



# CITY OF OXNARD PARKS & RECREATION MASTER PLAN

FEBRUARY 2021



# Acknowledgments

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**NRC**  
National Research Center Inc.

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***“I would like Oxnard to be known for great walking, biking and transit options so you can get around without a car.... promote a healthy lifestyle!” - Resident***

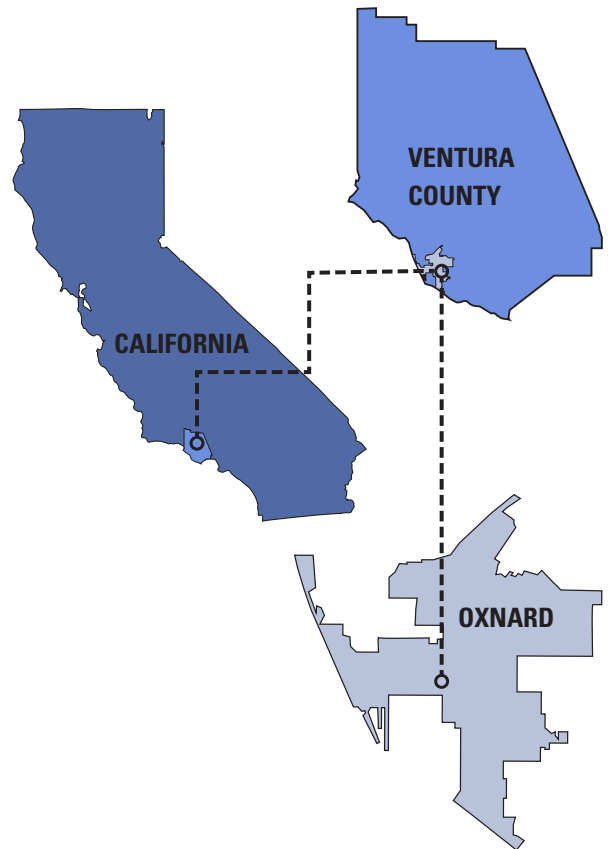
# Executive Summary

The Parks and Recreation Master Plan is the product of much research and review. Over 15 months, the project team worked with the City studying the history, ecology, and economics of Oxnard. They conducted interviews with City staff and local stakeholders and reviewed existing conditions. The project team also engaged the community in a robust outreach plan including a random mailed survey, two rounds of community meetings, a Workshop-in-a-Box, and the creation of an Advisory Committee. The result, contained in these pages, is a comprehensive assessment of the City's current challenges and opportunities regarding their parks and recreation programs and suggestions for how to better provide for its residents.

The project team has assembled this Executive Summary to provide a quick reference to the key findings and recommendations.

# Key Environmental & Demographic Factors

Oxnard is a **coastal city in California** located on a **rich alluvial plain**. It is the **most populous city** in Ventura County.



## KEY FACTOR #1

Smart water usage, as part of operations, is critical due to Oxnard's California location and Mediterranean climate.

## KEY FACTOR #2

Oxnard's alluvial soil has driven its agricultural heritage. Agriculture is important to Oxnard's past, present, and future, reflected in both its economy and demographics. This has several implications. The flat topography is great for biking, as well as agriculture production. Agriculture corporations should be targeted for corporate donations.

## KEY FACTOR #3

The City of Oxnard Parks and Recreation Master Plan needs to consider and plan for Oxnard's large youth population, as well as its significant aging adult population.

## KEY FACTOR #4

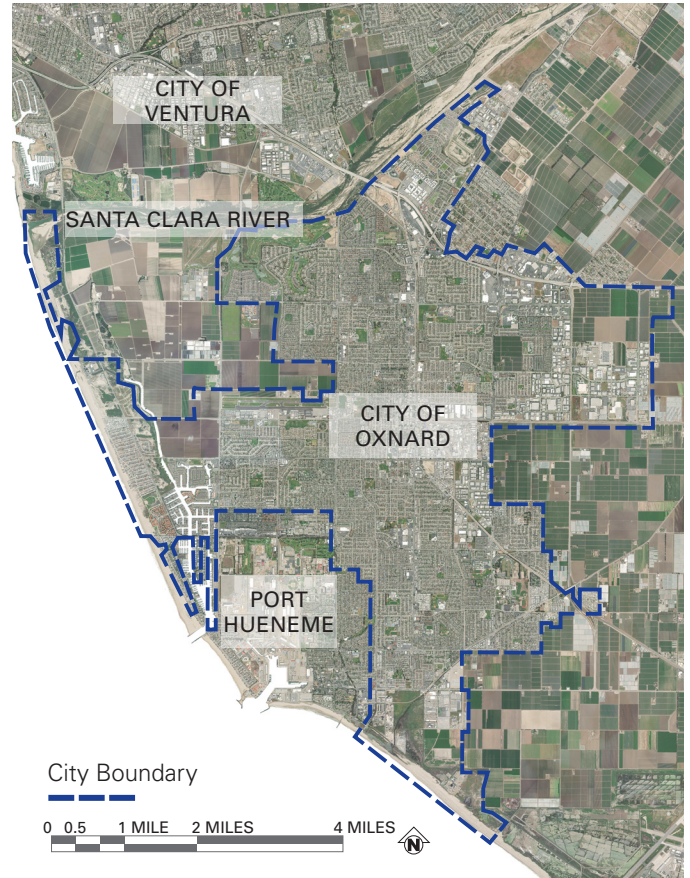
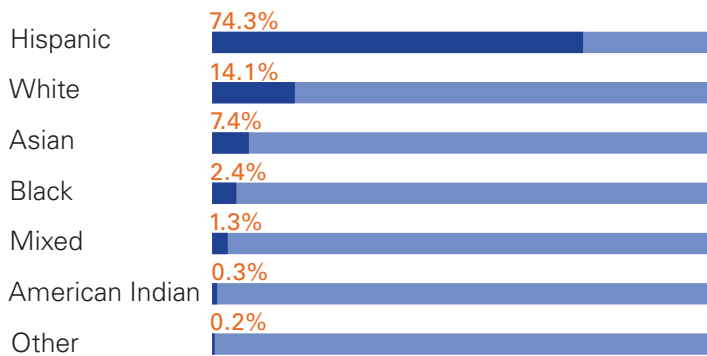
Oxnard's beaches are one of the City's biggest assets. Success in attracting more tourists and businesses relies, in part, on capitalizing on its coastal location.

## MEDIAN AGE

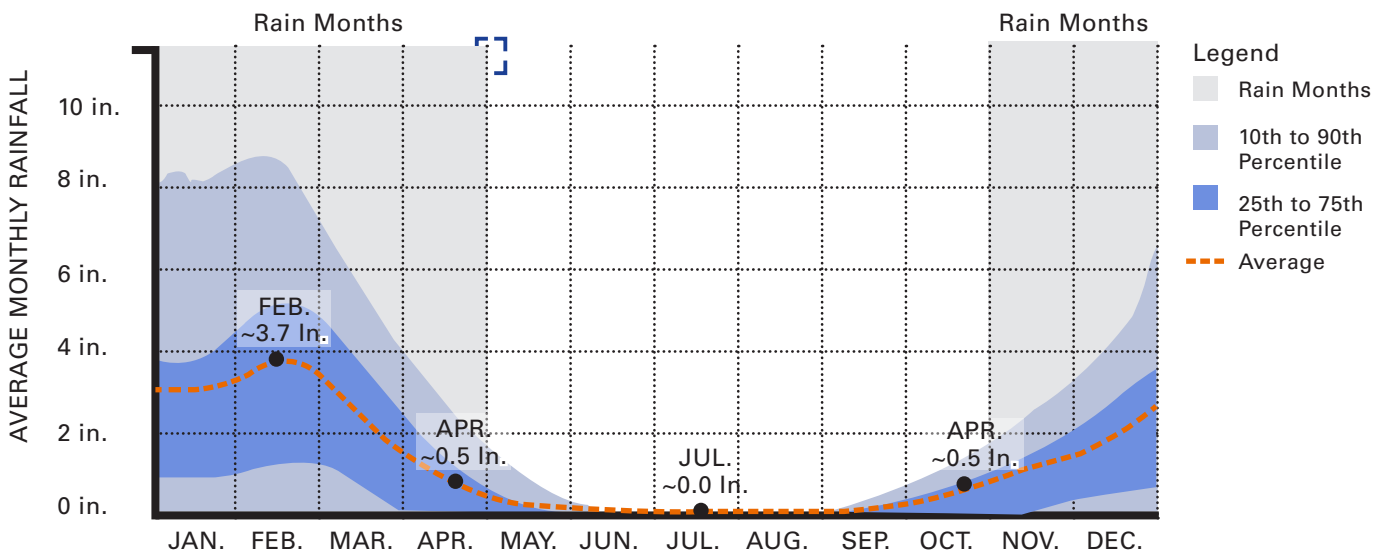
**31.5 years old**

**Almost 25% of the City's population is under 14 years old.**

## ETHNIC DIVERSITY



## ANNUAL RAINFALL



# Key Findings

The project team's **research and community engagement** revealed several key findings that **informed the recommendations.**

## **FINDING #1**

Oxnard's parks and recreation services receive less money per capita than neighboring cities.

## **FINDING #2**

Oxnard is significantly below the national parks and recreation standards for the following recreational amenities:

- Playgrounds
- Soccer fields
- Multi-purpose fields
- Pools
- Community gardens

## **FINDING #3**

Residents wanted more diversity in park programming and amenities.

## **FINDING #4**

Some neighborhoods are not within easy walking distance of a park and should capitalize on opportunities for better connectivity and safe access.

## **FINDING #5**

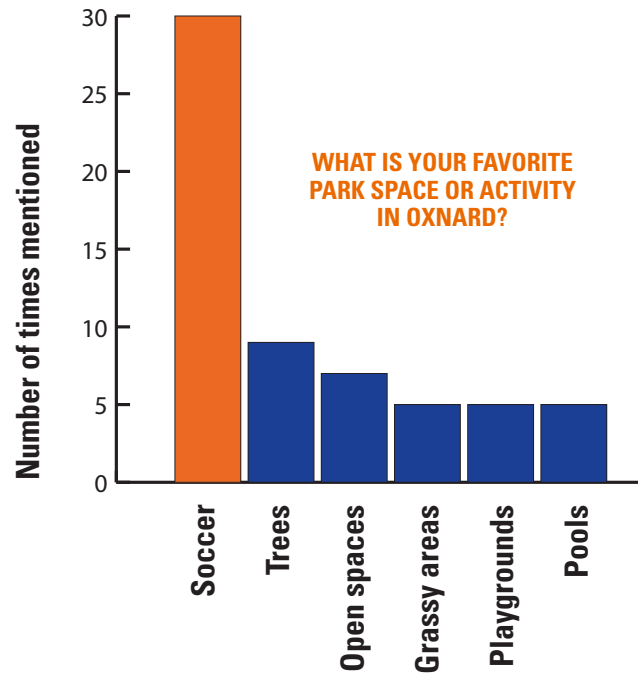
The beach is less active than it could be because of the lack of parking, lifeguards, and activities.

## **FINDING #6**

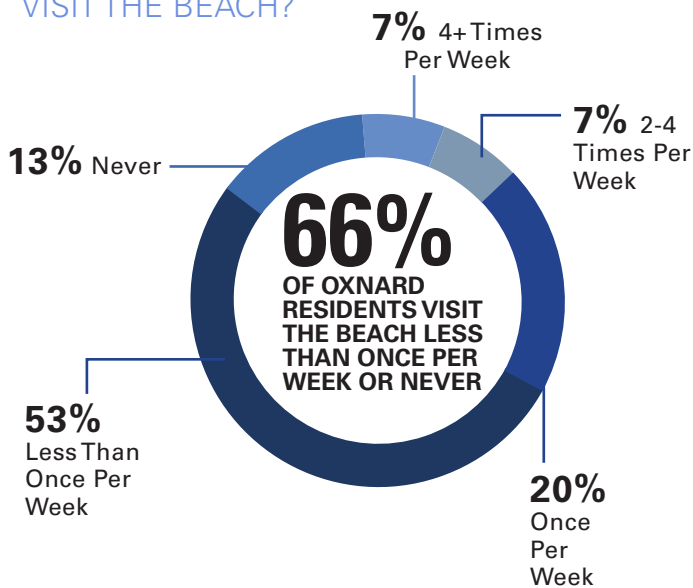
Primary community concerns are poor maintenance and safety.

## **FINDING #7**

Soccer is the most popular sport throughout the community.



DURING THE PAST YEAR  
HOW OFTEN DID YOU  
VISIT THE BEACH?



NEW PARK SPACES  
SHOULD...



Source: Community Survey,  
1st Community Meeting

# Primary Recommendations

While this document contains many recommendations for **enhancing Oxnard's parks and recreation** programs, the ones highlighted here, *in no particular order*, have the potential to make the **largest, most immediate impact**.

## RECOMMENDATION #1

Create an Oxnard Parks and Recreation District to generate more revenue.

## RECOMMENDATION #2

Restore and improve access to Ormond Beach by supporting the Ormond Beach Wetlands Restoration Plan and Public Access Plan.

## RECOMMENDATION #3

Coordinate with stakeholders to promote tourism as it specifically relates to parks and recreation.

## RECOMMENDATION #4

Improvements should be made to the bike network per the Mobility Plan and General Plan to ensure Oxnard develops as a safe and connected city for all.

## RECOMMENDATION #5

After auditing the current irrigation system, make appropriate repairs and alterations to make it more efficient and controlled.

## RECOMMENDATION #6

Foster existing and potential partnerships including the establishment of a non-profit parks foundation to accept donations.

**RECOMMENDATION #7**

Re-examine approach to urban forest system and landscape ordinance.

**RECOMMENDATION #11**

Reform the permitting process to be online and simple in order to encourage more park events and programming.

**RECOMMENDATION #8**

Create a multi-purpose trail along the Santa Clara River with grant funds to meaningfully connect the community to the river.

**RECOMMENDATION #12**

Incorporate signage in parks in multiple languages.

**RECOMMENDATION #9**

Reconsider Oxnard's Sunset Ordinance on a case by case basis and add field and pedestrian lighting to parks in order to extend the use of existing parks.

**RECOMMENDATION #13**

Transform turf to native or conservation plantings in appropriate areas.

**RECOMMENDATION #10**

Incorporate revenue generating facilities into parks like rentals, concessions, and events.

**RECOMMENDATION #14**

Develop Park Checklists to assist with standardizing the work and training of maintenance and operations staff.





# Introduction

## The Importance of Parks and Open Space Master Plan Goals

In the spring of 2017, the City of Oxnard issued a request for proposals for a Parks and Recreation Master Plan. The purpose of this Master Plan is to set the priorities for funding expenditures for the next twenty years with the goal of improving Oxnard's parks and recreational services.

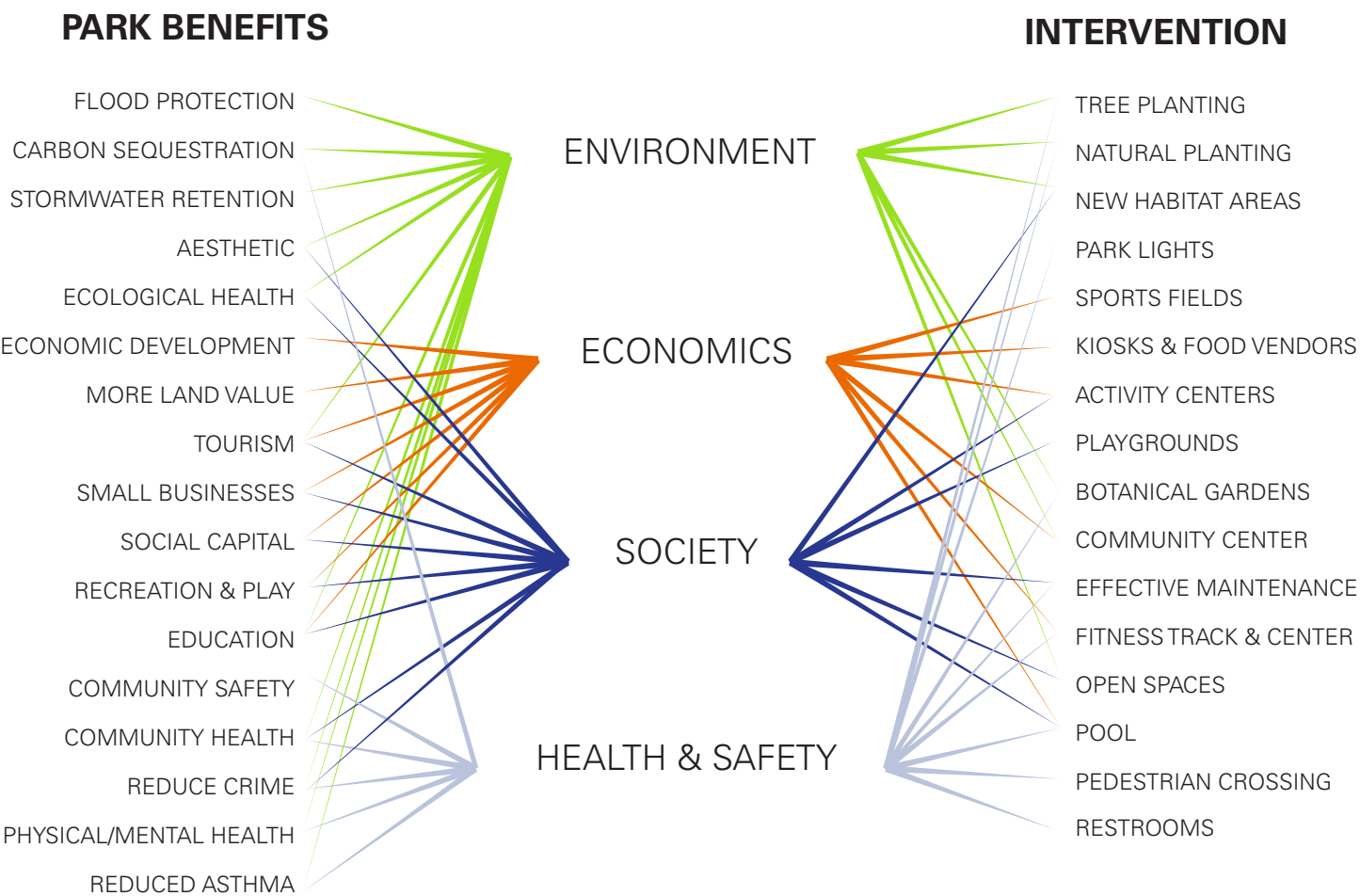
In order to develop a plan that truly served residents, the Master Plan team engaged in a robust community outreach effort. This involved meeting with Focus Groups of various special interest organizations, mailing 1,800 surveys, conducting four Community Workshops and a Workshop-in-a-Box, and forming an Advisory Committee composed of various community leaders and influencers. The result is a Master Plan that reflects the range and diversity of Oxnard's population. This is a tool for city officials and residents to use in creating an Oxnard that reflects the will of the people.

# The Importance of Parks & Open Space

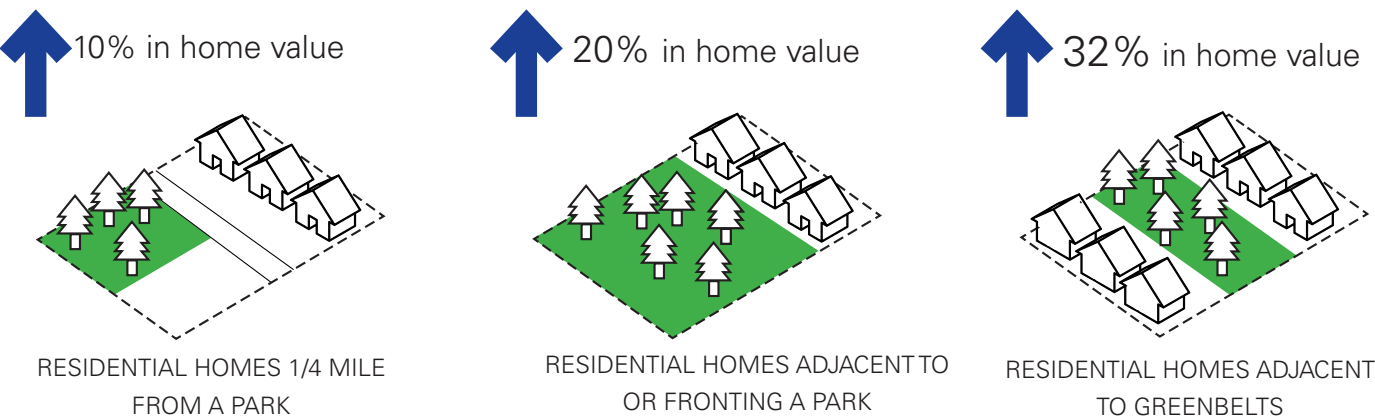
Parks provide **resources** that directly impact the **well-being** of their communities.

Many studies show that city parks generate economic growth, promote positive social change, improve public health, and provide critical environmental services.

A city’s park system is first and foremost an investment in the residents and a reinforcement of democratic ideals. If done right, parks can attract investment, reduce crime, and improve public health making their gross financial contribution more than their cost to build and maintain.



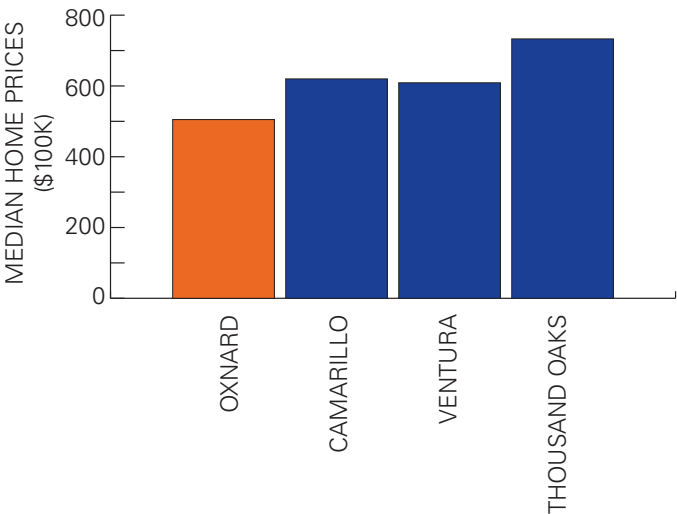
# Parks Improve Economics



According to over 30 studies, people are willing to pay more for a property that is close to parks, open space, and trees. In a 2001 summary report issued by the American Planning Association, homes within a quarter-mile of parks had an increased value of 10%; homes adjacent to a park had an increased value of 20%; homes adjacent to a greenbelt had an increased value of 32%.<sup>1</sup>

A recent study by the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) revealed that 85% of Americans consider the quality of local parks when deciding on a place to live.<sup>2</sup> Similarly, a survey by Area Development noted that three-quarters of corporate executives rate quality-of-life features as important when choosing a new company location.<sup>3</sup>

When it comes to attracting businesses and investment, Oxnard is competing with neighboring cities like Thousand Oaks and Camarillo; improving Oxnard’s parks is a critical component to staying competitive.



Home prices in Oxnard are 17% lower than in neighboring Camarillo, 18% lower than in Ventura, and 31% lower than in Thousand Oaks. All three of these nearby cities spend more per capita on their parks than Oxnard.

1 Crompton, J.L. 2001. Parks and Economic Development. PAS Report No. 502. American Planning Association, Chicago, Illinois.; [depts.washington.edu/hhw/b/Thm\\_Economics.html](https://depts.washington.edu/hhw/b/Thm_Economics.html)

2 2018 Americans’ Engagement with Parks Report. National Recreation and Parks Association.

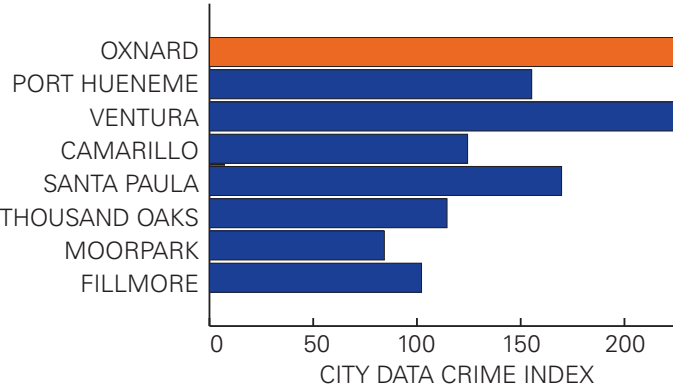
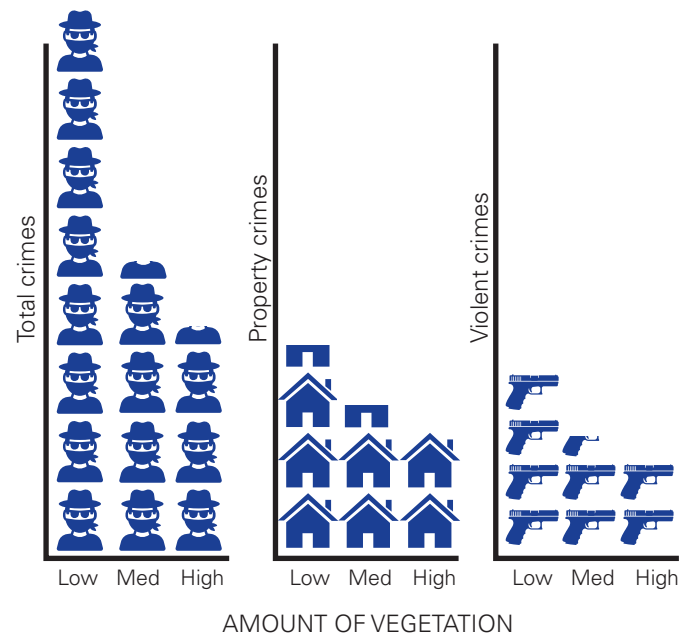
3 “31st Annual Survey of Corporate Executives: Confidence in U.S. Economy, Need for Investment in Infrastructure Reflected” Area Development. 2017. [www.areadevelopment.com/](http://www.areadevelopment.com/)

# Parks Decrease Crime

Studies have also shown that proximity to nature and green space can reduce aggression and crime. In Chicago, a research team collected two years of police data on property and violent crimes within public housing and found there was a stark decrease in violent crimes, property crimes, and total crimes in areas with increased vegetation. Similarly, a review of 31 urban sites in California found that 90% of the minor crimes, such as vandalism or graffiti, occurred in areas without plantings compared with only 10% in landscaped areas.

Recreational programs have proven to be instrumental as well in reducing crime. In 2008, park and community leaders in Los Angeles introduced a program called Summer Night Lights (SNL), which extended the nighttime hours of eight parks in troubled neighborhoods. This program kept the lights on until midnight and sponsored movies and family activities four nights a week. There was only one gang-related homicide in the areas surrounding those parks with the program while there were seven in the same area the year before. Since 2008, SNL has expanded to 24 parks throughout the city, leading to a 57% reduction in gang-related homicides in those neighborhoods.

Crime Index is a statistical measurement to define safety. It is represented as a “rating” or “number” that is calculated by measuring the amount of crime in a designated area. Among the cities in the area, Oxnard has the second-highest crime index; spending more to implement recreational programs such as those described above could help reduce this index. Consider what a 50% reduction in crime would mean for the quality of life and viability of the city.



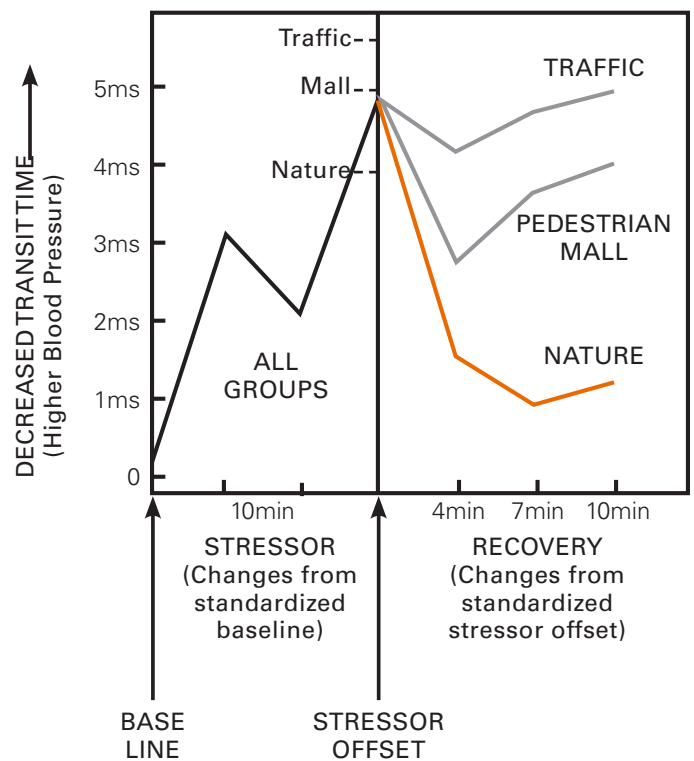
## Parks Improve Health

Obesity is becoming a health crisis in the United States. As much as 65% of adults are overweight, and one in three is considered obese. Obesity puts people at risk for developing chronic diseases such as high blood pressure, heart disease, stroke, diabetes, and cancer. These types of diseases account for approximately 300,000 premature deaths annually. Obesity is not only bad for health but also expensive; people who are obese spend an estimated \$1,429 annually more on medical costs than those of normal weight.<sup>1</sup>

Not surprisingly, parks and open space encourage more activity-- especially if they are nearby and convenient to use.<sup>2</sup> According to a study by the CDC, the presence of a well-designed place for physical activity can lead to a 25.6% increase in the number of people exercising three or more days per week.<sup>3</sup> Similarly, a collection of studies in the *American Journal of Preventative Medicine* demonstrated that "creation of or enhanced access to places for physical activity combined with informational outreach" resulted in a 48.4% increase in the physical activity.<sup>4</sup>

In Ventura County, approximately 35% of children are overweight or obese. Ensuring that each neighborhood has a safe, well-maintained park can go a long way to reducing that percentage and avoiding serious health issues in the future.

Parks and open space are important for mental health as well. Research has shown people are able to deal with stress better when exposed to natural environments as opposed to urban. Simply put, parks promote healthy living, both physically and mentally.



Ulrich, et al. 1991.

<sup>1</sup> [depts.washington.edu/hhw/b/Thm\\_Economics.html](https://depts.washington.edu/hhw/b/Thm_Economics.html)

<sup>2</sup> [www.tpl.org/sites/default/files/cloud.tpl.org/pubs/benefits-park-benefits-white-paper12005.pdf](https://www.tpl.org/sites/default/files/cloud.tpl.org/pubs/benefits-park-benefits-white-paper12005.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> CDC, "Increasing Physical Activity," p. 11.

<sup>4</sup> Emily B. Kahn et al. and the Task Force on Community Preventive Services, "The Effectiveness of Interventions to Increase Physical Activity," *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, no. 4S (2002): pp. 8788.

# Master Plan Goals

During the course of the Master Plan process, the project team **heard the same concerns** over and over. These recurring themes **became the basis** for the Master Plan Goals.

Throughout this process, the project team took great care to talk to as many different types of people and organizations as possible in order to get a complete picture of Oxnard's park and recreation needs. Public input highlighted certain issues that were common across multiple sources. After identifying these goals, the project team examined obstacles to achieving these goals and developed strategies to be employed to overcome these obstacles.

## Improve Maintenance & Operations



### WHAT IS PREVENTING OXNARD'S PARKS AND OPEN SPACES FROM BEING BETTER MAINTAINED?

The biggest obstacle to improving maintenance seems to be minimal funds to hire and retain staff. The second is the lack of a maintenance regimen. The project team heard about "squeaky wheels" - or parks with an active community getting attention - while parks without an active community sometimes being neglected. Establishing a maintenance regimen can ensure park maintenance is distributed by need rather than influence.

### STRATEGIES

1. Increasing & Diversifying Funds
2. Becoming More Efficient with Funds
3. Designing Parks to Lower Maintenance Load
4. Streamlining Resources

## Diversify Amenities & Facilities



## Create Safe & Active Parks



## Connect City with Natural Resources



## WHAT AMENITIES WOULD BEST SERVE OXNARD'S DIVERSE POPULATION?

There is no typical Oxnard resident. In fact, the City's diversity is often cited as one of its most distinguishing and attractive characteristics. Residents were certain to let us know that their recreation needs varied as well. Places for active sports is important, but there is a need for passive areas also.

### STRATEGIES

1. Designing Better Parks
2. Activating the Beach
3. Ensuring Facilities Work for Everyone
4. Creating a Dynamic Recreation Program

## HOW CAN OXNARD'S PARKS BE SAFER AND MORE ACTIVE?

The project team heard many complaints about people not feeling safe in the parks, either due to the presence of homeless people, vagrants or illicit activities. Activating parks is the key to making them feel safer; the more "eyes and ears" there are on parks, the more difficult it is for someone to misbehave.

### STRATEGIES

1. Increasing Activity
2. Improving Lighting
3. Improving Safety
4. Designing Parks for Safety

## HOW CAN OXNARD BE BETTER CONNECTED WITH ITS RIVER, MOUNTAINS AND BEACH?

Oxnard is surrounded by amazing natural resources: the Santa Clara River, the Pacific Ocean and two mountain ranges. However, residents rarely enjoy these. Finding ways to increase connections to these natural resources is a priority for the Master Plan.

### STRATEGIES

1. Creating Strong Connections
2. Promoting Stewardship



***Oxnard should be known for being  
“family friendly, culturally diverse,  
and enriching for all ages.” - Resident***



## **Existing Conditions**

Existing Parks & Open Spaces

Existing Recreation Service Level

Needs Analysis

The purpose of evaluating Oxnard's existing conditions is to create a baseline the project team could compare with what was heard from the community. This allows for a more complete understanding of the condition of Oxnard's parks and the distribution of recreation services throughout the city. From this research, a series of spatial analysis maps were created to illustrate which populations are below the standard for park resources.

# Existing Parks & Open Spaces

The good news is that there are many parks available to residents— 53 existing and two future—totaling roughly **500 acres\***. The issue is that they are not necessarily **equally distributed** or adequately maintained.

The Oxnard General Plan notes that there are a total of 1,637 acres of traditional City and County parks, beaches, golf courses, and parks under construction available to residents.

This section discusses Oxnard’s existing and planned parks and how they are funded and maintained. To aid this discussion, the parks are divided into quadrants corresponding to the maintenance quadrants proposed in Chapter Four. To get an idea of how successful each park is, members of the Advisory Committee (a select group of community stakeholders who provided guidance to the project team) and City Staff were asked to score them. The results of this scoring allowed the project team to engage actual users in evaluating the popularity of each park.



College Park

## PARK CLASSIFICATIONS\*\*

### General Fund Parks

The maintenance for these parks is performed by City staff and funded through the General Fund.

### Special District Parks

These are parks in one of the special districts throughout the Oxnard. Within these districts, adjacent property owners are levied with an annual assessment that contributes to maintenance for the parks in the area. Maintenance is contracted out, but overseen by City staff.

### Future Parks

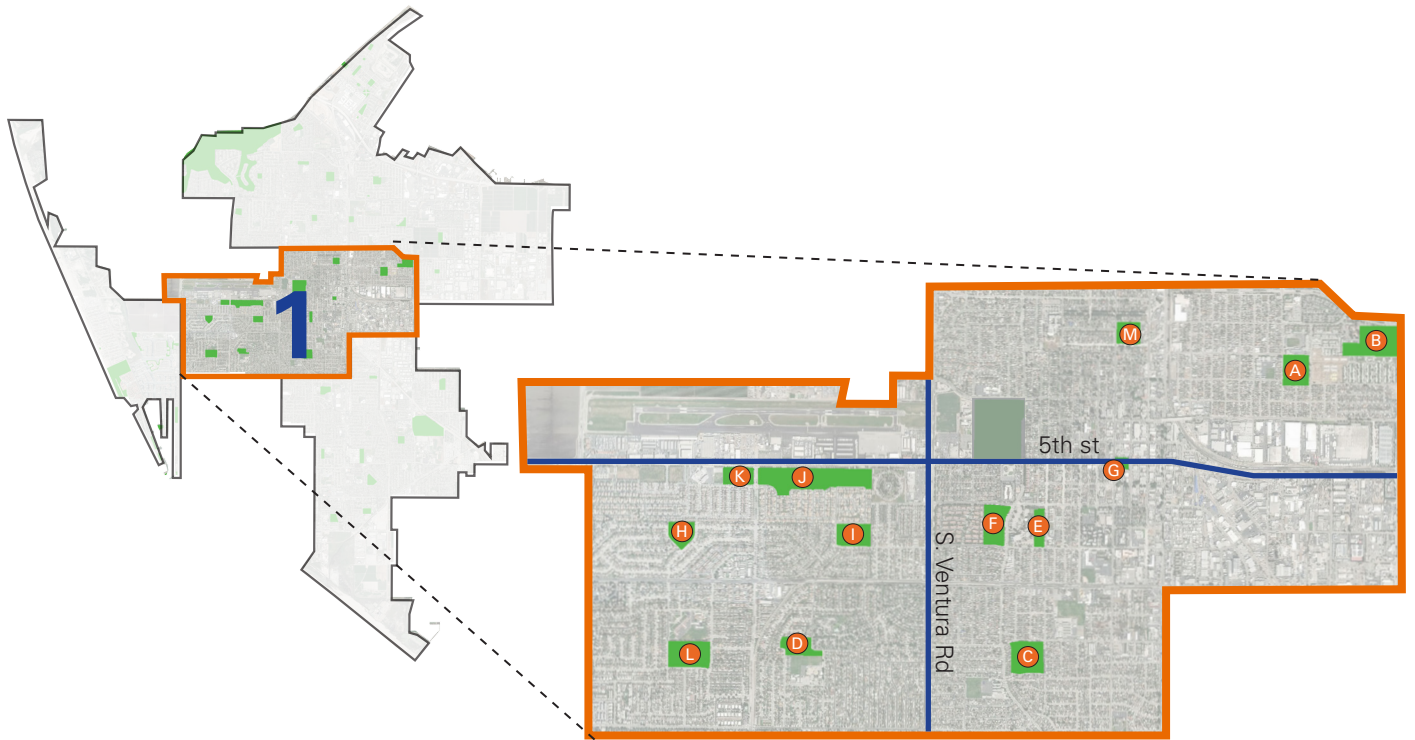
These properties have been identified by the City as land to be used for future parks.

\* The roughly 500 acres available to residents includes future parks, non-parks and joint-use parks.

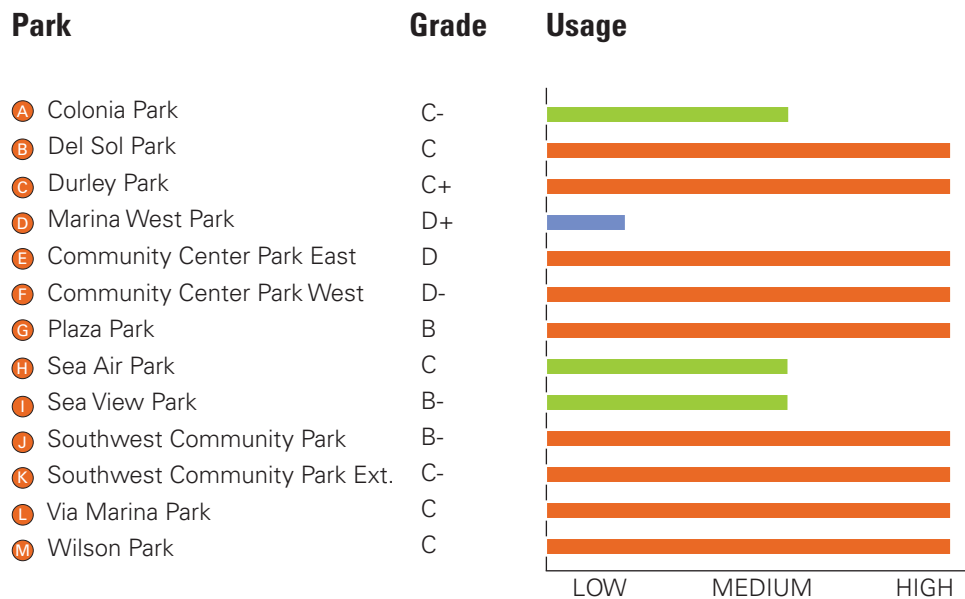
\*\*Due to disparate funding sources for parks, best practices of analyzing usage and service were used. Parks are not characterized by General Plan park type in this section.



## QUADRANT 1 PARKS



## PARKS CONDITION GRADE + USAGE



For all parks, anecdotal rates determined by City staff, members of the Advisory Committee, and the Parks, Recreation, and Community Services Commission. The graphs are useful as an indication of each park's condition and usage, but should not be relied upon as the sole basis for any park capital improvements or design changes.

### Condition Grade

A = Excellent; B = Good; C = Fair; D = Poor; N/A = Not Applicable

### Usage

Low = ■ ; Medium = ■ ; High = ■

Anecdotal rates determined by City staff with input from Parks, Recreation & Community Services Commission.

# PARK INVENTORY/AMENITIES

## Park Type

GF = General Fund

SD = Special District

	Park Type	Year Built	Acreage	Ball Diamond	Bandstand	Basketball Court	Bleachers	Crafts Building	Drinking Fountain	Exercise Stations	Horseshoes	Jogging Path	Lawn Bowling	Off Street Parking	Group Picnic Area	Picnic Areas By Reservation	Picnic Tables	Playground	Recreation Building	Restrooms	Tennis Courts
Colonia Park	GF	1950	8.96	2/1		3	X		X					X			X	1	X	X	
Del Sol Park	GF	1975 1981					X		X			X		X	X	X	X	1		X	
Durley Park	GF	1950		3		2	X	X	X					X			X	1	X	X	
Marina West Park	GF	1976	6.57						X								X	2		X	
Community Center Park East	GF	1967	4.38			1			X		X			X	2	X	X	1	X	X	8
Community Center Park West	GF	1981	9.86	2			X		X					X			X	1		X	
Plaza Park	GF	1902	1.75		1				X					X							2
Sea Air Park	GF	1986	8.61	1		1			X	X		X			X		X	2		X	
Sea View Park	GF	1981	6.45	1		1			X						X		X	2			
Southwest Community Park	GF	1996												X				1			
Southwest Community Park Ext.	GF	2007	5.9			0.5			X	X		X					X	1		X	
Via Marina Park	GF	1980		1		1	X		X		X				X		X	1		X	1
Wilson Park	GF	1974	5.82			1		X	X		X		X	X			X	1	X	X	1

## TOTALS

General Fund Parks: 13

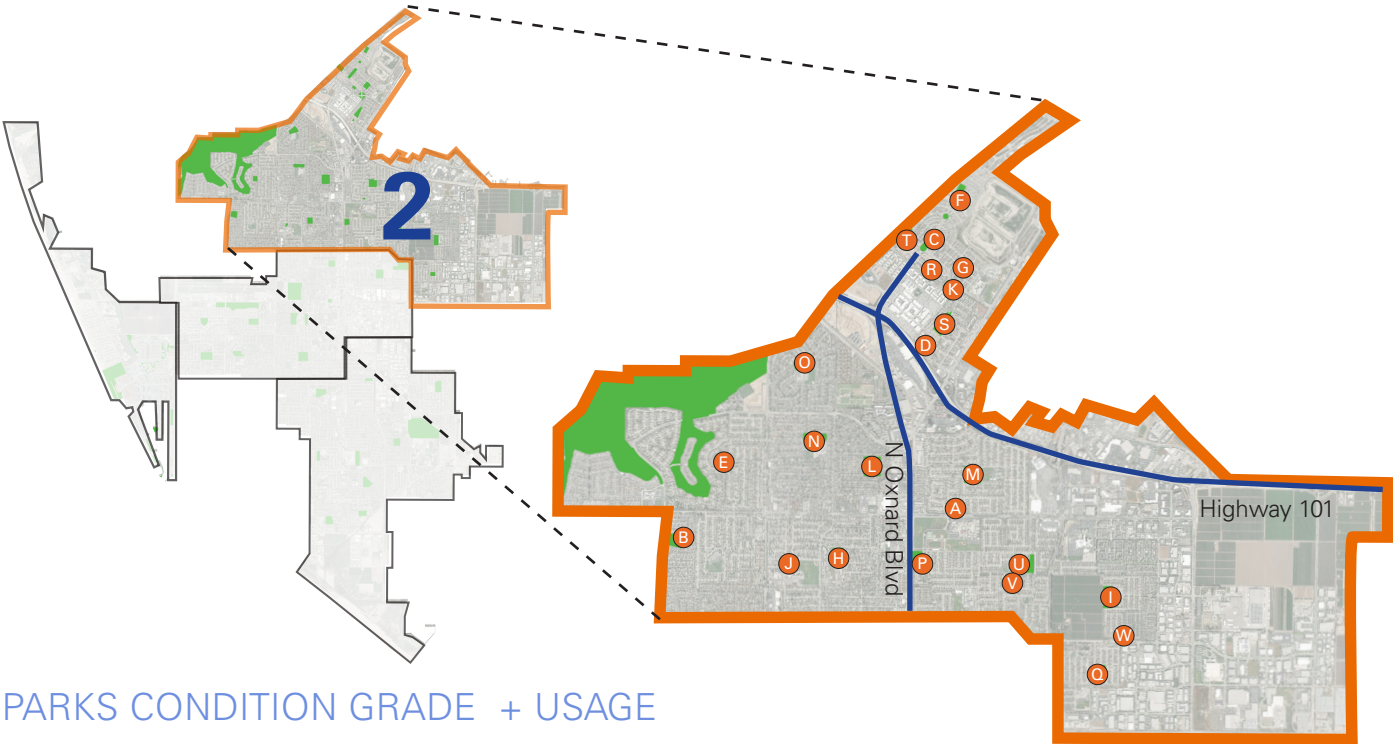
Special District Parks: 0

TOTAL ACREAGE: 122

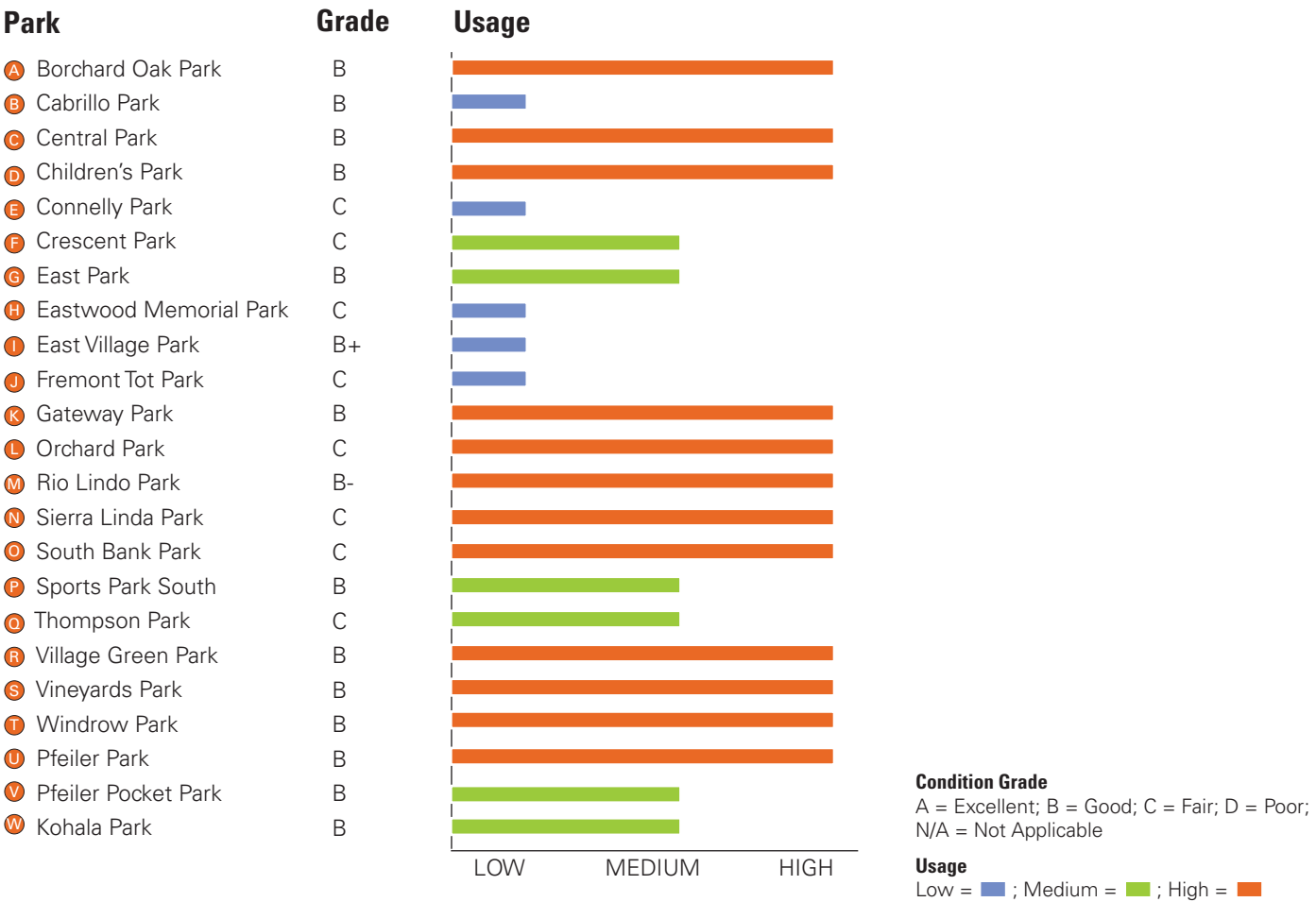


Picnic tables at Eastwood Park

# QUADRANT 2 PARKS



## PARKS CONDITION GRADE + USAGE



Anecdotal rates determined by City staff with input from Parks, Recreation & Community Services Commission.

