among others, as well as three members of the Parks and Recreation Commission. This group will meet throughout the project to advise the project team and

provide feedback on draft priorities, projects and the draft plan. This group also helps promote community workshops and opportunities for online engagement.

- A community workshop was held and attended by approximately 30 community members, during which participants completed a visual preference survey to inform design and programming direction for the Master Plan.
- Two previous meetings with the Parks and Recreation Commission included the opportunity to gather input on priorities and goals for the Master Plan have been held.
- The City Council has received one update report and conducted one workshop on the master plan.
- A community survey that was distributed online and in hard copy format was completed by 1,100 people from the community. The purpose of this survey was to collect information about community members' priorities for additions and improvements to park experiences, investments in parks and facilities, improvements to bikeways and trails, and recreation programming.
- Community submitted comments on the draft Master Plan have been received over the last month. Comments were received via email and via online comment forms. Approximately 40 comments were received.
- On December 8, 2016 approximately 30 participants attended a public open house that was held to receive comments on the draft master plan.
- The project website, [www.mhparksplan.com](http://www.mhparksplan.com), has been available and has provided up to date documents during the plans progress.

## PLAN STRUCTURE AND KEY COMPONENTS

Based on the outreach efforts described above, review of previous surveys and outreach efforts, prior plans, and in-depth conversations with inter-departmental staff and the Stakeholder Advisory Group members, the following key goals for the plan are proposed:

1. Improve connections between residences and the network of City parks and facilities;
2. Diversify the experiences in the City's parks and along its trails;
3. Engage people of all ages and all abilities;
4. Support the health and wellness of all community members;
5. Inspire a sense of community and place through arts, culture, and historic resources;
6. Respond to changing conditions and evolving preferences;
7. Ensure equitable access to programs and places for recreation and activity;
8. Leverage partnerships to maximize community benefit and use resources efficiently;
9. Balance active recreation with unprogrammed open spaces;
10. Continue to provide regional recreation destinations for visitors that support economic growth;
11. Enhance safety and navigation to key recreation destinations and along popular routes;
12. Invest in and maintain existing assets while carefully planning for future growth; and
13. Promote financial stability for operation of City facilities.

The draft document is structured into 5 sections

Chapters 1 through 3 of the Master Plan set the stage for the future by summarizing the existing conditions analysis and presenting the community-informed vision and goals for Morgan Hill's bikeways, trails, parks, and recreation system. Chapter 4 is the heart of the Master Plan, describing policies and projects proposed to address community needs and create a more robust system. Chapter 5 details implementation actions and near-term priority projects to most efficiently stimulate investment and development. Appendices and executive summary will be added to the document following direction provided by the Commission and Council.

## PRC KEY DISCUSSION POINTS

It is anticipated that Chapters 4 and 5 will be the most discussed by the Commission. The Commission has to purview to make recommendations on all aspects of the plan. Additionally, staff is specifically requesting that the Commission provide recommendations in the areas of:

- Overall Plan Components and Composition of the Plan
- Level of Service for City Parks, Trails and Recreation Facilities
- Park Classification System Format
- Incorporation of Sports Tourism Study
- Goals, Policies and Actions within the Plan
- Project Priorities
- Funding for future operations and maintenance

The meeting will be structured for the project team to provide detailed information and structure for the commission to review these items. Information from the Sports Tourism Study will be provided at the meeting and the formal report will be available to the Commission prior to its January meeting.

## NEXT STEPS

The focus on this meeting should be for the Commission to ask questions and gain clarification on the plan components in preparation for making formal recommendations to the City Council on the plan at its January meeting. It would be appropriate for the Commission to provide recommendations, comments and other feedback to staff to support preparation for the January meeting.

Staff will receive comments from the Library, Culture and Arts Commission, Planning Commission and Youth Action Council in early January, but it will be the PRC that makes a formal recommendation to the City Council. The plan is intended to go to the City Council in February following a recommendation by the PRC.