# PARK INVENTORY/AMENITIES

## Park Type

GF = General Fund

SD = Special District

	Park Type	Year Built	Acreage	Ball Diamond	Bandstand	Basketball Court	Bleachers	Crafts Building	Drinking Fountain	Exercise Stations	Horseshoes	Jogging Path	Lawn Bowling	Off Street Parking	Group Picnic Area	Picnic Areas By Reservation	Picnic Tables	Playground	Recreation Bldg.	Restrooms	Tennis Courts
Borchard Oak Park	SD	1999	0.45						X												
Cabrillo Park	GF	1995	5.19																		
Central Park	SD	2008	4.93									X									
Children's Park	SD	2014	0.43															1			
Connelly Park	GF	1995	3.1						X			X									
Crescent Park	SD	2015	2.72			1			X						X	X	X	1		X	2
East Park	SD	2007	4.5			1			X						X	X	X	1		X	1
Eastwood Memorial	GF	1959	4.29	2		1	X		X						X		X	1		X	2
East Village Park	GF	2016	6.44						X	X		X					X	1		X	
Fremont Tot Park	GF	1976	0.85						X								X	2			
Gateway Park	SD	2007	2.56																		
Orchard Park	GF	1981	10.47			0.5			X						X		X	1		X	
Rio Lindo Park	GF	1988	8.39	1		1			X	X		X			X	2	X	1		X	
Sierra Linda Park	GF	1983	5.02	1					X	X							X	1		X	
South Bank Park	GF	1995	6.22														X	1			
Sports Park South	SD	2001	3.95															1			
Thompson Park	GF	1965	2.72	1		2			X			X			X		X	1		X	
Village Green Park	SD	2007	1.25																		
Vineyards Park	SD	2007	5.34			3				X		X				X	X	2		X	
Windrow Park	SD	2008	4.99			1			X							X	X	X		X	
Pfeiler Park	SD	2005	2.1														X	1			
Pfeiler Pocket Park	SD	2001	1.25															1			
Kohala Park	GF	1989	1.01														X				

## TOTALS

General Fund Parks: 11

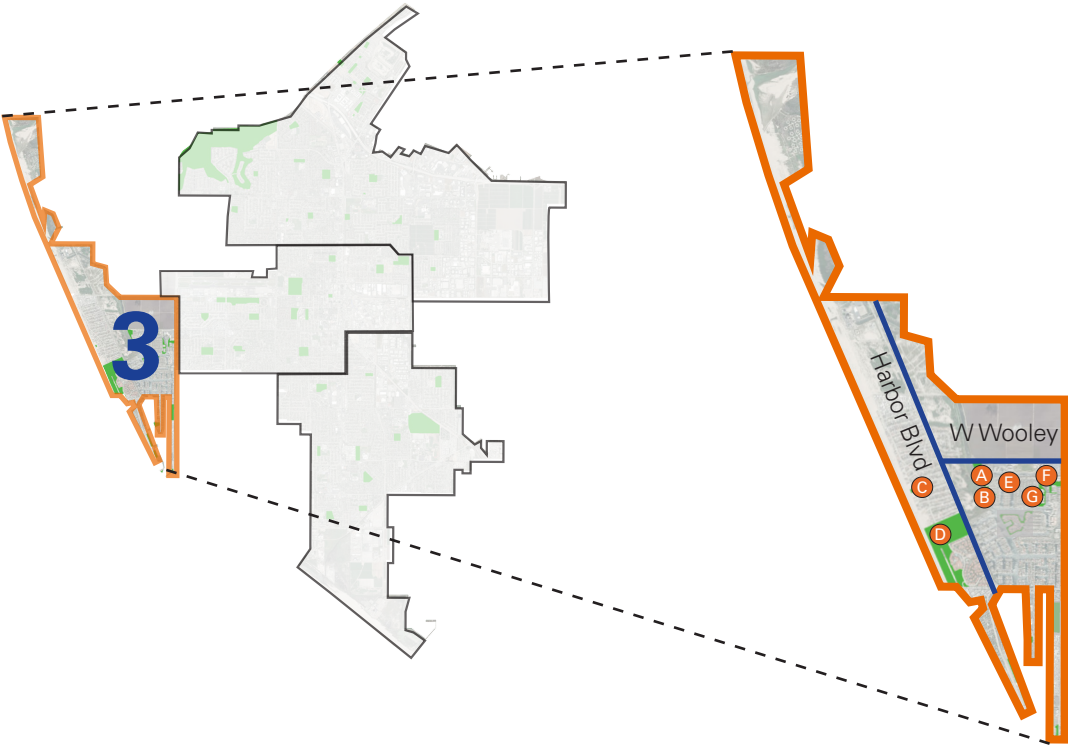
Special District Parks: 12

TOTAL ACREAGE: 88

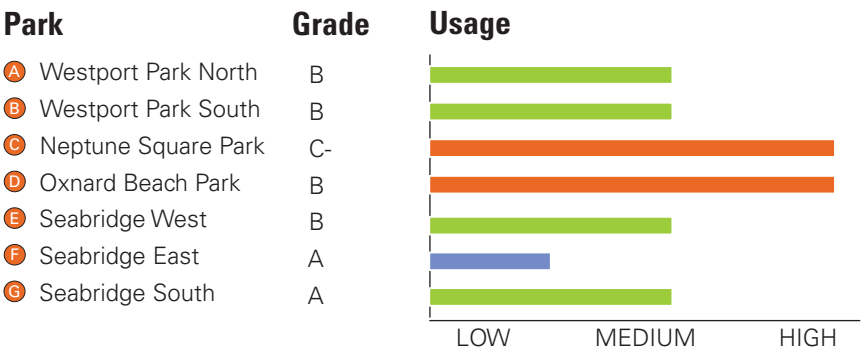


Basketball Court at Windrow Park

# QUADRANT 3 PARKS



## PARKS CONDITION GRADE + USAGE



**Condition Grade**  
 A = Excellent; B = Good; C = Fair; D = Poor; N/A = Not Applicable

**Usage**  
 Low = ■ ; Medium = ■ ; High = ■

Anecdotal rates determined by City staff with input from Parks, Recreation & Community Services Commission.

# PARK INVENTORY/AMENITIES

## Park Type

GF = General Fund

SD = Special District

	Park Type	Year Built	Acreage	Ball Diamond	Bandstand	Basketball Court	Bleachers	Crafts Building	Drinking Fountain	Exercise Stations	Horseshoes	Jogging Path	Lawn Bowling	Off Street Parking	Group Picnic Area	Picnic Areas By Reservation	Picnic Tables	Playground	Recreation Bldg.	Restrooms	Tennis Courts
Westport Park North	SD	2004	3.68							X		X		X			X	1		X	
Westport Park South	SD	2004	1.38							X		X						1			
Neptune Square Park	GF	1965	0.3			0.5												1			1
Oxnard Beach Park	GF	1989	57.84	1					X			X		X	X	2	X	1		X	
Seabridge West	SD		1.18														X				
Seabridge East	SD	2008	2.79						X			X		X			X	1		X	2
Seabridge South	SD	2008	1.4						X	X		X					X	1		X	

## TOTALS

General Fund Parks: 2

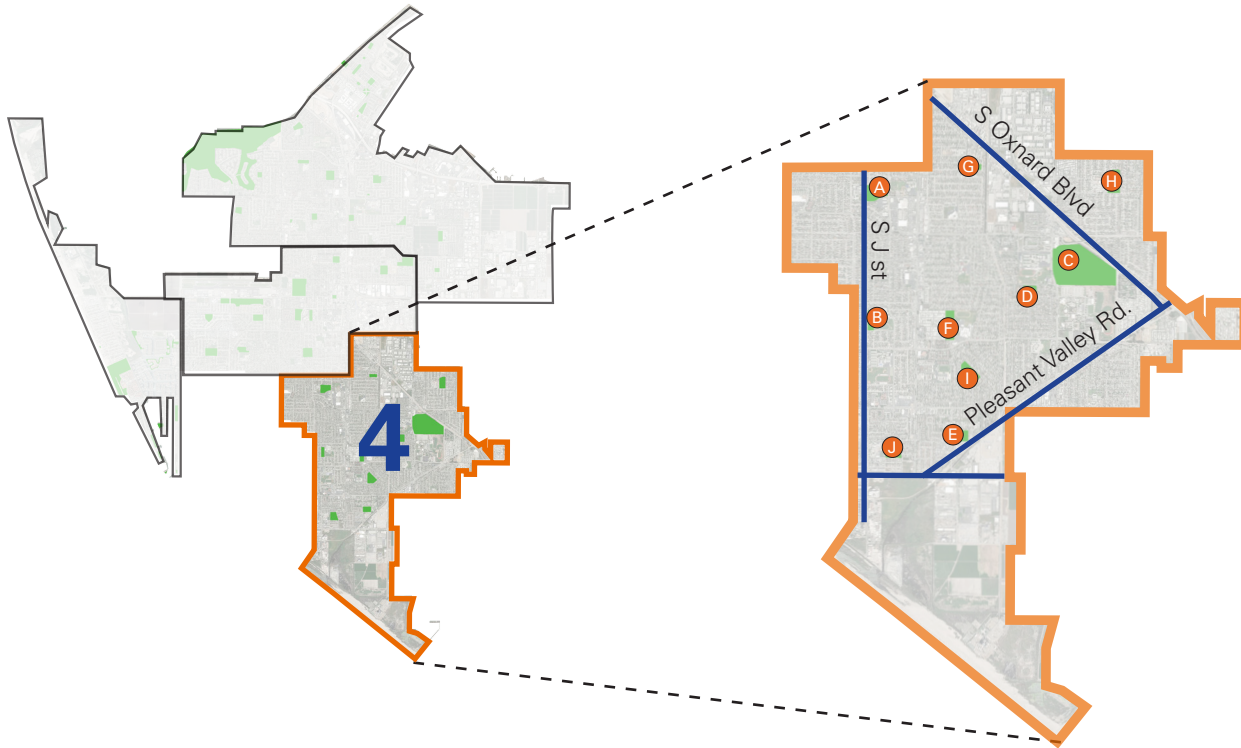
Special District Parks: 5

TOTAL ACREAGE: 69

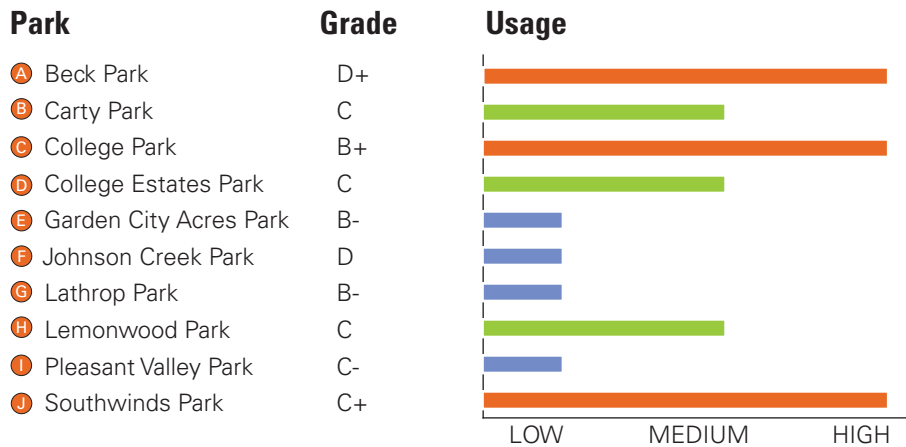


Walking Path at Oxnard Beach Park: Image - Californian Beaches website

## QUADRANT 4 PARKS



## PARKS CONDITION GRADE + USAGE



### Condition Grade

A = Excellent; B = Good; C = Fair; D = Poor; N/A = Not Applicable

### Usage

Low = ■ ; Medium = ■ ; High = ■

Anecdotal rates determined by City staff with input from Parks, Recreation & Community Services Commission.

## PARK INVENTORY/AMENITIES

### Park Type

GF = General Fund

SD = Special District

	Park Type	Year Built	Acreage	Ball Diamond	Bandstand	Basketball Court	Bleachers	Crafts Building	Drinking Fountain	Exercise Stations	Horseshoes	Jogging Path	Lawn Bowling	Off Street Parking	Group Picnic Area	Picnic Areas By Reservation	Picnic Tables	Playground	Recreation Bldg.	Restrooms	Tennis Courts
Beck Park	GF	1956	9.87	2/1		1.5	X		X					X	X		X	1		X	
Carty Park	GF	1967	4.08	2			X		X								X	1		X	
College Estates Park	GF	1985	6.53	1		1			X						X		X	1		X	1
Garden City Acres Park	GF	2007	6			1			X	X		X		X			X	1		X	
Johnson Creek Park	GF	1978	8.59	3/1			X		X						X		X	1		X	
Lathrop Park	GF	1960	2.96			1			X			X			X		X	1			2
Lemonwood Park	GF	1978	9.43	1		1			X			X			X		X	1		X	2
Pleasant Valley Park	GF	1977	9.61			2			X						X		X	1		X	1
Southwinds Park	GF	1979	7.68	1		2			X	X	X	X			X		X	2	X	X	
College Park	GF	2000	71.92			3.5			X		X			X	X	X	X	2		X	

### TOTALS

General Fund Parks: 10

Special District Parks: 0

TOTAL ACREAGE: 137



Playing hockey at Lemonwood Park: Image - Lemonwood School Twitter

# Comparative Cities\*

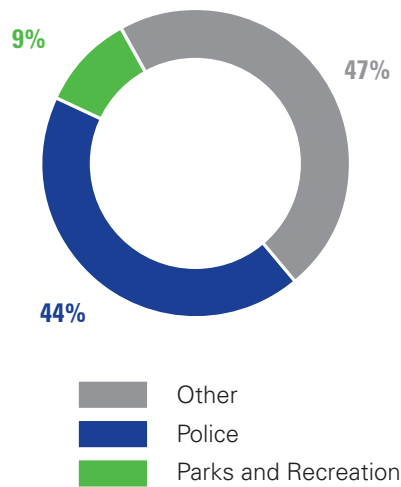
The Project team compared Oxnard’s expenditures to that of nearby cities to understand how Oxnard differed from its neighbors.

There was a marked difference in percent spent on parks and recreation through the combined efforts of each cities’ and their park districts’ expenditures (including bonds and grants).

On average, Oxnard spends about 10% less on parks and recreation than other nearby municipalities, and about 10% more on police. Additionally, Oxnard spends less per person on parks and recreation than the four comparative cities.

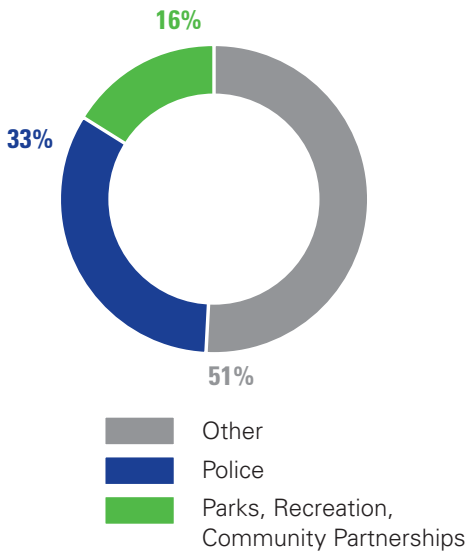
## EXPENSES

Oxnard



**P&R EXPENDITURES**  
**\$105.60 PP**

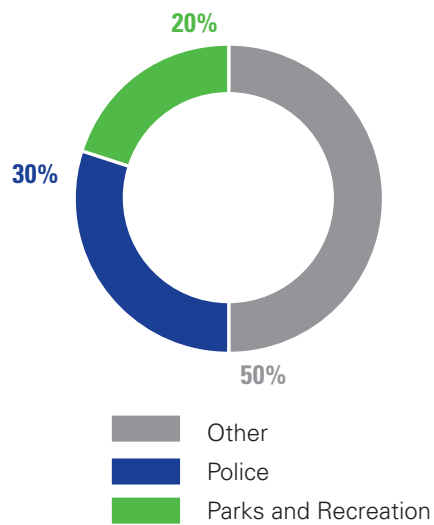
Ventura



**P&R EXPENDITURES**  
**\$215.43 PP**

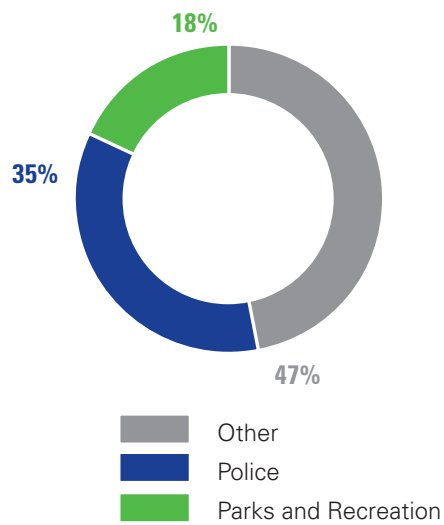
\*Unless otherwise noted, all data used is from ESRI Business Analyst, 2018.

Thousand Oaks



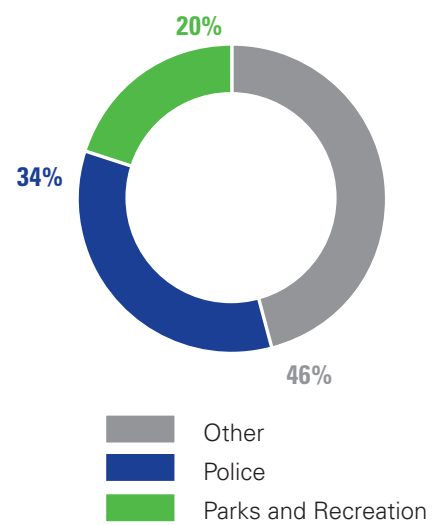
**P&R EXPENDITURES**  
**\$164.73 PP**

Camarillo



**P&R EXPENDITURES**  
**\$132.49 PP**

Simi Valley



**P&R EXPENDITURES**  
**\$274.01 PP**

*City of Oxnard FY2018-19 Budget & General Fund  
 General Funds for City of Thousand Oaks, Simi Valley, Camarillo & Ventura*

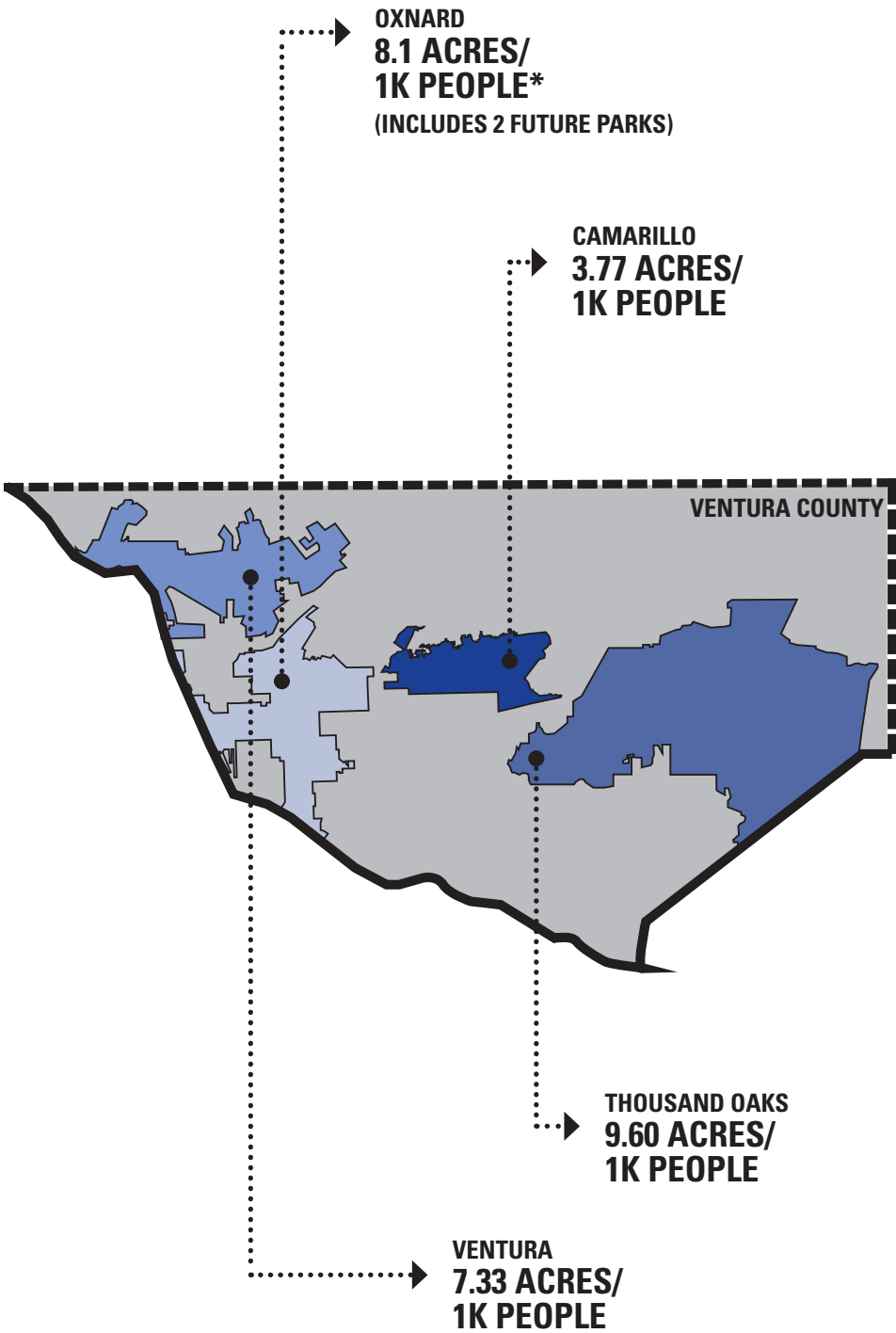
# Comparative Park Profiles

The California State recommendation for the number of park acres in a city is “3 acres per 1,000 residents” (National Recreation and Parks Association). The following section analyzes how Oxnard’s existing park acreage compares with surrounding cities in Ventura County and California recommendations. For information about how the beaches impact level of service, please reference the Oxnard General Plan. The City has made progress in developing recreation opportunities for residents in recent years, which has positively impacted the amount of facilities and space available per person.

**NATIONAL RECREATION & PARKS ASSOCIATION (NRPA)**  
**PARK STANDARDS**

The NRPA recognizes three approaches to calculating park space standards:


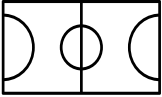

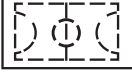


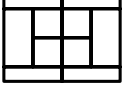
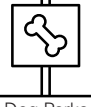




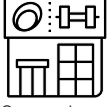




1. Total park and recreation space as expressed in a population ratio such as acres per 1,000 people. This approach is based on desired service level goals for parks facilities (acres population), and may be modified by factors such as service area and density.
2. Percentages of area devoted to park and recreation land and open space in a given community or jurisdiction.
3. Needs determined by user characteristics or demand projections.



*\*Oxnard park acreage per 1,000 people per 2030 General Plan:*

- Traditional city and county parks, beaches, golf course and parks under construction total approximately 1,637 acres, providing a ratio of 8.1 acres per 1,000 residents.
- Considering only City owned and managed traditional park space, as shown in the four quadrants in this master plan, the ratio is 2.39 acres/1,000 residents.

# Recreation Comparison: Facilities Per 10K Residents

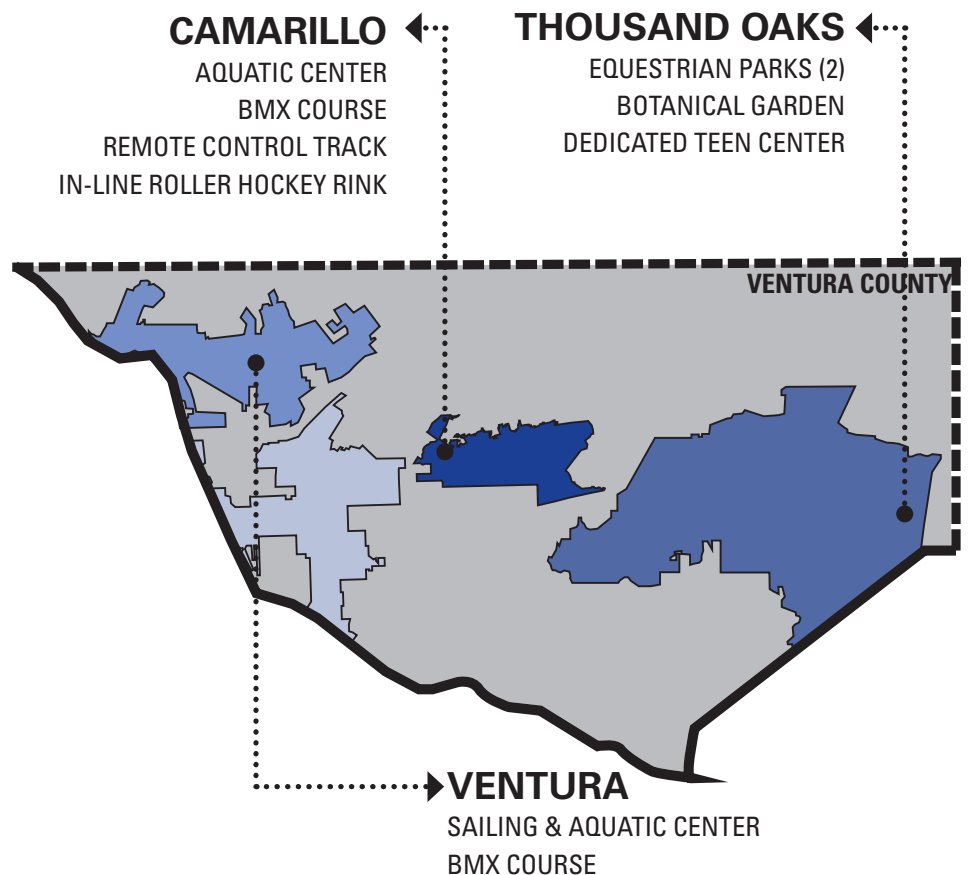
Total Oxnard Facilities		Additional Facilities Needed per NRPA Standards		Oxnard	Ventura	Camarillo	Thousand Oaks	NRPA AVERAGE*
48 9		**2.31		1.9	4.0	3.4	2.7	
8 16		** .38		.27	1.5	2.7	.76	
37 -		1.78		1.5	3.0	2.6	.49	
- 27		**0		1.6	.88	.08	1.3	
47 -		2.24		.82	.66	2.4	1.4	
15 -		.72		.09	1.0	1.2	.57	
34 -		1.64		1.9	3.2	1.6	.57	
3 **2		.14		.18	.44	.31	.22	
1 5		.05		AC	AC	.23	.28	
Total Oxnard Facilities		Additional Facilities Needed per NRPA Standards		Oxnard	Ventura	Camarillo	Thousand Oaks	NRPA AVERAGE*
- 4		**0		.09	.15	.16	.18	
3 4		.14		.18	0	.08	.33	
1 NA		.05		.18	0	0	N/A	
2 5		.10		CC	.15	CC	.33	
3 1		.14		.09	.15	CC	.18	
4 -		** .19		0	0	.08	.18	
1 1		** .05		0	0	.08	.09	
37 NA		64%		67%	44%	61%	NA	
AC = Pool in Aquatic Center CC = In Community Center ** = Below NRPA Average								

## Duplication of Service Analysis

A duplication of service analysis (program gap analysis) was conducted for several services the Parks & Recreation Divisions offer. In order to understand any overlaps or duplications of service in Oxnard and the serviceable region, an inventory of the following programs was prepared:

- In-house programs run by the Parks Division
- Programs that are outsourced or co-sponsored with partners using Parks Division facilities
- Similar external service providers at non-Division facilities

National and regional programming trends were also analyzed. All nearby communities provide several options for youth and adult recreation, and a varying range of senior programs. Additional sports opportunities, mostly for youth, are provided locally by other organizations, such as the American Youth Soccer Organization. Basic programs, like soccer, baseball, and summer camps are duplicated across communities. Local demand is enough to support similar or identical programs; however, several specialized facilities are particular to one or two cities. These may not have as much local demand and are more likely to incentivize people to travel further for them. Specialized facilities, as seen in the graphic on this page, in



the nearby comparison communities include:

- Four equestrian parks (two in Thousand Oaks, two in Simi Valley)
- BMX courses (one each in Camarillo and Simi Valley)
- Aquatic facilities (Ventura's Sailing Center & Aquatic Center)
- Community pool in Rancho Simi
- Shared pools for aquatics classes in Thousand Oaks; Camarillo's Aquatic Center)
- Botanical Garden (Thousand Oaks)
- Dedicated Teen Center (Thousand Oaks/Conejo)
- Remote Control Track (Camarillo)
- Skate park (Camarillo, Ventura)
- In-line roller hockey rink (Camarillo)

The project team recommends that Oxnard focus on providing facilities that meet the highest need for Oxnard residents, even though these may duplicate some services provided by other communities. Providing these facilities will allow residents to fully reap the benefits of local recreation, without having to travel far or pay a non-resident fee. Such facilities include additional soccer fields, another swimming facility<sup>1</sup>, and a flexible indoor recreation facility. More detailed descriptions appear in the Recommendations chapters of the Master Plan.

<sup>1</sup> Even though the Recreation Division provides programming at the Colonia Pool during the summer months in the form of swim lessons, there is still a need for additional swimming facilities and programming.

## Fee Analysis

Overall, Oxnard's fees are similar to the comparison cities, but there are several items that neighboring cities charge for that Oxnard does not. These represent opportunities for Oxnard to collect additional revenue. For example, Oxnard does not charge for most park picnic area reservations. In contrast, the comparison cities either charge an hourly rate and an administrative/processing fee or just a processing fee. The project team recommends that Oxnard models its fees after other cities. Oxnard should implement at least a processing fee associated with any reservations and could also charge a small fee for minor permits. Rates should be lower than the comparison cities, as Oxnard has a lower average income than the comparison communities and does not want to discourage residents from filling

reservations and permits. Oxnard could also look to charge an "Opening/Closing Fee" for rentals outside of typical business hours (as does Camarillo's Pleasant Valley Recreation and Park Association) or a "Restroom Cleaning Fee" for tournaments on City fields (as does Ventura).

Oxnard's programming fees are more on par with the comparison cities. The exception is youth sports, with Oxnard being cheaper than other cities. Oxnard's non-resident fee is also lower than the neighboring cities. The City could look to increase the charge to a \$5 or 20% non-resident registration fee, whichever is greater, and not to exceed \$20.



## Market Analysis of Comparison Cities

While Oxnard is not in as strong of a spending position, it has more opportunities for growth. In particular, there is potential for business growth, which will help bring in additional revenue to the City. Oxnard has fewer businesses than Ventura and Thousand Oaks, even though Oxnard has more people. The City also has a lower ratio of employees to residents than all comparison cities.

The project team believes Oxnard has the potential to make money

with food and concessions in parks. About 90% of residents went to a fast-food or drive-in restaurant in the past six months, while about 71% of residents visited a family restaurant or steakhouse in the past six months. Fine dining is not as popular, with only about 9% going to a fine dining restaurant in the past month. Take-out is the most popular option for fast-food/drive-in restaurants. Fast food is slightly more popular for lunch and on weekdays than for dinner and on weekends (46%/53% compared to

42%/47%). Family restaurants and steakhouses are more popular for dinner and on weekends. **This data suggests putting in a city-run or city-contracted fast food option in the most popular parks would be financially successful.**



Shake Shack is a popular spot + funding source for New York City's Madison Square Park.

	OXNARD	VENTURA	CAMARILLO	THOUSAND OAKS
<b>POP.</b>	210,000 RESIDENTS	~110,000 RESIDENTS	~68,000 RESIDENTS	~128,000 RESIDENTS
<b>LAND AREA*</b>	26.89 SQ MILES	21.66 SQ MILES	19.53 SQ MILES	55.03 SQ MILES
<b>MEDIAN** HOUSEHOLD INCOME</b>	\$68,303	\$76,076	\$92,913	\$105,485

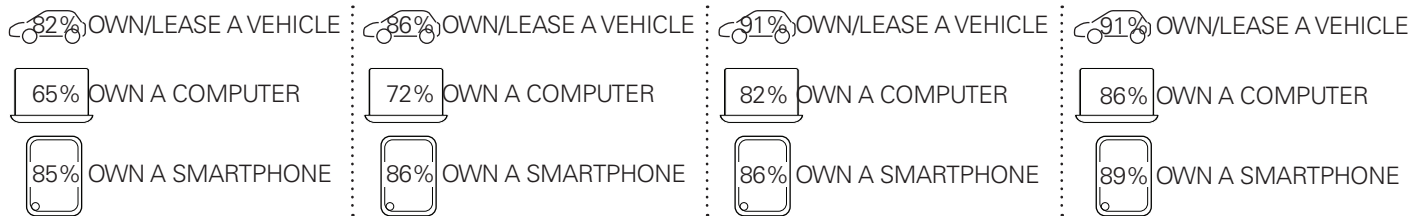
## TOTAL BUSINESSES & EMPLOYEES



## OCCUPATION



## MATERIAL OWNERSHIP



## 2019 ENTERTAINMENT/RECREATION CONSUMER SPENDING



Above information from ESRI Business Analyst, 2019.

\*Area information from Census.gov Quick Facts (2010).

\*\*Median Household Income from Census.gov Quick Facts (2014-2018 in 2018 dollars).

## Park & Open Space Coverage

Oxnard is fortunate enough to be surrounded by many natural features such as the Santa Clara River, Topatopa Mountains, and Ormond Beach. What's disappointing is that these places aren't easily accessible. The Focus Groups and the community expressed a desire to engage with these places more and even try to bring naturalized landscapes into city parks. Having more "wild" areas in parks would increase the educational potential and make them more engaging.

The project team applied the national standards of distance to parks to evaluate which areas of the City were "park poor." This national standard sets guidelines for service range based on the size of the park. The reasoning is that larger parks serve more people, so they should have a more significant influence area. According to this standard, several neighborhoods around Oxnard could use additional parks for full coverage. The City should consider acquiring some of the vacant lots in these areas to develop into parks, when and if resources become available. Until then, Oxnard should focus on park poor averages and alternative options for parks as seen in the Section 5 - Goal 2: Parks with More Amenities to Serve a Diverse Community.



Oxnard has many nearby natural features, such as the Santa Clara River & Ormond Beach that are not utilized for recreation. There is potential for creating more recreational opportunities associated with these features.



Oxnard's parks lack aesthetic diversity and programming; basically, most parks look dull and uninspiring. This lack of visual interest contributes to the perception that there is a lack of park space and few facility offerings.



# Park Conditions

The condition of Oxnard’s parks, as a whole, is below standards. The project team witnessed this first hand and heard it from many community members. Broken equipment, overflowing trash cans, and dirty restrooms were common complaints. Additionally, the City is currently mowing turf once a month in 2019/2020 due to budget shortfalls.



Durley Park



Colonia Park



Colonia Park

Poorly maintained parks aren't only challenging to use, but they also erode community pride and diminish stewardship. That is, the less the community feels the City is investing in their parks, the less they will invest in them as well. The result is more and more degradation. Conversely, when a park is neat and tidy, community members are more likely to go out of their way to pick up errant trash or treat the equipment with care. For this reason, improving park maintenance should be one of the City's highest priorities.



Wilson Park



Wilson Park



Eastwood Park

# Existing Recreation Service Level

Oxnard is blessed to be nestled between two **mountain ranges** right next to the **beach**. With access to a variety of amenities, Oxnard also has many recreational offerings for **residents of all ages**.

From infant to teen to senior programs including City Corps, the Police Activities League and lawn bowling, the City works hard to provide residents with a range of opportunities. It's possible that the range of recreational opportunities spreads the City's resources too thin. Oxnard must find a balance between offering a variety of opportunities to a range of people without compromising fiscal responsibility.



Oxnard Seniors

## Festivals & Events In Oxnard

Oxnard might not have many festivals, but those they have are cherished. Chief among those is the Strawberry Festival. Every May since 1993, thousands of people gather in Oxnard to enjoy the 200+ arts and crafts vendors and eat strawberries at their peak! Other festivals and events include the Salsa Festival, the Tamale Festival, the Multicultural Festival, the Oxnard Jazz Festival, Insect Festival, summer movies, and food trucks and farmers' markets at Plaza Park.

All of these events offer opportunities to bring the community together and activate open space. Oxnard should work to promote and add to these events for year-round activities.



Oxnard Strawberry Festival



Salsa Festival

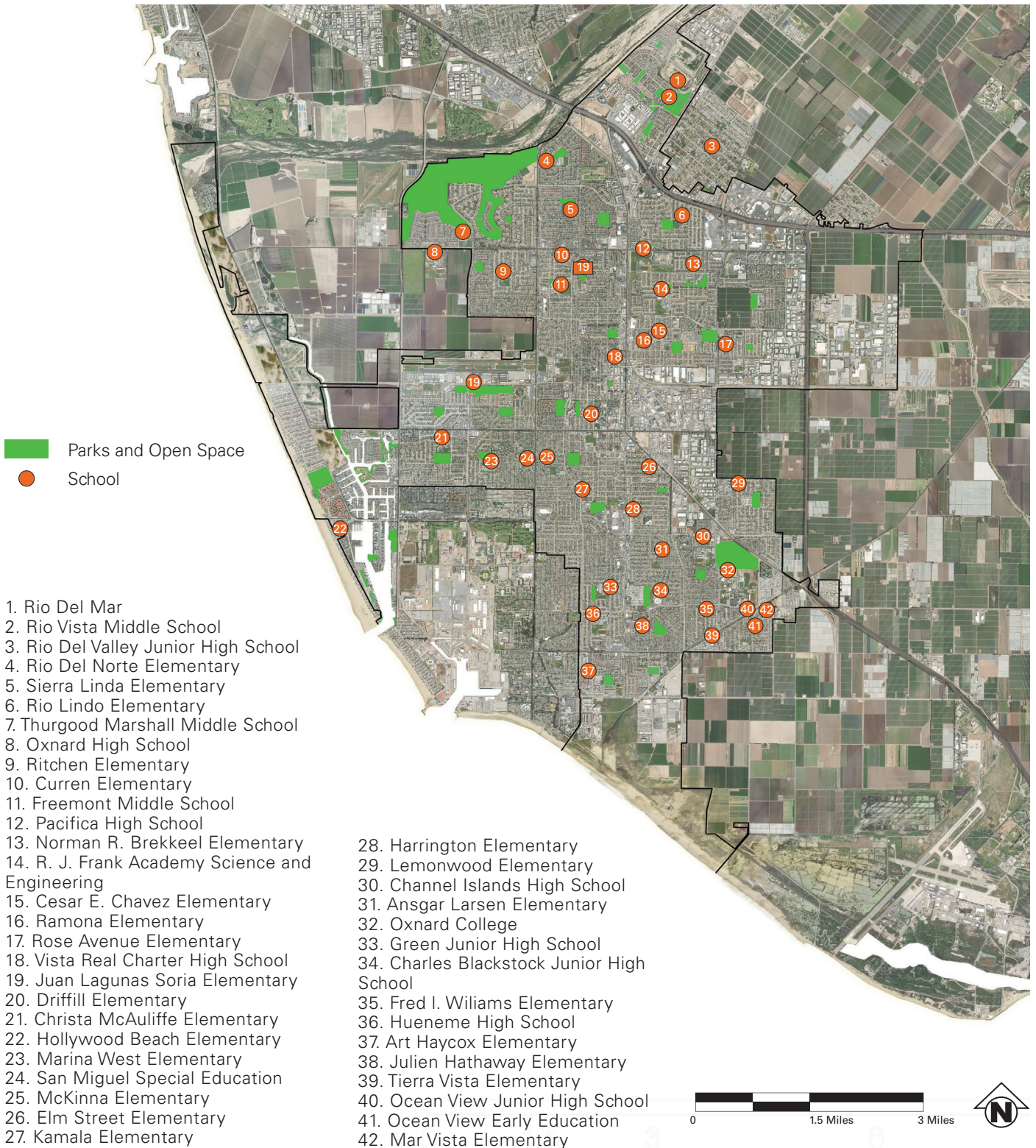


Food trucks at Plaza Park  
Image Source: City of Oxnard

# Schools & Parks

Oxnard has 42 public schools distributed throughout the City. These offer potential partnership opportunities for parks and recreation in the future.

## OXNARD SCHOOL & PARK LOCATIONS



# Bike Lanes, Trails & Major Destinations

The Oxnard residents who participated in the Focus Groups and community meetings agreed that improving the bike network was a way to encourage more people to visit the beach, river, and the other open space amenities Oxnard has to offer. Improved beach access should be considered in the City’s mobility plan.

## EXISTING ACCESS AND CONNECTIVITY CONDITIONS



Source: City of Oxnard Bicycle & Pedestrian Facilities Master Plan

# Needs Analysis

This needs analysis is **based solely on distance** from parks, but a more **comprehensive needs analysis** requires considering more factors.

Distance from parks is important, but the types of services and programming each park provides to residents are critical to the success of these parks. A neighborhood park is an easy way for people who can't afford gym memberships to get exercise; therefore, the poorer a neighborhood is, the more they need a park. High densities of trees absorb particulate matter and reduce asthma rates, so areas with high asthma rates need more trees. Green spaces absorb stormwater, so areas prone to flooding can benefit from having more parks. In terms of planning, areas anticipated to increase in population will need more parks in the future. This type of analysis allows us to think of park need in terms of park function and purpose.

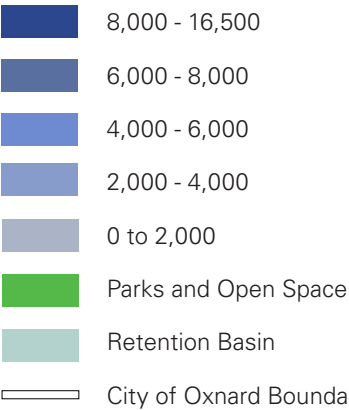


Oxnard Farmers Market  
Image Source: City of Oxnard

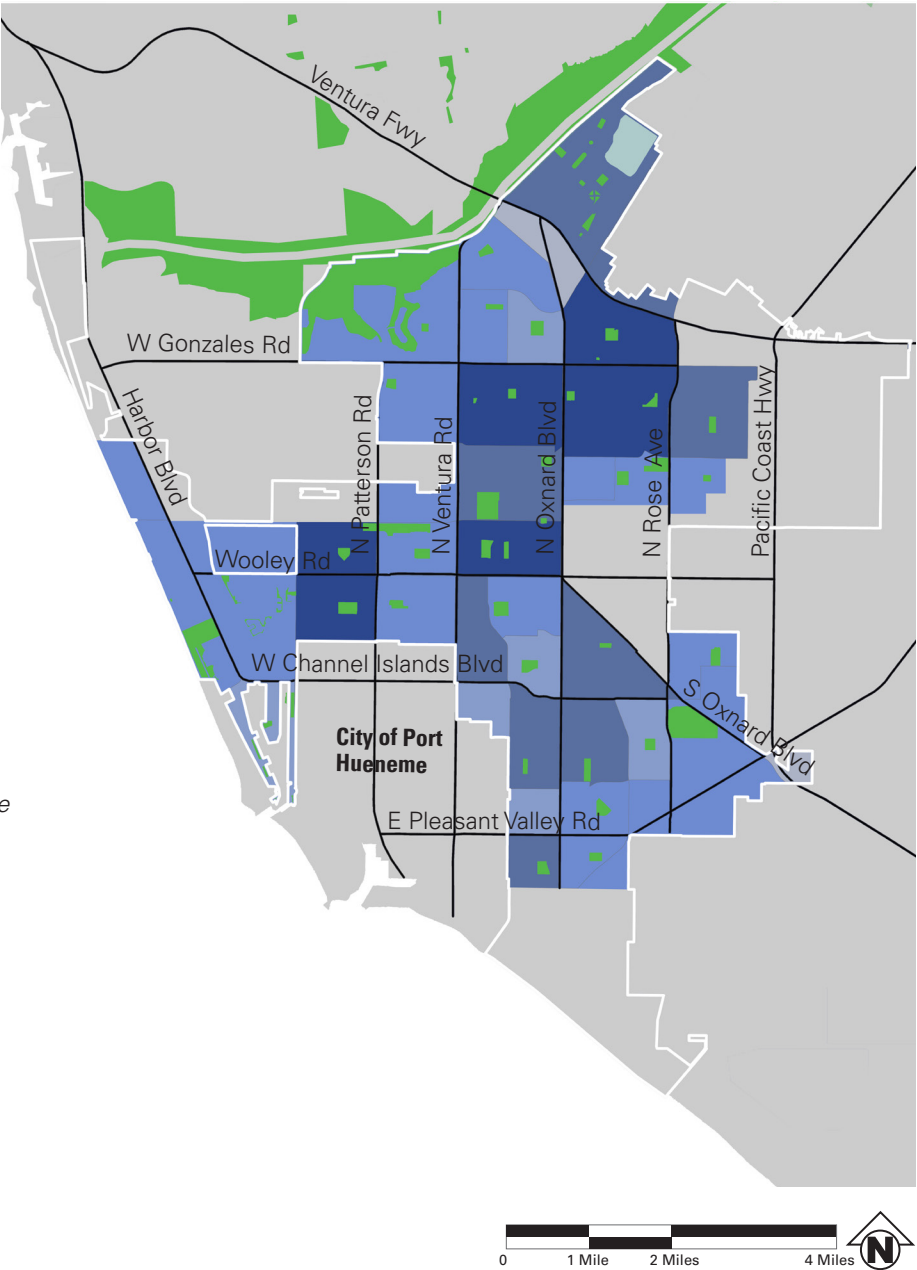
# Existing Population Density

The highest population density in Oxnard is in the northeastern neighborhoods. The higher population density identifies areas with greater park need.

2018 Total Population by Census Tract\*



\*Density measured per square mile



Source: 2014-2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Data by Census Tract

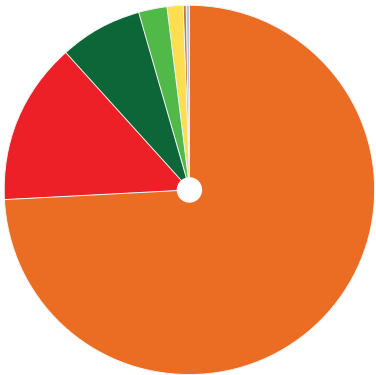
# DISTRIBUTION OF RACIAL POPULATIONS

Over 74% of Oxnard’s population identifies as Hispanic or Latino.

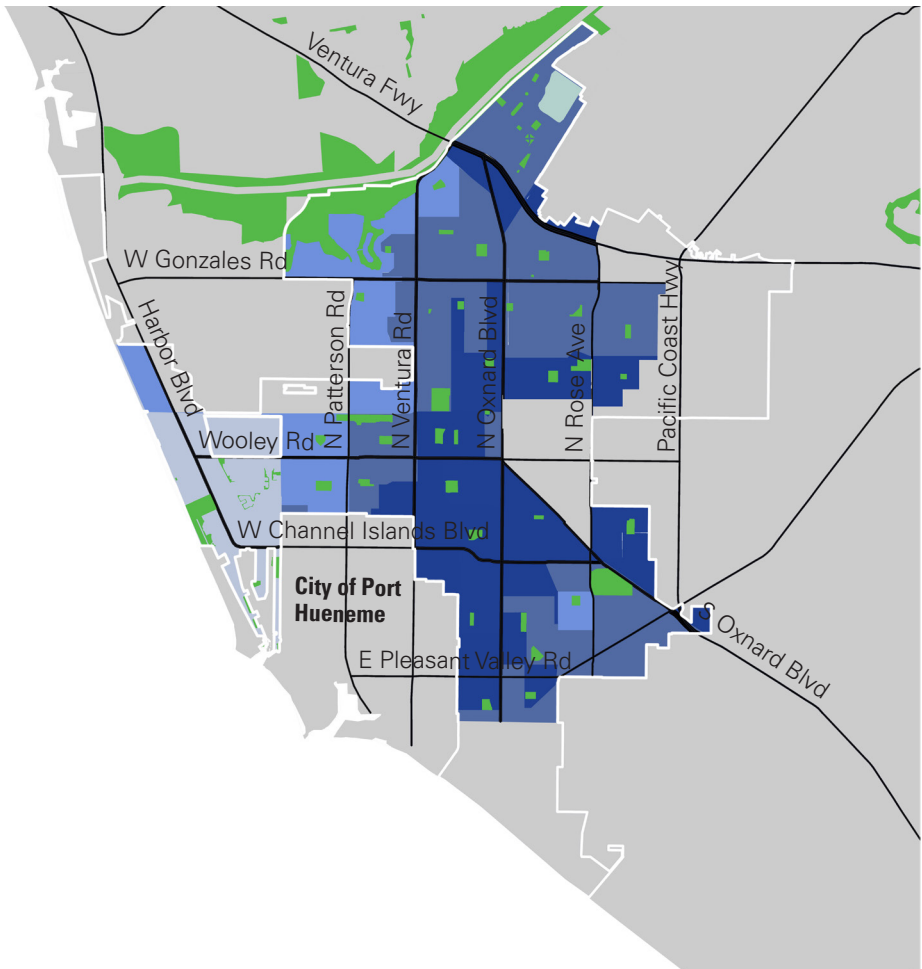
When planning for future parks and recreation programming to serve the needs of all members of the Oxnard community, ethnic and cultural backgrounds are important to take into consideration.

American Community Survey 2018 Ethnicity Breakdown

- Hispanic (all): 74.3%
- Not Hispanic, White: 14.1%
- Not Hispanic, Asian: 7.4%
- Not Hispanic, Black: 2.4%
- Not Hispanic, 2 or more: 1.3%
- Not Hispanic, American Indian: 0.3%
- Not Hispanic, Other: 0.2%



## Hispanic or Latino Population Concentration



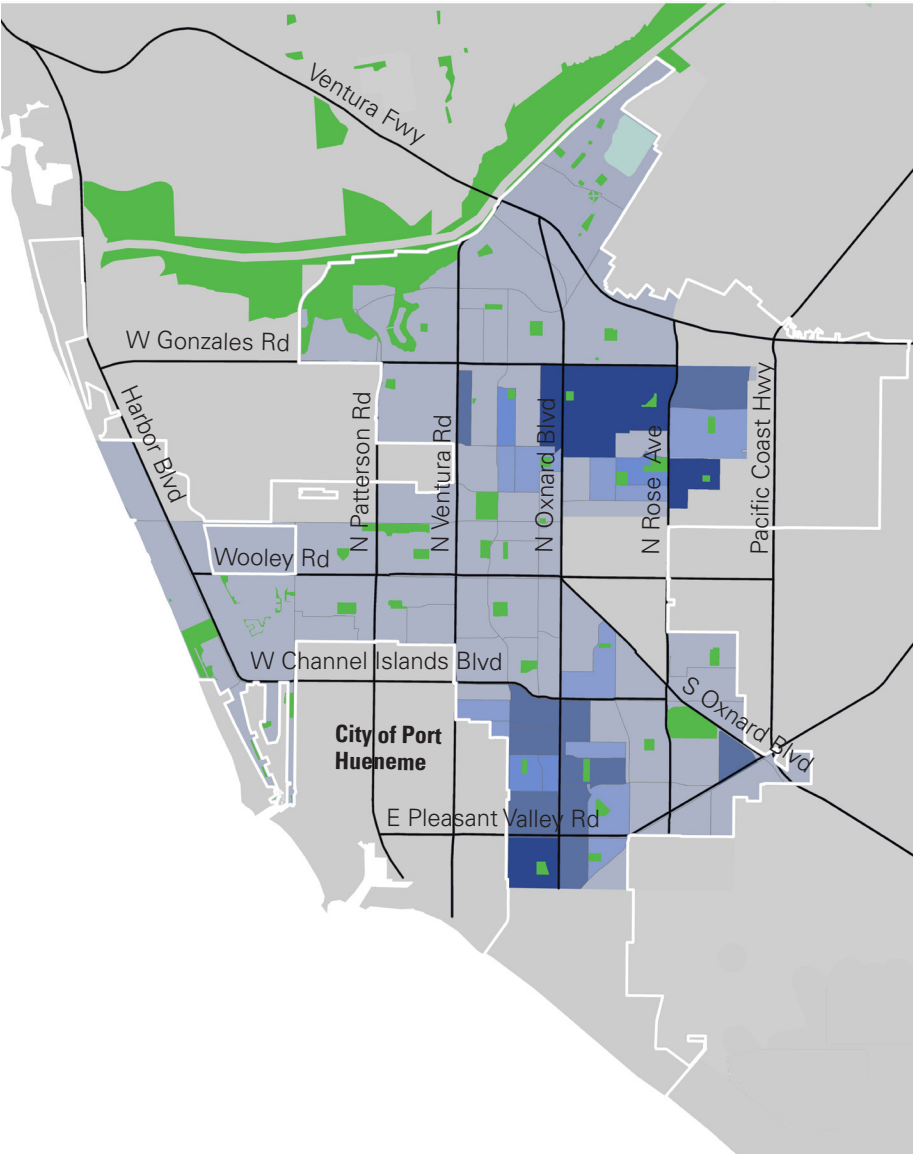
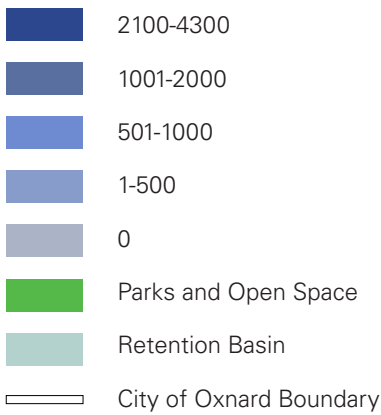
Hispanic or Latino Population Concentration by Census Tract

- Very High
- High
- Moderate
- Low
- Parks and Open Space
- Retention Basin
- City of Oxnard Boundary

# Population Growth to 2045

According to the Oxnard General Plan Demographic Projections from May 2019, the population of Oxnard is projected to increase by ~10% from 2020 to 2045.

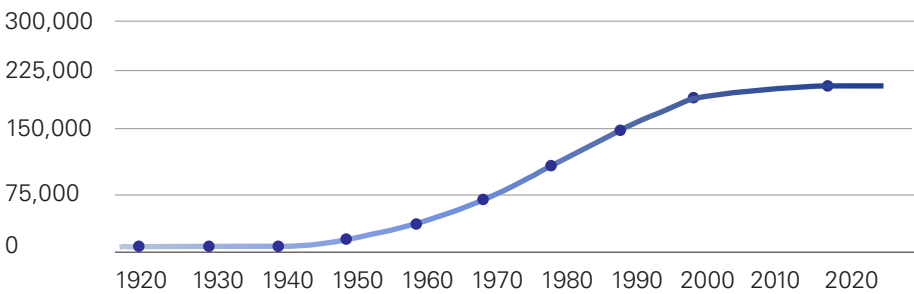
## 2016-2045 POPULATION GROWTH BY SCAG



Source: 2016-2045 Change by Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG)

## HISTORIC POPULATION FROM 1920-PRESENT

Oxnard experienced steady population growth from 1950 to 2010. While the population since 2010 has slowed relative to this growth, it is consistent with state growth trends.



# NEW RESIDENTIAL/MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT IN OXNARD

## ADOPTED RESIDENTIAL SPECIFIC PLANS

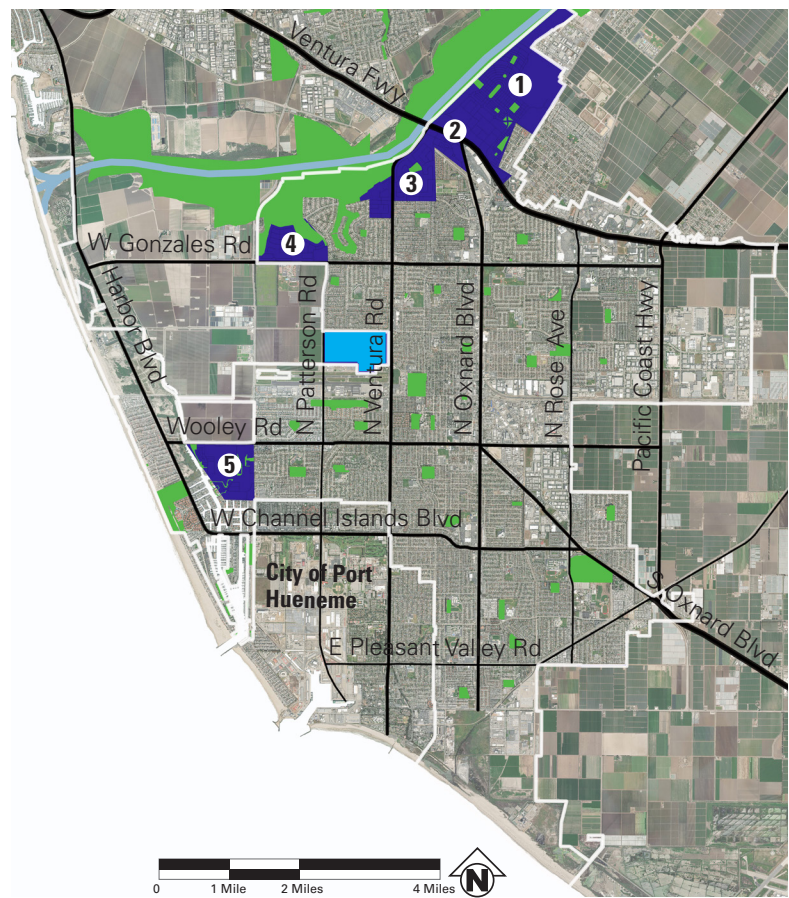
- 1 RiverPark
- 2 The Village/Wagon Wheel
- 3 Northwest Community
- 4 Northwest Golf Course Community
- 5 Mandalay Bay Phase IV

## PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL SPECIFIC PLANS

- Teal Club

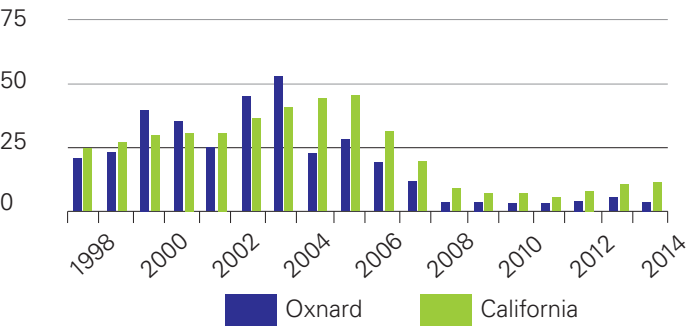
Source: Planning Report Project List, 1st Quarter 2020

Parks & Open Space

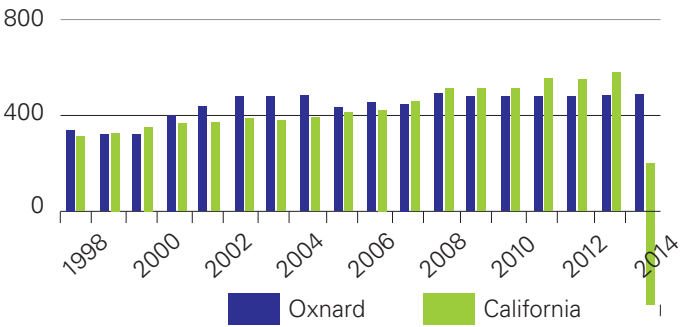


## BUILDING & HOUSING PERMITS

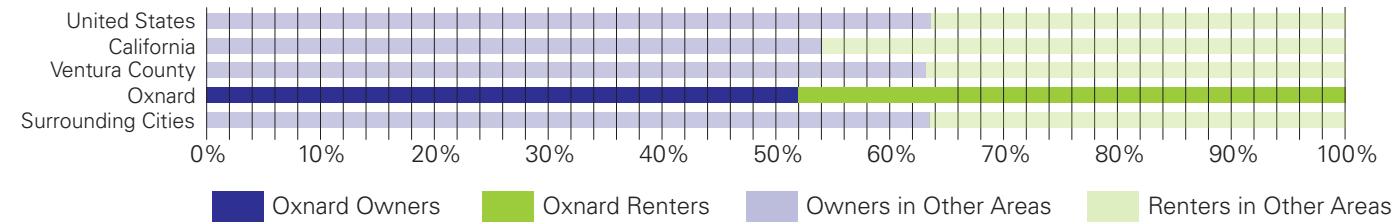
Number of Building Permits per 10,000 Residents



Average Home Cost (in \$1,000's)



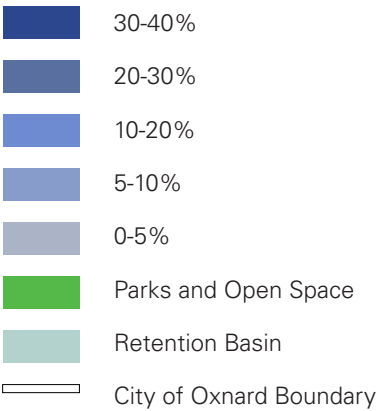
## HOME RENTAL VS. OWNERSHIP



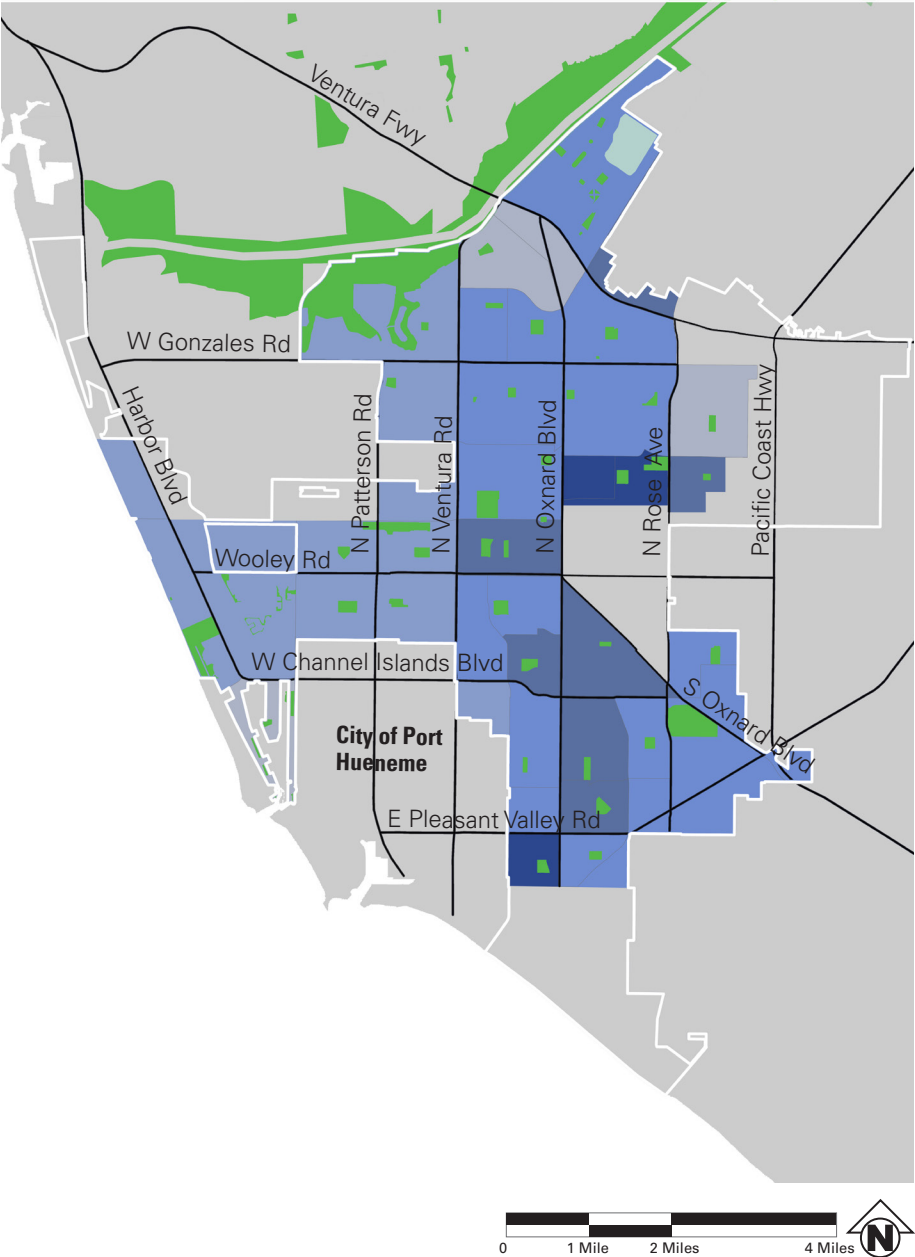
Source: [www.city-data.com/city/Oxnard-California.html](http://www.city-data.com/city/Oxnard-California.html); [datausa.io/profile/geo/oxnard-ca](http://datausa.io/profile/geo/oxnard-ca)

# Percent of Population Below Poverty Level

Percent of Population Below Poverty Level by Census Tract



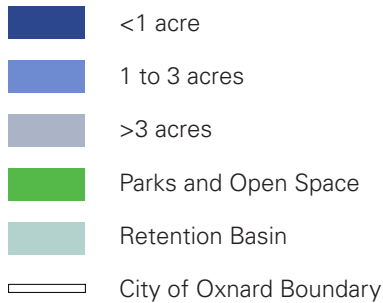
Neighborhoods on the eastern edge are in a lower income bracket than communities adjacent to the beach. This indicates need throughout Oxnard except in northwest area of the city. Lower income individuals have less dispensable resources to travel to visit a park, and are more likely to visit neighborhood parks (NRPA).



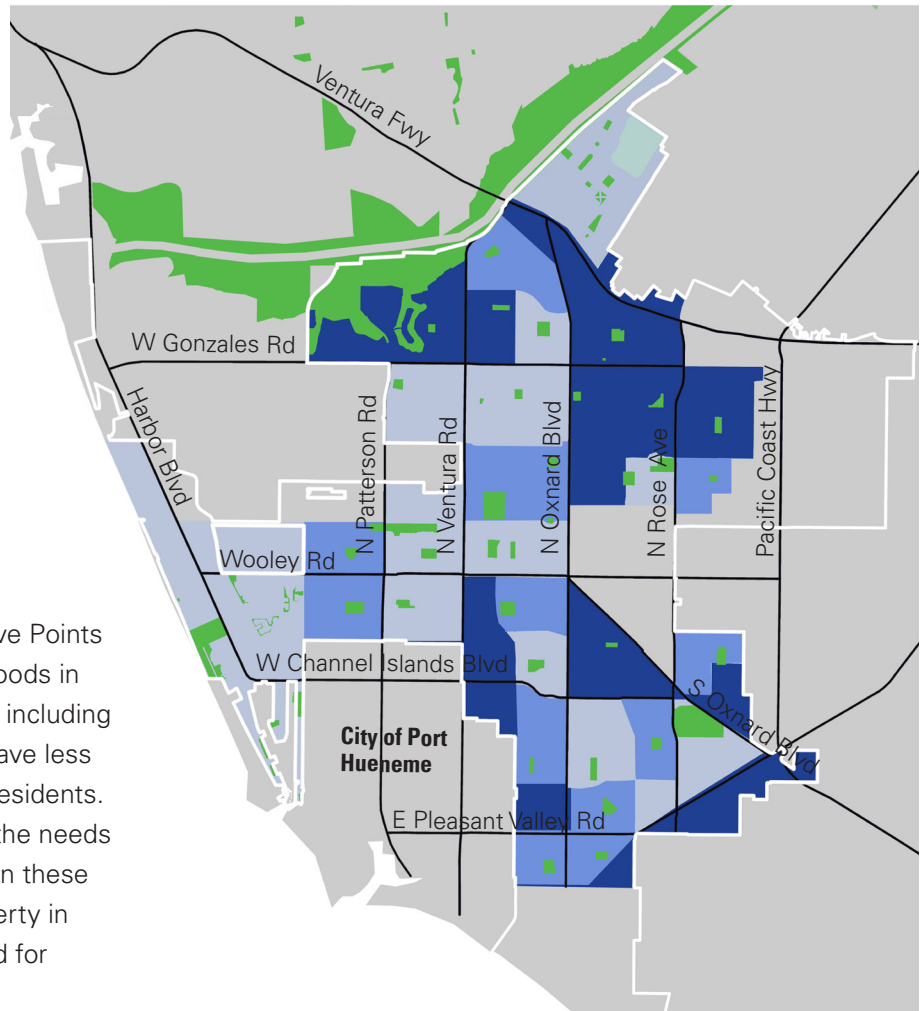
Source: 2014-2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Data by Census Tract

## Park Acres Per 1,000 Residents

Park Acres per 1,000 Residents by Block Groups



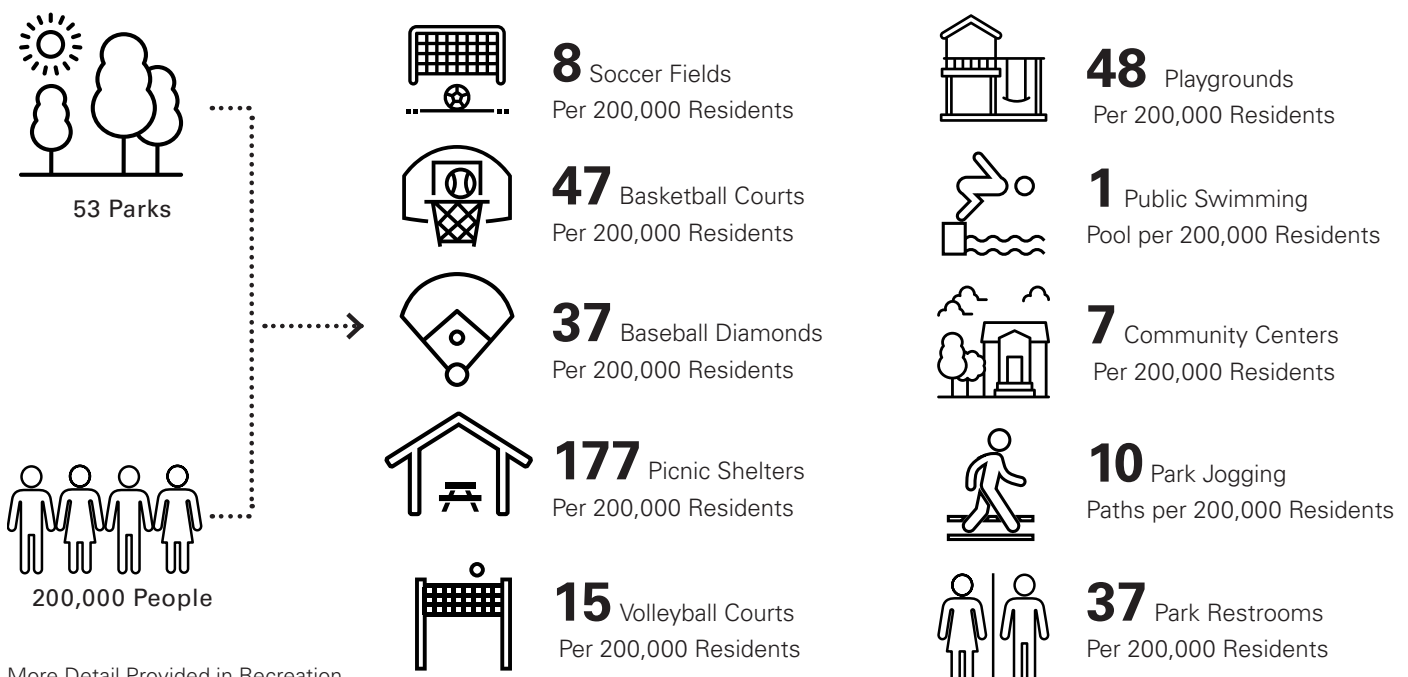
The city's most significant gap is the Five Points neighborhood. Several other neighborhoods in the center and eastern edge of the city, including Tierra Vista, Mar Vista and Redwood, have less than one acre of park space per 1,000 residents. This is not enough park space to meet the needs of the city's current population density in these areas. It is unknown at this time if property in these areas could be potentially secured for additional space.



Source: [www.parksforcalifornia.org/parkaccess](http://www.parksforcalifornia.org/parkaccess)

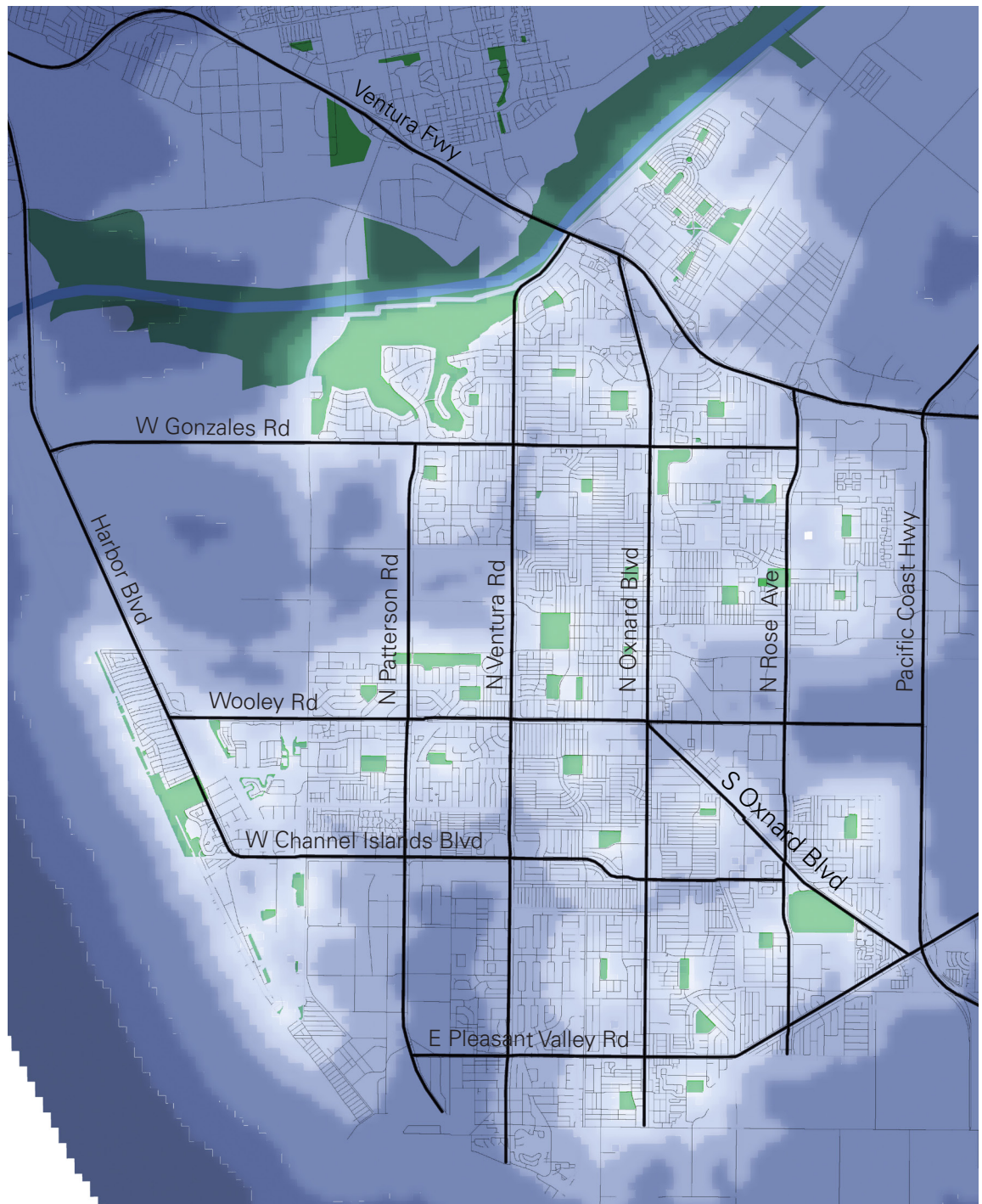


## OXNARD PARK AMENITIES PER POPULATION STATISTICS



More Detail Provided in Recreation Comparison Table

## PARK WALKABILITY FROM RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITIES



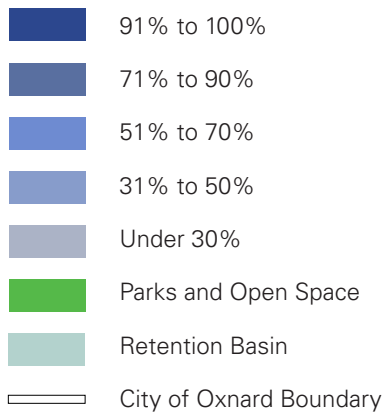
The majority of Oxnard's neighborhoods are within a half a mile walk of a park. However, some communities in the southern regions of Oxnard are closer to one mile from a park. The neighborhoods that have a higher walk time to any major park should be considered first for new parks and recreation spaces.

### Park Walkability in Miles

0' to 100'	.5 to 1 mile
100' to 500'	1 to 3 miles
500' to .25 mile	3 to 5 miles
.25 to .5 mile	5+ miles

# CalEnviroScreen Indicates Park Need in Northwest and Southeast Areas of Oxnard

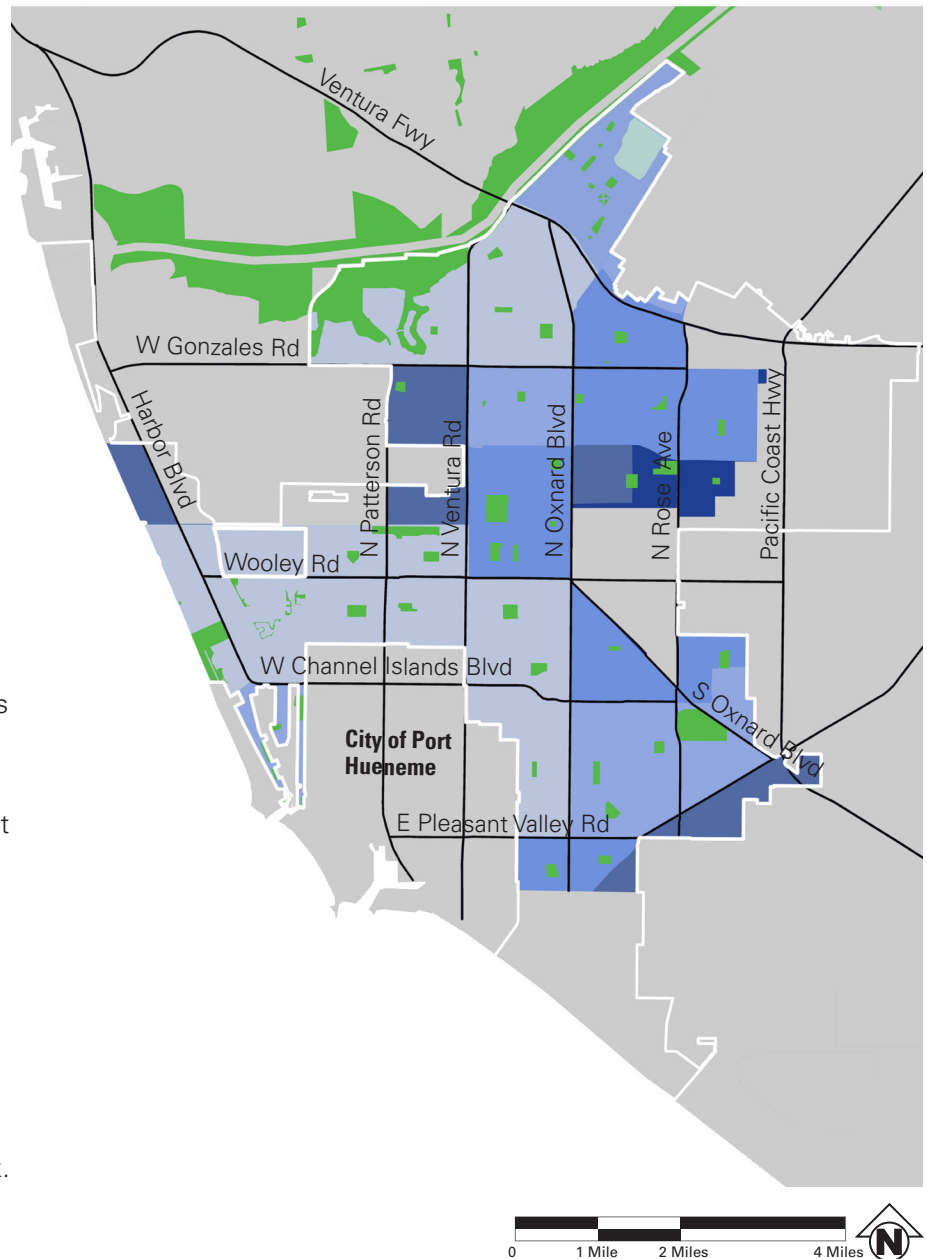
CalEnviroScreen 3.0 Results  
by Census Tracts



CalEnviroScreen is a mapping tool that uses environmental, health and socioeconomic factors including hazards from surrounding operations, closed landfills, and groundwater that needs to be desalted to identify communities that are most affected and often especially vulnerable to pollution's effects.

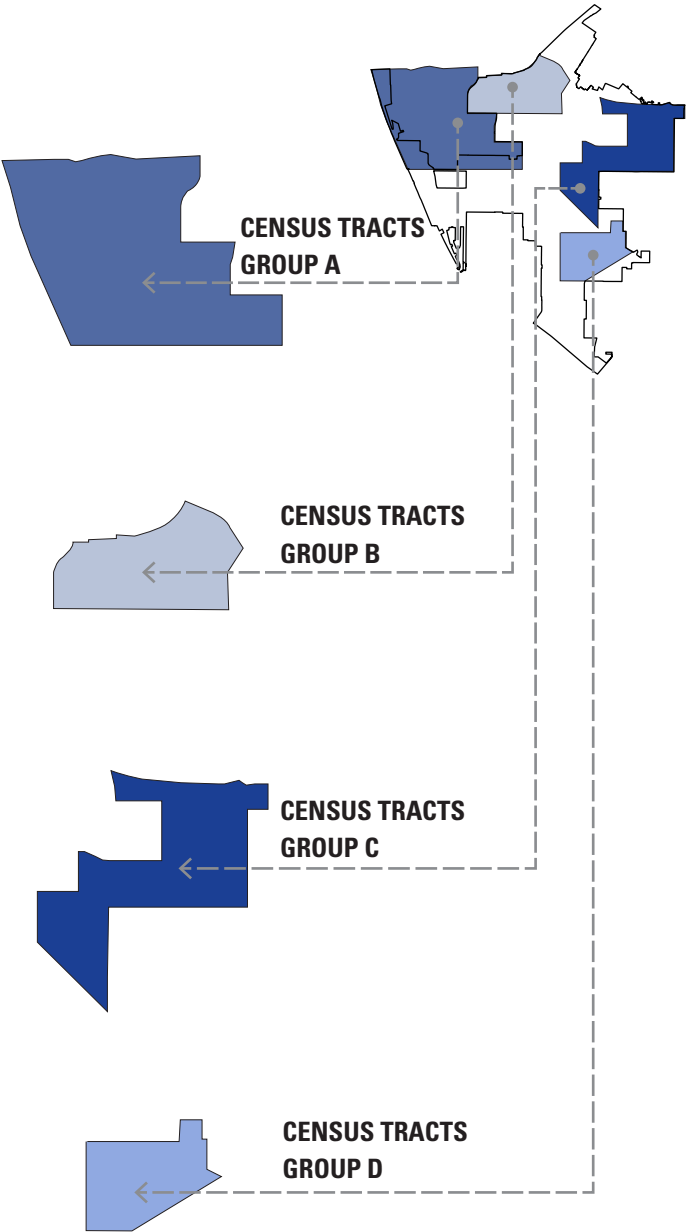
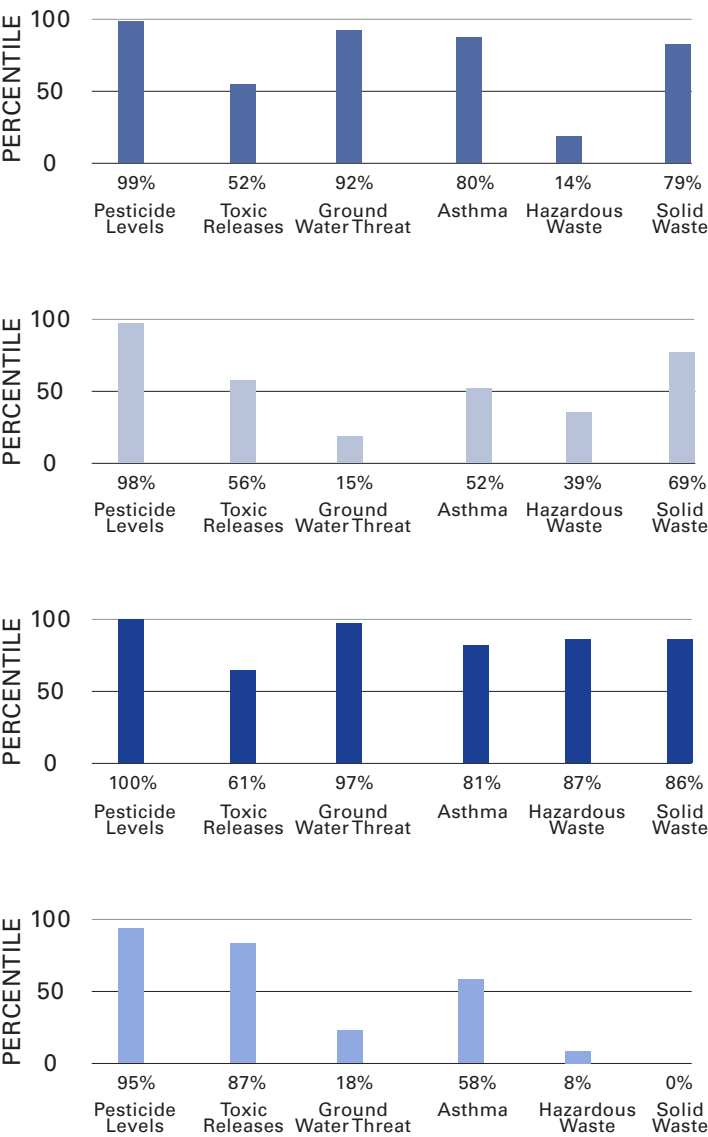
Although these are not hazards in the everyday context, they are indicators to identify how impacted by pollution California communities are. The score allows us to understand better which neighborhoods have a higher health risk. An area with a high score is one where residents experience a much higher pollution burden and therefore are at a higher health risk than areas with low scores.

The eastern border of the City along the agricultural lands has the highest CalEnviroScreen rating due to the area's exposure to pesticides.

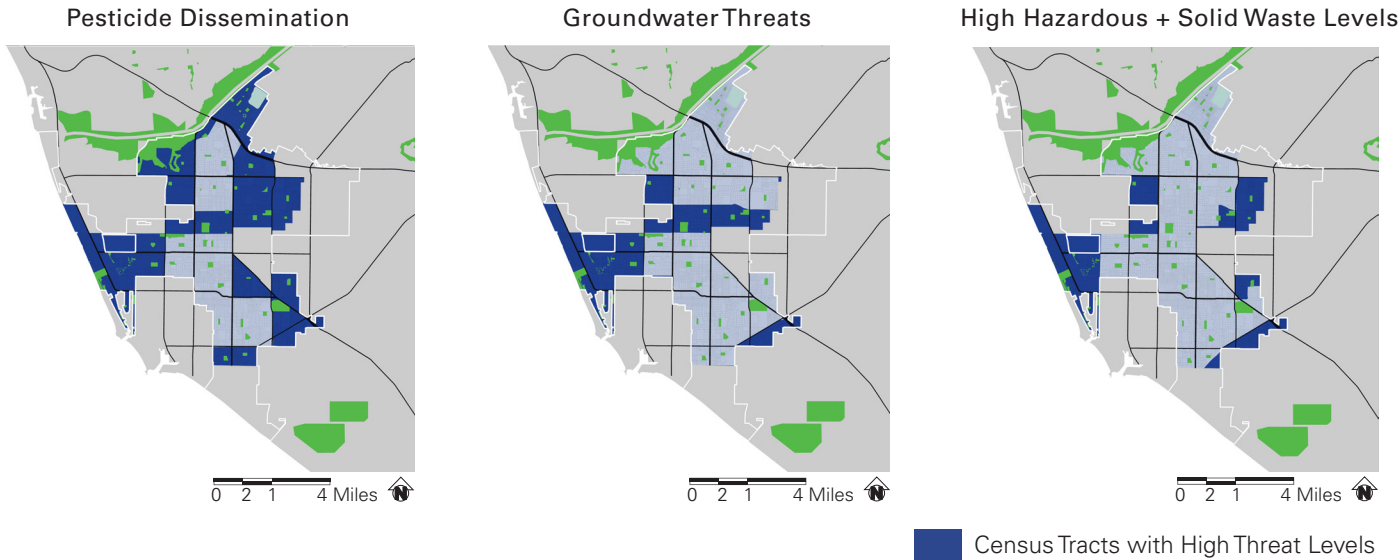


Source: [oehha.ca.gov/CalEnviroScreen/report/calenviroscreen-version-20](http://oehha.ca.gov/CalEnviroScreen/report/calenviroscreen-version-20)

# STATISTICS OF HEALTH PROBLEMS

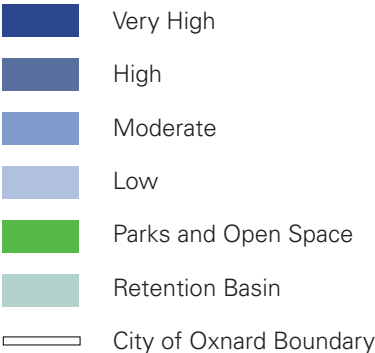


# OXNARD LOCATION OF TOP THREE HEALTH HAZARDS

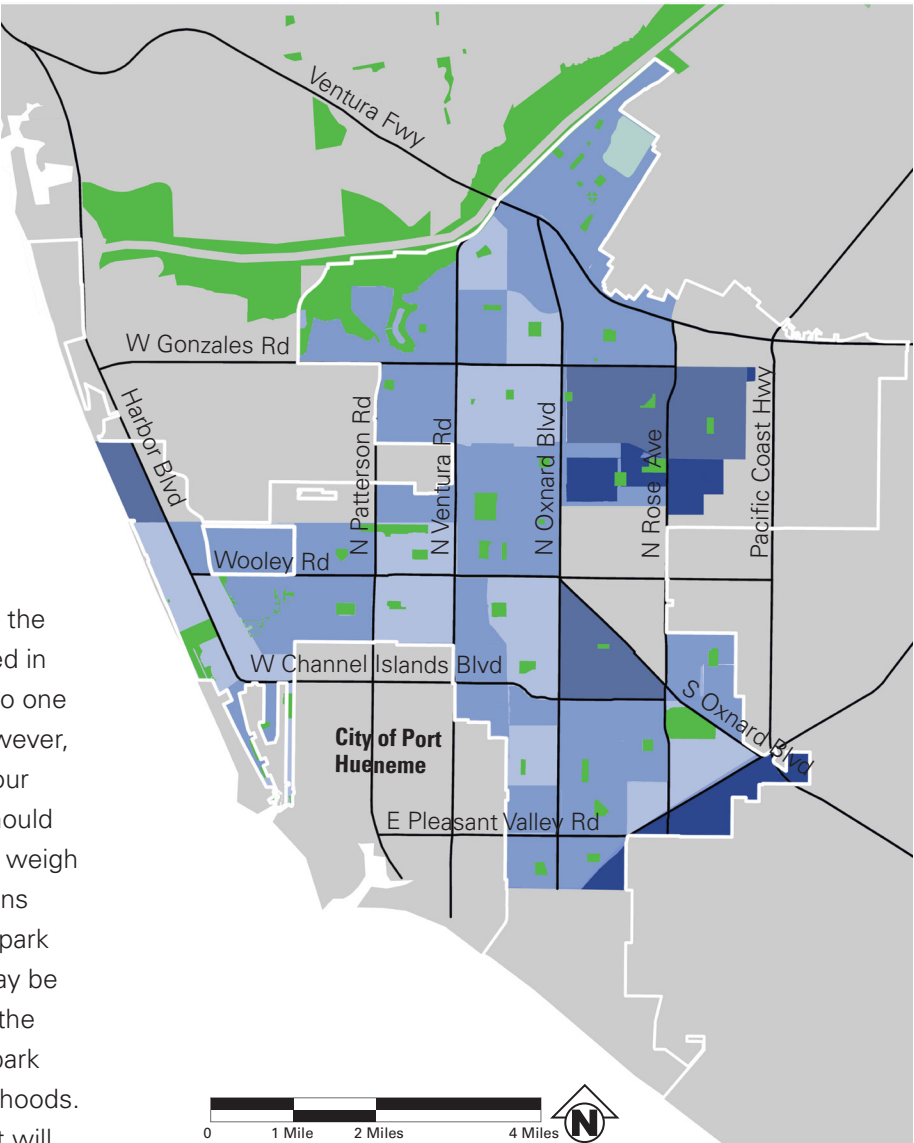


# Spatial Equity Mapping

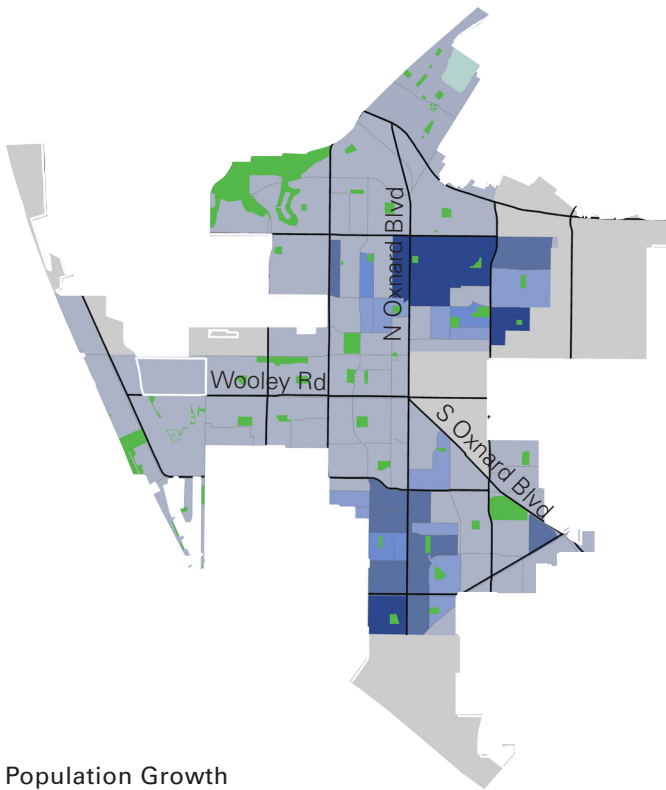
Spatial Equity Need  
(for facing page also)



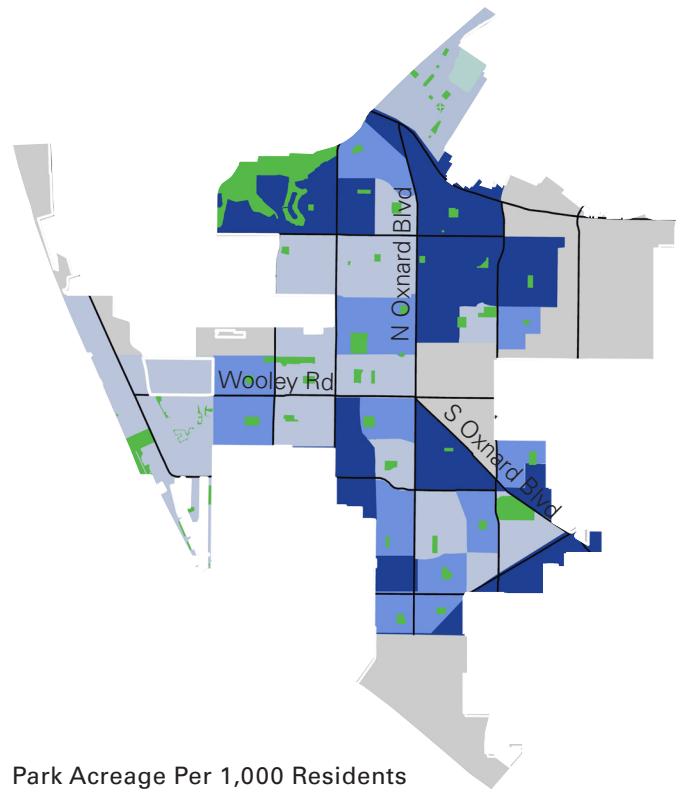
Weighing each of the factors explored in the previous pages indicates higher park need in Oxnard’s southern neighborhoods, but no one neighborhood has the highest need. However, it should be noted that this is only if all four factors are weighted equally. The City should prioritize certain factors if they want it to weigh heavier on analysis. Through conversations with the Planning Division, it seems like park acreage and service area of the parks may be a factor of higher priority. Or, prioritizing the CalEnviroScreen would further indicate park need in the south and northern neighborhoods. However, when furthering this analysis it will be important to consider access to parks and open space that may be “untraditional” such as regional assets and Homeowners Association-provided space. This analysis is a tool for the City to use in park needs discussions along with other tools like total asset management and the budgeting process, but it is not intended as a definitive indicator of where parks should be prioritized, improved and added.



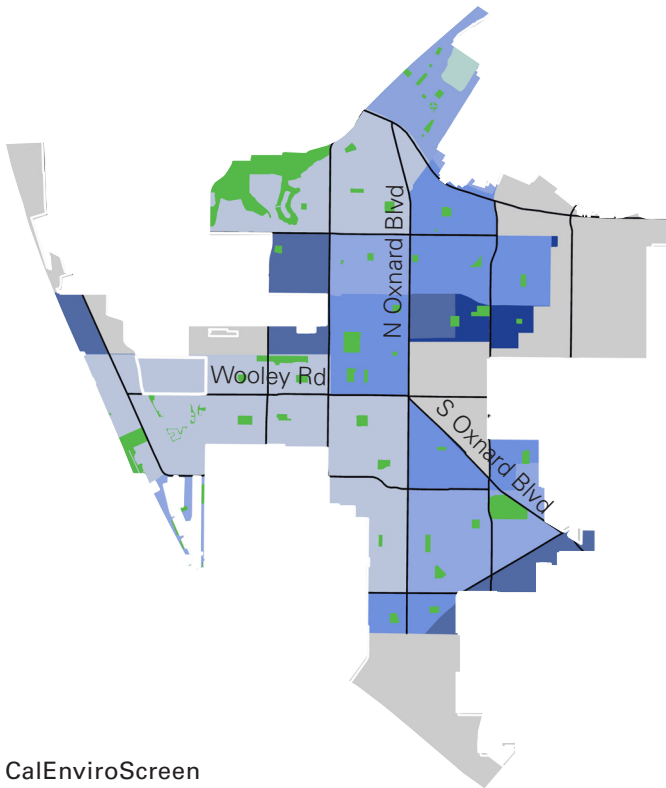
Source: [oehha.ca.gov/calenviroscreen/report/calenviroscreen-version-20](http://oehha.ca.gov/calenviroscreen/report/calenviroscreen-version-20)



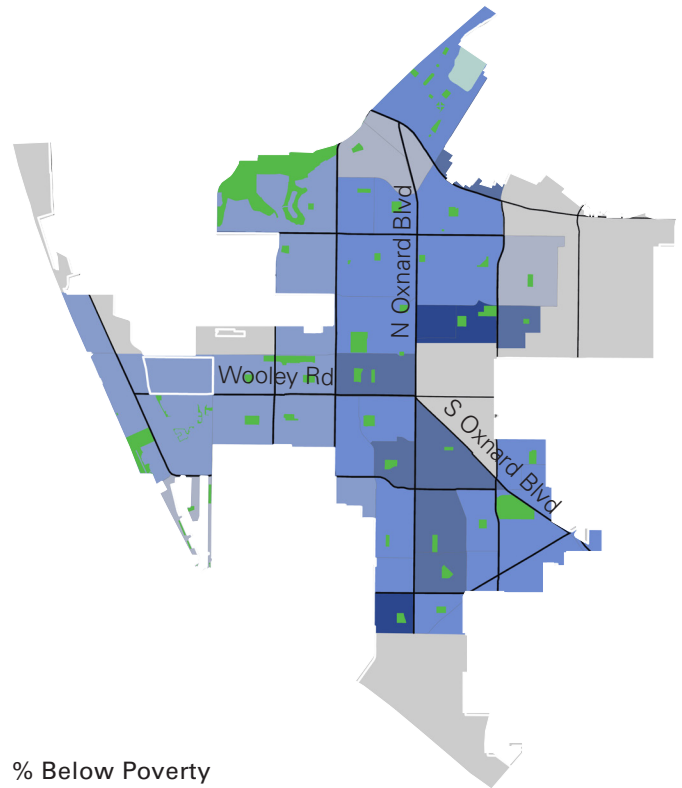
Population Growth



Park Acreage Per 1,000 Residents



CalEnviroScreen



% Below Poverty



***I would like Oxnard to be known for  
"its diversity, all cultures united."***

*- Survey Respondent*



# Community Engagement

Introduction to the Community Engagement Process

Advisory Committee

Focus Groups

Scientific & Open Survey Results

Community Workshop #1

Workshop-in-a-Box

Community Workshop #2

Creating a shared vision for Oxnard's diverse population meant creating a multi-pronged community outreach plan. To ensure the project team received the most feedback from the broadest cross-section of the City, it solicited input through community meetings, mailed and online surveys, and interviews with community stakeholders. The project team collected as much information as possible during this phase to create a complete understanding of how Oxnard's current park and the recreational system is meeting or failing to meet community needs.

# Introduction to the Community Engagement Process

The City of Oxnard's park system serves over 200,000 residents from diverse backgrounds. To reach as many people as possible, the project team developed a public engagement strategy that effectively captured the concerns and values of all major community groups, families, and individuals. This strategy included the following tactics:

## Focus Groups

Six focus group sessions were held over two days. Each group was made up of selected individuals and experts in a particular field to gain valuable information from a local perspective.

## Community Workshops

Two rounds of two community workshops were held in January and April to get feedback from a larger group of Oxnard residents. Workshops were held on consecutive nights in different areas of the city to make it more convenient for people to attend. The workshops were also conducted as "open houses" so that people could still participate even if they only had 20 minutes.

## Advisory Committee

The Advisory Committee was a select group of community stakeholders who provided guidance by reviewing content and assisting the project team in formulating solutions.

## Statistically Valid Survey

Randomized mailed surveys were mailed to 1,800 random households in Oxnard to gather data. The purpose of this survey was to receive an objective, unbiased response from constituents. Surveys were in both English and Spanish and included a self-addressed stamped envelope. These surveys were sent out in addition to the sidewalk workshops, community workshops, series of focus groups, and advisory committee meetings that involved a broad spectrum of stakeholders. Meetings were also held with all relevant City Divisions.

## Open Participation Survey

The survey was also available on Oxnard's website for any resident to complete, as well as at the First Community Workshop. This data was factored into its own set of results as a secondary data set.

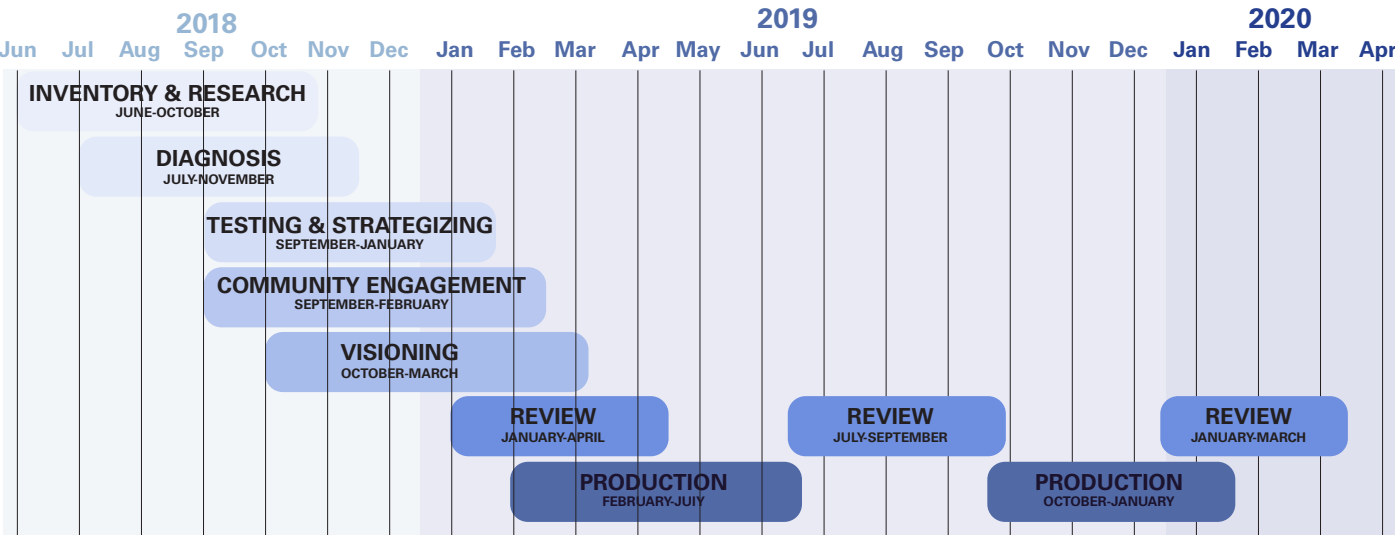
## Workshop-in-a-Box

A simplified version of the First Community Workshop conducted as an informal meeting with various non-profits, clubs, and targeted organizations. This allowed us to reach people unable to come to the larger community meetings.



*Above and to the right*  
Third Advisory Committee Meeting  
Survey Station at Community Workshop 1

# How Long Did This Take?



# Advisory Committee

The project Advisory Committee (AC) was instrumental in guiding the project team regarding engaging the community and reviewing content before releasing the Master Plan to a broader audience. The project team met with this group five times in December, January, February, March and June. Each meeting focused on presenting the project team's research, exploring Oxnard's history of parks/recreation, and strategizing on how to engage the community during workshops most effectively.

The Advisory Committee included people who come from diverse backgrounds to get input and feedback from the broadest cross-section. The committee was hand-selected from engaged focus group attendees and recommendations by the City of Oxnard. Throughout the process, the AC became the project team's primary support in spreading the word about engagement and answering questions about local knowledge and City culture.



## Advisory Committee Members

- **Alex Torres**  
First 5 Family Center
- **Alice Sweetland**  
Oxnard Senior Services Commission
- **Alyce Bosaki**  
Oxnard Convention Center
- **Andrew Arreola**  
Sunset Little League
- **Art Gutierrez**  
City of Oxnard
- **Aurelio Ocampo**  
Friends of Campus Park
- **Brian Yanez**  
City of Oxnard
- **Gabe Teran**  
Parks, Recreation & Community Services Commission
- **Gerard Kapuscik**  
V.C. Watershed Protection District
- **Giles Pettifor**  
Port of Hueneme
- **Greg Barnes**  
City of Oxnard
- **Helen Lopez**  
Sunset Little League
- **Jamie Amburgey**  
V.C. Public Health
- **Jim Danza**  
Friends of the Santa Clara River
- **Joe Guerra**  
Mermaids Softball League
- **Kat Selm**  
The Nature Conservancy
- **Kate Faulkner**  
Channel Islands Bike Club
- **Larry and Shirley Godwin**  
Saviors Road Design Team
- **Ocil Yuleima Herrejon Rivera**  
CAUSE
- **Peter Dixon**  
The Nature Conservancy
- **Priscilla Cisneros**  
Reiter Affiliated Companies: Sembrando Salud
- **Ramona Villavicencio**  
Oxnard Union High School District
- **Ray Blattel**  
Oxnard Tennis Center
- **Roger Poirier**  
Parks, Recreation & Community Services Commission
- **Sergio Perez**  
Oxnard Guerreros Youth Academy
- **Silvia Lopez-Navarro**  
V.C. Public Health
- **Steve DeGeorge**  
V.C. Transportation Commission
- **Steve Nash**  
Parks, Recreation & Community Services Commission
- **Vanessa Teran**  
Mixteco Indigena Community Organizing Project (MICOP)

# Focus Groups

The Focus Groups were for **discovery**. They provided an opportunity for groups to **brainstorm ideas** and learn the **perspectives** of all involved.

Focus Groups were a critical tool for understanding the community's concerns, opportunities, values, and needs. The Focus Group meetings provided an in-depth discussion with a select group of experts and constituents on specific topics. This allowed the project team to leverage the community's existing knowledge to collect as much pertinent information as possible in a comfortable, open forum. Participants were selected based on recommendations by the City of Oxnard, representing a myriad of community partners, non-profits, activists, volunteers, and employees. Six focus groups were conducted to cover a wide range of interests within the Oxnard Community.



First Advisory Committee Meeting

## Natural And Agricultural Resources Focus Group

The Natural Resources and Agriculture Group gathered those stakeholders with experience and ideas related to conserving natural resources, maintaining working agricultural lands, and outdoor programming or educational opportunities. Constituents in this group were essential to understanding how Oxnard's parks can capitalize on existing ecological systems and resources. Additionally, this group provided perspective on methodologies to improve Oxnard's environmental health in the development of new parks and open spaces.



### WHAT WAS HEARD

- When planning future parks and open spaces, water usage needs to be considered. The **cost of irrigation** is continuing to increase.
- Oxnard needs more significant **buffers between urban and natural areas**. The City needs to take advantage of natural amenities, such as Ormond Beach, to provide access to large, natural spaces.
- There are ample opportunities for bike transportation that are not being utilized in Oxnard. The City needs to **provide more bike lanes as an opportunity to get to parks**. Bike routes should be added along naturalized channels such as the Santa Clara River. The City is working on a Mobility Plan to address these issues.
- There needs to be an **incorporation of natural areas and habitats into Oxnard's parks**. This is an educational opportunity to which many residents don't have access.

### GROUPS IN ATTENDANCE

- Friends of the Santa Clara River
- Sierra Club Ventura Chapter
- County of Ventura
- Central Coast Alliance United for a Sustainable Economy (CAUSE)
- Ormond Beach Task Force
- The Nature Conservancy
- Saviers Road Design Team
- Ventura Audubon Society
- The Community Roots Garden
- Ventura Co. Stormwater Program
- Friends of Campus Park
- Pollinate

## Program Providers Focus Group

The Program Providers Group included recreation providers as well as profit and non-profit partners. Their role was to provide information on available facilities and service gaps within the City's programming/recreational offerings. The Program Providers discussed mechanisms for incorporating more cultural and artistic programming into park operations. This includes an approach for streamlining large events, renting facilities, and implementing public art and history into public spaces.



### WHAT WAS HEARD

- There is a **lack of music and art venues** in Oxnard's parks because of funding challenges. It is important to consider how to incorporate more art and culture into the parks.
- **Booking park facilities for events can be challenging.** Looking into creating a "one-stop-shop" for permit processing could help providers get their programs in the parks more efficiently and practically.
- Oxnard's existing festivals have been a good **revenue generator**. Park programming should consider events more often with ideas such as touch-a-truck, vintage car shows, concerts, food festivals and markets.
- The City should reform the process for **establishing fees** to rent out park facilities.
- Oxnard needs to reflect and celebrate its **history** in public spaces. There is currently not much reference to history within any of the park sites.

### GROUPS IN ATTENDANCE

- Senior Services Commission
- Cultural Arts Commission
- Oxnard Historic Farm Park
- City of Oxnard Recreation Division

## Role Of Parks In Our Community Focus Group

The Role of Parks in Our Community Focus Group included representatives from local businesses. Through the discussions with this group, the project team learned the perspective of companies and institutions on how economics can play a role in park development. Additionally, it allowed the project team to explore how the private sector could partner with the City in the future to fund park improvements.



### WHAT WAS HEARD

- Improving Oxnard's **sustainability** in regards to resources and transportation would save the City a lot of money.
- **Beach activation and better transit** would result in more tourists coming to Oxnard, thereby increasing revenue generated from sales taxes and improving the local economy.
- The process of renting parks to local businesses must be improved. There is a need to **balance revenue with affordability**. Many businesses are not renting the parks because of the fee compared with the amenities.
- Oxnard should take more advantage of **business sponsorships** for events and park dedication or maintenance. There needs to be more partnerships between the City and local businesses.
- **Safety** is a big reason why many do not enjoy Oxnard's parks. Implement an "Adopt-A-Park" program to create a partnership and economically maintain the park to "safe levels."
- Money is the biggest impediment to improving the parks. The group discussed ways to **leverage funding**, such as organizing events, creating park districts, and establishing foundations.

### GROUPS IN ATTENDANCE

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| • City of Port Hueneme                              | • River Ridge Golf Club                     |
| • Port of Hueneme                                   | • Laborers International Union 585          |
| • Reiter Affiliated Companies                       | • Cabrillo Economic Development Corporation |
| • St Johns Hospital                                 | • Independent Consultants                   |
| • Naval Base Ventura County                         | • Downtown Oxnard Management District       |
| • Ventura County Public Health                      |   |
| • Parks, Recreation & Community Services Commission |   |

## Schools and Youth Focus Group

The Schools and Youth Focus Group emphasized the importance of family facilities and school partnerships to provide parks and recreation opportunities. In participation were representatives from Oxnard's five school districts as well as others in family-focused non-profit groups. Representatives from this group discussed collaboration. Regarding future development, participants gave insight into the opportunities and constraints of park space for our children and youth.



### WHAT WAS HEARD

- Very few of Oxnard's parks have **playgrounds** that support the full range of ages (0-5 and 6-12) and abilities.
- Participants recommend adding **community centers and fields** in the parks to promote more programming and reduce the burden on schools.
- There is a big public outcry when schools cannot provide for everyone's needs. There is increased demand placed on schools, which means the fields and facilities get **over-used**.
- Invest in **bike lanes** to create an "interconnected" system of parks.
- Present parks serve Oxnard's needs as best they can for the available resources, but they need to improve. **Oxnard needs a pool, protected bike lanes, more opportunities for teens, a skate park, playgrounds for children 0-3, and programs for senior residents and those with special needs.**

### GROUPS IN ATTENDANCE

- Child Development Resources
- Oxnard College
- Oxnard Elementary School District
- Hueneme Elementary School District
- Rio School District
- Proyecto Mixteco Indigena/ Mixteco Indigena Community Organizing Project (MICOP)
- First5
- Representatives of Inclusive Playgrounds
- El Centrito Family Learning Center

## Serving A Diverse Community Focus Group

Organizations that participated in the Serving a Diverse Community Focus Group were public health providers, senior services providers, Hispanic groups, non-profit organizations, and community outreach agencies. The discussion focused on recreation trends, service gaps, perceived barriers to participation, minority group park needs, and outreach efforts. The group discussed how to make park spaces more equitable for Oxnard's diverse community. Additionally, the group had advice for making future parks and open spaces more inclusive.



### WHAT WAS HEARD

- Many of Oxnard's parks are not well-maintained. They also suffer from the presence of vagrants and drug addicts. Improve the **overall maintenance** of parks by providing **restrooms, lighting, and an adequate police presence**.
- Oxnard needs more **lighting and programming in parks**. Programming such as the Summer Concert Series or P.A.L. movie nights are good examples. Hosting events allow people to have **"eyes on the park."**
- There is a **lack of communication** about public programs in Oxnard. Some recommended the City **broadcast information** on the radio or social media platforms about parks, programs, and amenities the City offers.
- Oxnard parks serve **multi-generational and multi-cultural needs**. The City needs to continue to provide resources to attract people of all demographic groups. Reaching out to **indigenous communities** is particularly important.
- Oxnard's signage and wayfinding are only in English; signs should also incorporate **Spanish and Mixteco**.

### GROUPS IN ATTENDANCE

- Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán/Chicano Student Movement of Aztlán (MEChA)
- The Carnegie Art Museum
- Oxnard Friends of the Library Foundation and Oxnard Library
- Proyecto Mixteco Indígena/ Mixteco Indígena Community Organizing Project (MICOP)
- Oxnard Police Department
- Parks, Recreation & Community Services Commission
- The Senior Services Commission
- Clinicas del Camino Real, Inc
- Police Actives League (PAL)
- El Centrito Family Learning Center
- Future Leaders of America

## Special Interest (Sports & Biking) Focus Group

The Special Interest Group gathered representatives from Oxnard's diverse sports community, bike clubs, and urban agriculture groups. They provided insight into their experiences participating in recreational activities in Oxnard. Additionally, this group focused on the challenges of equitably distributing funds and City resources. As major park users, the special interest constituents made a case for more funding to properly maintain programs and facilities.



### WHAT WAS HEARD

- There is a significant **shortage of soccer** fields in Oxnard. This shortage results in soccer teams practicing on other sports' fields, such as softball and baseball, which negatively impacts the condition of all turf fields in Oxnard.
- The poorly maintained tennis courts are a **safety hazard**. The Tennis Center is heavily used but has not received funding from the City in years. Members of the Tennis Center have spent their own money updating the facility themselves.
- Not enough people engage in recreational biking because of the **shortage of safe bike routes and trails**.
- The baseball community would like to see improvements in the condition of Durley Park and other facilities. Little League wants to put lights on the fields to **discourage crime and prevent the homeless** from lingering.

### GROUPS IN ATTENDANCE

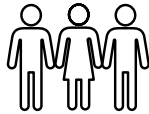
- East Side Little League
- Oxnard Guerreros Soccer
- Soccer Community Representative
- Oxnard Sunset Little League
- Oxnard Tennis Center
- Pickle Ball Community Representative
- Channel Islands Bicycle Club
- Parks and Recreation Commission

# Scientific & Open Survey Results

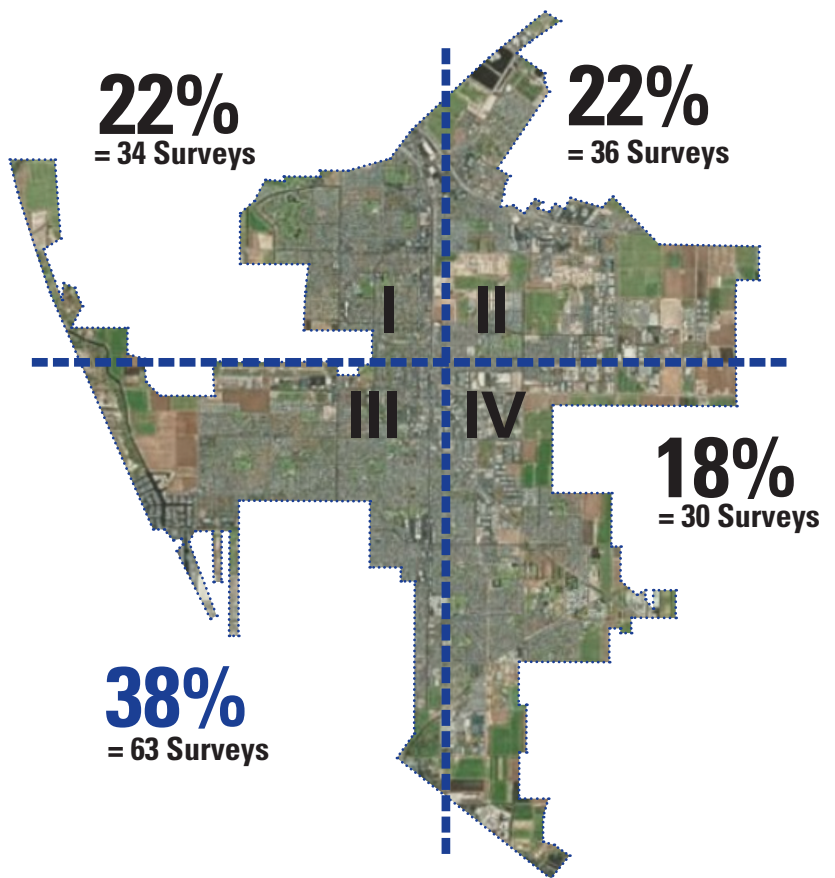
The Scientific Survey is an **experiment**. The **randomization** provides an unbiased data set.

It was essential to get a wide range of opinions on Oxnard's park and recreational needs to prevent special interest groups from having an outsized voice. Collecting this data required soliciting input from residents that typically do not participate in the planning process or may not currently be the primary user group of parks and recreation facilities. In October 2018, the project team sent surveys out to 1,800 random households across Oxnard in Spanish and English. The selected participants were contacted three times to encourage participation. In November 2018, the project team received 164 surveys back—that's a response rate of 9%, which is pretty typical for open surveys such as this one. An average response rate for these types of surveys is between 10% to 20%, which results in a 95% confidence interval (often referred to as the "margin of error") of  $\pm 6.3\%$  to  $\pm 4.9\%$ . The synthesized answers to the Oxnard survey served as a baseline to compare with additional community data.

**164 TOTAL RESPONDENTS**



## SCIENTIFIC SURVEY RESPONSE BREAKDOWN BY QUADRANT



Open Participation Survey is **reflective**. The results generally illustrate the opinion of residents more **involved** in the parks.

The Open Participation Survey collected responses from residents that typically participate in the planning process or are involved with parks and recreation facilities. The questions were the same as the scientific survey, but were presented online on the City’s website, at the first community workshop, or during a Workshop-in-a-Box. The project team assumed that participants who filled out the online survey were directed there from a special interest source, such as their tennis club. The project team compared the Open Participation Survey results against the Scientific Survey conclusions.

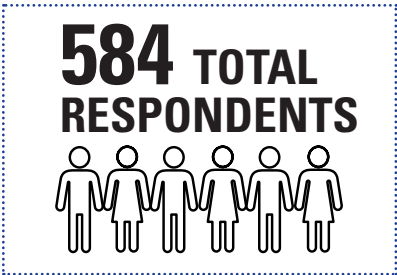
For the most part, the Open Participation Survey matched the results of the Scientific Survey.

In those cases where the two differed significantly, the Open Survey results are in an orange dialogue box.

OPEN PARTICIPATION SURVEY

This dialogue box identifies open survey results that differ from the scientific survey by more than

10%



OPEN PARTICIPATION  
RESPONSE BREAKDOWN  
BY TYPE

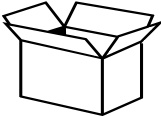


FIRST COMMUNITY WORKSHOP

19% = 113 Surveys


\* 91 English

\* 22 Spanish



WORKSHOP-IN-A-BOX

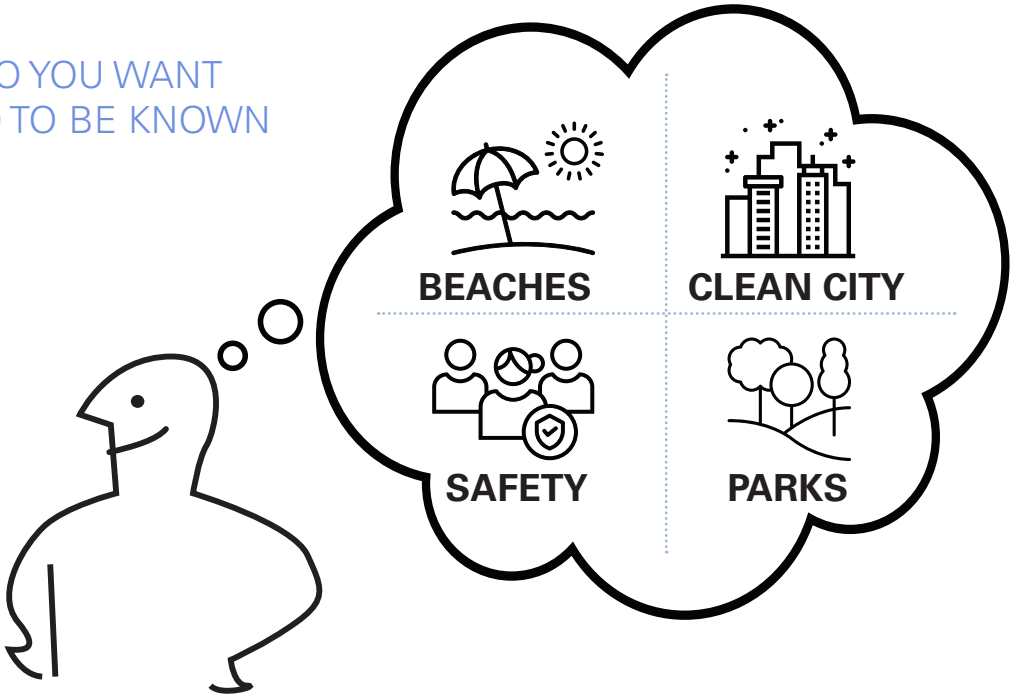
28% = 166 Surveys



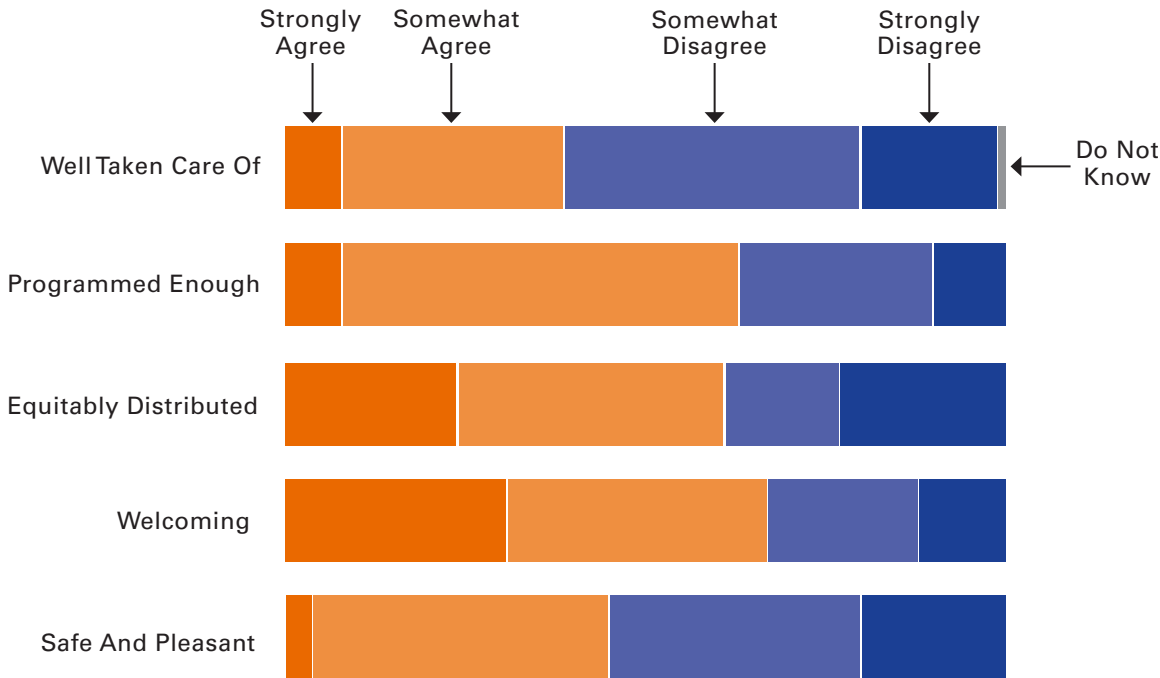
OPEN ONLINE SURVEY

52% = 305 Surveys

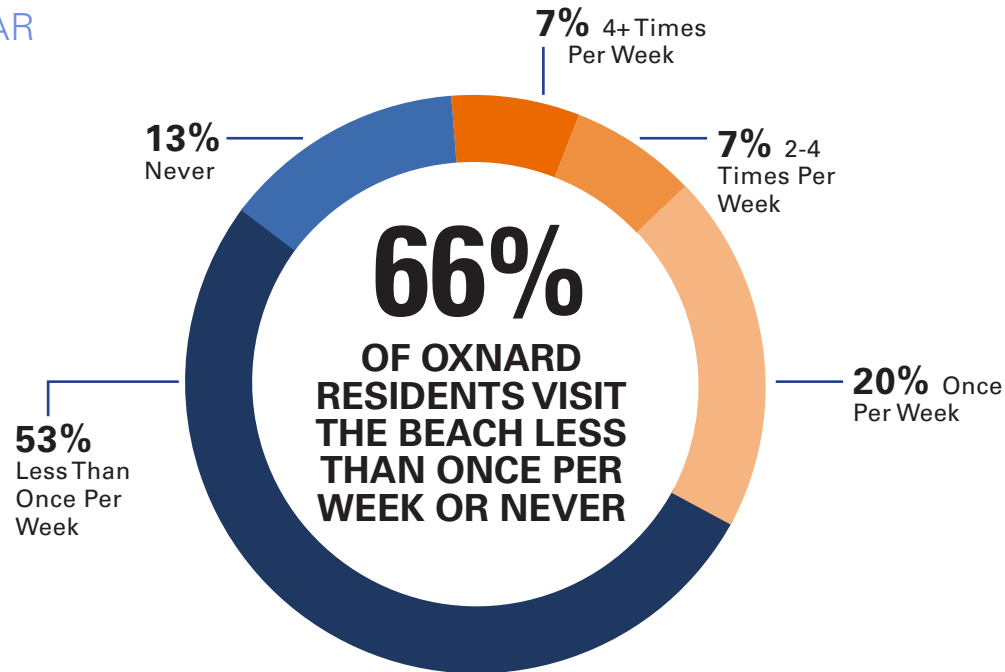
WHAT DO YOU WANT  
OXNARD TO BE KNOWN  
FOR?



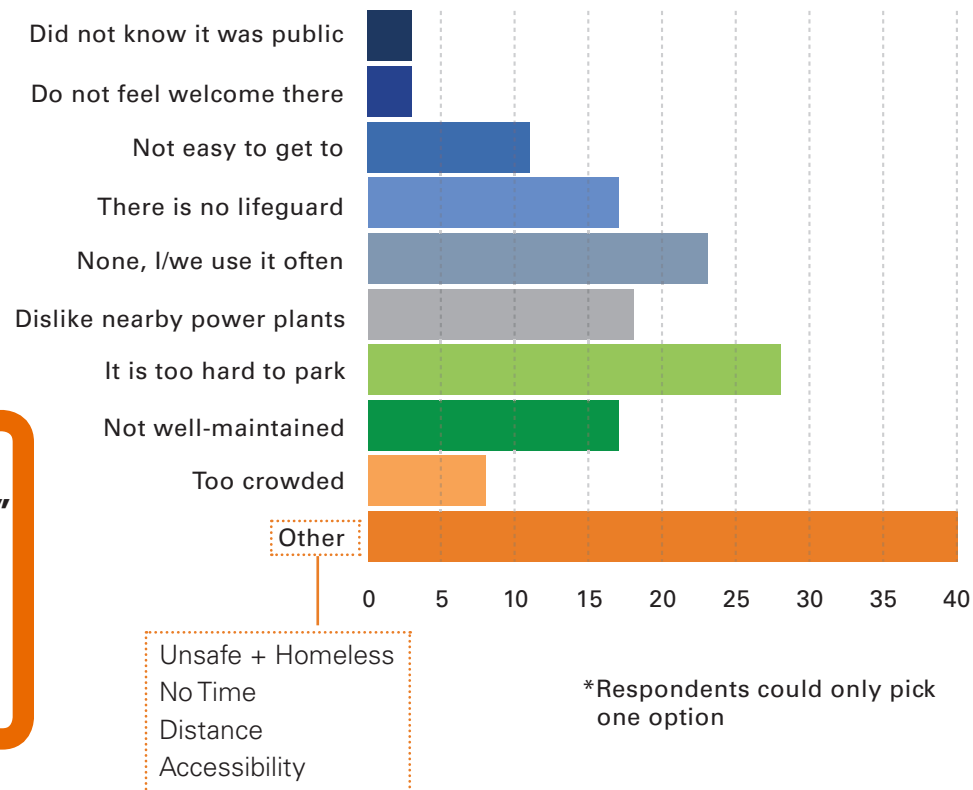
OXNARD'S PARKS ARE...



DURING THE PAST YEAR  
HOW OFTEN DID YOU  
VISIT THE BEACH?



WHY DOESN'T  
YOUR FAMILY  
VISIT OXNARD'S  
BEACHES MORE  
OFTEN?



OPEN PARTICIPATION  
SURVEY

"NO LIFEGUARD" &  
"POOR MAINTENANCE"  
EACH INCREASED BY

**13%**

## OXNARD'S PARKS....

### STRONGLY AGREE

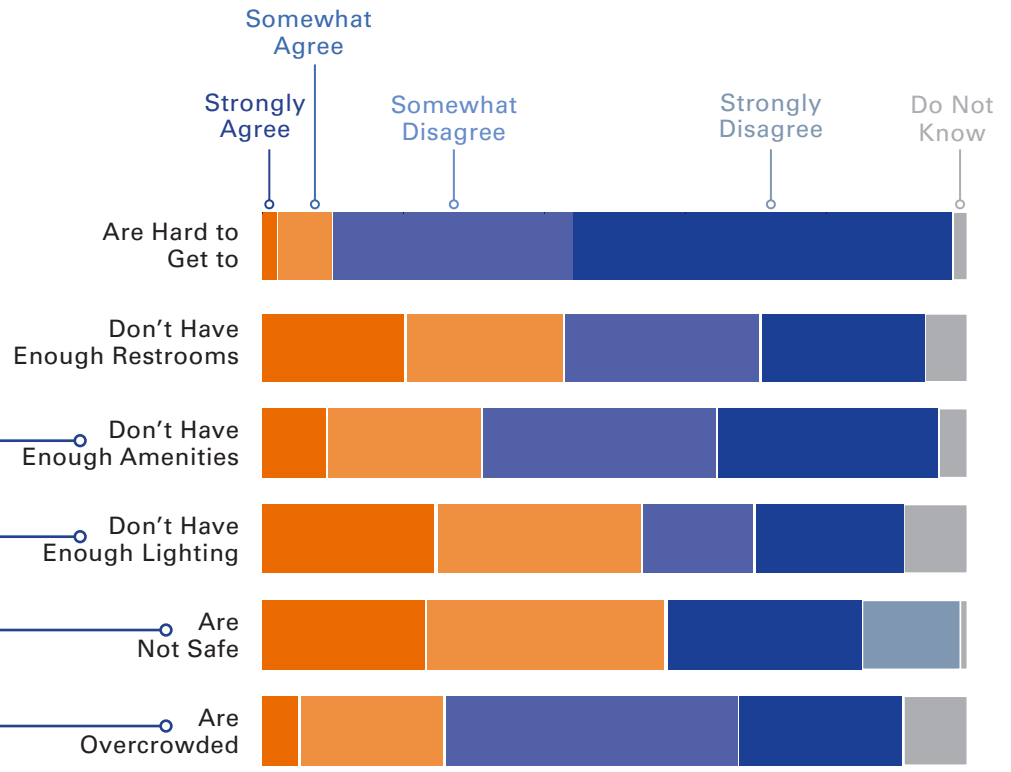
**INCREASED BY 33%**

**INCREASED BY 35%**

**INCREASED BY 32%**

**INCREASED BY 14%**

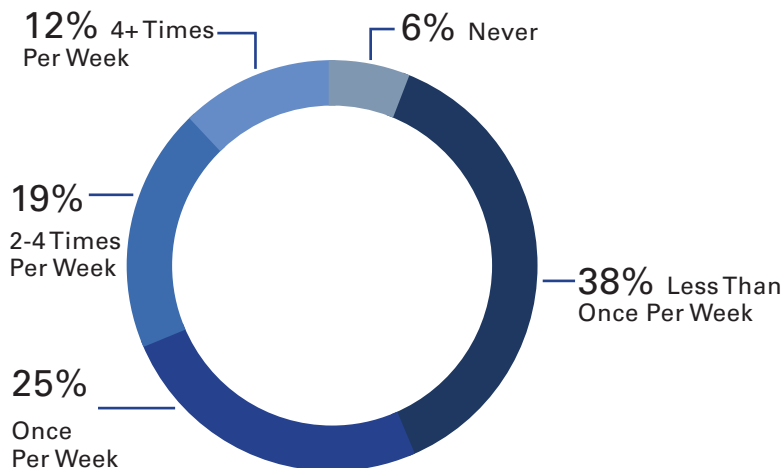
OPEN  
PARTICIPATION  
SURVEY



### THE MAJORITY OF OXNARD RESIDENTS BELIEVE....

- Parks are fairly easy to get to
- Lack of lighting is a major problem
- Lack of restrooms is a problem
- Parks are not safe

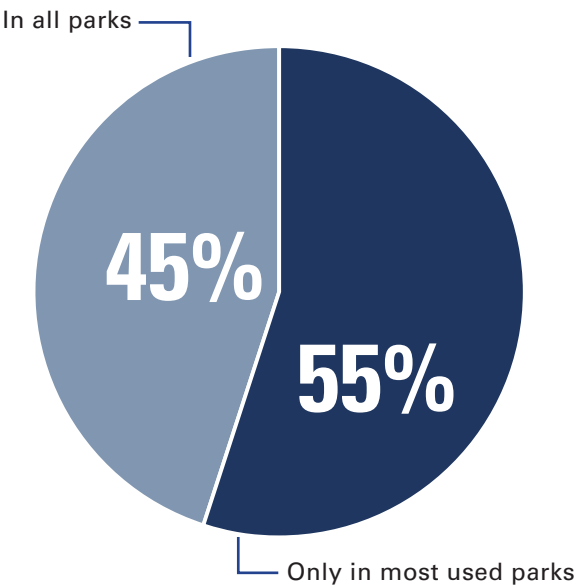
### DURING THE PAST YEAR HOW OFTEN DID YOU VISIT A CITY PARK?



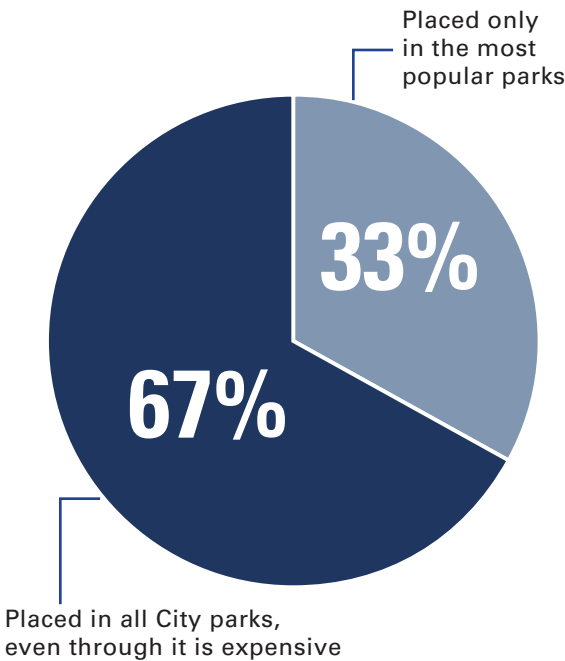
**44%**  
OF OXNARD  
RESIDENTS VISIT  
A PARK LESS THAN  
ONCE PER WEEK  
OR NEVER

**31%**  
OPEN SURVEY

LIGHTING OF COURTS AT NIGHT  
SHOULD BE....



RESTROOMS SHOULD  
BE...



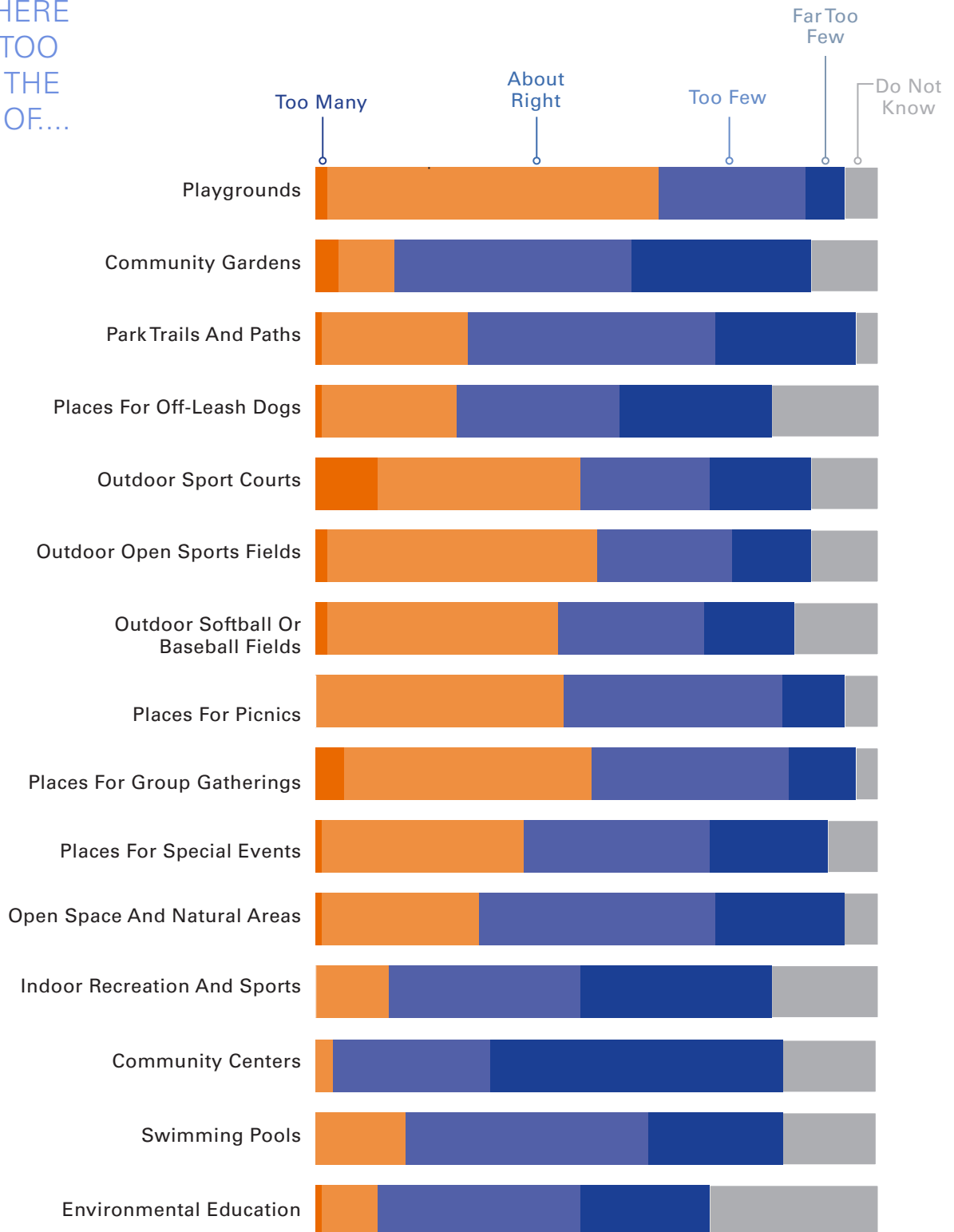
HOW DO OXNARD'S  
RESIDENTS FEEL  
ABOUT THEIR PARKS?



DO YOU THINK THERE ARE TOO MANY, TOO FEW, OR ABOUT THE RIGHT AMOUNT OF...

**THE MAJORITY OF OXNARD RESIDENTS BELIEVE....**

- Too few community gardens
- Too few trails and walking paths
- Too few open and natural spaces
- Too few indoor recreation areas
- Too few community centers
- Too few swimming pools
- Too few areas for environmental education
- Too few places for off-leash dogs



NEW PARK SPACES  
SHOULD...

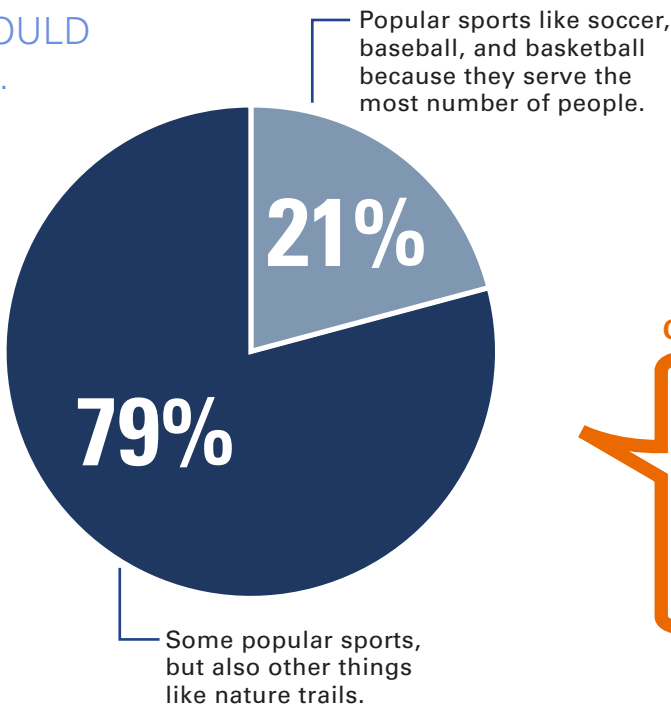


OPEN PARTICIPATION SURVEY

**43%** prefer more  
soccer fields

**57%** prefer other  
passive activities

PARK SPACES SHOULD  
BE DEVOTED TO....

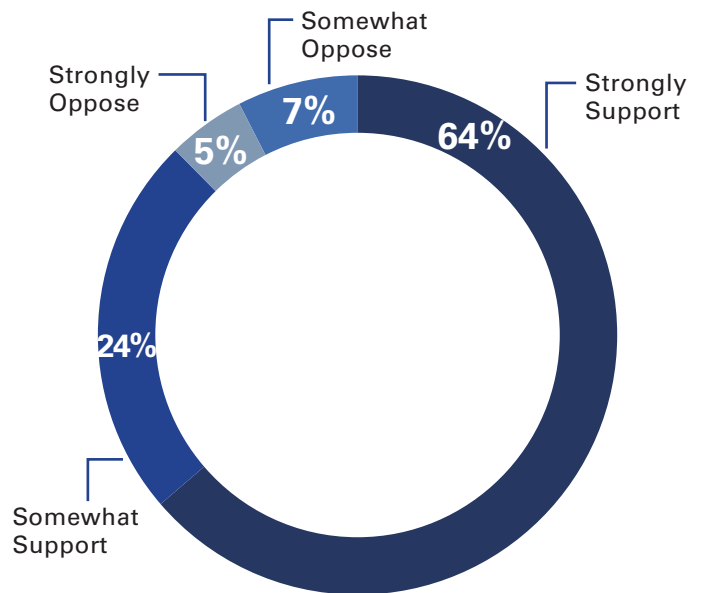


OPEN PARTICIPATION SURVEY

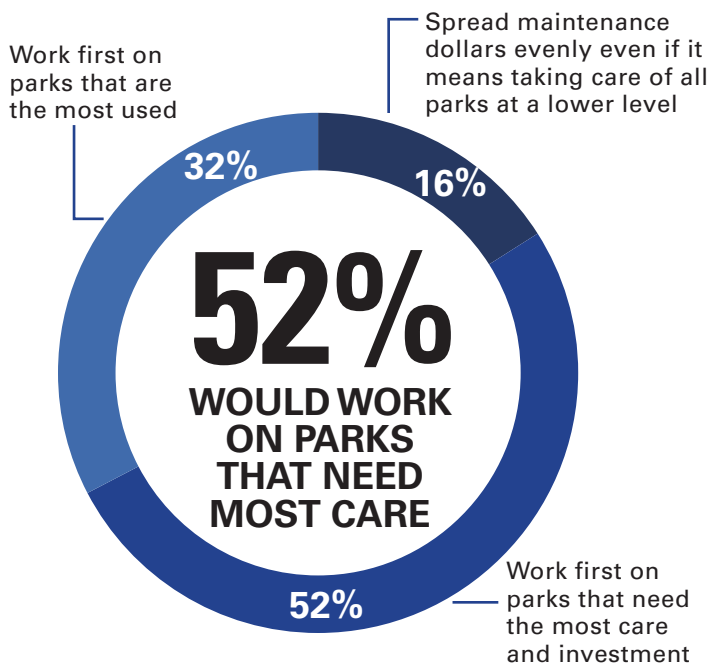
**42%** prefer popular  
sports

**58%** prefer other  
diverse activities

HOW MUCH WOULD YOU SUPPORT  
CREATING A BIKE AND WALKING PATH  
ALONG THE SANTA CLARA RIVER?



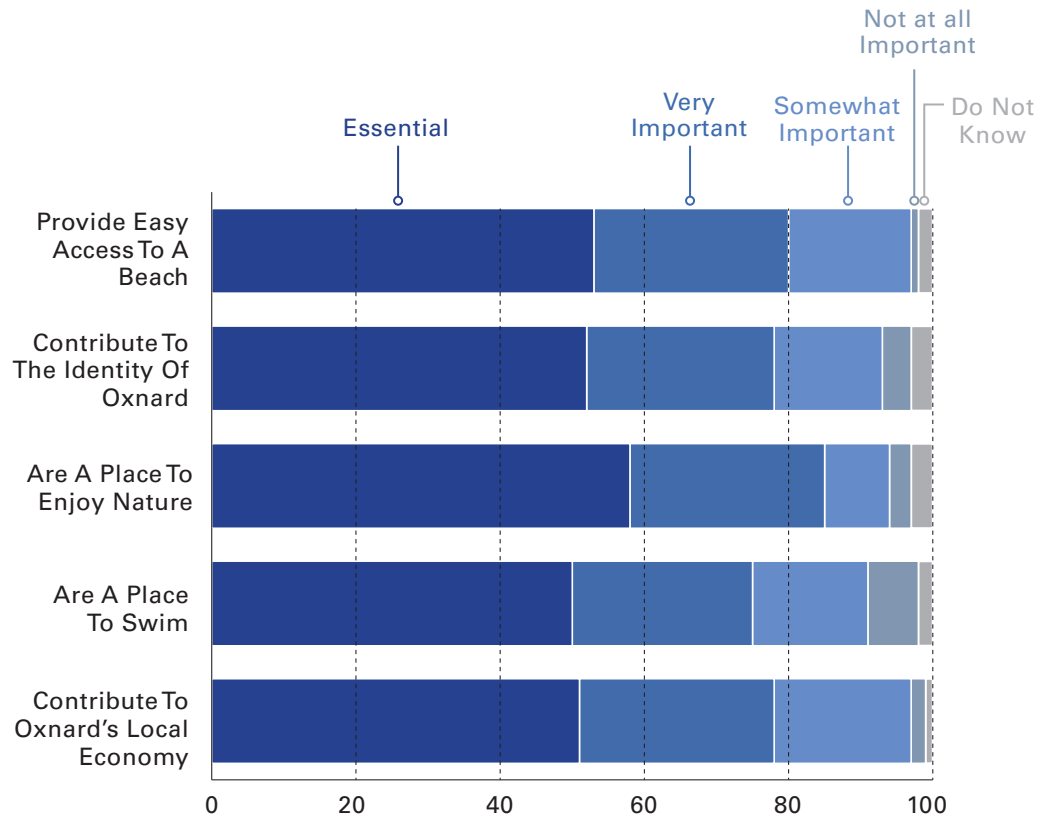
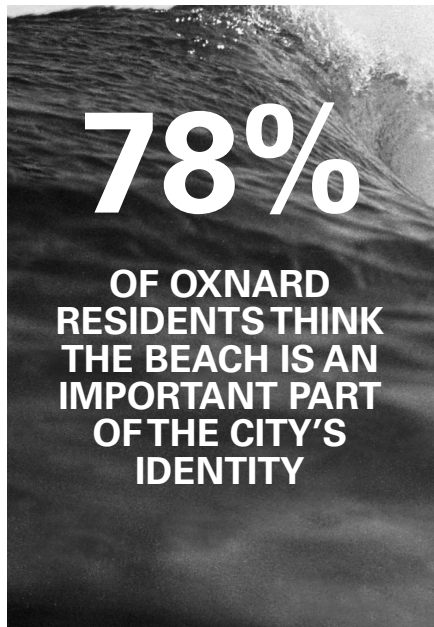
HOW SHOULD THE CITY APPROACH  
TAKING CARE OF PARKS AND TRAILS?



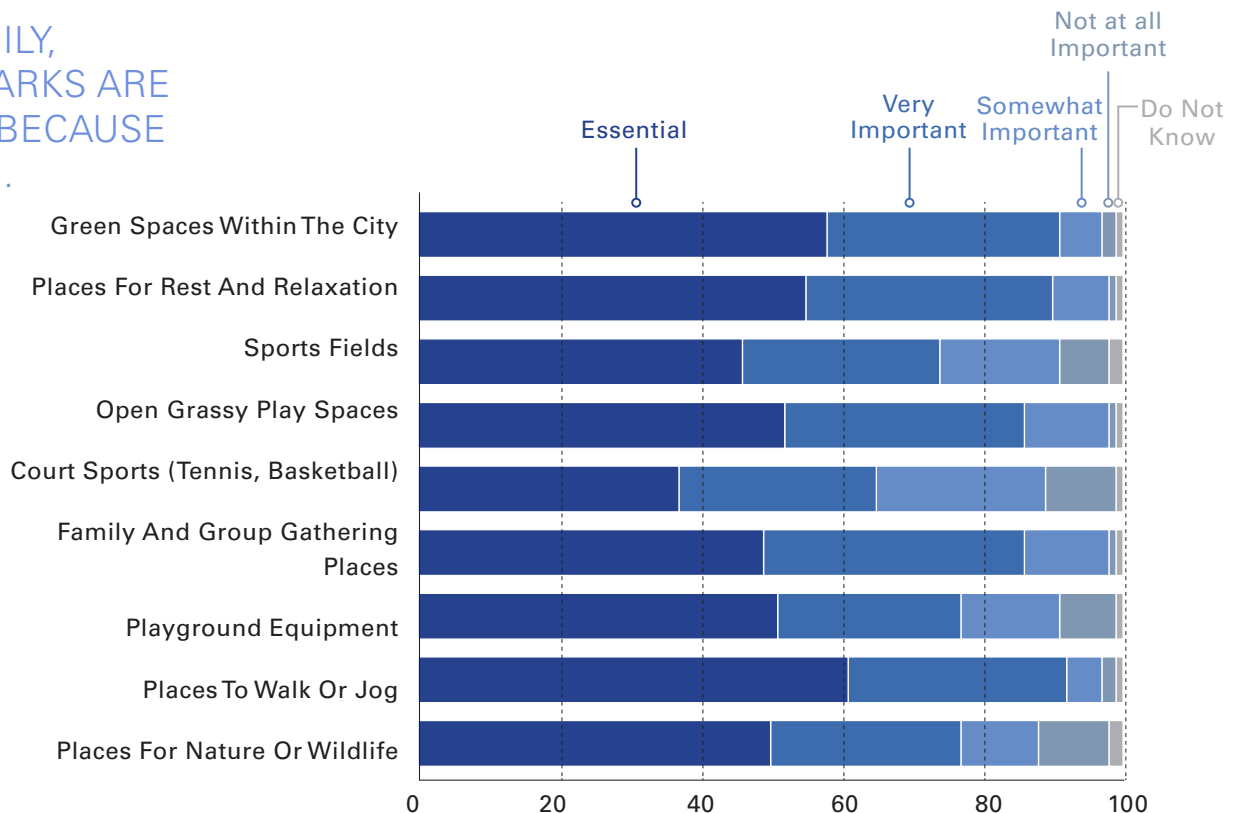
**OPEN PARTICIPATION SURVEY**

**62%** would work first on parks that need the most care and **19%** would work on the most used parks

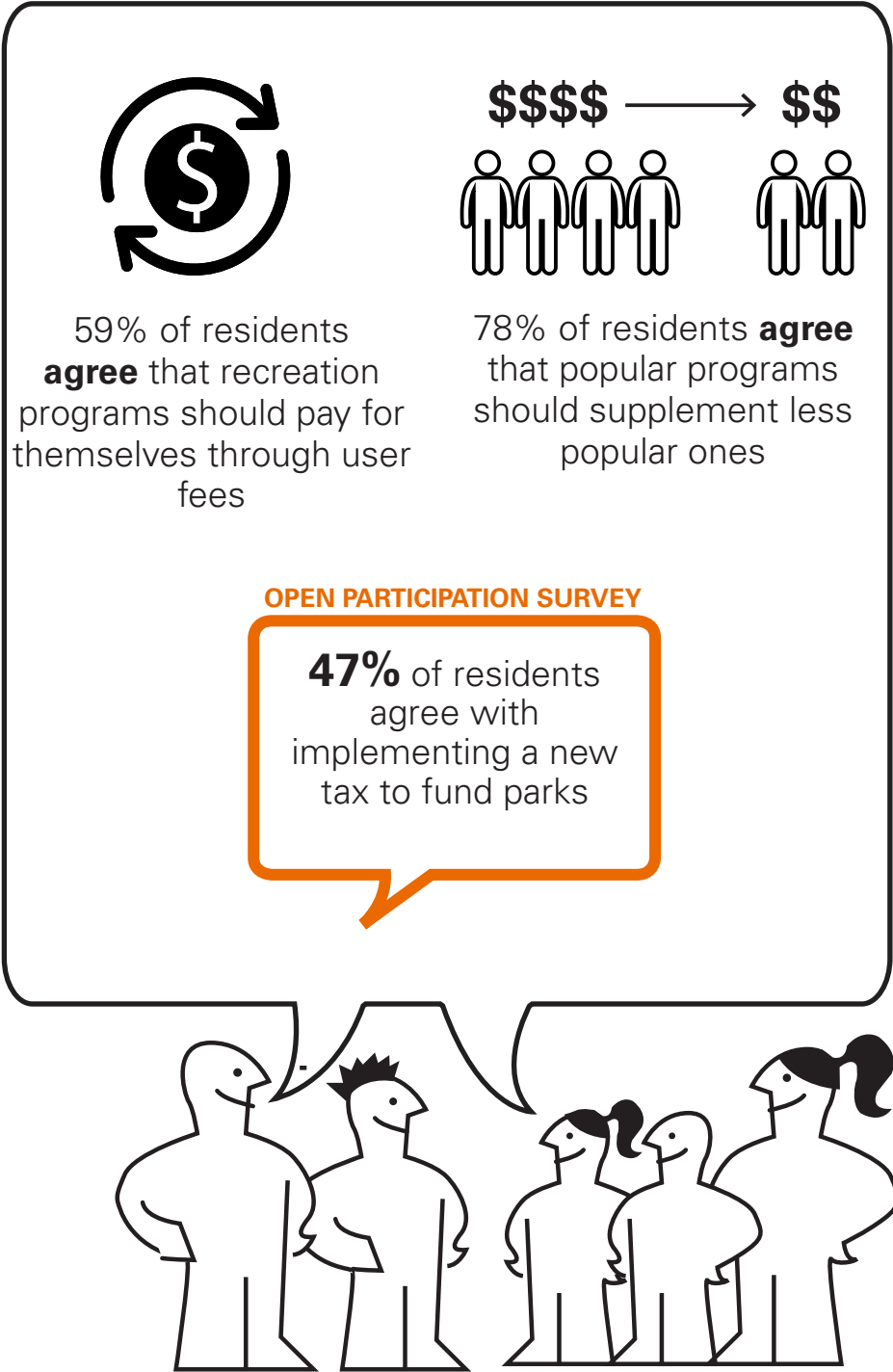
## OXNARD'S BEACHES...



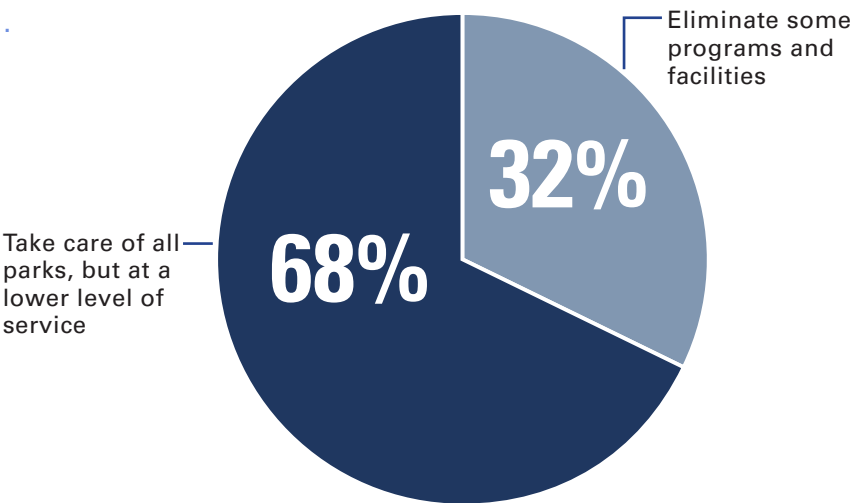
## FOR MY FAMILY, OXNARD'S PARKS ARE IMPORTANT BECAUSE THEY HAVE....



TO ACQUIRE MORE FUNDS, OXNARD PARKS SHOULD....



TO STAY WITHIN BUDGET  
THE CITY SHOULD...



WHAT ELSE DO YOU  
WANT TO TELL US?



Clean Restrooms Needed



More Programs and Events



Oxnard Needs a Pool



Publish News about Programs



Address Homeless Issue



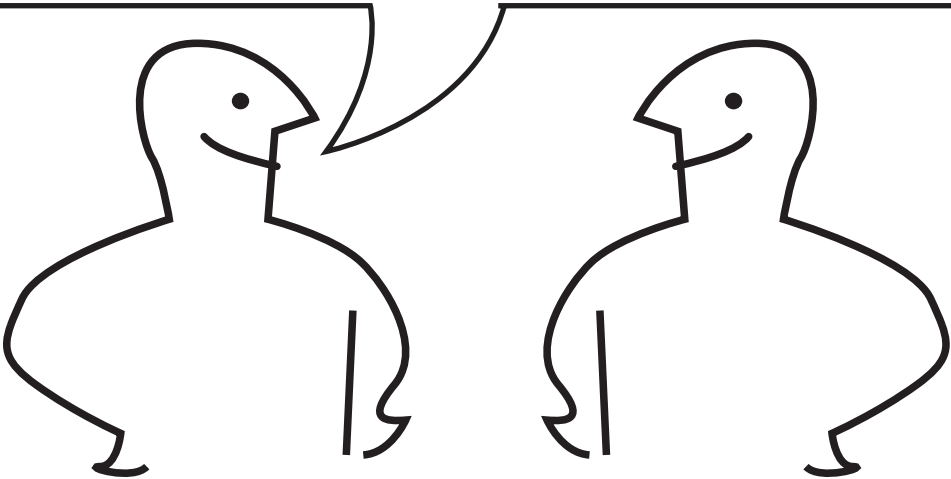
Maintenance Should be a Priority



Dogs Need a Park Too

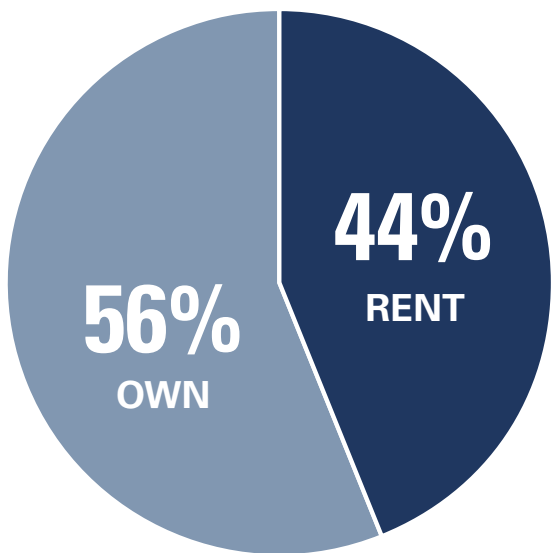


Implement Volunteer Park Programs

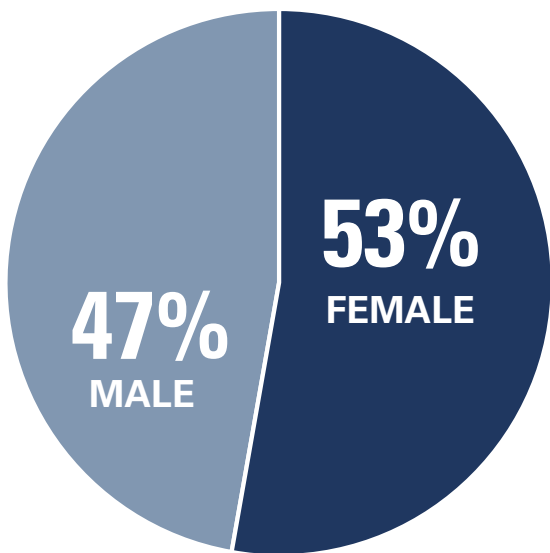


# Scientific Survey Profile:

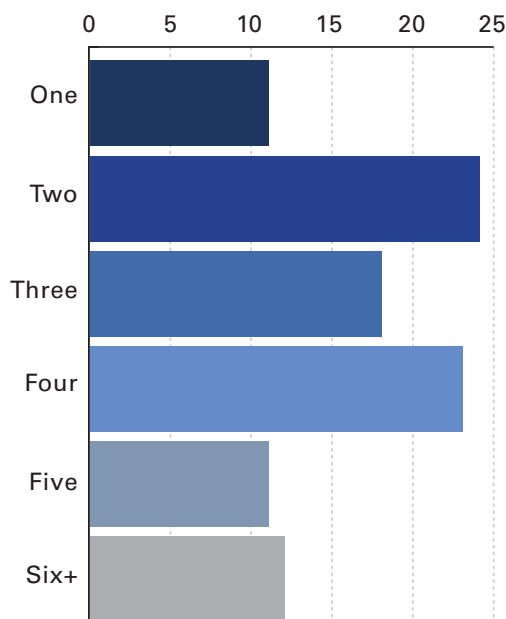
DO YOU RENT OR OWN YOUR HOME?



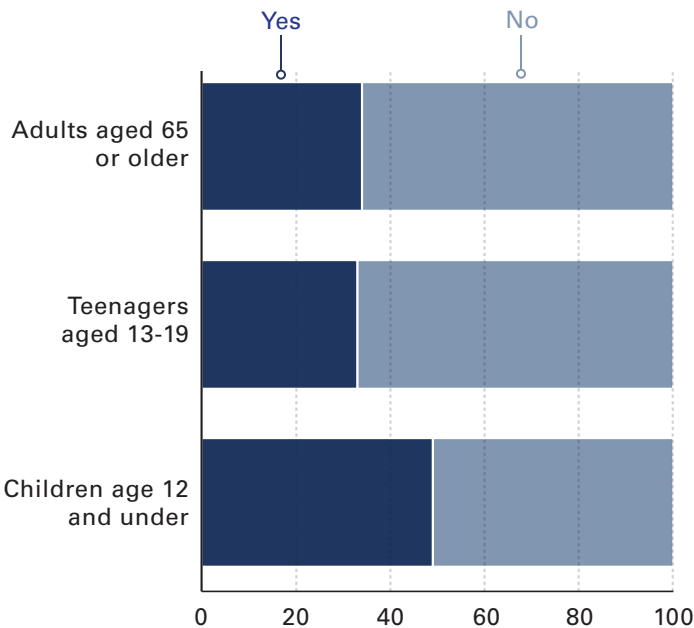
WHAT IS YOUR GENDER?



HOW MANY PEOPLE LIVE IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD?



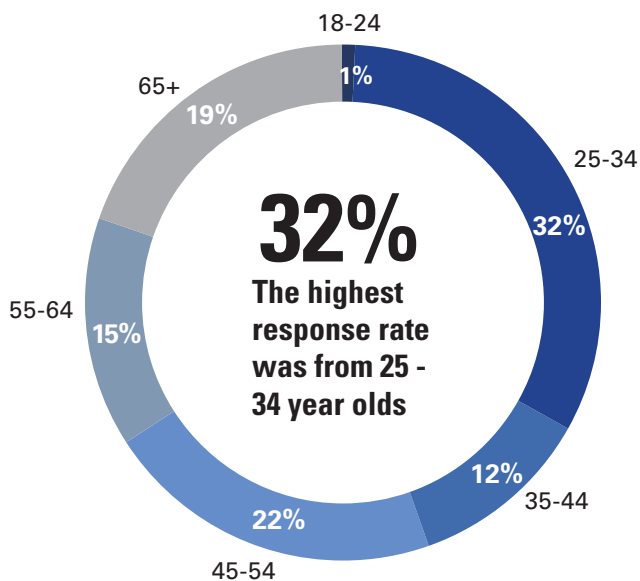
DO ANY OF THE FOLLOWING LIVE IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD?



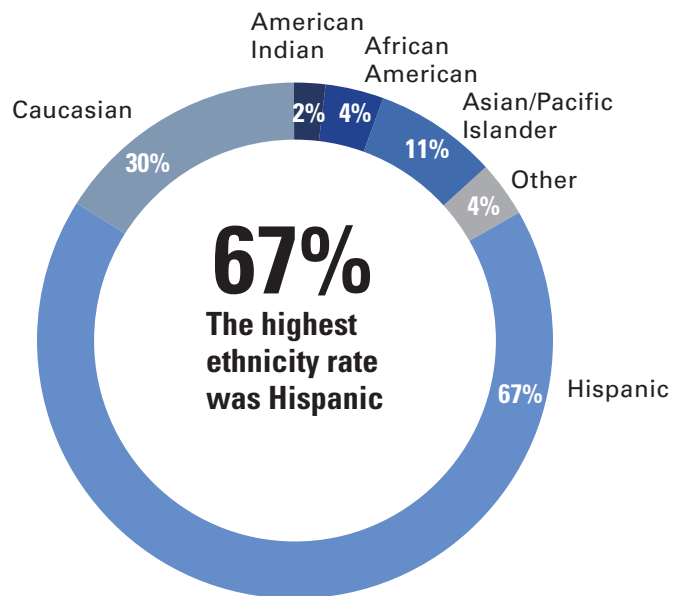


Oxnard Theater

## WHAT IS YOUR AGE?



## WHAT IS YOUR RACE/ETHNICITY?



\*Total exceeds 100% because people selected more than one race

# Community Workshop #1

The purpose of the first round of community workshops was to **promote participation** and identify **what was working** and what wasn't.

To encourage maximum participation, two community meetings were held on consecutive nights at two different locations. The workshop was an “open house” format where people could drop in any time from 4-8 PM. They were also held in three languages: English, Spanish, and Mixteco. Additionally, the workshop was conducted as a series of stations or games so participants could choose to participate in all or only some. The hope was this flexibility and variety would allow more people to attend.

The City, Advisory Committee, and the project team worked to get the word out through email announcements, social media postings, flyers and word of mouth. The first night had about 120 people in attendance, and the second had about 80.





## MAKE OXNARD'S PARKS BETTER

## MEJORA LOS PARQUES DE OXNARD

Help us make Oxnard's parks better for you and your neighbors. Come to the community workshop, and make your voice heard!

Ayúdenos a mejorar los parques de Oxnard para usted y sus vecinos. ¡Ven al taller comunitario y haz oír tu voz!

**Choose your day! Drop-in between 4pm and 8pm!**  
**¡Elige tu día! ¡Presentarse entre 4pm y 8pm!**

**Both workshops will have the same agenda and discussion activities. Choose the workshop date that is most convenient for you!** The workshop will be in English & Spanish! Snacks will be provided!

**Ambos talleres tendrán la misma agenda y actividades de discusión. ¡Elige la fecha del taller que más te convenga!** ¡El taller será en inglés y español! Se proveerán refrigerios!

Have questions? ¿Tiene preguntas?  
Eric Humel, Interim Project Manager  
(805) 271-2231  
eric.humel@oxnard.org

**Join Us!**  **Únase a nosotros!**

<b>DAY 1 / DÍA 1</b> English y Español	4:00 pm - 8:00 pm January 9, 2019 The South Oxnard Community Center 200 E. Bard Road, Oxnard, CA 93030	<b>DAY 2 / DÍA 2</b> English y Español	4:00 pm - 8:00 pm January 10, 2019 Oxnard Performing Arts Center 800 Hobson Way, Oxnard, CA 93030
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## Station #1: Giant Map & Orientation

This station informed attendees about the Parks and Recreation Master Plan process and purpose and invited them to ask questions.

Adjacent to the presentation was a giant six-foot square map. It was created as a visual display to analyze how far residents traveled to go to their favorite park. Participants were asked to put a “red pin” where they live, and a “blue pin” at the park they frequented the most. A project team member tied the pins with a string. The results were later digitized to identify trends.

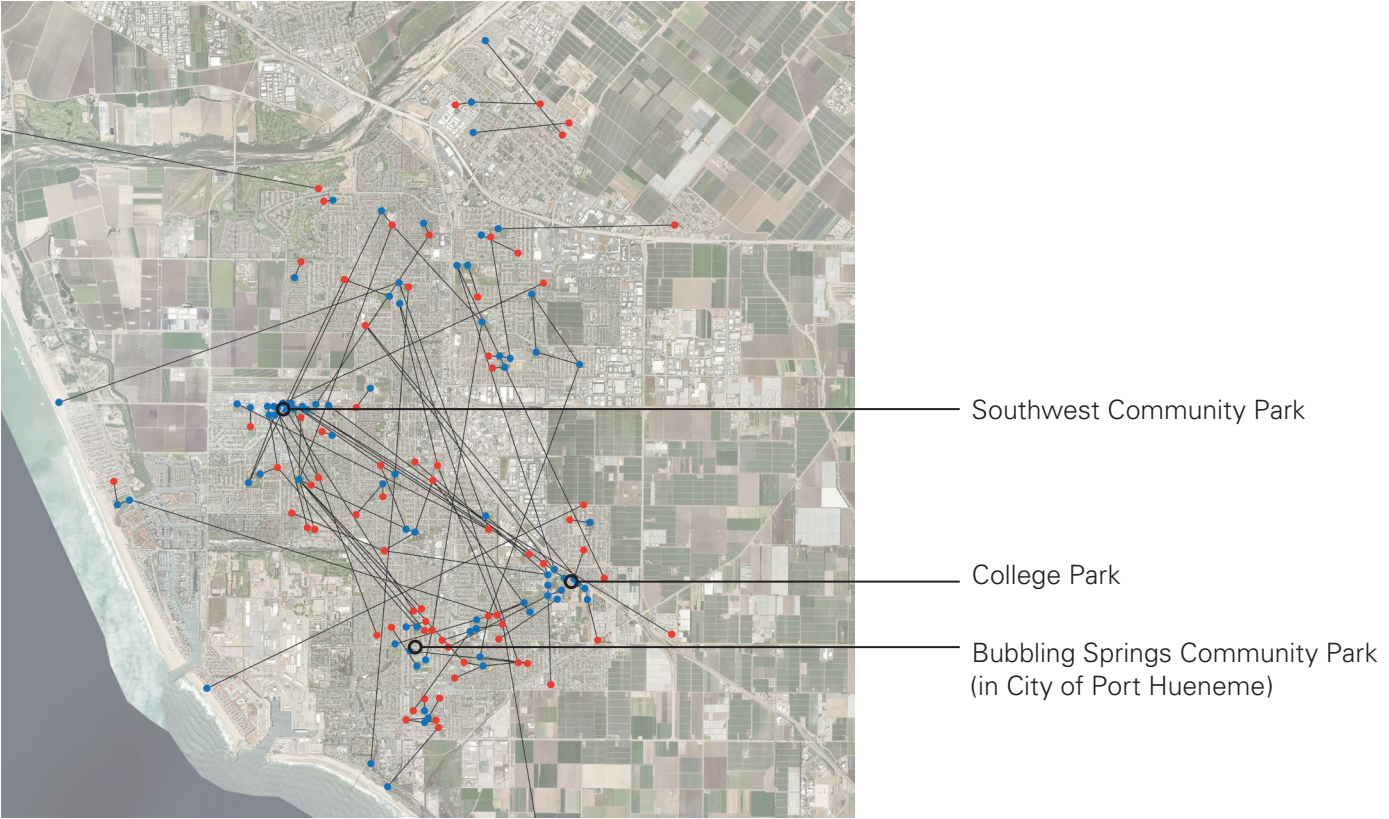


Parks and Open Space

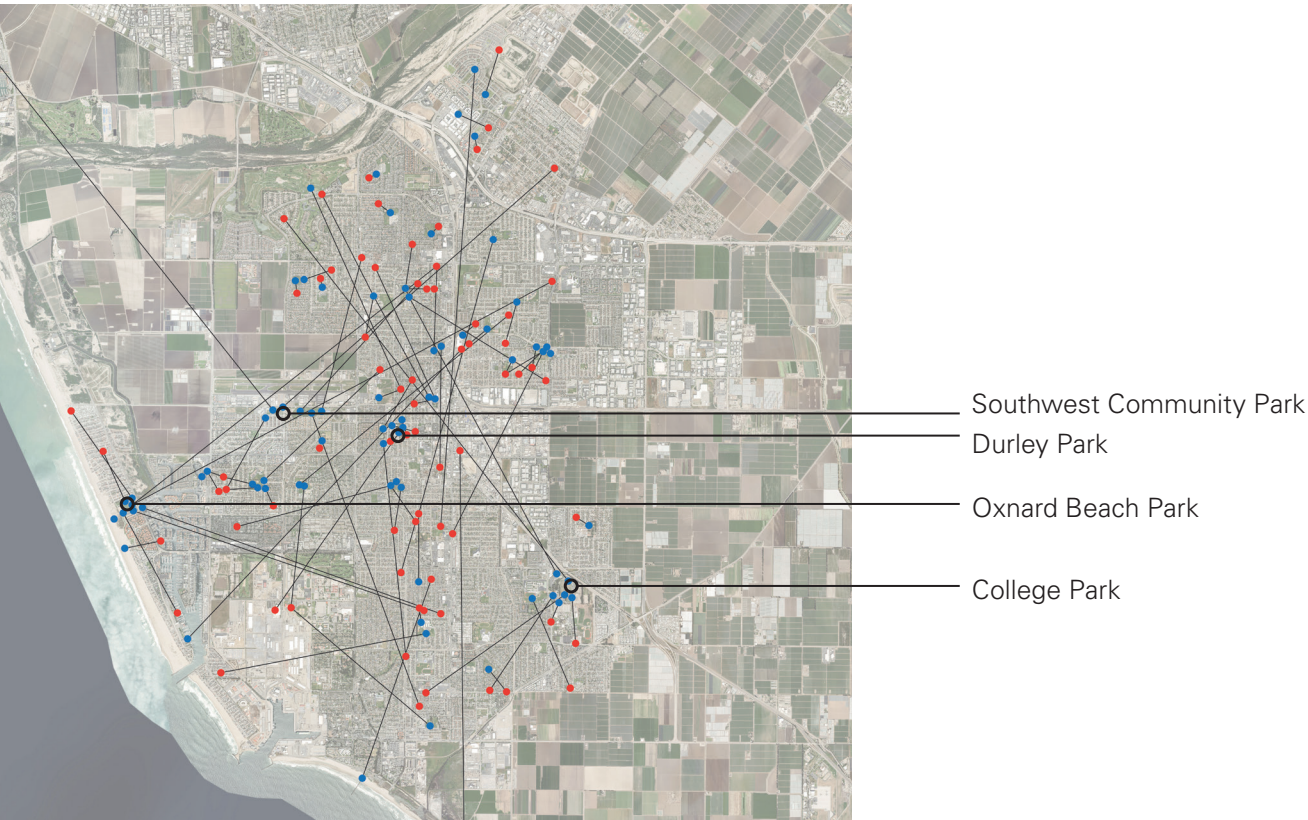
### WHAT WAS LEARNED

- College Park and Southwest Community Park were most popular with residents attending Night One.
- There was a greater range of residents and park usage with attendees from Night Two, including more people visiting the beach.
- At least two residents from Night Two said they didn't go to Oxnard's parks.
- Residents seemed willing to travel across town, if necessary, to frequent their favorite park. This implies that park location isn't nearly as important as the park amenities.

NIGHT ONE



NIGHT TWO

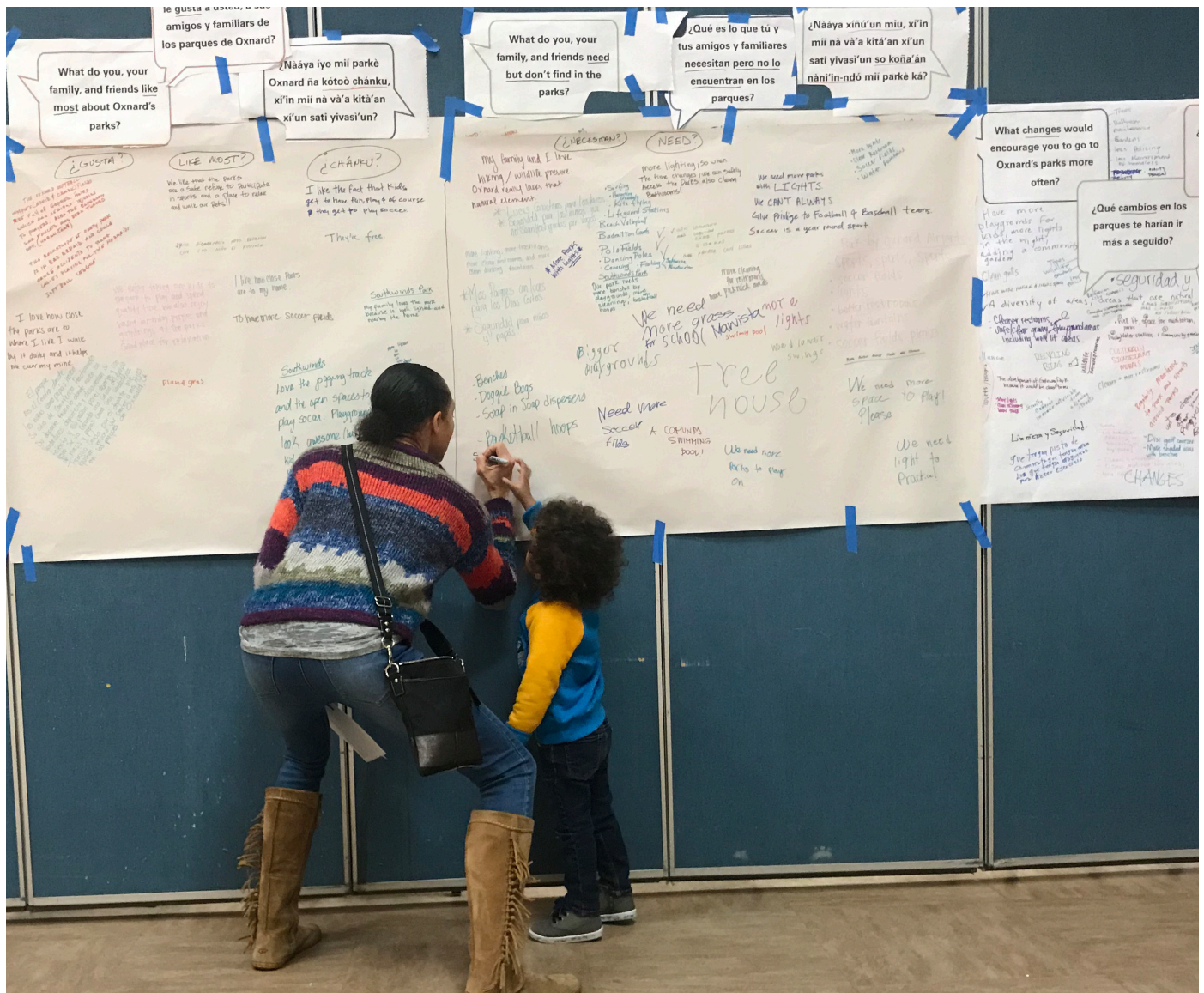


## Station #2: Conversation Wall

The conversation wall was meant to solicit specific input on services and amenities. The project team posted three questions on a large mural where participants could write their responses. Each question was translated into Spanish and Mixteco to ensure everyone attending the event could understand.

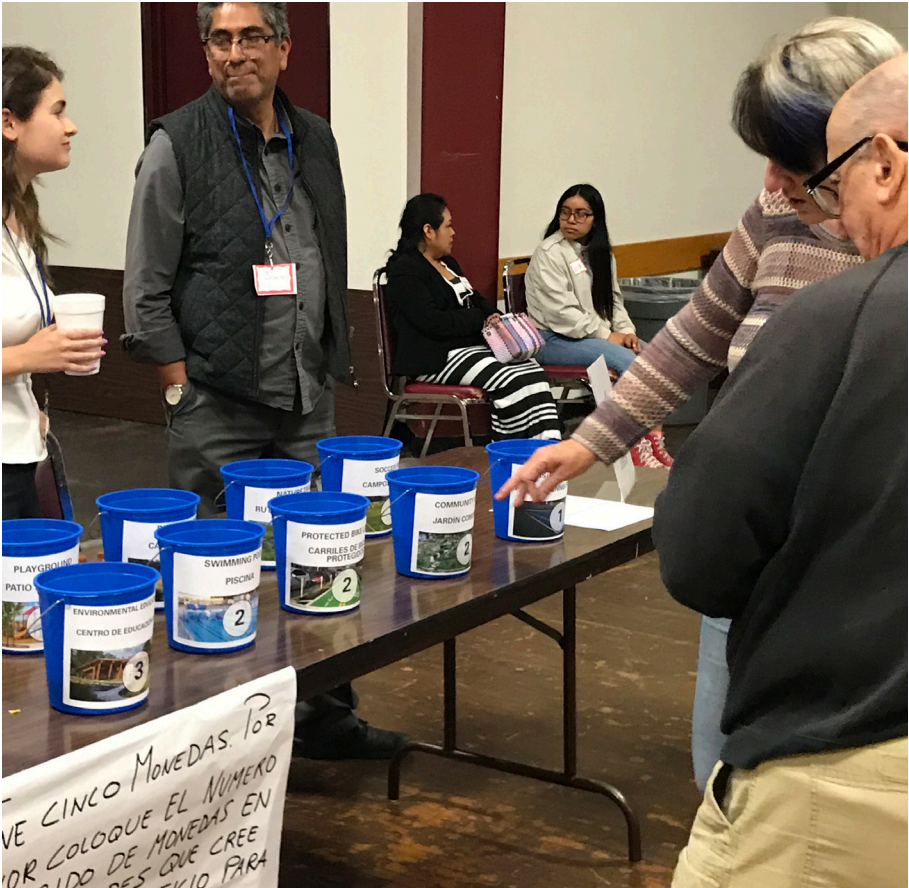
## WHAT WAS LEARNED

- Most residents seem to cherish the parks for the services they provide— a place to play soccer, play, and spend time with family.
- But safety and security were big concerns, with better lighting and cleaner restrooms topping the list of what the parks needed most.



# Station #3: Bucket Game

The Bucket Game asked Oxnard’s residents how they would allocate a limited budget for different amenities. Participants were given five coins and asked to choose between twelve amenities where each amenity’s “cost” correlated with the order of magnitude of real-life construction cost. For example, a playground cost one coin while a community center cost three, because community centers are much more expensive to build than playgrounds. The results were tallied at the end to understand what amenities are most important to residents.



## WHAT WAS LEARNED

- In terms of activities, a swimming pool, playground and nature trails scored relatively high in terms of priorities for the community.
- In terms of sports, soccer fields and tennis courts were given a large amount of coins - illustrating that these amenities are in high demand.

## COIN COST FOR EACH AMENITY

### COMMUNITY GARDEN



BASEBALL FIELD

### TENNIS/PICKLEBALL COURT



ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION CENTER

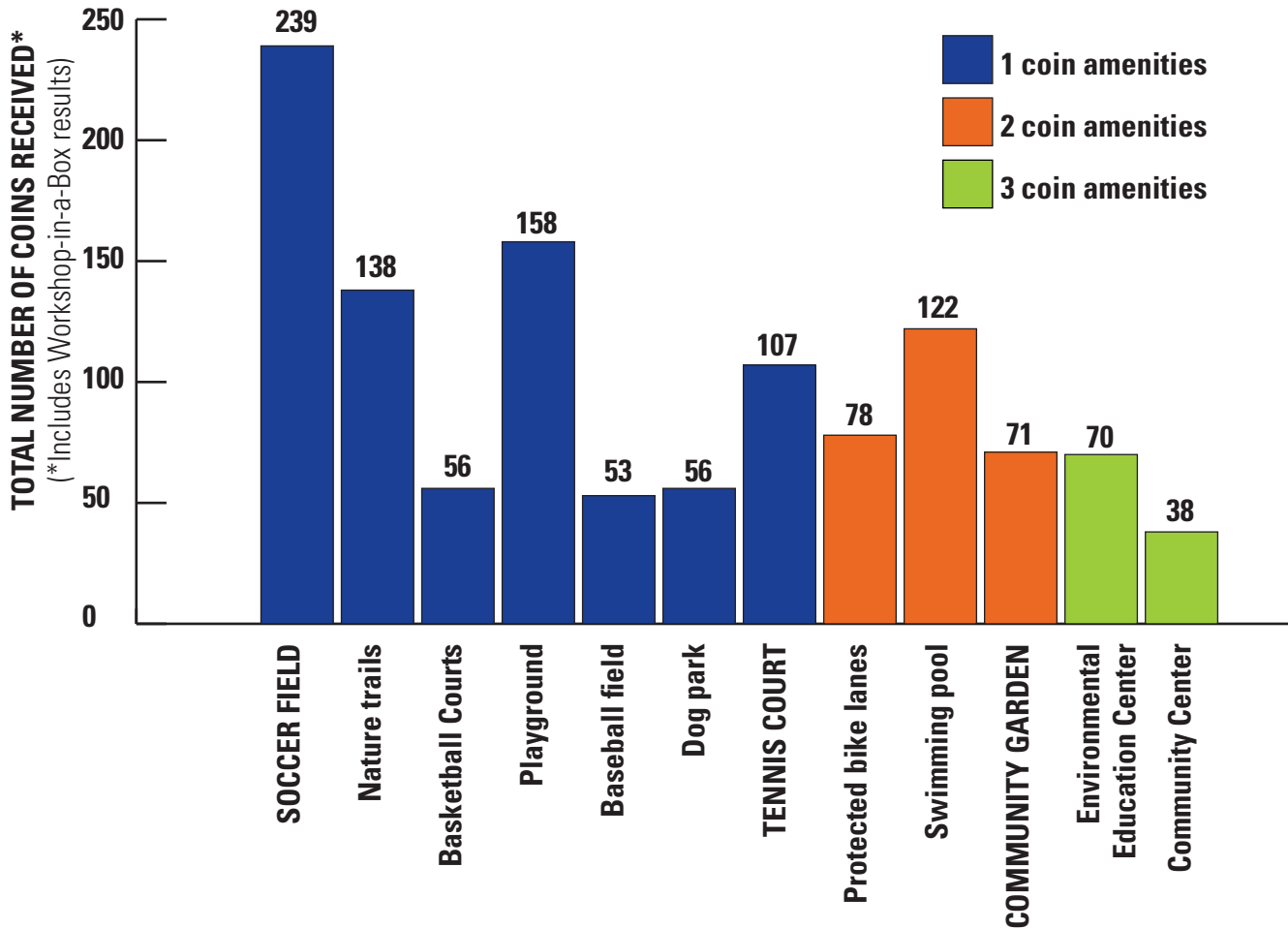
### PLAYGROUND



DOG PARK



# NUMBER OF TOTAL COINS ALLOTTED TO EACH AMENITY



PROTECTED BIKE LANES

COMMUNITY CENTER

SOCCER FIELD



SWIMMING POOL



NATURE TRAILS



BASKETBALL COURT



## Station #4: Describe Me! Station

The Describe Me! Game involved eight boxes printed with images of different parks or natural settings. The project team chose images that illustrated a range of “landscape types” such as lush vegetation, turf fields, drought-tolerant plantings, and naturalized areas. The purpose of these selections was to understand which aesthetics Oxnard residents find most appealing and to gauge their perceptions of sustainable landscape designs. Participants wrote their comments on a card and deposited them in the box anonymously. At the end, the project team tallied the results to reveal trends.



### WHAT WAS LEARNED

- Residents responded negatively to dry landscapes but positively to native landscapes with contemporary design elements
- Oxnard should find a way to educate residents on the value of different landscape aesthetics



## MAJORITY RESPONSES

- Dry

## MINOR RESPONSES

- Needs maintenance
- Ugly or unappealing
- Good place to walk dogs
- Natural, wild open space
- Needs more green
- Nice hiking trail
- Need or want this in Oxnard
- Beautiful or "I like it"

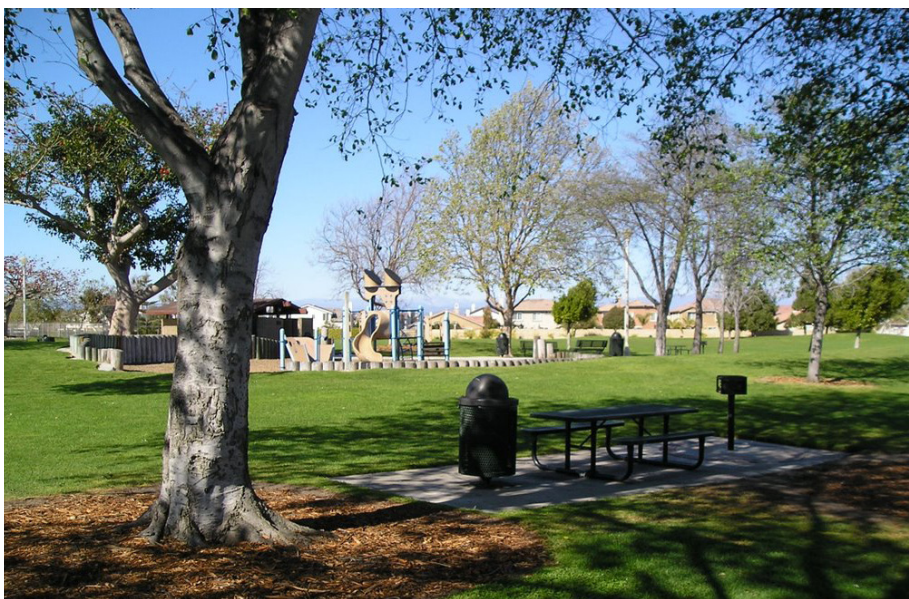


## MAJORITY RESPONSES

- Natural, wild open space habitat

## MINOR RESPONSES

- Scary, dangerous, ugly
- Needs maintenance
- Beautiful or "I like it"
- Needs trails or paths
- Wasteland, abandoned
- Nice hiking trail
- Develop into soccer fields



## MAJORITY RESPONSES

- Beautiful or "I like it"

## MINOR RESPONSES

- Clean or maintained
- Like the playground
- Like the green or open space
- Good for families
- Good for social activities
- Like trees or shade



## MAJORITY RESPONSES

- Beautiful or "I like it"
- Good for walking

## MINOR RESPONSES

- Peaceful, relaxing, or calming
- Need or want this in Oxnard
- Clean
- Safe
- Needs lighting



## MAJORITY RESPONSES

- Beautiful or "I like it"
- Need or want this in Oxnard

## MINOR RESPONSES

- Good for soccer
- Good for sport or exercise
- High maintenance



## MAJORITY RESPONSES

- Beautiful or "I like it"
- Dry, needs watering or grass
- Boring or don't like it

## MINOR RESPONSES

- Peaceful, relaxing, or good for meditating
- Educational
- Nice place for a walk
- Drought tolerant or eco-friendly
- Nature/natural



## MAJORITY RESPONSES

- Good for biking
- Beautiful or "I like it"

## MINOR RESPONSES

- Needs maintenance
- Fun, or good place to spend time
- Good place to be active or exercise
- Need protected bike lanes or paths
- Relaxing or peaceful
- Beach



## MAJORITY RESPONSES

- Needs maintenance

## MINOR RESPONSES

- "I don't like it" or ugly
- Beautiful or "I like it"
- Needs more grass
- Needs more to be a usable park
- Could be used for soccer fields
- Dry

## Station #5: Survey Station

The Community Workshop allowed us to solicit more responses to our project survey. Making the survey one of the stations gave participants a chance to make their voices heard even if they weren't on the original random survey mailer. The results of the surveys from both nights, as well as those filled out during Workshop-in-a-Box meetings, contributed to the Open Participation data results.

### WHAT WAS LEARNED

- See Open Participation Survey section on page 77.

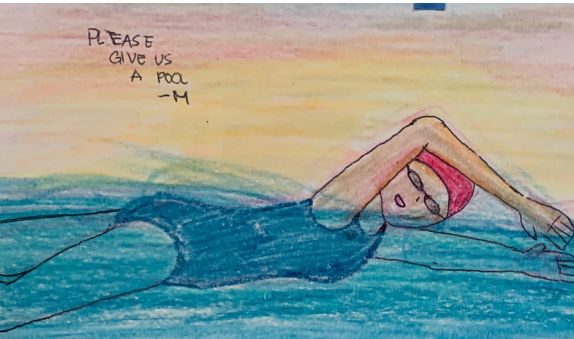
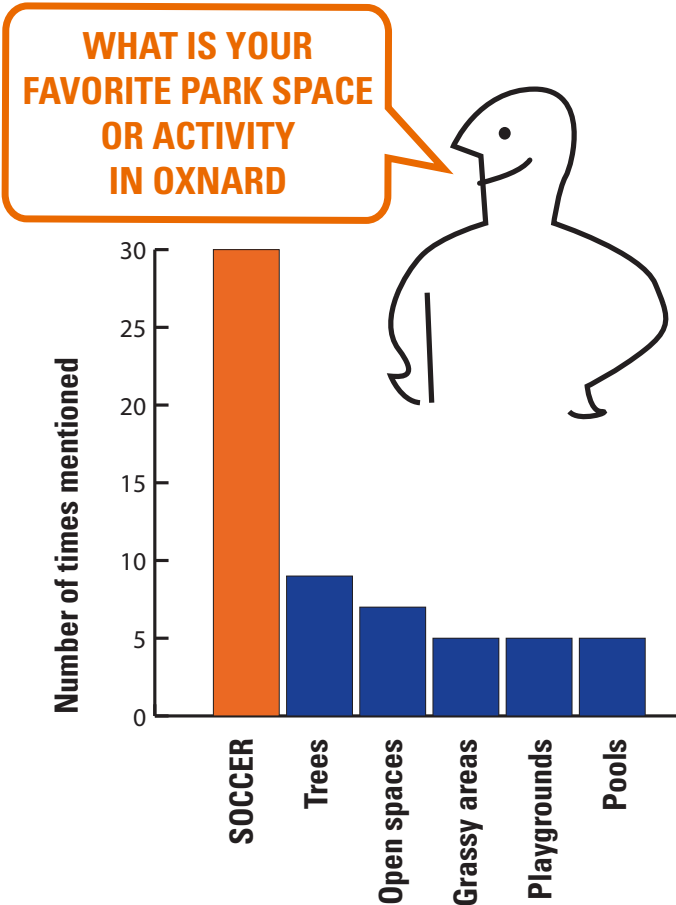


# Station #6: Kids Station

The Kids Station was an opportunity to get input from Oxnard’s youth. The project team asked children to draw their ideal park or activity in Oxnard. After the workshops, the project team tabulated reoccurring themes in the drawings to create a profile of what the children want to see in their parks.

## WHAT WAS LEARNED

- For youth in Oxnard, soccer is the most popular program
- The children appreciate open spaces, grassy areas, and trees



# Workshop-in-a-Box

“Workshop-in-a-Box” kits—a **condensed version** of the community workshop—offered a way to reach **more neighborhood groups**.

The project team created Workshop-in-a-Box kits to expand community outreach. These kits came with instructions that allowed community stakeholders, such as Advisory Committee members or community organizers, to lead mini-community meetings without the project team. Each box contained packets of questions similar to those asked at the first Community Meetings along with a QR code and an online link to the project survey. The project team compiled the results from the workshops into the Open Participation survey data.

## PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS

- C.A.U.S.E.
- The Oxnard Tennis Center
- Driffill Elementary School
- Haycox Elementary School
- M.I.C.O.P.
- Oxnard College
- Cesar Chavez School
- City of Oxnard Senior Services

**DESIGNWORKSHOP**

527 WEST 7TH STREET  
SUITE 508  
LOS ANGELES, CA 90014  
213.426.1760



# WORKSHOP-IN-A-BOX

THE CITY OF OXNARD PARKS & RECREATION MASTERPLAN

# Community Workshop #2

The purpose of the second round of workshops was to ask for **community input** on potential solutions to **three specific issues** from the community survey and the first round of workshops.

The format of the second meeting was a poster session where attendees could review the Community Survey results and potential solutions to three problems. A focused discussion followed this. The project team held two rounds of discussions each night centered around the following questions:

- What is your reaction to the survey results? Are you surprised, or are any of the results unreasonable? Is the idea of protected bike lanes supported, desired, or thought to be feasible?
- Do you feel that the ideas presented for additional soccer fields would work in Oxnard? Did any characteristics of the designs stand out to you in particular?
- Did any of the images of the example parks excite you, and if so, which parks and which aspects?

While the City employed the same outreach methods as in the previous workshops, the attendance was, unfortunately, much lower than the earlier workshops.



Second Community Workshop

# MAKE OXNARD'S PARKS BETTER

It is time for the next round of Community Workshops. Come to the workshop and make your voice heard.

Es tiempo para la próxima ronda de los Talleres Comunitarios. Ven al taller y haz oír tu voz.

**Both workshops are the same so choose your day! The workshop will be in Spanish & English. Share your opinion and have some snacks!**

**Ambos talleres son el mismo, así que Elige tu día! El taller será en Español y en Inglés. Comparte tu opinion y come unos bocadillos!**



Have questions? ¿Tiene preguntas?  
Eric Humel, Interim Project Manager  
(805) 271-2231  
eric.humel@oxnard.org

# MEJORA LOS PARQUES DE OXNARD



## Join Us! Únase a nosotros!

\*Choose your time: 4:30 pm - 6 pm, or 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm

\*Elige tu tiempo: 4:30 pm - 6 pm, or 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm

### DAY 1 / DÍA 1 English y Español

4:00 pm - 8:00 pm\*  
April 24, 2019  
Oxnard Performing Arts Center  
800 Hobson Way, Oxnard, CA 93030

### DAY 2 / DÍA 2 English y Español

4:00 pm - 8:00 pm\*  
April 25, 2019  
South Oxnard Community Center  
200 E. Bard Road, Oxnard, CA 93030

## Discussion Point #1: Installing Protected Bike Lanes and Improving Access to Nature

Because the project team heard the desire for more and better bike lanes in the Focus Groups, survey, and Community Workshops, it became important to discuss this topic with residents in more detail. Through conversations it became clear how bike lanes could create a network of parks and also enhance the design of parks.



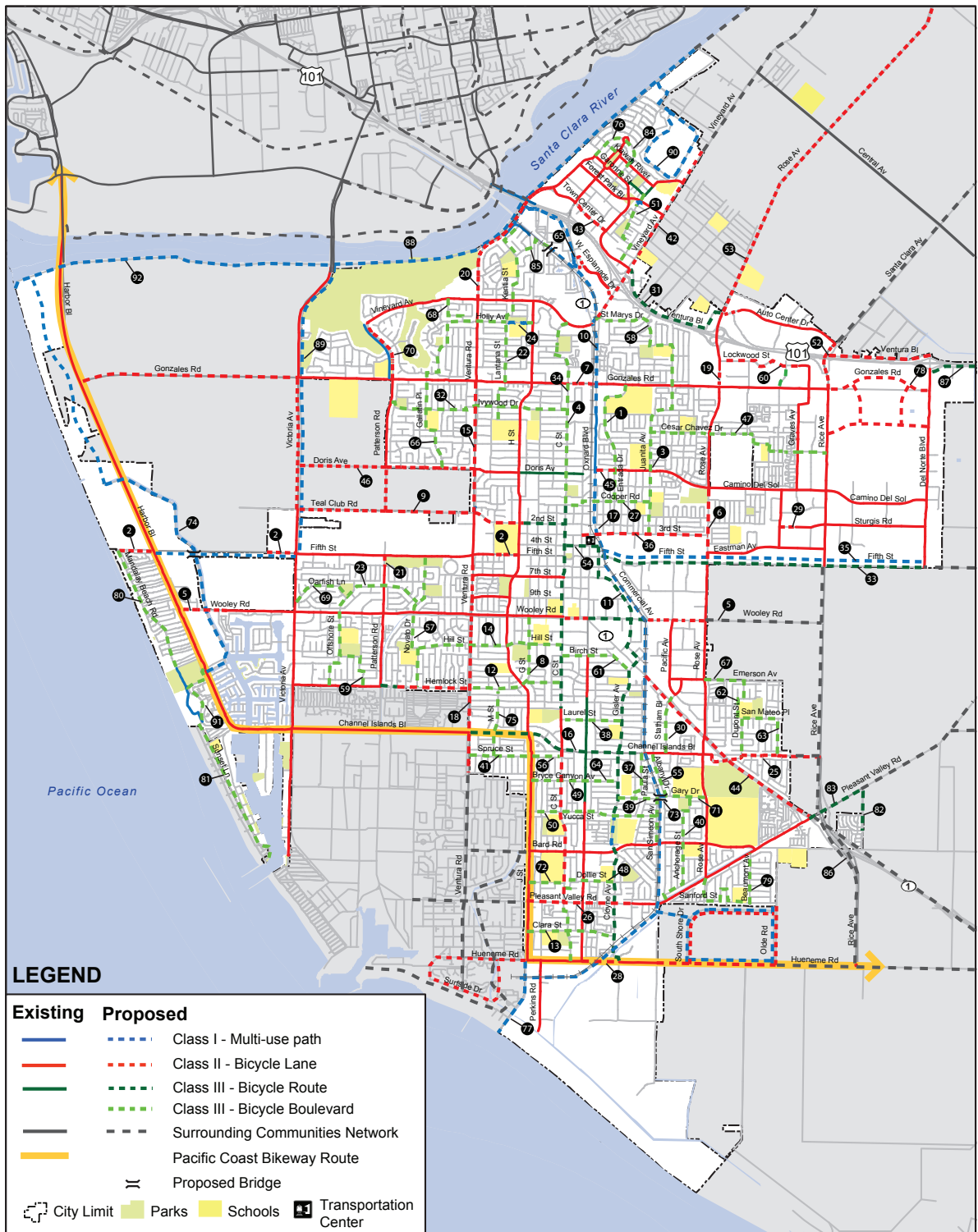
**BUILD A SANTA CLARA BIKE TRAIL**



**BRING NATURE INTO PARK DESIGN**

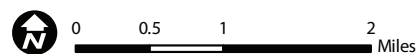


**CREATE HABITATS FOR PEOPLE & WILDLIFE**



## Oxnard Prioritized Bicycle Projects

Oxnard, CA  
 Bicycle & Pedestrian Master Plan  
 Source: City of Oxnard  
 Date: February 2012



Map 6-1: Oxnard Prioritized Bicycle Projects

## Discussion Point #2: Alternatives to Addressing Oxnard's Soccer Field Shortage

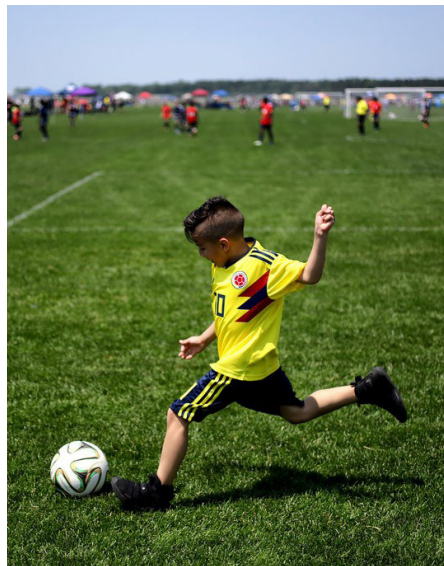
In the Focus Group discussions, the project team heard of the immense popularity of soccer in Oxnard and the shortages of fields. This sentiment was echoed in the first Community Meeting, where participants chose to spend their “coins” on putting in more soccer fields, and “playing soccer” was the most common answer to the question, “What is your favorite park activity?” at the Kids Station.

At the same time, the majority of survey respondents said that they would like the parks to have more recreational opportunities than just soccer— 79% in the mailed survey and 57% in the open survey. This made us wonder if there was an alternative that both provided the additional soccer fields the community desired while still keeping park space available for other activities. The project team proposed two options based on successful examples: sod farm use and indoor recreation centers.

## PRECEDENT: TUCKAHOE TURF FARMS. NEW JERSEY

Tuckahoe Turf Farms is a sod farm in New Jersey that rents its fields out for kids to play soccer. The farm fits 35 full-sized fields and has endless parking, restrooms, and clusters of food trucks. Since the farm supplies field turf, they can advertise an already tested product.

The farm hosts seven major tournaments a year and has seen over 300 teams and 25,000 visitors. There aren't any bleachers, but that's fine with families who say that the casual atmosphere promotes camaraderie and quality family time.



## SCALE COMPARISON



Tuckahoe Turf Farm ~175 Acres



CAMPUS  
PARK  
~30 Acres



SPORTS  
PARK  
~25 Acres



COLLEGE PARK  
~72 Acres

**PRECEDENT: SANTA CLARITA SOCCER CENTER.** SANTA CLARITA, CA  
**PRECEDENT: UPLANDS SPORTS ARENA.** UPLANDS, CA

Indoor recreation centers offer another potential solution for meeting the soccer demand. Both Santa Clarita and Uplands, CA, two Southern California cities, have sizeable indoor recreation areas with two to three fields, kid and adult soccer leagues, sports camps, and rental spaces. Because these fields can operate at night or in inclement weather, there is the potential of having hundreds of games per month.



## WHAT WAS LEARNED

- Community members expressed concern about the addition of new soccer fields conflicting with the amount of space used for agriculture.
- In general, community members were dubious that an indoor sports center would work well. They liked the idea of enhancing existing soccer fields and allowing them to be open later.



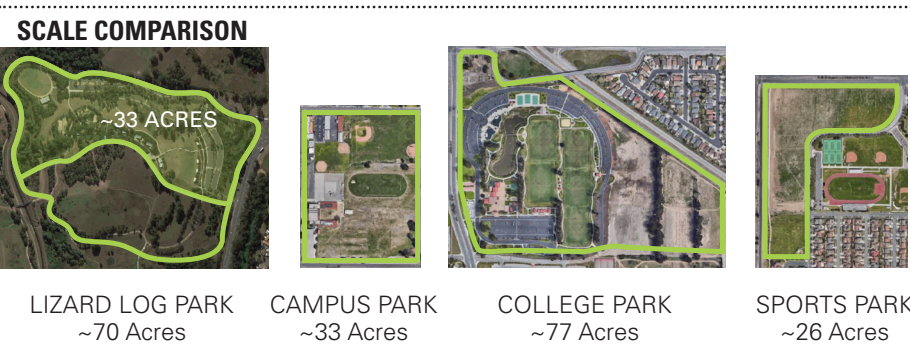
# Discussion Point #3: Park Variety to Inspire

The Scientific Survey revealed that approximately 76% of Oxnard’s residents would like to see more variety in the recreational opportunities in the parks. While this number decreased to 57% in the Open Survey, it still revealed that residents want parks that have something for people who don’t necessarily play organized sports. The project team also heard in the Focus Groups a need for activities for older children and teens and more emphasis on sustainability in the parks. Similarly, the Advisory Group advocated for showing residents examples of parks from around the world for inspiration.

At the Second Community Meeting, the project team presented images from four parks around the world that looked different than a typical Oxnard park. The project team wanted to see what aspects of these parks resonated with people.

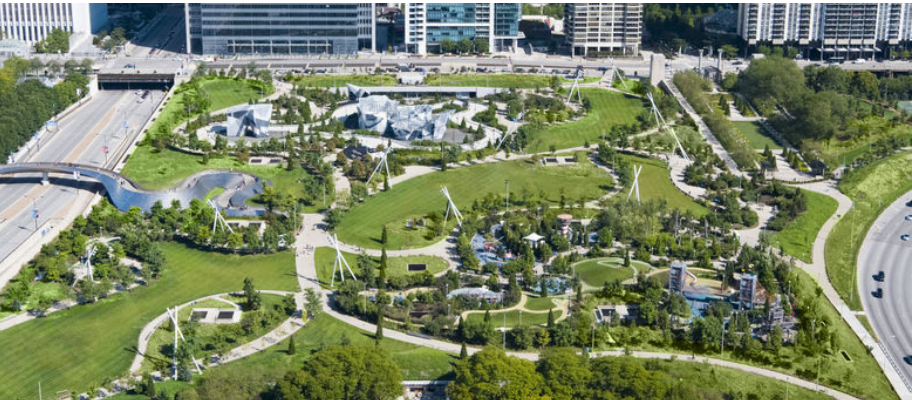
## PRECEDENT: LIZARD LOG PARK. AUSTRALIA

Lizard Log Park in Australia is approximately 70 acres, but the more programmed space is about 33 acres—similar in size to Campus Park. The park features native plantings, play spaces made of natural materials, and restrooms with a solar roof and common hand-washing basins. Irrigated lawn areas are confined to strategically located “picnic pods” for responsible water consumption.



**PRECEDENT: MAGGIE DALEY PARK. CHICAGO**

Maggie Daley Park is packed with activities-- climbing walls, playgrounds, and a skate path that turns into an ice-skating "ribbon" in the winter. Grassy lawns accommodate the casual soccer game, Frisbee, or picnic. All this allows Maggie Daley to be a multi-generational park serving diverse needs.



**WHAT WAS LEARNED**

- Participants expressed a desire for nature paths.
- There is a strong need for maintained restrooms that are open later and have better lighting.

**SCALE COMPARISON**



MAGGIE DALEY PARK  
~27 Acres



CAMPUS PARK  
~33 Acres



COLLEGE PARK  
~77 Acres



SPORTS PARK  
~26 Acres

## PRECEDENT: BLUFF CREEK PARK. PLAYA VISTA, CA

Even though it's only three acres, Bluff Creek Park contains a playground, dog park, native plant walking paths, and an artificial turf soccer field. This park offers an example of how Oxnard could provide more variety of programming and activities within their existing neighborhood parks and be more of a resource to everyone.



### SCALE COMPARISON



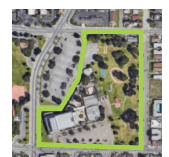
Bluff creek PARK  
~3.3 Acres



Thompson park  
~2.7 Acres



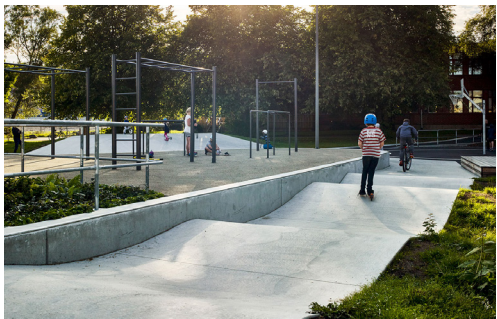
Lathrop PARK  
~3 Acres



Community PARK  
East ~4.4 Acres

**PRECEDENT: FLATAS PARK. SWEDEN**

Flatas Park in Sweden employs constructed topography and creativity to add interest and fun into its small size. This park uses humble materials, like concrete and asphalt, in a unique way to turn an average park into something noteworthy.



**SCALE COMPARISON**



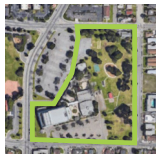
Flatas PARK  
~2.5 Acres



Thompson park  
~2.7 Acres



Lathrop PARK  
~3 Acres



Community PARK  
East ~4.4 Acres



***“There is a  
general recognition that more needs  
to be done with less resources.  
What’s less clear is the how to do it.”***

***- Resident***

# **Goal 1: Improve Maintenance & Operations**



Strategy One: Increasing & Diversifying Funds

Strategy Two: Becoming More Efficient with Funds

Strategy Three: Designing Parks to Lower Maintenance Load

Strategy Four: Streamlining Resources

A city's parks and open spaces reflect its quality of life and provide a sense of civic pride. For many communities, parks are the foundation of social and physical opportunities. Ill-maintained parks can create the illusion that a neighborhood is unkempt. This chapter focuses on how the City of Oxnard can improve park maintenance by raising additional funds and reducing maintenance load.

# Strategy 1: Increasing & Diversifying Funds

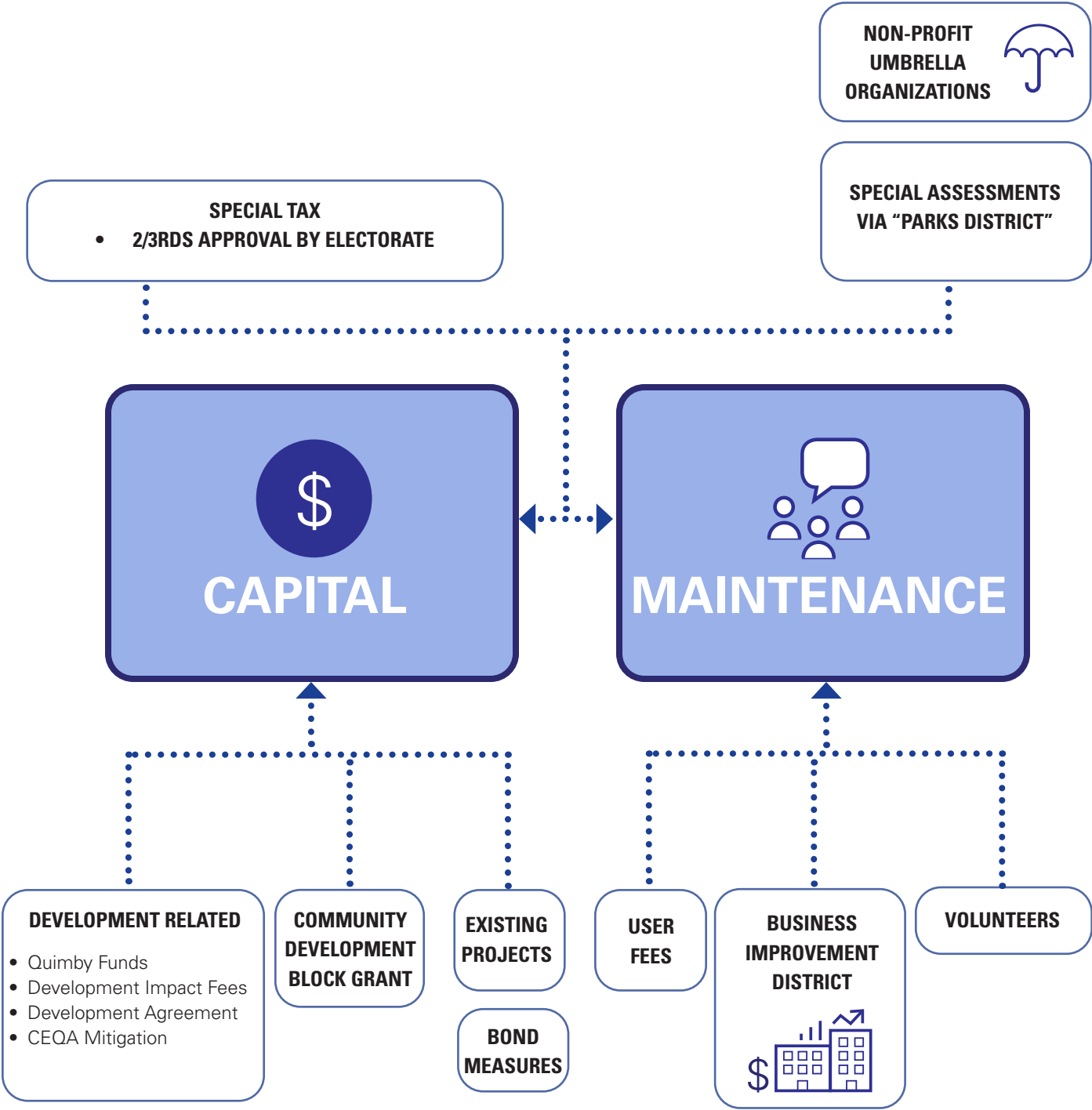
**Quality, well-maintained parks** require money; offering **exceptional recreational programs** requires money. This is so straightforward that it may seem naive, but it could be this simple. The question is, where to start?

Not enough staff or funds is a problem many municipalities face, and Oxnard is no exception. Budget problems have plagued the city since the onset of The Great Recession, and they don't seem to be waning. In our staff interviews, the project team heard of budget and staff cuts year after year challenging division heads to do more with less. Eventually, there comes a breaking point.

While the strategy of "Increasing & Diversifying Funds" is simple, the strategies to do this are not, but there are some tactics that have the potential to increase Oxnard's coffers.



# Additional Revenue for Parks

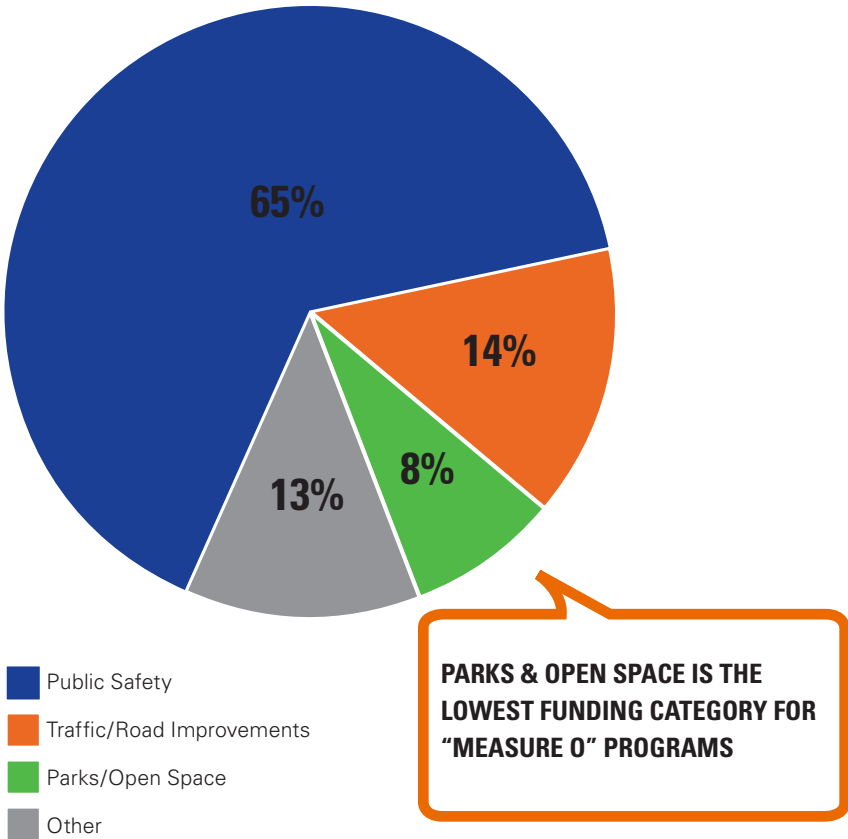


# Create a Tax to Fund Parks & Recreation

Measure O is a 20-year general-purpose sales tax enacted in November 2008 to “enhance services to the Oxnard community.” These services include public safety, traffic/road improvements, parks/open space and a variety of other services. While 8% of “Measure O” is dedicated to parks and open space, a majority goes to services deemed essential, e.g., public safety.

Oxnard’s parks and recreation services need a consistent and dedicated funding source beyond Measure O. The City should evaluate any new sales tax initiative for its ability to provide funding parks need to thrive.

CURRENT “MEASURE O” BREAKDOWN (2018-2019)



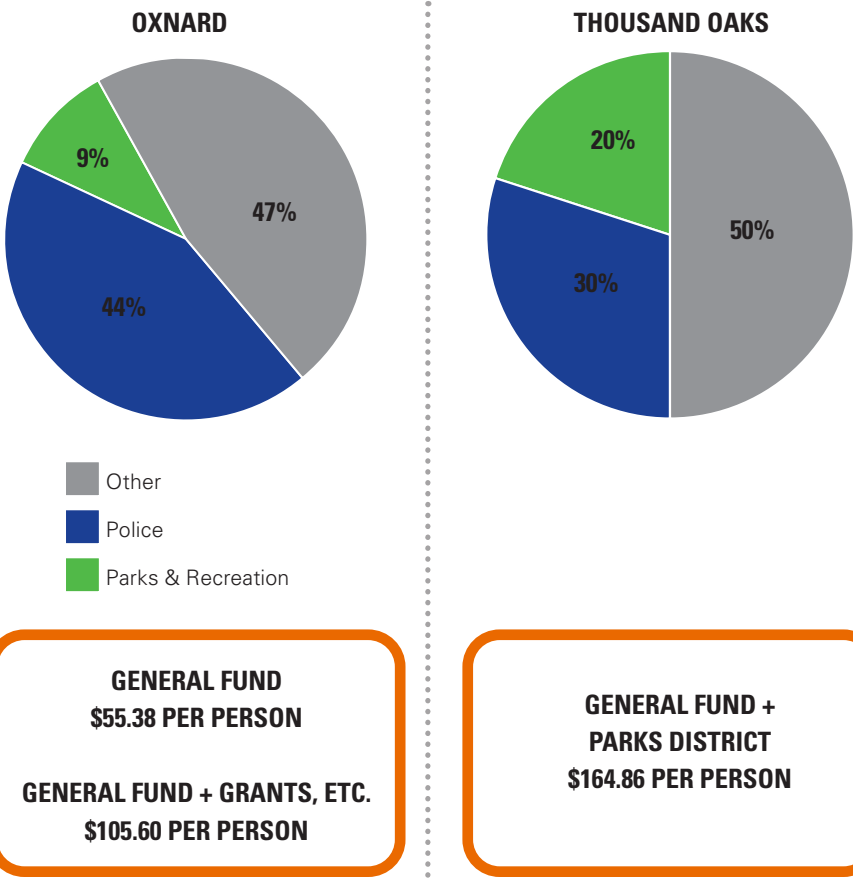
# Create an Oxnard Parks & Recreation District

Parks Districts provide funds to maintain, operate, and develop parks and recreation facilities within a specified district boundary. The majority of parks and facilities serviced by a Park District are owned by that district, though some may be owned by the district and city. All collect a form of property tax, which goes into a special fund for parks instead of the General Fund.

The City could explore creating a Parks District similar to other nearby cities such as Thousand Oaks. Forming a new district requires planning and should not be taken on lightly. It can be costly and time-consuming due to the fees, studies, and elections/voting involved. Still, it has excellent potential to provide the necessary resources needed and should be considered as the best alternative to increase maintenance funds.

Consider this: Oxnard’s General Fund provides approximately \$11.5 million for Parks and Recreation, or about \$55.38 per person. With the additional grant funding Oxnard receives, that per capita expenditure increases about \$40, but that’s only 58% of the funds available to residents of Thousand Oaks due to its park district support. In the absence of additional funding, Oxnard’s parks and recreational programs will not be able to thrive.

## EXPENSES



### SUMMARY OF OXNARD PARKS AND RECREATION GENERAL FUND EXPENDITURES BUDGETED FOR FY 19/20

Parks General Fund Expenditure	\$5,136,562.00
Recreation General Fund Expenditure	\$6,492,613.00
<i>Total Parks and Rec General Fund Expenditures Budgeted FY19/20</i>	<i>\$11,629,175.00</i>

### SUMMARY OF OXNARD PARKS AND RECREATION GENERAL FUND EXPENDITURES BUDGETED FOR FY 18/19

Parks General Fund Expenditure	\$5,924,066.00
Recreation General Fund Expenditure	\$6,912,876.00
<i>Total Parks and Rec General Fund Expenditures FY18/19</i>	<i>\$12,836,942.00</i>

## Encourage Business Improvement Districts in Commercial Areas

A Business Improvement District (BID) provides funds for improvements within a specified commercial district to beautify the area and promote local businesses. Each business owner contributes to a collective fund to use on projects. By investing in the “look and feel” of the district, BIDs create nicer places, encouraging people to shop, live, and work within their district. The benefits are enhanced public safety and improved identity that increase economic development. Additionally, BIDs can drive investment in public parks by contributing funds to capital improvement projects, maintenance, and recreational programming.



### CASE STUDY ONE: CAPITOL RIVERFRONT BID

Washington, D.C.

- Manages 10 acres of parks through a creative partnership with Washington D.C. These include eight major park/public spaces that link the district
- Maintains and programs Yards Park and Canal Park which are considered significant public spaces in the neighborhood that hosts events for over 75,000 people
- The BID supports walkable streets and nature-focused lifestyles



[centercityphila.org/parks/sister-cities-park](http://centercityphila.org/parks/sister-cities-park)

### CASE STUDY TWO: CENTER CITY DISTRICT BID (CCD)

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

- The CCD and associated non-profit Center City District Foundation (CCDF) work together to enhance downtown Philadelphia while managing four urban parks.
- Works year-round to leverage new investments in parks and public spaces orchestrating state and federal funding as well as support from foundations
- Over \$63 million in improvements to parks since 2008, including more green space, new signs, paths, art, and lighting

## Establish a Non-Profit Parks Foundation

A Parks Foundation is a non-profit organization with a mission to raise funds for projects and programming. Typically, Parks Foundations are realized through public-private partnerships between a non-profit entity and the Parks Division. They can raise funding from local businesses, foundations, or corporations to finance city parks since cities aren't set up to accept private donations for public park improvements. Establishing a park's foundation is an avenue to raise money through both public and private sector partnerships.

Programs such as "Adopt-A-Park," "Friends Of The Parks," or "Donate A Bench" are ways a Parks Foundation can collect donations to help sustain city parks and programs. Other methods include annual fund-raisers, capital campaigns, in-kind donation programs, and endowment funds. Additionally, a Parks Foundation can work on initiatives with other non-profit groups or volunteer organizations to implement projects such as community gardens, pocket parks, wellness programs, and more. It could be a great way for Oxnard to have an additional funding source to create new projects, maintain existing facilities, and enhance recreational offerings that the City can't provide.



### CASE STUDY ONE: CITY PARKS FOUNDATION

New York, New York

- A non-profit organization created to program parks in New York City.
- Over 300,000 New Yorkers participate in their free recreational programming. With 400 parks programmed annually, there are 12,000 kids receiving free athletic scholarships and over 24,000 local volunteers to improve the district's park spaces.
- Generates fees through fundraising events, grants, donations, patronage, sponsorships, and corporate events.



### CASE STUDY TWO: CHICAGO PARKS FOUNDATION

Chicago, Illinois

- Founded in 2012 to support Chicago parks and programs
- Stewards over 8,500 acres of green space, more than 600 parks, 230 field houses, 29 beaches, and 26 miles of Lakefront.
- An official charitable partner to the Chicago Park District that raises funds and awareness for parks via special events, community outreach, fiscal partnerships, and restorative projects.

## Incorporate Revenue Generating Facilities into Parks

Oxnard's parks need to be less reliant on the General Fund for their financial sustainability. To do this, the City must get creative on how their parks can cover more operating expenses through park-generated revenue. Oxnard could partner with private organizations charging them a fee to use park space for these programs. It is standard that a business will pay the City for renting park space, but will keep all operational profits. Private organizations such as adventure companies, mobile concession stands, athletic instruction, and camps can all be required to rent park space for a pre-set fee to generate income.



Bike, boat or roller skating rentals in parks to generate income



Mobile concession stands for sports games/ events



Partnering with local companies and camps for space rental



Fitness and personal training licensing in parks

## OTHER FUNDING SOURCES FOR OXNARD

### Voter Dependence

#### SALES TAX PERCENTAGE

A new sales tax percentage or hotel taxes to go into funding parks

### Partnerships

#### CORPORATE PARTNERSHIPS

Private donation to park spaces in return for corporate naming and brand integration/ dedication

### City Council Approval

#### CANNABIS TAX

Tax on the sale of cannabis as a percentage of retail price

#### GRANTS

Non-repayable funds given out by a government for a specific purpose, such as park maintenance or improvement

#### GIFT CATALOG

An Internet based shopping list for individuals to “buy” or contribute money towards gifts for the Divisions

#### DEVELOPMENT IMPACT FEES

Cash contribution substitutes for land requirement

#### BOULEVARD TAX

A charge added to property tax bill based on linear footage of the property along a parkway or boulevard

#### RETAIL PARTNERSHIPS

Working with a retailer to give customers the option of adding a percentage or dollar amount to their bill to be given to parks/ recreation

#### LAND/LEASE CONCESSIONS

Land or space leased to private companies for use; also includes contracts with companies to sell only their line of product

#### IMPROVEMENT DISTRICTS

Landscape, Maintenance Districts, etc.; Special assessments on property owners to support development/ maintenance costs

OTHER REVENUE STRATEGIES

LONG TERM SOURCES

NON-RECURRING FINANCING MECHANISMS

## Strategy 2: Becoming More Efficient With Funds

There are essentially three prongs to improving Oxnard's financial situation. Strategy 1 reviewed increasing funds or **making the pie bigger**; the second involves being **more efficient** with existing funds.

Oxnard doesn't have money to waste, so it needs to examine every expenditure for potential cost savings. Lack of maintenance was a big concern for Oxnard residents, but city staff felt they were doing the best with their limited resources and extreme maintenance load. The two biggest park operations expenditures are water and energy. Finding ways to reduce maintenance loads and decrease the water and electric bills are a target for unlocking money for other projects or expenses.



Solar panels on picnic structures allow for more usage of features at night

## Reduce Energy Costs

Oxnard spends more money on water and electricity than anything else for parks. A long-term investment in sustainable systems, such as solar panels and efficient lighting, will be a significant upfront cost but will result in dramatic cost savings over time. Oxnard should implement solar-powered or cost-efficient LED lighting in all City parks. In facilities such as public restrooms, efficient ENERGY STAR-rated appliances need to be installed to save money.

Better designed restrooms and other structures can result in savings too. Skylights over restroom stalls will allow for less energy to be used in the daytime hours. Other solutions like installing solar panels on top of restrooms, picnic structures, and community centers can reduce energy costs. Additionally, Oxnard spends a large amount of money, maintaining the expansive turf in parks. The City should strategically replace turf with water-smart planting to lower the water requirement of each park.



Green roofs for public restrooms reduce electricity demand  
Source: Design Workshop Mueller Branch Park



Solar panels and skylights in restroom design save a lot of money in park energy costs



Solar powered park lighting can reduce energy costs by 30%

## Install Efficient & Controlled Irrigation

The cost of overwatering can be tremendous. Efficient and technologically advanced water solutions can save a city hundreds-of-thousands of dollars every year in water costs! The City of Oxnard should hire an expert consultant to evaluate its current water-use practices and irrigation methods. This consultant would audit the City's existing systems and water-use consumption patterns over ten years to reveal any problems with overwatering or waste.

Many California cities are running their irrigation systems on outdated technology. Contemporary irrigation systems have become automated and controllable through mobile applications or desktop computers; this allows for consistent monitoring of all irrigation systems

so that problems can be spotted right away. Oxnard can use these technologies along with a comprehensive water management plan to ensure the sustainable development and management of water resources on a municipal level. Comprehensive strategic planning can establish priorities for water-efficiency projects to evaluate the most significant impact or cost-saving solutions for the City. The chart on the following page describes further strategies for improving water efficiency.



# OVER WATERING IN CALIFORNIA



THE WESTERN UNITED STATES WASTES OVER ONE MILLION ACRES WORTH OF WATER PER YEAR

## PROBLEMS

### INADEQUATE TECHNOLOGY

### PERFORMANCE ISSUES

### POOR DESIGN & MAINTENANCE

## SOLUTIONS

### WEATHER ADAPTIVE IRRIGATION



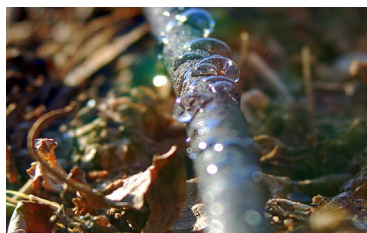
New technologies allow irrigation to adjust their water-flow settings to match weather patterns automatically. For example, if the weather is cool and cloudy, irrigation systems can now adjust automatically to produce less water than on a hot sunny day.

### RETROFITTING OLDER MODELS



Software advances have come a long way in water conservation technology. Many irrigation companies will now allow cities to retrofit their control systems at no cost and get paid back for water savings. This allows the City to focus upfront dollars on infrastructure improvements and spend less money on control costs.

### IRRIGATION MONITORING



35% of wasted water comes from unreported leaks in irrigation systems. Computer-driven irrigation monitoring and software systems detect broken parts or irregular water flows in real-time while producing metric data on water-use.

### PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT



Consultants can audit existing irrigation systems and analyze water-use over ten years, comparing data to an industry baseline and performance management baseline. Setting a performance management baseline will set the target amount of water they should be realistically using per year based on data.

### WATER MANAGEMENT PLANS



Water Management Plans guide cities to update the design, delivery schedules, and pressure requirements of irrigation systems. They act as an overall framework plan that gives guidance on how to control the volume, frequency, and rate of water irrigation for whole city networks and individual sites.

### RECLAIMED INFRASTRUCTURE



Oxnard is already developing new sources of potable water from wastewater. This will help with water conservation and sizing of infrastructure. Continued work with consultants is recommended.

# Strategy 3: Designing Parks To Lower Maintenance Load

The third financial strategy is to identify and eliminate those **systemic qualities** in the parks that are making maintenance more **time consuming or costly**.

Different landscapes require different amounts of maintenance. This means that from the beginning of park design conception, creating a landscape that matches maintenance requirements with maintenance capacity is essential for park success. Without this, the park will forever be doomed to suffer from a lack of maintenance due to lack of resources—a failure in design. This section includes strategies to reduce maintenance through design.



## Use Durable & Sustainable Materials

Oxnard should invest in long-lasting, sustainable materials in parks. While many durable products are more expensive, their longer life will save the City money in the long run. It's particularly important to choose materials selected for resistance against vandalism and weather elements (such as salt from the ocean or heavy sun exposure). Long-lasting natural materials, such as stone or concrete, have a timeless aesthetic and need to be replaced less often than the average product. When designing a park, work with the landscape architect to evaluate the life cycle of specified products versus their cost.



Stone is a great material choice because it is very durable and can last generations without repair. Oxnard must be selective with where it can invest in high quality products.



High-quality poured concrete can look better over time.



High quality materials selected for resistance against vandalism and weather elements

# Transform from Turf to Native or Conservation Plantings

Most of Oxnard’s parks have lots of turf which requires irrigation and regular mowing. This adds up to dollars spent on water and hours spent on maintenance. Redesigning parks to have less turf would not only save money, but also result in more environmentally responsible and engaging parks.

Plant native landscape material in spaces where no programming is expected to occur, such as along the exterior perimeter of the park, between pathways, or in smaller areas and between amenities. Slowly converting each city park into primarily “conservation lawn” or native planting will result in a significant decrease in maintenance and water costs. While perennials and native grasses do need occasional maintenance, they

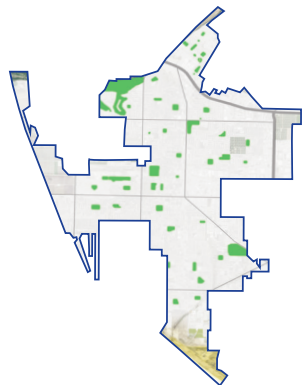
require significantly fewer resources for watering, mowing, cutting, and seeding. According to the chart below, if Oxnard were to convert 30% of its turf area into natural planting, over \$500,000 could be saved annually. The diagram on the next page shows an example of a (re)design.

## COST COMPARISON OF TURF TYPES VERSUS NATIVE PLANTINGS

Landscape Type	Annual Hours Per Acre	Average Hourly Staff Rate	Personnel Cost	OTPS %	OTPS Cost	Total Cost Per Acre	Cost Per SF
Turf - Typical / Non-Athletic	329	\$20	\$6,579	55%	\$3,618	\$10,197	\$0.23
Turf - Athletic Fields	566	\$20	\$11,323	75%	\$8,492	\$19,815	\$0.45
Turf - “Low-mow”	184	\$20	\$3,678	45%	\$1,655	\$5,333	\$0.12
Native Planting	184	\$25	\$6,610	30%	\$1,383	\$5,993	\$0.14

Note: OTPS = “Other Than Personnel Services”; OTPS costs include materials, supplies, equipment maintenance, fuel, utilities, etc. \*Costs can be ~15,000 higher if the field is re-sodded yearly

## TURF IN OXNARD CALCULATIONS

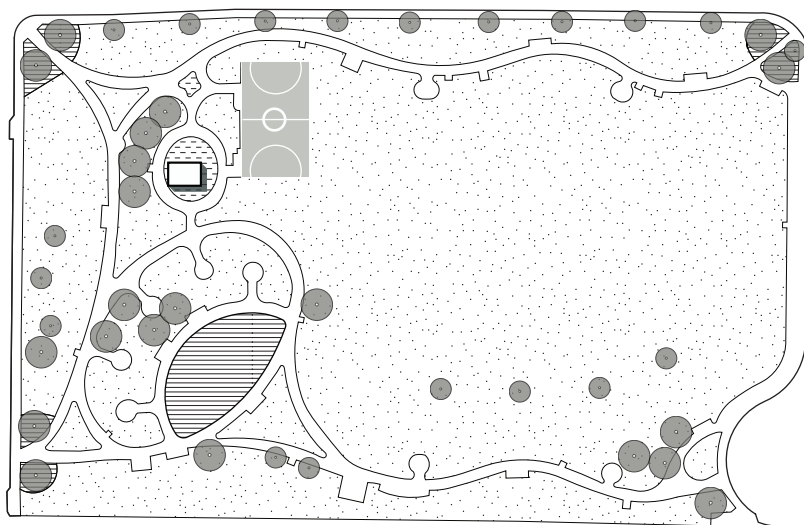


Estimated Turf In Oxnard Parks:  
15,949,961 square feet

Estimated Turf Cost Per Year (Typical/Non-Athletic Turf):  
\$3,668,491 annually

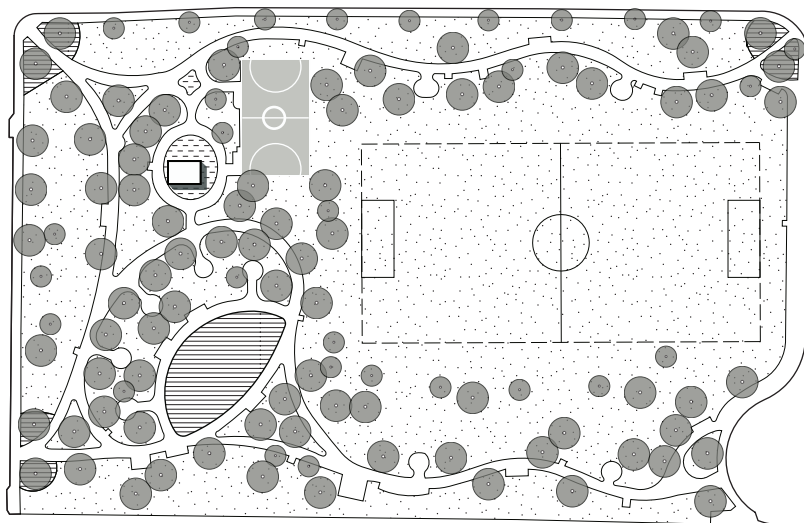
Estimated Cost Per Year if there is a 30% Conversion from Turf to Native Planting:  
\$3,237,842 annually

Estimated Cost Per Year if there is a 30% Conversion from Turf to “Low-mow Turf”:  
\$3,142,142 annually



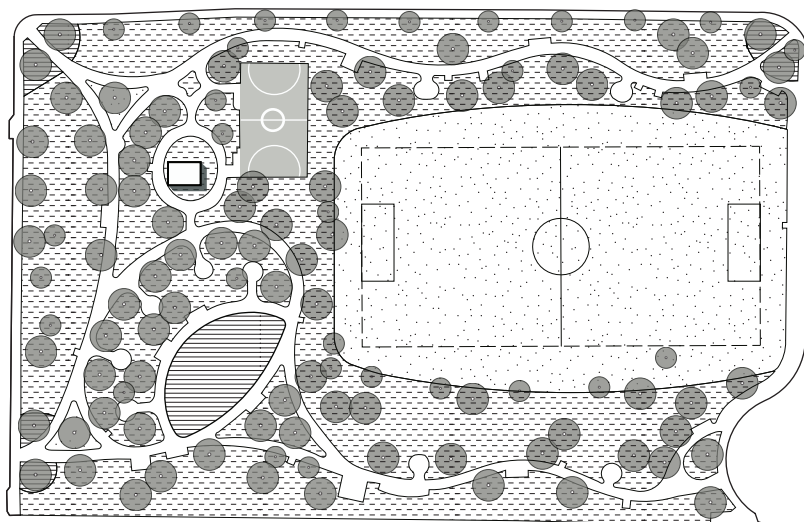
### **PHASE ONE: EXISTING PARK IN OXNARD**

Oxnard's parks are comprised almost entirely of turf. They have large open spaces, typically used for sports, with meandering pathways and other limited amenities. The associated diagram is of Garden City Acres Park. One can see there are many "dead" spaces between paths where no programming can happen.



### **PHASE TWO: PROGRAMMING ZONES & NATURALIZE**

When (re)designing a park, first delineate the appropriately sized area for required programming. It is important to define the current park usage to know how much turf is necessary. In this example, a soccer field is accommodated within the open, flexible turf space.



### **PHASE THREE: REPLACE TURF WITH NATURAL PLANTING**

Convert all non-program use areas to either natural materials, conservation lawn, or native, drought-tolerant planting. This will dramatically reduce site water-use and maintenance costs. For Garden Acres Park, the spaces that have no programmatic function can be converted to native planting. An advantage of this conversion is that the native planting can provide a new program—a community botanical garden.

## Use “Low-Mow Turf” for Sustainable Landscapes

Conservation lawn, or “low-mow” lawn, is a more sustainable alternative to traditional turf landscapes. Not only does “low-mow” turf require little water, but it also deters weeds, thrives in a range of lighting conditions, and requires no fertilizer. Additionally, “low-mow” turf is mowed only a couple times a year. The City would save over \$500,000 annually if it were to convert just 30% of this turf to “low-mow” planting. This is in addition to savings in labor due to less mowing.

Having a “mowed edge” against the “low-mow” planting can make a marked difference in the community’s perceptions of native landscapes. The clean line of a mowed edge juxtaposes the natural plantings, conveying that the landscape is intentional.

It is important to consider that maintenance needs for “low-mow” turf will be different than the traditional grass lawn. Oxnard staff will require training and/or hiring of new employees to ensure the new “low-mow” landscapes are adequately maintained.



A clean mowed edge along a “low-mow” natural turf condition creates a beautiful juxtaposition. The topographic edge with planting indicates occupiable space.



Use “low-mow” planting in buffer areas, along hard-to-mow topography and spaces with minimal foot traffic. These areas can have a more natural aesthetic and require less maintenance.

## Utilize Bio-Retention Technologies

Bio-retention technologies are environmentally responsible and cost-effective ways to collect stormwater. The main benefit of implementing bio-retention technologies is that they significantly reduce water load on a city's existing infrastructure systems and can add a natural element to landscapes.

There are numerous funding avenues for the design and construction of bio-retention areas along streets and in parks in California. The state's prolonged drought and water quality challenges mean that designs that promote responsible water use are a high priority for grants and state funding initiatives.

These innovations aren't complicated. Simple "curb-cut" designs could be installed to collect and filter stormwater into park spaces from the street, utilizing it for bio-retention and infiltration.



While Oxnard generally has sunshine all year round, there are times of heavy rains in winter months. Designing new infrastructure with stormwater retention in mind will improve the condition of the City's underground utilities.



Stormwater bio-retention areas designed into attractive park features such as a stream



Curb cuts on roadways around the perimeter of park can collect and filter stormwater reducing the load on city systems.



Bioswales with native plantings are both beautiful and functional.

## Use Artificial Turf in Parks for Sports Play

Oxnard could benefit from installing artificial turf in many of its sports fields. A typical grass sports field can use between 500,000 to 1,000,000 gallons of water each year, so synthetic turf can result in substantial financial savings. For this reason, the City of Los Angeles is replacing every natural turf field with high-quality synthetic grass. In Oxnard, switching to artificial turf would significantly save on water bills, which would allow the City to recapture the cost of installation within a few years. It also reduces the costs associated with mowing, such as labor and equipment.

The chart on the next page, from the University of Michigan, breaks down each cost associated with real and artificial turf fields. Natural grass is, on average,

about \$20,000 higher than artificial turf for general maintenance costs per field. Another advantage of artificial turf is they can withstand much more “wear and tear.” Many of Oxnard’s sports fields are run down from constant play; artificial turf fields will allow the Oxnard community to have a versatile and flexible play surface for year-round activity.



## COST OF EQUIPMENT, SUPPLIES AND LABOR REQUIRED FOR MAINTENANCE:

### ARTIFICIAL TURF

Water (for cooling)	\$6,000 - \$35,000
Sprayer for water application	\$1,000 - \$35,000
Sweeper	\$1,500 - \$20,000
Mechanical Broom	\$500 - \$3,000
Line Painter	\$500 - \$3,000
Groomer	\$1,500 - \$2,000
Cart (for towing equipment)	\$7,000 - \$16,000
Field Magnet	\$500 - \$1,000
Rollers	\$250 - \$2,000
Top Dresser	\$4,500 - \$10,000

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**Total** **\$23,250 - \$127,000**

### NATURAL GRASS

Irrigation	\$6,000 - \$35,000
Equipment for Irrigation	\$3,000 - \$31,000
Mower	\$13,000 - \$69,000
Fertilizer Applicator	\$1,000 - \$3,000
Line Painter	\$700 - \$3,000
Rollers	\$2,000 - \$4,000
Cart (for towing equipment)	\$7,000 - \$18,500
Aerator	\$2,100 - \$5,000
Vacuum	\$2,100 - \$5,000
Top Dresser	\$4,500 - \$20,000

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**Total** **\$42,800 - \$205,500**

## ANNUAL MAINTENANCE REQUIRED FOR:

### ARTIFICIAL TURF

Painting/removal	\$1,000 - \$10,000
Top Dressing/Infill	\$5,000
Brushing/Sweeping	\$1000 - \$5,000
Disinfecting	\$220
Carpet Repair	\$1000 - \$8,000
Water Cooling	\$5,000 - \$10,000
Weeding	\$500 - \$1,000

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**Total Per Average Sized Field** **\$13,720 - \$39,220**

### NATURAL GRASS

Painting/removal	\$800 - \$12,300
Top Dressing	\$0 - \$5,400
Dragging	\$0 - \$200
Fertilizers	\$1,200 - \$11,000
Pesticides	\$650 - \$6,300
Aeration	\$700 - \$960
Sod Replacement	\$833 - \$12,500
Irrigation	\$300 - \$3,000

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**Total** **\$8,133 - \$48,960**

# Strategy 4: Streamlining Resources

A key component of any maintenance regime is a defined set of **expectations and procedures**.

## Understand Worker Resources

Having a Maintenance Checklist will help the City understand the number and types of workers required to have a structured maintenance regime. Each park will have a designated number of hours for maintenance according to its park checklist. Adding the individual site hours together will result in a total number of maintenance hours, and dividing this number by 40 hours a week (or less) will yield the number of staff the City needs to maintain the parks adequately. Having an understanding of this need will save the City money by maximizing worker resources and utilization.



A City Corps Trainee planting trees in Orchard Park

# Develop Park Maintenance Checklists

A Park Maintenance Checklist would include details on park amenities, amount of staff time needed per park on certain tasks, and how to utilize staff time at each park and frequencies of visits. More similar to an audit and collection of current resources than a training tool

or guide, this would assist in maintaining what Oxnard has. The list below is an example of a park maintenance checklist sheet.

## EXAMPLE PARK MAINTENANCE CHECKLIST

\*Park maintenance checklists should specify the estimated amount of time in minutes and hours of each task to properly assign city resources

FUNCTION	QTY UNIT	UNIT (MIN)	ONCE (MIN)	ONCE (HOURS)	ANNUAL FREQ.	TOTAL HOURS
Litter - general	75 msf	1.67	125.3	2.1	32	66.8
Empty trash cans	15 cans	7.2	108.0	1.8	104	187.2
Mow open areas w/580D	37.1 msf	0.3	11.1	0.2	19	3.5
Mow close areas w/20" mow	0.1 msf	9	0.9	0.0	19	0.3
Mow close areas w/hydro-mow	0.7 msf	3	2.1	0.0	19	0.7
Broadleaf weed control (hand)	0.8 msf	6	4.8	0.1	2	0.2
Broadleaf weed control	37.1 msf	1	37.1	0.6	2	1.2
Overseed (hand)	0.8 msf	7.2	5.8	0.1	1	0.1
Overseed	37.1 msf	1	37.1	0.6	1	0.6
Liming (hand)	0.8 msf	7.2	5.8	0.1	1	0.1
Liming	37.1 msf	1	37.1	0.6	1	0.6
Top-dress (hand)	0.8 msf	7.2	5.8	0.1	1	0.1
Top-dress	37.1 msf	1	37.1	0.6	1	0.6
Edging (hand)	0.7 clf	5.4	3.8	0.1	1	0.1
Spray w/small tank	0.5 mlf	40	20.0	0.3	3	1.0
Fertilize w/tractor	37.1 msf	1	37.1	0.6	2	1.2
Fertilize w/hand sprayer	0.8 msf	6	4.8	0.1	2	0.2
Aerify ground	37.9 msf	6	227.4	3.8	2	7.6
Prune shrubs	600 each	12	7200.0	120.0	2	240.0
Fertilize shrubs	600 shrub	6	3600.0	60.0	2	120.0
Cultivate shrub bed	6 msf	30	180.0	3.0	1	3.0
Clean catch basins	1 basin	60	60.0	1.0	1	1.0



***"Sad to say but compared to smaller cities, Oxnard parks are fewer and of poorer quality." - Oxnard Resident***

## **Goal 2: Diversify Amenities & Facilities**



Strategy One: Designing Better Parks

Strategy Two: Activating the Beach

Strategy Three: Ensuring Facilities Work for Everyone

Strategy Four: Creating a Dynamic Recreation Program

Parks should be for everyone. They should serve people of all ages, cultures, economic standing, and abilities. Residents rely on their local parks to do what they love, whether that means the ability to enjoy nature, read under a tree, play their favorite sport, or even go for a swim. It provides an avenue for recreational facilities and programming. A healthy park system is always adaptive to the recreational needs of its users.

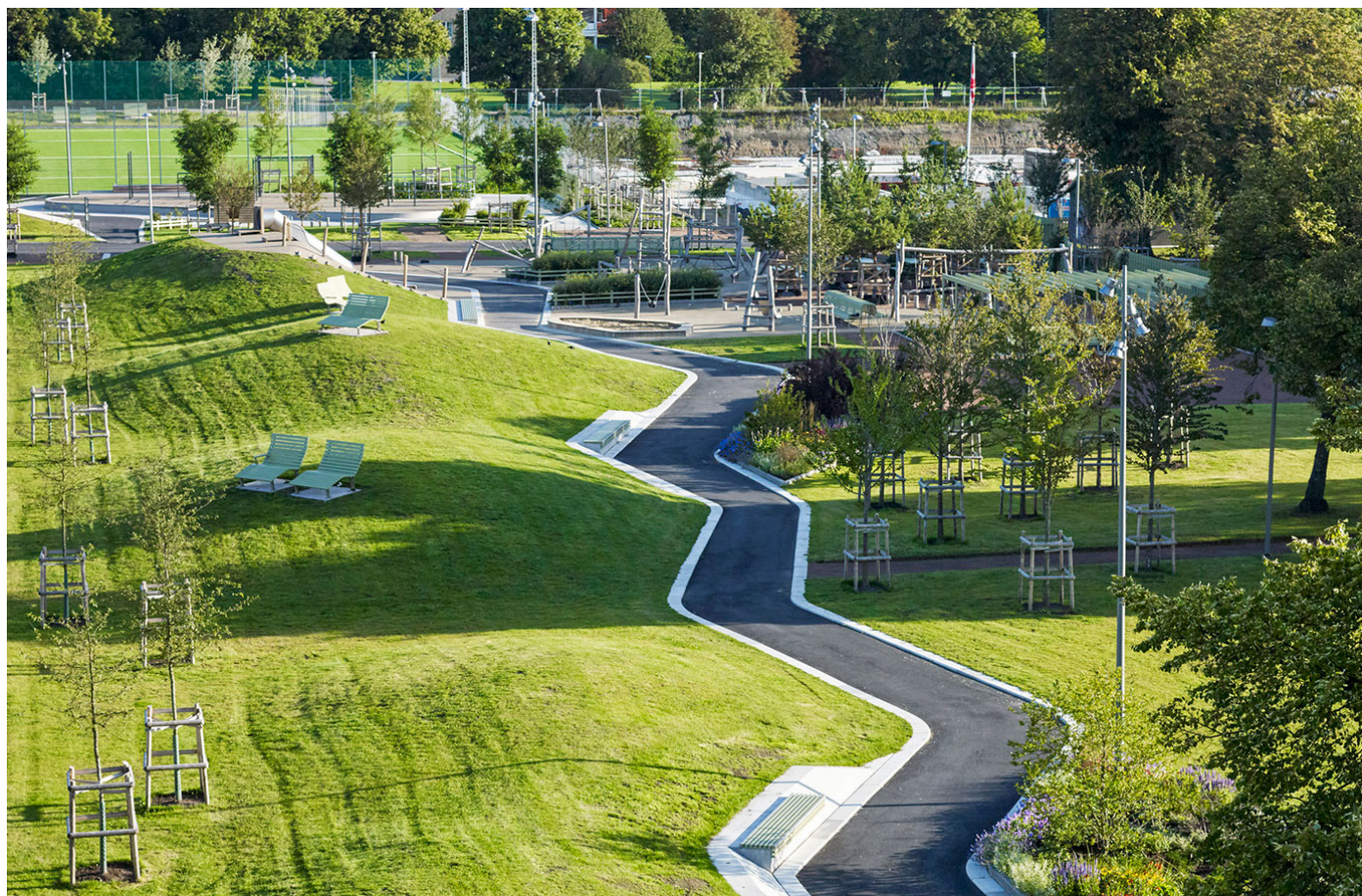
As a City that prides itself on diversity, parks and facilities in Oxnard fall behind in providing diverse amenities that are also functional. This is due to lack of funding, as there is a lack of money both to build new amenities and keep up existing ones. Oxnard needs to use its resources as efficiently as possible to create a self-sustainable park system.

This chapter focuses on strategies for equity within recreational programming and facilities. It also evaluates how Oxnard can better design its park spaces and beaches to be active and efficient.

# Strategy 1: Designing Better Parks

Design isn't just about beauty or innovation. Well-designed parks **function better**, are easier to maintain, and serve the **whole community**.

Oxnard's parks, for the most part, suffer the common fate of many aging municipal parks—designed as with a rubber stamp. Park elements are generally composed of an off-the-shelf playground kit, a baseball field, some trees, and a grassy lawn with few elements to make each park distinct.



## Incorporate Habitats and Natural Features

Integrating natural spaces into Oxnard's urban parks is responsible and educational. It promotes environmental stewardship, creates places for habitat formation, and creates an engaging and dynamic environment that delights people of all ages. Exposure to nature will help Oxnard's residents build a connection to their local park and surrounding natural ecosystem

Community members cited building an environmental education center as a top priority. The City could explore utilizing the Advanced Water Purification Facility in south Oxnard as an environmental education center. Here the City could partner with a non-profit to conduct educational programs, classes, and provide additional school tours to educate both kids and adults on Oxnard's ecosystem, ways to be more sustainable, and the importance of responsible landscaping.

Urban parks should also have an educational component. This could be as simple as signage labeling plants or informative diagrams identifying restorative processes, such as bio-retention and sustainable materials. This education will help residents understand the broader value their parks bring to the broader ecosystem promoting life-long environmental stewards.



Natural areas in urban parks create many opportunities for restorative experiences and natural programming. This can include areas for children to learn about plants, animals, health and environmental education, as well as provide places for play and discovery.



The Newtown Creek Wastewater Treatment plant regularly hosts tours and educational events on how the plant works and New York City water.

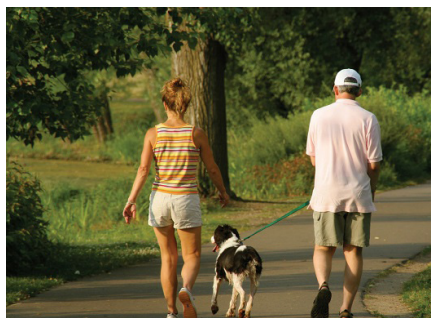
## Design Parks for Flexibility and Multi-Use

Limited resources and funding will force Oxnard's parks to serve more than one function. The City and park designers should consider how different people can use each space at different times for different purposes—open fields available for pick up soccer and picnicking, structures for both exercise and play, trails for walking, and education. This variety is what makes a great design strategy; parks need an intermixing of a flexible and permanent program that reflects a healthy blend of active and passive recreation. Oxnard especially needs a greater diversity of passive programming elements to counterbalance sports. Features such as dog parks, water play, and walking tracks will serve a higher diversity of park users.



Maggie Daley park in Chicago employs many lawn spaces to create flexible, active, and passive programming opportunities. As Oxnard has limited resources, all parks must be dual-purpose to meet the needs of a diverse community.

### PASSIVE PROGRAM ELEMENTS TO ACTIVATE OXNARD'S PARKS



A walking track allows more people to use the park by creating a safe, accessible, and pleasant place to walk or run for people of all ages. It can be designed as a multi-use trail to allow for flexible program use.



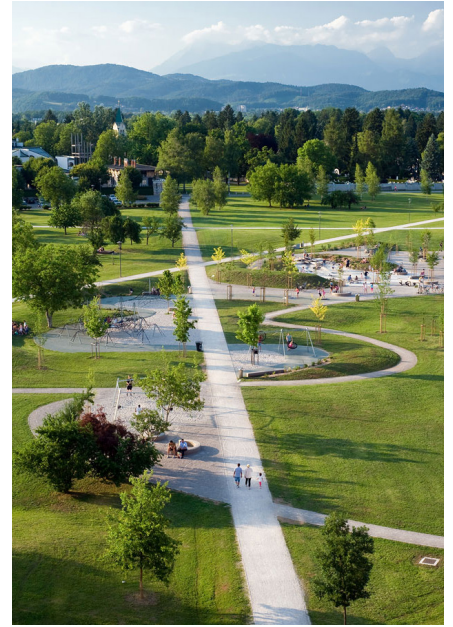
Water features are visually stimulating and a great place for kids to play.



Botanical + Community Gardens could be privately run while being a great place for educational programming.



Smarinski Park in Poland integrates water play with stormwater technology.



Natural playgrounds with hills or rock gardens provide both flexible play options for children and create visual interest in the landscape.



Oxnard needs more areas for off-leash and on-leash dog play. They create social opportunities for humans and dogs.



Increased integration of nature in parks will create many opportunities for outdoor education, wildlife viewing, relaxing, and trail exploration.

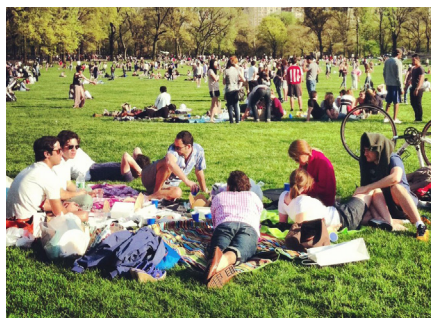
## Focus On Existing Parks Before Adding More

Oxnard has fewer parks than the national average. However, when considering the City's position between the coast, Ormond Beach, and the Santa Clara River, there are many opportunities for outdoor recreation. The diagram in Chapter 3 (p. 24) supports this, showing that the coverage of public parks (per mileage radius) leaves service gaps in areas that need more park space even if you include the future Sports Park and Campus Park. As Oxnard has a difficult time managing its existing parks, the City should focus funding on improving what they already have.



The beach could be a greater resource for the City if it were more accessible and programmed.

### FOCUS ON OXNARD'S EXISTING PARKS AND OPEN SPACES



The City should build Campus Park and Sports Park, and finish College Park while continuing to plan small neighborhood parks for neighborhoods that lack park acreage. Both developments will be a resource for the entire community, prioritizing their needs for funding and maintenance resources.



Incorporate diverse programming into existing parks to attract more people and take full advantage of the current park acreage. Programs include public agriculture, community gardens, habitats, and orchards.



The City should consider privatized parks/open spaces as a way to supplement the amount of park space the City can maintain.

## Make Each Park Distinct

With a few exceptions, Oxnard’s parks are monotonous and lack visual interest. For the most part, they’re all comprised of the same elements with little to make each park unique and representative of the neighborhood.

Parks need to employ thoughtful design strategies to create variation. The City should think cohesively about future park designs; aim for creating each with an “identity” and unique visual character. Tactics like introducing slight topography changes and diverse plantings can create a varied, layered ground-plane. The Police Department is currently included in design consideration and will be in the future as well.

Each of Oxnard’s parks would benefit from a refresh to see how they could perform better and serve more people. The City should solicit a collection of design firms to review parks and identify strategic design interventions. Through the design process each element should be evaluated for appropriateness and impact on park safety.



A red ribbon bench has made this Chinese park internationally known.



This large climbing wall is a distinctive feature that sets this park apart.



This playful topography against the flat terrain gives this park a sense of playfulness.



Natural features help to create a sense of place and play area for children.

# Park Design Recommendations & Standards on Park Classifications

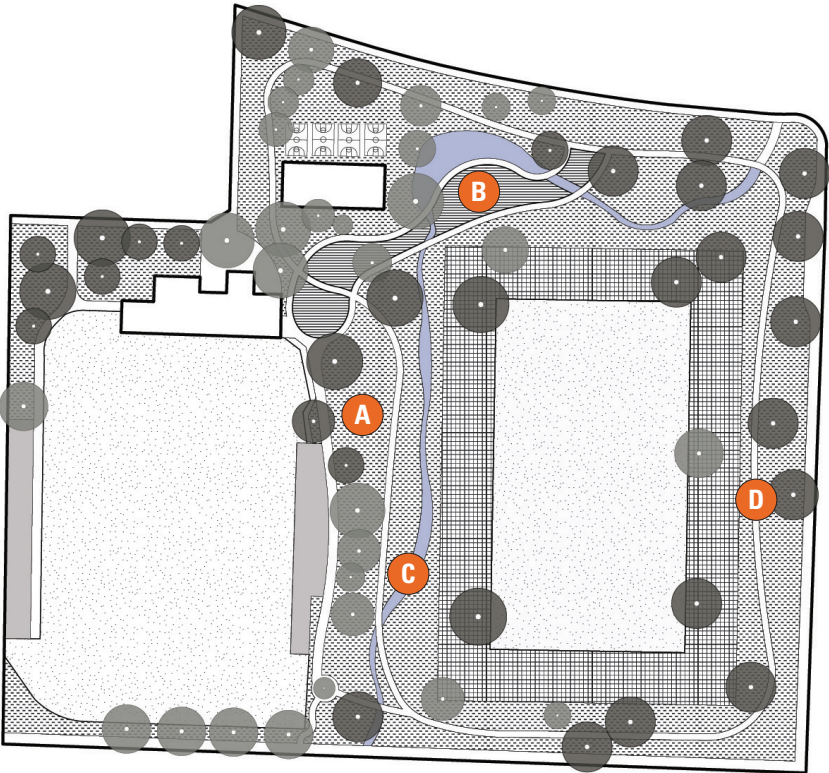
The vast amount of turf in Oxnard’s parks makes maintenance difficult and expensive. Redesigning the parks to have less turf will save water, reduce maintenance costs, and increase visual interest. The project team also recommends incorporating natural play areas and stormwater retention areas.

On the right is a hypothetical conceptual redesign of Del Sol Park incorporating these changes.



DEL SOL PARK: BEFORE

- A** Turf planting is minimized and replaced with native plantings or conservation lawn.
- B** Programed areas are expanded and integrated into the rest of the park.
- C** Stormwater retention areas absorb water and introduce natural habitat.
- D** Park paths are expanded to create a walking trail loop around the park.



SURFACE APPLICATION	
	Turf
	Landscaped Area
	Mulch
	Programmed Area
	Stormwater Retention

DEL SOL PARK: AFTER



Hudson Street Park

### **UNDER 3 ACRE PARKS: SMALL/POCKET PARKS**

Small/Pocket parks provide for the needs of limited or concentrated populations and activities. Small/Pocket park features include:

- Active Recreation Elements: Varies
- Passive Recreation Elements: Benches, Sidewalks, Picnic Tables
- Visitor Facilities: Small Pavilions, Parking
- Landscaped Areas



Hassett Park

### **3 - 10 ACRE PARKS: NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS**

Neighborhood parks provide open space for a population in a designated area/neighborhood within a quarter- to half-mile radius. Neighborhood park features include:

- Active Recreation Elements: Game Courts, Game Fields, Play Areas
- Passive Recreation Elements: Benches, Sidewalks, Picnic Tables
- Visitor Facilities: Restrooms, Pavilions, Parking
- Landscaped Areas

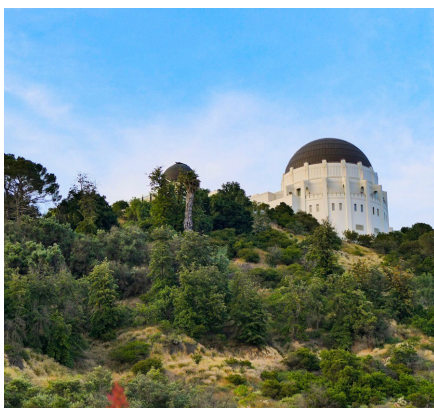


Mueller Town Center Park

### **10 -20 ACRE PARKS: COMMUNITY PARKS**

Community parks serve an area within a 3/4- to one-mile radius and provide for open space for several neighborhoods. Community park features include:

- Recreation Elements: Athletic Complexes, Play Areas
- Passive Recreation Elements: Seating Areas, Trails, Picnic Areas
- Visitor Facilities: Restrooms, Concessions, Parking
- Landscaped and Natural Areas



Griffith Park

### **20+ ACRE PARKS: REGIONAL PARKS**

Regional Parks serve several communities over a 1 mile radius for multi-use. Natural resources are encompassed with public facilities. Regional park features include:

- Special Use Areas: Plazas, Amphitheaters, Arenas
- Recreation Elements: Trail Systems, Picnic Areas, Athletic Facilities
- Visitor Facilities: Visitors Center, Restrooms, Concessions, Parking
- Preserved Natural Areas and Wildlife Habitat

Source: [www.webpages.uidaho.edu/css386/Recreation\\_Size\\_and\\_Occupancy\\_Standards.pdf](http://www.webpages.uidaho.edu/css386/Recreation_Size_and_Occupancy_Standards.pdf)  
 Source: [www.dallasparks.org/151/Park-Classifications](http://www.dallasparks.org/151/Park-Classifications)

## Strategy 2: Activating the Beach

Oxnard's relatively flat topography makes it a **perfect place to bike**, yet most residents didn't, citing concerns for **safety** as the reason.

With the Oxnard's flat topography, Oxnard should be a biking community, but it needs a bike lane network that is safe and protective for its users. An overwhelming majority of Oxnard's bike lanes are Class II or Class III, which force bikers to share the roadway with vehicles without any physical buffer. Creating a safe, connected bike network through the city would allow residents to easily access the beach, Santa Clara River, and downtown.



## Add Lifeguards

The absence of lifeguards at Oxnard's beaches is a major reason residents do not feel safe there. The City should implement a lifeguarding training program in the most affordable way possible for the City. Lifeguards not only assist in lifesaving activity, but also play a major role in educating the public and teaching lessons on ocean safety. Because a large majority of Oxnard's youth do not know how to swim, having lifeguard stations close and in-between beach access points could create a sense of safety. To save on initial costs, the City could work with the County to better understand their lifeguard staffing and start by providing lifeguards only during the summer and on weekends.



Lifeguards are essential to creating a safe environment for local beaches. A lifeguarding program can train and recruit local high school students or volunteers to serve Oxnard's beaches.

## Provide More Wayfinding Signage

Oxnard should be known for its beautiful beaches. However, navigating to the shore can be difficult for people unfamiliar with the City and can detract visitors and residents from going. Beach access points are not obvious, and parking is limited. Therefore, it is critical to orient pedestrians, bicyclists, and even cars to the beach from all major points in Oxnard with wayfinding signage. The beach needs to represent as a destination and not an afterthought. Incorporating signage along all East/West road corridors, and at major access points, will break down perceptions that the beach is not for everyone to enjoy.



Wayfinding signs could direct pedestrians walking or biking from Oxnard's historic core to the beach. This example has clear directions and icons pointing to different amenities throughout the City and distinguishes between biking, trail, and transit destinations.

## Establish Programming & Economic Drivers

Oxnard's beaches are beautiful; however, they are missing the activity of a dynamic and vibrant coastline. Creating a programmatic incentive for visitors and residents to stay in Oxnard will allow the City to compete with surrounding beach communities. The City should enhance their beach-going experience through additional programming and economic development. Such enhancements could include private operations at the beach, such as pop-up food carts, kayaking, furniture rentals, and boat/beach tours.



Kayak, surf board, boogie board and game rentals should be made available at the shore to promote outdoor recreation.



Partnering with companies for legal beach bonfire events.

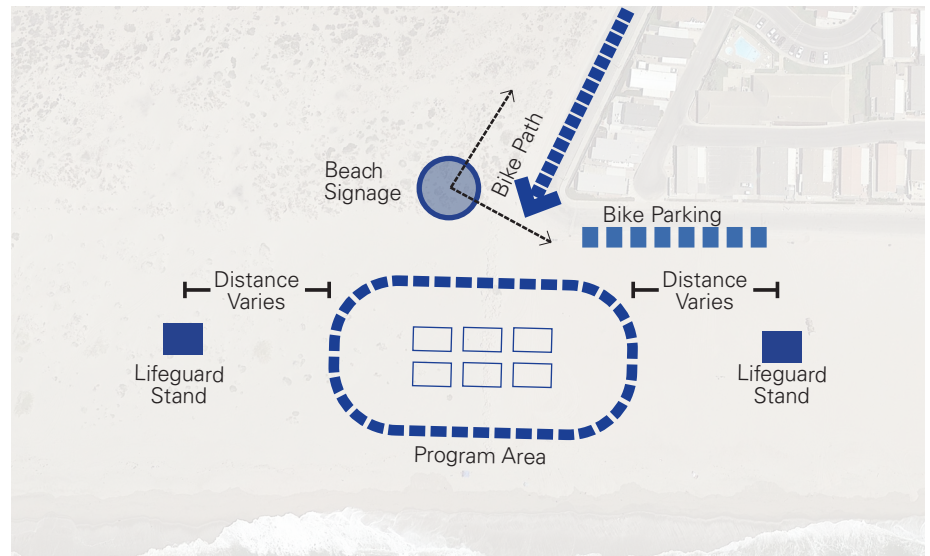


Beach volleyball is a great way to attract young sports players to the beach during all seasons.

## Add More Bike Parking

Easy access to Oxnard's coast is essential to having a great beach culture. Unfortunately, vehicular roadways don't run along the beach, resulting in many dead ends, and there is limited space for public parking. However, Oxnard's flat topography allows a fantastic opportunity to connect the City through bike lanes. Constructing a bike/pedestrian route adjacent to the coastline will make Oxnard's beach more accessible and create more access points where residents and visitors are encouraged to enter.

Access points along the coast should be consistently spaced and be opportunities for activity. Even though limited beach belongs to the City, partnerships with the County and State should be strengthened to allow for continuous design, operations, and programming. Each access point should have clear entrance signage, plenty of bike parking, and spaces where programs, such as beach volleyball, could happen. Other beach programs such as furniture rental, cabanas, games, and entertainment could also occur in these spots. Lifeguard stations should also be offset at a specified distance from these points to ensure full sightlines and safety coverage of the water.



The concept of signage with program areas bike parking is important. Each beach entrance should have adequate signage to confirm to residents and tourists that they are public. Program areas, such as volleyball, rentals, beach games and cabana areas should be located close to an entrance. Lifeguard stands should be situated on each side of program areas.

## Promote Regional & Private Events

Holding private events and regional festivals at Oxnard's beach would be a great way to raise money while promoting the City's culture. Proximity to Los Angeles allows for endless opportunity to host amazing beach festivals and attract tourists from all over Southern California. Additionally, private events such as weddings and parties could be a great way to collect revenue from beach rental fees. Corporate organizations and non-profits could also rent the beach as a venue for local company retreats, fund raisers, and charity events. Partnering with local groups could result in a consistent number of events to take place every year, collectively generating enough funding to improve local beach and programming for residents.



Beach Game Day: inflatable foosball, giant games, kids activity zones, cornhole, beach obstacle courses, etc.



Special events, fund raisers, and celebrations



Kite and sand castle festivals



Ticketed outdoor concerts and movies



Permits for beach weddings and similar events can be a great way for the City to collect revenue.

## Strategy 3: Ensuring Facilities Work for Everyone

Oxnard's population is **diverse**, both demographically and culturally. This means that the **recreation programs** and **park amenities** need to be diverse as well.

In speaking with residents and Advisory Committee members, the project team heard that not everyone feels welcome in Oxnard's parks. Reasons for this ranged from language barriers to differences in cultural norms to concerns about safety. Additionally, many residents expressed frustration that there didn't seem to be many features for them at the parks. Seniors wanted walking paths or just quiet places to sit, while pre-school teachers advocated for more playgrounds designed for kids under three. Finally, the lack of parks, playgrounds, and facilities that are inclusive and accessible was a big concern.



Oxnard Cultural Festival

## Focus On Senior Center Development & Resources

Ensuring quality senior programming is essential to the foundation of Oxnard's recreational services. Specifically, Oxnard could construct a new Senior Center when funds become available. A new center would provide the required space necessary for hosting the recommended amount of programming for seniors. As

seniors make up 9.8% of Oxnard's population, it's important to provide seniors with resources that are accessible and affordable.



Senior programs are a foundational part of Oxnard's recreational offerings. After youth programming, senior recreation needs to be a priority in regards to funding.

## Incorporate Signage in English, Spanish and Mixteco

Making sure that everyone who lives in Oxnard can read park signs will help all residents feel welcome. Some residents, especially those that only speak Spanish or Mixteco, don't always realize that parks are public. Additionally, if they can't read any of the signs in the park, they may fear disobeying the rules unintentionally. To make everyone feel welcome, the

consultant recommends that all entrance, restroom, directional, and instructive signage in existing and new parks should be trilingual— in English, Spanish, and Mixteco.



Signage in Oxnard should try as much as possible to be in English, Spanish, and Mixteco. The sign in this image does a good job at incorporating three different languages in a clear, concise way.

## Joint-Use Strategies for Necessary Amenities

The City is currently working with two schools to develop a joint-use pool agreement, but more work could be done to strengthen joint-use contracts with other schools. It is critical to promote partnerships like these between the Oxnard School District, Oxnard College, and the City of Oxnard. To create successful partnerships, both parties must receive a benefit. Oxnard should renegotiate existing joint-use agreements to ensure maximum benefit to the City. The City of San Ramon is a good example of joint use agreement that has been ongoing for over 30 years with elementary and middle schools that was developed so that tax payers are not duplicating paying for school park areas and nearby city parks when they serve similar needs. Placer County recently used this as an example to draft an updated JUA for their jurisdiction. There are currently two pools at Oxnard High School District schools within City limits, at Oxnard High School and Hueneme High School. Nearby, Rio Mesa High School also has a pool.



The original Master Plan for College Park had a joint-use aquatic facility between the City and Oxnard College. This idea should be revisited in thinking about long term joint-use partnerships. Image from Blackbird Architects of Oxnard Union Pool Facility.

### JOINT USE STRATEGIES FOR OXNARD



The City and School Districts can create a special rental rate that makes joint use affordable to both parties. For example, if the High School field fees are too pricey for the City to rent at its current rate, there could be a subsidized rate worked among parties that is more realistic. In exchange, City facilities could become cheaper for the High School District.

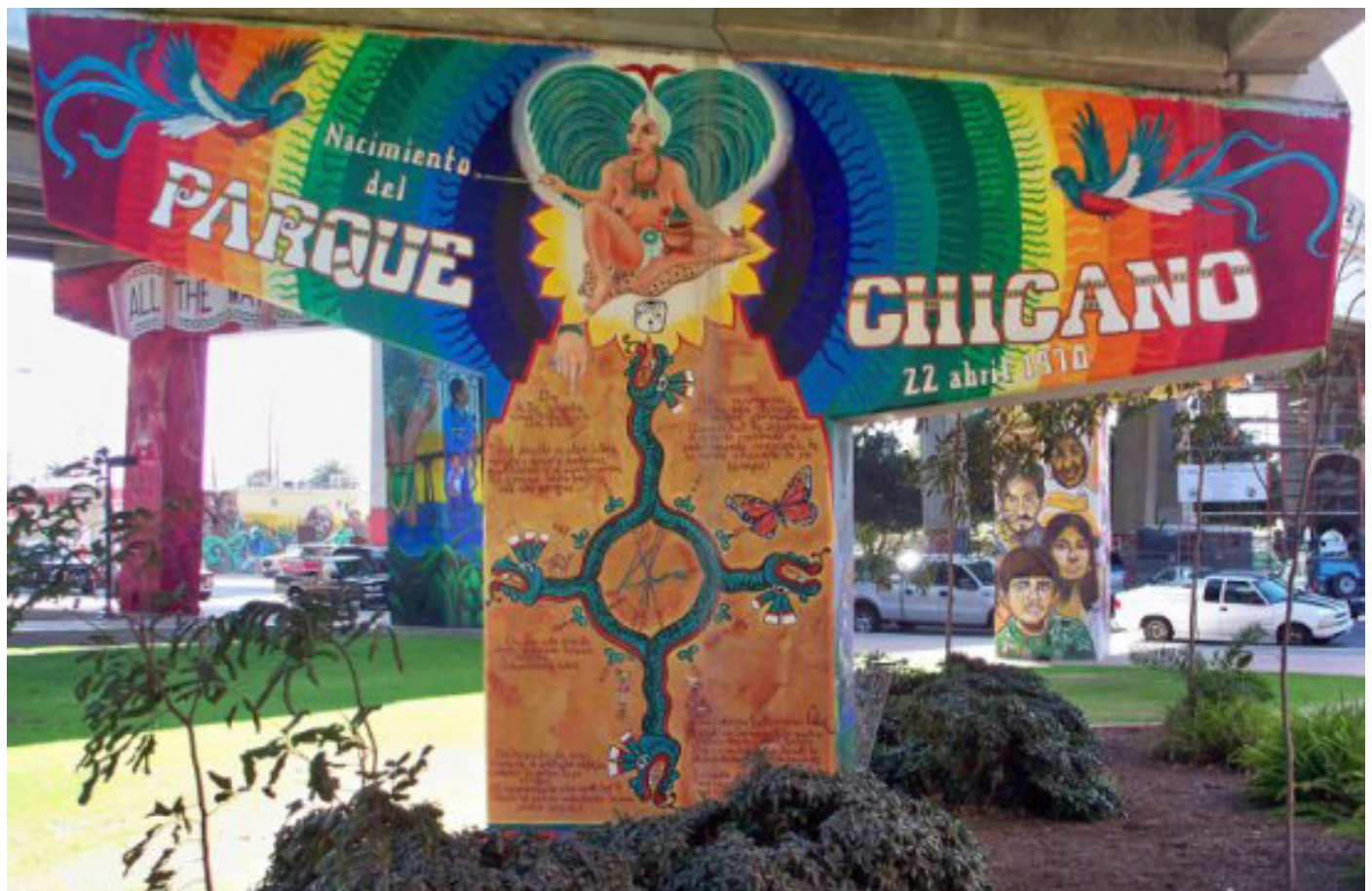


Manage City and School District owned practice fields under one scheduling system. This would consolidate resources and allow for practices and games to be controlled more efficiently. A scheduling system is being implemented soon.

## Design Parks that Reflect the Neighborhood Culture

Oxnard's culture needs to be evident in the design of public parks and open spaces. When designing new parks, the local community should be consulted to ensure it reflects their needs and culture. Each park should respond to Oxnard's unique cultural composition while still maintaining program flexibility. For example, parks with ample picnic areas and barbecues reflect the view that parks are meant to be social spaces that support large family gatherings.

Murals and art can also be useful in showcasing the culture and history of the users and residents. In older parks, the City can work with local artists to incorporate heritage inspired murals and artwork.



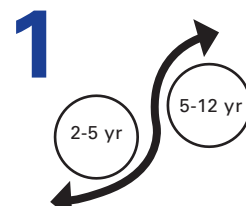
# Ensure Accessible Programs & Equipment


Inclusiveness needs to be a significant design consideration in the development of all new parks and open spaces. This means designing spaces that allow people with disabilities, sight or hearing impairments to experience the park amenities like paths and playgrounds. It also means programming for all age groups. The solutions below outline basic principles for how to convert and develop parks to become accessible for everyone.





An example of an inclusive playground that allows for children in wheelchairs to use a slide. Sensory-rich playgrounds offer opportunities for all children.


## STRATEGIES FOR ACCESSIBLE PARKS IN OXNARD


- 


In new parks, playgrounds should cater to different age groups. Consider building two smaller, separate playgrounds adjacent to one another for 2-5 & 5-12 year-olds.
- 


New playgrounds in Oxnard should be handicap accessible. As older playgrounds wear over time, the City should replace them with accessible playgrounds.
- 

Promoting integrated recreation programs that allow disabled persons to participate.
- 

Consider materiality and access in designing new circulation paths and public spaces. Choose materials that are easy for wheelchairs to move on.
- 

Provide recreational programming and spaces for teenagers. Often, park design doesn't consider teenagers — programs like skate parks, exercise equipment, large "play" features, and study spaces.
- 

Go beyond ADA requirements. Choose outdoor site furnishings that cater to accessibility. Examples include accessible picnic tables and benches.
- 

Build accessibility into the park design. Dedicated pedestrian and bike paths allow a safe environment for navigating at different speeds and abilities.
- 

Improve access into City parks, such as improving visibility at intersections to protect those with visual, hearing, or motor disabilities.

## Address the Soccer Shortage

There are approximately 250 youth soccer teams and 50-60 adult teams in Oxnard, but only eight official fields. The immense popularity of the sport combined with the shortage of playing fields has created tension between the soccer community and non-soccer playing residents. To ensure that soccer teams have adequate playing and practicing space while still allowing for multiple activities in parks and for the fields to be used for multiple other uses when soccer is not being played, the project team is proposing a variety of strategies.



Soccer is the most popular sport in Oxnard. It also demands the most amount of resources. Considering various solutions for the soccer shortage will help accommodate everyone.

### **CONSOLIDATE SOCCER AT COLLEGE PARK**

Part of College Park's undeveloped 25 acres should be converted into an outdoor soccer complex. The goal is to consolidate soccer practice in one location, using fewer maintenance and staff resources. While the current fields at College Park are locked for game use only, much of the undeveloped acreage could be designed as practice fields for everyday use. This should alleviate the burden on the rest of Oxnard's parks enough to support teams and even host tournaments. Of course, Pelota Mixteca should still be able to use this space as well.

### **ARTIFICIAL FIELDS THAT ARE PRE-STRIPED**

The City could install artificial turf fields in parks to reduce long-term maintenance costs. An advantage of artificial fields is that they can come “pre-striped” for a range of field sizes. This allows the same space to be used by teams for 8, 12, 15-year olds, etc. Incorporating more artificial fields that are pre-striped for different field sizes will make it easier to conserve space and have multiple games on a single field.

### **CONSIDER AN INDOOR SOCCER FACILITY FOR 24 HOUR PLAY**

Oxnard should consider teaming with a private firm to build an indoor soccer complex. Although outdoor soccer is more appealing for the community, an indoor complex will allow for play at all hours of the day and be usable in bad weather. As soccer complexes only take up about an acre of land, the facility would be only a fraction of the overall soccer complex. An indoor soccer facility in Oxnard would need to be privately run by an outside operator, so it would be necessary for the City to partner with a developer/operator.

### **COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS WITH LAND OWNERS**

The City of Oxnard should work to find creative partnerships for providing more soccer to the community. Private landowners with old agriculture lots, turf farms, or empty fields may be willing to convert their land for tax incentives or private capital. Like the Tuckahoe Turf Farm example from the Community Engagement Chapter, private owners may be ready to have seasonal soccer tournaments on their land for a rental fee.

### **LEAGUE & SEASON PLAY CONSOLIDATION**

The number of soccer leagues in Oxnard, in addition to year-round play, has put too much strain on resources. The consultant recommends consolidating the leagues into a more manageable number that can be run by the City. Also, the competitive soccer season should be shortened from 12 to 8 months of the year so that field facilities and staff can rest. These changes will result in a strengthened soccer program that is not only more organized but better funded per player.

### **IMPLEMENT SCHEDULING SOFTWARE**

With consolidated leagues, the City of Oxnard should continue with its plans to purchase a soccer league management software. This technology will allow each league to manage the game and practice schedule efficiently. It will also ensure all teams will have a designated time and place to play. Implementing software allows for a consolidated soccer network that can easily record team registration data, financial information, and club roster lists. With so much demand for soccer, scheduling software is necessary to make the most efficient and effective use of resources.

## Create A Place for Baseball & Softball

Baseball and softball teams in Oxnard have suffered from the poor condition of Durley Park. Issues such as safety, poor lighting, homelessness, and failing equipment/fields have prevented these sports from thriving. The City of Oxnard needs to provide baseball and softball leagues with maintained facilities at the very least. The consultant recommends the City prioritize improvements to Durley Park's baseball field and incorporate baseball/softball fields into the new design for Sports Park to provide players with functional, consolidated playing facilities.



### MAKE IMPROVEMENTS TO DURLEY PARK A PRIORITY

Repairing the baseball facilities at Durley Park should be a priority. The fencing needs replacing, the field needs resurfacing, and the bleachers require repair. The City should also add appropriate lighting.



### BUILD A BASEBALL & SOFTBALL COMPLEX AT SPORTS PARK TO CONSOLIDATE FIELDS

Develop Sports Park to be primarily programmed with baseball and softball facilities. Sports Park is located near existing baseball and softball leagues which helps consolidate resources.

## Improve Tennis Facilities & Grow Interest in Pickleball

Tennis players in Oxnard are very active. As a lifetime sport, tennis offers a way for residents—from the very young to the very old—to engage in physical activity. Unfortunately, the courts are not well maintained, which is frustrating for tennis enthusiasts. The conditions of tennis facilities outside the Tennis Center are so poor that the courts are next to unusable.

With national recreation trends changing, there has been an extreme increase in pickleball popularity and a decline in tennis. The project team recommends consolidating maintenance efforts at the Tennis Center and considering improving courts to bring back local and county tennis teams who could pay the increased membership fees to keep the courts maintained. For those courts that are not being used for tennis, converting them for new uses, like pickleball may be a good option also, as it too can be a lifetime sport.



### **CONSOLIDATE PLAY & PRIVATIZE MEMBERSHIP DUES AT THE OXNARD TENNIS CENTER TO PROVIDE MORE FUNDING**

The majority of tennis played in Oxnard is by Tennis Center members, so the priority is to maintain the courts in the Tennis Center over those in public parks. To support this, increased membership dues should fund Tennis Center site improvements as opposed to going into the General Fund.



### **CONVERT RUNDOWN TENNIS COURTS TO PICKLEBALL & BASKETBALL COURTS**

While tennis is an enriching sport, it has waned in popularity over the years. Not every park needs a tennis court and repurposing those that aren't well used could prove beneficial. The City should consider transforming run down or unused tennis courts into pickleball and basketball courts. Basketball is a popular sport and pickleball is on the rise, so the City will have to determine the highest and best use for each court.

## Support Indoor Basketball

Indoor basketball leagues are the second most popular sport in Oxnard. However, because competitive basketball is played indoors, there isn't as much of a need to provide more outdoor courts for competitive play. With the local decline in tennis popularity, old courts can be converted to basketball to meet any additional demand. Adding lighting in parks could also support basketball. Repairing popular basketball courts, such as those at Oxnard Beach Park, would be ideal improvements for now.



Indoor basketball is one of the most popular sports in Oxnard. The use of outdoor basketball courts will have to be determined in evaluating whether or not to add more in parks.

## Evaluate the Future of the River Ridge Golf Course

Converting the River Ridge Golf Course into another use is not a task the City should take on at the moment. As River Ridge was built over a landfill, converting the property into a park would pose environmental and financial problems for the City. The golf course also assists in generating higher property taxes for the nearby surrounding homes. The project team recommends evaluating the potential growth for this site as recreation trends continue to change.



The River Ridge Golf Course is popular among users and local surrounding homeowners. It will cost the City more money to convert it to another land use than just keep it how it already is.

# Add Community Gardens

Community gardens not only provide opportunities to grow fresh produce, herbs and flowers to improve health and well-being; but they also create spaces to build community and learn from others. They often increase surrounding property values, enhance safety and security, and have the potential to provide a revenue source to the people growing in the gardens as well as to the larger community.

Community gardens are usually built on a piece of land that is divided into smaller plots for individual gardeners. Often there is a fee or deposit required to secure a plot. The programming of these gardens can vary widely – some are set up to only allow community members to grow their own food, some include educational activities and events, some include spots for growers to sell the produce they grow, and still others give the produce grown by members to local food banks.

Located in a Mediterranean climate zone, with warm, dry summers and mild, wet winters, Oxnard is an ideal location to grow vegetables, flowers, herbs, fruits and nuts. Community Roots Garden and the Dr. Manuel Lopez Garden have already established themselves as strong community gardens, managed by local churches on private land and open to the entire Oxnard community. The 1.5-acre Camino del Sol Community

Garden Project, also popular with community members, consistently has a waiting list. The success of these three gardens illustrates the popularity and importance of growing and community to Oxnard residents. The Recreation Division operates a garden for seniors at Wilson Park and another community garden at Fire Station #2 is operated by the Parks Division.

Based on research and public engagement conducted during this planning process, a key finding is that Oxnard is significantly below the National Parks and Recreation Association (NRPA) standard for community gardens. According to the National Recreation + Parks Association standards, Oxnard needs at least four more of these types of gardens. Adding more community gardens on City owned land when available and appropriate will benefit the entire community, including pollinator species, and honor the agricultural heritage of the area.

## PARTNERSHIPS

Agriculture in all its forms is one of the main economic engines for the state of California. The economic value of the industry is critical to the state's economy. In cities, the form agriculture usually takes is community gardening – where community members rent individual plots or shared plots.

Often, a community garden is run through partnerships between

non-profits, neighborhood groups, community centers or other community organizations (e.g. churches, co-ops) and public or private entities.

The City of Oxnard's Public Works Department (Parks Division) and the Cultural and Community Services Department (Recreation Division) could partner with local non-profits, schools (there are 42 public schools in the city), neighborhood associations and local businesses to help run the gardens. Local garden centers or nurseries may be willing to offer discounts on supplies to community garden members in exchange for advertising.

## OPERATIONS + MAINTENANCE

### Initial Funding

Fundraising events or grant applications can help get a community garden off the ground. If the garden is on City-owned land, and the City will help with operating costs, initial funding will be needed to pay for supplies, to build plots and pathways, and to purchase garden tools. Many of these items could also potentially be obtained through donations. Changes that need to be made relating to irrigation for new gardens may require significant investment also, depending on existing conditions of the land selected.

### Ongoing Financing

Many community gardens charge plot fees to rent space, and sometimes also require a deposit

that is returned at the end of the season if appropriate. These fees help to pay for the management, maintenance and upkeep of the garden (e.g. fencing, shared tools, weed abatement materials, etc.). Some municipalities will rent the land to the garden for free or offer discounted/subsidized pricing on certain services (e.g. water usage).

*See Goal 1: Improve Maintenance & Operations – Strategy 1: Increasing & Diversifying Funds (page 116) for more funding ideas.*

## Maintenance

While a municipality's Parks and/or Recreation Division may be formally in charge of a community garden, as they often sit on public land, sweat equity is often used to tend to community gardens throughout the season. Often, a workday kicks off the season, which may include members working in groups to mulch paths, weed common areas, set up tool sheds, irrigation, etc. These can be scheduled intermittently throughout the season to keep the garden in good working order.

Per State regulations, all California cities must either adopt a "Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance" that is tailored specifically to the needs of the city or the State's ordinance will be mandated and adopted by default. This is one of the most important aspects of maintenance to consider first when planning for a community garden.

State Statute	Applicability	Requirements
<b>UAIZ*</b>	Urban Agriculture Initiative Zone used to support local food production – municipalities and counties can contract with landowners who agree to restrict use of their land for small scale agriculture production	Minimum 5-year lease, possible fees assessed to cover cost of program and/or cancellation fees for exiting contract early
<b>Cal.Gov. Code § 14670</b>	Allows entities to lease or sublease state owned properties for community vegetable gardens	No more than 5-year lease period, no more than 5-acres (and cannot be contiguous lots)
<b>Cal.Str. &amp; H.Code § 104.7(a)</b>	Land held for future highways can be leased for \$1 for agricultural and community gardens or recreational purposes	Lease period of no less than 1-year
<b>Cal.Gov. Code § 66477(f)</b>	Allows municipalities to dedicate "land and facilities" for "recreational community gardening"	N/A
<b>Cal. Educ. Code § 10901</b>	"Recreational community gardens" included under the "recreation center" definition	N/A

\* In 2013, the State of California enacted legislation allowing a city or county to establish an Urban Agriculture Incentive Zone (UAIZ). This zone is to be used for supporting local food production. Cities and counties have been authorized to contract with landowners who agree to restrict the use of their land for a minimum of five years for small-scale agriculture production. These landowners get the benefit of a lower land assessment rate (based on the average per-acre value of irrigated cropland in CA). Municipalities and counties with a UAIZ program can establish regulations for implementation and administration the Zone, e.g. assessing fees to cover the cost of the program and/or cancellation fees for leaving a contract early.

## MANAGEMENT

While user fees often pay for a garden manager, the amount of money offered does not allow the manager to run the garden as a full-time employee. Often, a garden board is created, and this group directs the work of the manager. In Oxnard, managing the garden with City staff oversight, or having a volunteer manage the garden with staff oversight may be the best option. The volunteer

manager could be selected using an interview process and be given twice the garden space as other gardeners as an incentive. This worked well at the Camino Del Sol garden, as there are many committed gardeners who would love the additional space. Because the salary often does not provide a living wage, board members or others might volunteer some of their time also to help with the day to day running of the garden.

In California, water management is a key issue to consider. Currently, the City of Oxnard provides drip irrigation supplies to gardeners. This service is funded by the Water Division for water conservation. Auto timers are an additional water saving option that could be used for future gardens. A garden manager that is familiar with water efficiency should be enlisted in the case of Oxnard.

## POTENTIAL LOCATIONS

Currently, one community garden for seniors at Wilson Park is managed by the Recreation Division and a second garden at Fire Station #2 is operated by the Parks Division. With \$8.5M dollars allotted to the renovation of Campus Park and its large size (33-acres), this is a potential ideal location for a community garden. With little capital to purchase new land, the Parks and Recreation Divisions should look into potential locations that are owned by partners and other options. Land surrounding Oxnard, owned by Ventura County, could potentially be looked at for community gardens as well, as this is easily accessible. The State Statutes allow both counties and cities to set aside particular lands for urban agriculture.

## PRECEDENT STUDIES

### BROCKTON'S URBAN AGRICULTURE PLAN

In 2017, the City of Brockton, Massachusetts' asked the Conway School to prepare an Urban

Agriculture Plan to highlight next steps to support and promote urban agriculture in the community. The plan includes defining urban agriculture and looking at case studies, analyzing Brockton existing conditions, understanding visions for the future that might work (e.g. repurposing parks and open space, transforming vacant lots), and providing these recommendations:

- Expand community participation
- Establish coordinating councils
- Build on education
- Ensure access to land
- Protect and conserve land

### MINNEAPOLIS'S COMMUNITY GARDEN POLICY

Minneapolis Park + Recreation Board (MPRB) has created a strong Community Garden Policy, establishing the foundation for neighborhood parks and sections of newly acquired parks parcels to be used for community gardening. The City established a Community Garden Policy Statement and a set of useful procedures to follow when implementing community gardens. These procedures included statements on details such as:

- Staffing
- Site Selection
- Permitted Types of Community Gardens
- Garden Design
- Application Process
- Garden Management
- Insurance, Utilities + Maintenance

- Public Access + Use
- MPRB Purchase of Existing Gardens

### SACRAMENTO'S CITY CODE

The City of Sacramento amended their City Code in 2015 to reduce the regulatory burden for urban agriculture, including community gardens. The City Code was revised to allow small-scale urban agriculture as a primary land use in most zones. Urban Agriculture Development Standards were also added to the Code and include information regarding urban agriculture development, and operations and maintenance standards. The City also allows gardeners to sell the produce they grow.

Separate definitions for public and private community gardens were created to differentiate between ownership and operation. Private community gardens are established, operated and maintained by private entities and are subject to requirements included in the City Code, whereas public community gardens are not subject to the Code, but instead fall under the Sacramento Parks and Recreation Division rules and regulations.

### LANSING'S FOOD HUB IN THE PARK

In 2008, as part of a plan to improve Hunter Park, one of the city's urban parks. The Allen Neighborhood Center partnered with the City to add improvements to the park, which included the GardenHouse – a very successful

food hub and education center in the park. Programming is offered throughout the year, focusing on farm and garden education. The project was funded through a Michigan grant program. The GardenHouse includes a 30' x 96' greenhouse used to grow produce year-round and over an acre of outdoor production space. The facility also includes space for other types of programming to engage the community in the park. The GardenHouse sells produce through a Community Supported Agriculture program at affordable prices. Community volunteers help tend the gardens.



Senior community garden at Wilson Park



## RECOMMENDATIONS

The Oxnard community can continue to capitalize on its ideal location in Southern California, one of the foremost agriculture states in the country, where the climate allows for growing all year long. While the City's history is directly tied to larger farm agriculture, its future can include the synthesis of agriculture into its urban areas with the addition of more community gardens. These gardens provide spaces for community gathering and sharing, growing produce and plants, and offering education programming and experiences for the public. Adding gardens to municipal parks will help activate these spaces, attract more people to the parks and create a sense of ownership among community members.

The City can take the following first steps to promote community gardens in Oxnard:

- Conduct a community garden needs assessment to determine exactly what the community desires from new gardens – this could be completed by students at CSUCI as part of their capstone research project
- Create Community Garden Policy Guide, with procedures, and implementation steps (with community member input) – these should be relatively general and adaptable in order to serve the needs of each garden
- Talk with landowners in areas where residents want community gardens to see if they are willing to contract their land as a Urban Agriculture Incentive Zone (AB 551)
- Explore the possibility of using state owned land for community gardens
- Explore the possibility of using DOT land held for future highway purposes for community gardens
- Look for federal and state grant opportunities to help with community garden funding
- Due to Oxnard's tight budget and limited resources, community garden members can implement volunteer management/ coordination that is overseen by City staff.
- Add community gardens to the City Code and/or General Plan.

[brockton.ma.us/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/brockton-urban-agriculture-plan-2017.pdf](http://brockton.ma.us/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/brockton-urban-agriculture-plan-2017.pdf)

[www.minneapolisiparks.org/volunteer\\_and\\_give/garden\\_volunteers/gardens\\_\\_bird\\_sanctuaries/community\\_gardens/community-garden-policy](http://www.minneapolisiparks.org/volunteer_and_give/garden_volunteers/gardens__bird_sanctuaries/community_gardens/community-garden-policy)

[www.cityofsacramento.org/Community-Development/Planning/Long-Range/Urban-Agriculture/Urban-Agriculture-Regulations](http://www.cityofsacramento.org/Community-Development/Planning/Long-Range/Urban-Agriculture/Urban-Agriculture-Regulations)

[allenneighborhoodcenter.org/gardenhouse](http://allenneighborhoodcenter.org/gardenhouse)

## Strategy 4: Creating a Dynamic Recreation Program

Oxnard's population is **diverse**, both demographically and culturally. This means that the **recreation programs** and **park amenities** need to be diverse as well.



Understanding shifts in recreation program demand and anticipating new programs that are of interest to the community will help identify future program opportunities for Oxnard and the facilities needed to support them. Oxnard needs to continue to focus on increasing programming and adding events to meet the needs and desires of its diverse community. Increasing programming to bring more people to city parks also has the potential to help with park safety issues. The public engagement conducted as part of the planning process revealed the following specific findings:

- According to the Program Providers Focus Group, it is important to consider how to incorporate more art and cultural venues and programming into the parks.
- The Schools + Youth Focus Group recommended adding community centers and sports fields to the parks to promote more programming.
- The Serving a Diverse Community Focus Group feels that more programming in the form of events should be hosted at parks that feel “dangerous” to them to have “eyes on the park.”
- Under 5% of residents who participated in the community surveys believe Oxnard parks are programmed enough.
- A majority of survey respondents feel there are too few community centers in Oxnard.

## PROGRAM TRENDS

Recreation Management releases an annual *State of the Managed Recreation Industry Report*, which

details the current trends in the recreation, sports, and fitness industry. The report utilizes survey responses from approximately 1,600 different parks and recreation departments, college/universities, school districts, health clubs, YMCAs, camps, and community sports/recreation centers. The 2019 report was used to understand what issues other communities are facing, what programming they offer and the direction of national trends in these areas

Based on the overall report findings, it seems that staffing concerns and new programming are issues that many recreation, sports and fitness industry providers are facing. In fact, 53.2% of respondents to the report survey reported that staffing is a top issue in terms of programming. The City of Oxnard should anticipate the possibility of additional staffing shortages in the future, in order to appropriately address the most pressing funding, programming and maintenance needs of the community.

As Oxnard’s parks and recreation receives less funding per capita than surrounding communities, programming will remain important to address. According to the *State of the Managed Recreation Industry Report*, sports and creative programming are important to community members nationwide.

Nationwide trends are also focused at expanding arts and crafts programs or recreations sports teams for adults. These are some examples of programming that the City may want to invest more time and/or money in for the Oxnard community. City parks and recreation departments are also the most likely providers of festivals and concerts, which is a great way to activate the parks and possibly bring earned revenue into the parks. Other programs like group exercise and fitness or youth environmental education are trending programs that many departments across the nation will begin to integrate in 2020.

Fitness and wellness programming for older active adults are becoming increasingly important services that the City should continue to support. As stated in *State of the Managed Recreation Industry Report*, wellness and exercise programming are important, along with inclusion and outreach to various populations.

## Address Program Gaps through Partnerships + In-House Programming

The City should address existing program gaps and invest in competitive, high quality programming. New program additions, expansion of existing programs and services, and associated enhancements based on regional trends, staff feedback, and community input should be considered.

The Recreation Division should establish the desired level of programming to be offered in-house versus through outsourced/co-sponsored organizations. Typically, parks and recreation divisions focus on serving the biggest portion of the population through introductory, recreational, and non-exclusionary level programs, while outsourced/co-sponsored organizations provide competitive or elite programs.



## Provide Transformative Programming

Transformative programs can also be centered around new and innovative concepts or provide a fresh take on existing offerings. Transformative programs are activities, classes, sports, and events that make a significant impact on residents' lives. They are creative and engaging programs that touch important social and cultural issues. For example, these programs may seek to

teach residents to grow and cook healthy fruits and vegetables in neighborhoods designated as food deserts or offer couples opportunities to reconnect through dance, local travel, or new experiences like kayaking under the stars.

Basketball might be a common youth program, but midnight basketball for at risk teens run by engaged and active community members offers a new perspective and means of creating positive impacts.

Placing new soccer fields underneath powerlines, creating "Powerline Parks" in existing open spaces is perhaps a way for the City to explore using existing open space in developed areas.

The City should create new and expand existing transformative programs, including community garden educational courses. The Recreation Division could also implement transformational program pilot projects at each recreation center.



## Upgrade Capacity for New, Expanded Programs and Facilities

Identify a phased strategy for facility upgrades to ensure the city provides the highest quality spaces, equitably distributed across the city, including the implementation of existing park master plans.

Explore the development and prioritization of sports programs that are nationally trending and desired by the community, as shown through community engagement, but not currently offered or not offered enough by the Division like adult basketball, adult kickball, adult pickleball, youth basketball, youth soccer, youth girls volleyball, youth wrestling, and youth track and field/ cross country.

## Explore Development of Wellness Initiatives

Explore the development and prioritization of wellness initiatives that are nationally trending and desired by the community but not currently offered or not offered enough by the Division.

## Provide Technology Resources for Users + Staff

Provide public computers for parks and recreation program registration and updates in recreation and community centers and libraries.

Evaluate the current program scheduling software to determine if it is the best option for the City and Division.







***I would like Oxnard to  
be known as “a great community—  
clean orderly, inclusive, and safe.”***

*- Survey Respondent*



## **Goal 3: Create Safe & Active Parks**

Strategy One: Increasing Activity

Strategy Two: Improving Lighting

Strategy Three: Improving Safety

Strategy Four: Designing Parks for Safety

A park that is not safe will not be used. However, what is more powerful than actual crime statistics is public perception; it is just as important to feel safe as it is to be safe. Safety in parks stems from two things: proper maintenance and active programming. People gravitate to public environments that feel greater than themselves; it is a sense of civic ownership that attracts crowds. Parks that feel or appear unsafe will lose their public presence. Like people, parks also get bad reputations.

It was clear from the public engagement process that Oxnard's residents don't feel safe in some parks. This chapter focuses on strategies to make Oxnard's parks safer and more active. It identifies specific design strategies and includes programming recommendations to transform each park into a destination for residents and visitors alike.

# Strategy 1: Increasing Activity

The number one way parks can feel **safer** is to make them **more active**. When parks are filled with residents enjoying the space, incidents of illegal activity decrease.

Over 60% of survey respondents felt that Oxnard's parks were unsafe. People cited the presence of homeless people, vagrants, or gangs as reasons why they avoided some parks even during the day. When residents avoid parks for fear of safety, it only aggravates the problem; the absence of people to report illicit activity further encourages it. Fortunately, the strategy to counter this is simple: attract more people to the City's parks.



Image Source: City of Oxnard

## Reconsider Oxnard's Sunset Ordinance

Oxnard's Sunset Ordinance closes parks after dark. The goal of this ordinance is to deter crime, but it has the potential to do the opposite. By prohibiting lawful activity, the ordinance could inadvertently invite unlawful activity. Keeping parks open later will generate activity and allow more "eyes on the park." Examples includes nighttime joggers, people walking home from shifts, dog walkers, and teenagers who don't have a place to hang out. With appropriate lighting, late night programming such as midnight basketball or summer concert series can keep parks active.

Cities that have implemented nighttime park programming have reported numerous benefits. Two case studies, included here, demonstrate the effects of nighttime programming efforts on that transforming urban parks. Oxnard should consider suspending the Sunset Ordinance on a case by case basis, especially in parks with good lighting, and in neighborhoods with a large youth population.



### **CASE STUDY ONE: SAFETY IN "SUMMER NIGHT LIGHTS"**

Los Angeles, California

- Summer Night Lights started in 2008 by extending nighttime operating hours in crime-filled parks along with recreational, art and entertainment-based programming.
- The program was expanded from 8 to 32 park sites in Los Angeles over a five year period. It also reduced gang violence, created over 1,000 jobs, and recreational opportunities for over 700,000 participants.
- The program budget was around \$5.4 million, with almost half provided by private funding and the remainder from public sources.
- The program helped fuel the local economy while creating stronger and safer communities.



### **CASE STUDY TWO: MIDNIGHT BASKETBALL LEAGUES**

Across the U.S.A.

- A national non-profit organization organized basketball and other programming from 10 pm to 2 am to keep youth in urban areas off the street.
- The goal was to help young men develop self esteem through education and recreation. In addition to recreation, the program provided employment workshops and skills training.
- Crime in neighborhoods was shown to decrease by up to 30% over the program's first three years of implementation.

## Increase Programming

Parks with active programming are vibrant; people want to spend time where they can feel positive energy with others. That same presence makes a park space feel safe. Consider a Park Activation Plan to evaluate current offerings in each park, as well as the community group using them. The purpose is to introduce a variety of programming opportunities into Oxnard's parks, whether it be through City funding or through private partnerships. The plan should then outline how to create a unique identity within each park and strategize the specific programming required for further activation.



The November Project is a free fitness movement organized through social media that brings many runners and fitness enthusiasts into public parks for free workouts.



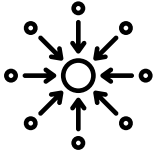
Outdoor ping pong tables add liveliness to this urban space.



Programs or events in parks don't have to be a big production— a collection of bean bag chairs with some lawn games, a game of kickball, or string lights and music can become an event.

## STRATEGIES FOR PARK ACTIVATION

1



Introduce a wide variety of programs, activities and amenities in public parks. No park should be a single-use facility.

2



Design parks with a diversity of spaces. Create places for active and passive programs to attract a wide demographic of users.

3



Conduct a regular evaluation of park programming. Eliminate or modify programs that are not effectively attracting users.

4



Engage minority communities regarding specific programs that could be implemented in the parks to meet their needs.

5



Explore private partnership opportunities to bring programs into the parks. Examples include for-profit fitness, rock climbing, youth camps, rentals, etc.

6



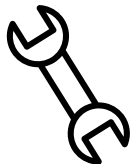
Encourage informal pop-up programs such as community organized groups and social media meet-ups that bring people into parks.

7



Maintain the parks so that users feel safer and are encouraged to return again.

8



Focus new programming on underutilized spaces. The goal should be to activate all spaces.

# Reform the Permitting Process

Through community engagement conversations, users mentioned that they found filing an event permit in Oxnard confusing and time-consuming with the current system because it cannot be completed online and requires signatures from multiple Divisions. As a result, many residents opt to either not have events or have an event without a permit. This reduces potential activity in the parks and denies the City revenue from permit fees; both are detrimental to improving parks.

Reserving a park or park amenity for private events needs to be as seamless as possible, and there needs to be a consistent fee chart for renting park structures that is easily accessible online.

The City needs to streamline the permitting process so that it can be quick, easy to understand, and 100% online (for both permit and reservation fees).


A consistent fee chart needs to be prepared for renting park structures that is online and easily accessible. The City should consider establishing at least two types of event permits: a Simple Event

Permit and a Special Event Permit. The Simple Event Permit would be for events under 50 people with no special considerations (e.g., no alcohol, no temporary structures, etc.) and a smaller fee. Many community groups and families could use these permits for small gatherings. The Special Event Permit would be for larger events, or events that have special considerations that would need review by other City Divisions.

For both permits, the submittal process and fee payment should be online, with an available paper option to accommodate those with limited internet access. The City should also set standards for how long it will take to notify applicants their event is approved. For example, Simple Permits will receive notification of approval within two weeks of submittal; Special Permits within four weeks.

Key features of a simple permit process are:

- Single page
- Available to download AND submit online
- Only approval from one city department required, even if multiple departments or divisions are involved. For more complex or larger events, multiple approvals may still be necessary.



**CITY OF  
OXNARD**  
CALIFORNIA

**PAVILION II**

Unlock BBQ at:        am/pm

**OXNARD BEACH PARK RESERVATION FORM**

MAINTENANCE SERVICES DIVISION  
1060 Pacific Ave., Bldg. 3  
Oxnard CA 93030  
Tel. No. (805) 385-7950

Reservation Issued To: \_\_\_\_\_ Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Reservation Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Activity/Function: \_\_\_\_\_ No. of Attendance: \_\_\_\_\_

(This form is an all day permit and must be kept on-site at all times during the event)

Reservation must be made two (2) working days prior to event date.

**Reservation Fees:**

\$100.00 - Weekdays/Non-Holidays

\$300.00 - Weekends/Holidays

\$300.00 - Security & cleaning deposit (refundable)

Office Use Only

<input type="checkbox"/> Cash	<input type="checkbox"/> Check # _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Cash	<input type="checkbox"/> Check # _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Cash	<input type="checkbox"/> Check # _____

**Refund/Cancellation Policy**  
Cancellation 30 days prior to event date: Full refund will be given.  
Cancellation less than 30 days prior to event date: The reservation fee will be withheld.  
(Deposit will be mailed 6 weeks after event date, if Pavilion is left clean and damage free).

**Rules & Regulations:**

1. The City of Oxnard is not responsible for accidents that may occur at Oxnard Beach Park.
2. No one is permitted to charge admission, sell, solicit, or conduct any business in Oxnard Beach Park.
3. All Trash Must Be Put In Trash Receptacles.
4. Vehicle Entrance fees: \$1.00/hour per space per vehicle or \$5.00 a day per space per vehicle. (It is the responsibility of the person to whom this permit is issued that his/her guests comply with parking fees).
5. City Ordinance 7-125(A) prohibits the consumption of alcoholic beverages in City parks. Violation of this ordinance could cause the event to be terminated immediately.
6. Amplified sound (PA Systems/DJs/Speakers) is not allowed in City parks (City Ordinance 16-476). Groups must not exceed a moderate noise level (City Ordinance 19-60.12). Violation of these ordinances could cause this reservation to be terminated immediately.
7. A permit is required for the use of inflatable jumper in a City park (City Ordinance 11-282(A)). Please contact Parks and Facilities at (805) 385-7950 for more information. No other equipment or apparatus is allowed without the written approval of the Parks & Facilities Division (maximum of 2 per park).
8. Vehicles including trailers are prohibited from driving or parking upon park turf or sidewalks (City Ordinance 8-25(A)).
9. Non-compliance with the Park Rules and Regulations or providing false information may cause forfeiture of security/cleaning deposit.
10. Reservation time is 8:00 a.m. to dusk.
11. Reservation can be rescheduled within a month of original reservation date (for reasons beyond our control).

I certify that I have read and will abide by the rules and regulations, which govern the use of Oxnard Beach Park facility.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Driver's License No. \_\_\_\_\_



Streamlining the process and allowing residents to complete the permitting process online will ease the burden on those wanting to reserve spaces and City staff.

City of Oxnard Park Reservation Permit Form - The current permitting process calls for approval signatures from many City Divisions. Even the Recreation Division needs to go through this process in order to hold events.

## Strategy 2: Improving Lighting

In the community meetings and surveys, Oxnard residents underscored the need for **more and better lighting**.

Improving the lighting in Oxnard's parks will not only make them safer, but also more active. Several residents shared stories of being afraid to walk by parks at night because the lack of lighting doesn't allow pedestrians to see if anyone is hiding. Soccer leagues told stories of parents shining car lights onto the field so that a game could finish. To address this issue, parks should have both field lighting for sports fields and pedestrian lighting along the park paths and perimeter when applicable.



Source: Design Workshop, Edgewood Resort Trail Lights

## Add Pedestrian & Field Lighting to All Parks

By adding pedestrian and field lighting to all parks, Oxnard can feel safe and inviting. This straight-forward action will discourage vagrants and illicit activities while also allowing residents to enjoy and activate the park even in winter months.

While lighting can be expensive, the efficiency of LED allows cities to save money while reducing environmental impact. Converting existing lighting into LED technology can reduce electricity costs up to 70%. This conversion will also lower maintenance and operating costs.

LED lighting is not only cost-effective but can be “smart” as well. Some new fixtures include such features as “smart motion sensing,” which adjust brightness instantly to match pedestrian movement or detect threatening activity, or 4G LTE, which enhances cell phone coverage within the parks. Also, LED lighting can now have “gunshot detection,” which automatically alerts 911 call centers for police and ambulance response teams in emergency situations. Having a lit environment at night will create a perception of safety for residents, and these extra features definitely help.



### CASE STUDY ONE: CENTRAL PARK

New York City

- New York City Department of Transportation and the US Department of Energy Gateway began a pilot program installing over 1,600 LED lights in Central Park. This resulted in 62% less energy consumption, saving approximately \$94,000 in lighting costs and another \$30,000 PER YEAR in maintenance costs.



Source: Design Workshop, Dengaro Market Redevelopment

## Strategy 3: Improving Safety

As many as 44% of Oxnard residents visit a park less than once a week; **concern for safety** was a main reason.

Many residents felt the presence of the homeless, vagrants, and people engaged in illicit activities made the parks feel unsafe. They were afraid to send their children to neighborhood parks alone or go there themselves. Making the parks more active will definitely discourage unlawful behavior, but Oxnard should also take measures to increase general park safety.



## Partner with Non-Profits to Provide Homeless Resources

One method of combating homelessness is to embrace it. Public parks and recreational facilities can be forward-thinking, and, instead of fighting the problem, plan intelligently for them. By partnering with non-profits that provide resources for the homeless, municipalities can ease their burden and work toward solutions. These resources include mobile showers and program centers so that the homeless can maintain personal hygiene and connect with potential jobs or housing programs. They might include public storage in parks, so that homeless people can safely store their belongings while they navigate social services.

Interviews with city staff revealed that the police utilize approximately four full-time staff addressing the homeless issue, but it doesn't seem to be getting better. The City needs a different strategy. The project team recommends Oxnard forms a "Homeless Round Table" composed of mental health workers, community leaders, and the City to collaborate on a homeless strategy. Homelessness is not a simple problem and requires a diversified perspective to enact change. The case studies to the right are two successful programs that could be models for alternative and more effective solutions.



### CASE STUDY ONE: VACAVILLE HOMELESS ROUND-TABLE

Vacaville, California

- Created as an entity that brings together individuals from various local and county agencies to combat the City's local homeless problems. Groups include the police force, the faith-based community, social services and volunteers
- The Round-Table collaborates to share information with one another while developing strategies for increased coordination of efforts.
- After five years, the program has accounted for a 60% reduction in homeless on the street. It has become a national model for success in working across the aisle to find new local solutions for homelessness.



### CASE STUDY TWO: HOMELESS LIAISON PROGRAM ()

Santa Monica, California

- An outreach team that co-locates employees from appropriate agencies within the City of Santa Monica with local police officers to assist in connecting homeless persons to the appropriate services.
- Consists of seven police officers that collaborate with the Santa Monica City Attorney's Office, Fire Department, Human Services Division, and Department of Mental Health.
- The HLP Team works together to ensure that the appropriate care is given to homeless persons, as well as ensuring that the rights of the homeless are not violated. Training is given to City and police staff, which supports better collaboration between law enforcement and City agencies.

# Foster Existing & Potential Partnerships

## EXISTING PARTNERSHIPS

The City of Oxnard has over 100 existing parks and recreation partners. Some notable recreation partners include:

- California State Parks
- California Police Activities League
- National Association of Police Athletic/Activities Leagues
- Oxnard Rotary Club
- St. Johns Dignity Health
- Ventura County Agency on Aging

The City also partners with the Hueneme and Oxnard Elementary School Districts. They are able to use the school facilities when they run after-school programs at the schools, which reach approximately 3,000 children. As of the time of this report, the City and schools are working to formalize a new agreement that will allow Recreation to use the school fields for soccer practice

at times other than the after-school programs. This will help alleviate some of the immediate need for additional soccer fields but should not be seen as a substitute for new fields.

## FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES

Given the high number of existing partnerships, the City may not need to look for new partners. Rather, the City should focus on improving the quality, benefits, and productivity of current partnerships. Some methods of doing this include: formalizing agreements for informal partnerships, revisiting and revising existing agreements, minimizing undesired duplication of services, and ensuring partners are providing services they excel at. Future opportunities worthy of investment may be any “Friends of” groups and parks non-profits, local businesses, as well the City of Port Hueneme. Local agricultural businesses that employ Oxnard residents may be able to sponsor some recreation programming and/or park amenities.

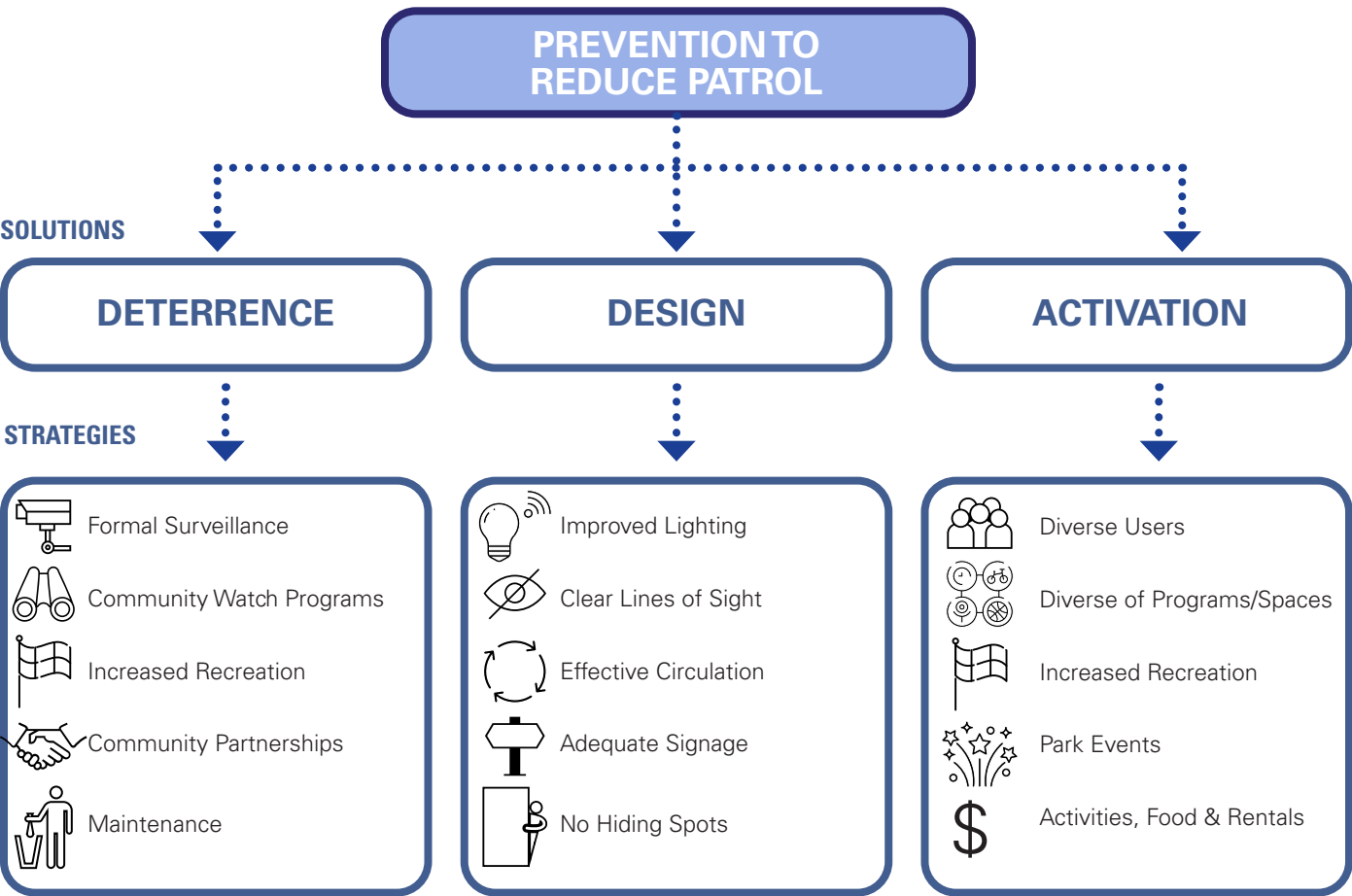


# Preventative Crime Efforts

The chart below visualizes how a combination of deterrence, design, and park activation strategies can work with one another to reduce the need for police patrolling in parks. Oxnard needs dynamic parks that are self-sufficient and require fewer resources in response to safety.

Crime deterrence can be increased by a strong engagement between law enforcement and the local community. Supporting a strong neighborhood watch program will empower Oxnard’s residents to act as natural guardians of the City’s public parks. Similarly,

the better maintained a park is, the more it will inspire stewardship in local residents. Deterrence is not just having “eyes on the park” but sending a message that people are invested. The more a community cares for their public space, the less inclined criminals will be to pursue an illegal activity.



## Rely More On Cameras In Parks

The Oxnard police spend a lot of time and resources patrolling parks. Relying more on surveillance cameras could assist them in creating a safer environment. People generally behave better when they know they are being observed, while most illicit activity happens behind closed doors or away from “prying eyes.” While cameras can cause some negative feelings within the community, just their presence can also make park users feel safer. Additionally, cameras in public parks can help police catch perpetrators, should there be any criminal activity, or monitor tricky areas not visible from the street.



Surveillance cameras should be used to assist the police force, not replace them. They are most effective in interior park spaces that are harder to monitor from the street.

## Strategy 4: Designing Parks For Safety

One of the most effective ways to promote **safe parks** is through **design**.

The placement of service buildings or bathrooms, the pattern of paths, the arrangement of planting material—all can either work to encourage activity and safety or deter it. The project team recommends Oxnard take a critical look at each park—especially those with a “bad reputation”—and see what design changes would work to make the park safer.

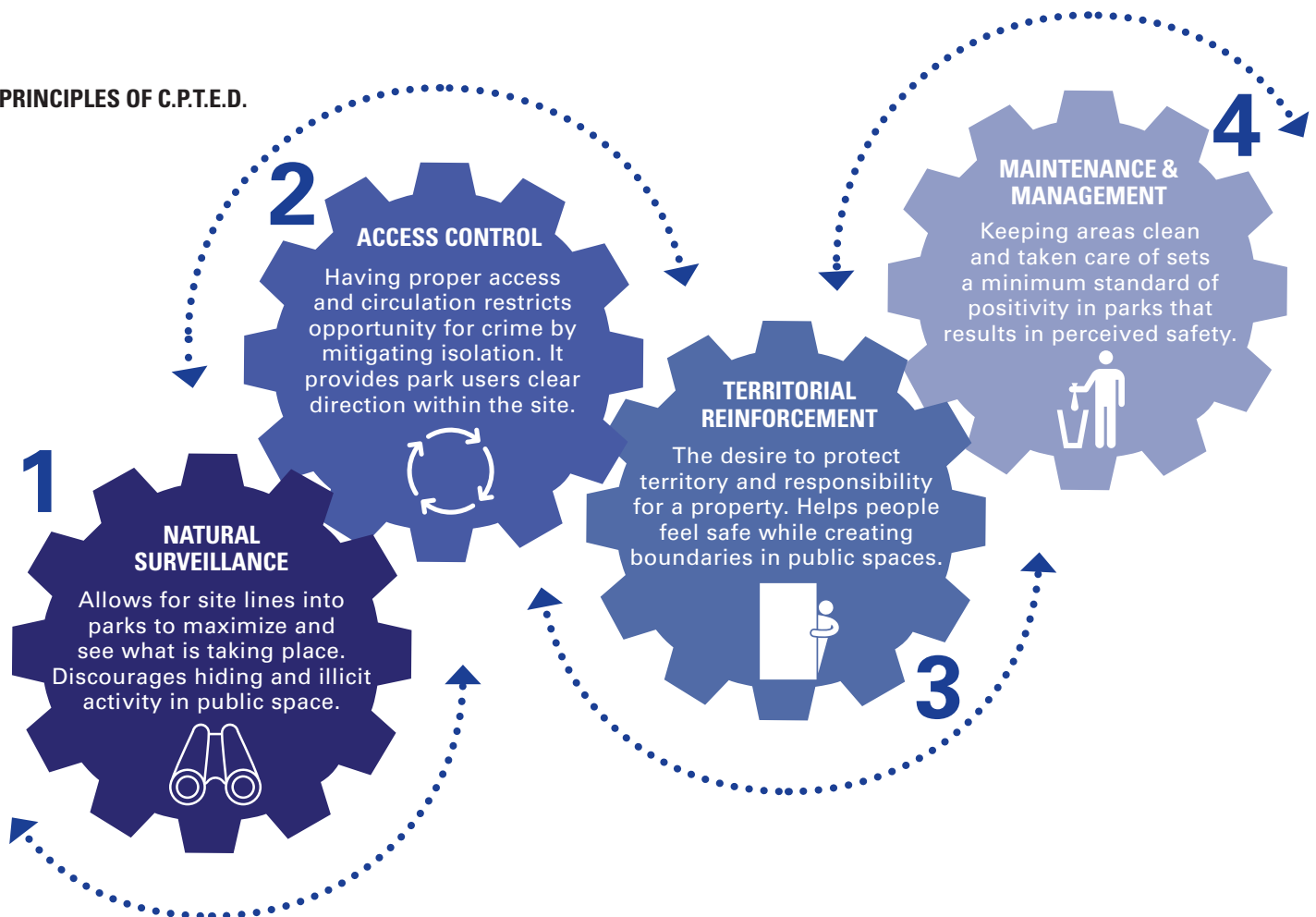


# Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design

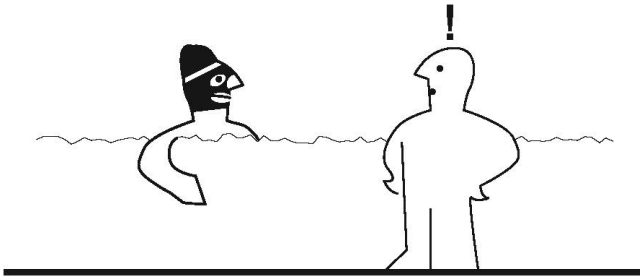
Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) is a multi-disciplinary approach for reducing crime through urban and environmental design and the management of built environments. The Parks Division is currently working with the Oxnard Police Department on these design strategies with an appointed liaison in order to assist with park design. CPTED strategies aim to reduce victimization, deter offender decisions that precede

criminal acts, and build a sense of community among inhabitants so they can gain territorial control of areas and reduce opportunities for crime and fear of crime ([www.cpted.net](http://www.cpted.net)). CPTED is a proven standard that could help mitigate crime in Oxnard's parks. What makes CPTED such a great tool is that the strategies can be used in a variety of park types and sizes. CPTED can be worked into park design from the onset and allow safety to be more of a consideration in the future. The four main principles of CPTED are Natural Surveillance, Access Control, Territorial Reinforcement, and Maintenance+Management. The following pages discuss the specific strategies under each principle:

## PRINCIPLES OF C.P.T.E.D.

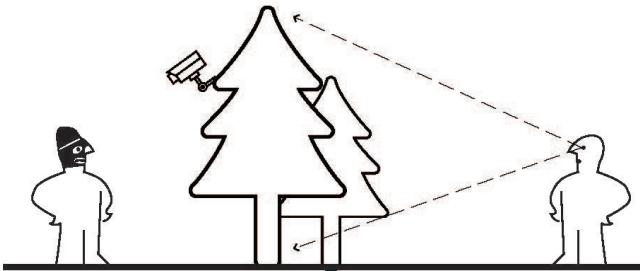


## PRINCIPLE ONE: NATURAL SURVEILLANCE



### ELIMINATE HIDING SPOTS

Eliminate places where vagrants or criminals can hide. Any dense vegetation or tall hedges should be removed or thinned to support clear site lines throughout a park.



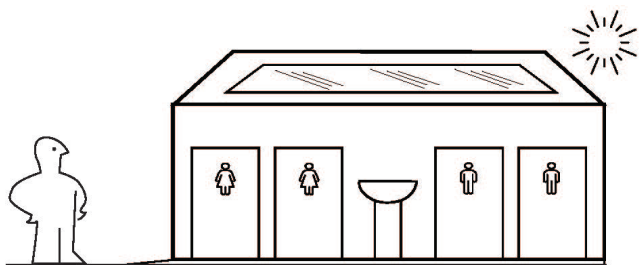
### USE CAMERAS FOR TRICKY LINES OF SIGHT

For areas hard to patrol, consider using surveillance cameras to capture tricky lines of sight. It's impossible for police to have their eyes on each park constantly; cameras are crime deterrents and can monitor trouble spots.



### VISUAL PERMEABILITY

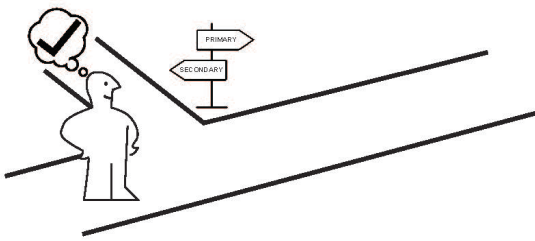
Make sure there are clear lines of sight throughout the entirety of a park. Avoid using tall visual blockades such as evergreen trees, closed fences, or walls that criminals could hide behind.



### REDESIGN OF RESTROOMS FOR SAFETY

Individual stall entrances should be accessed from the outside of the bathroom building so one can enter and exit safely. Bathroom stalls should be naturally lit during the day with skylights and with LED lighting at night.

## PRINCIPLE TWO: NATURAL ACCESS CONTROL



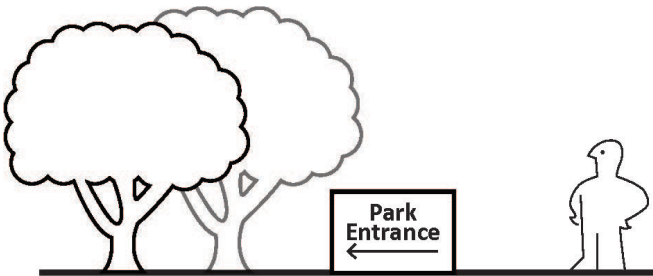
### LEGIBLE PATHWAYS & CLEAR HIERARCHY

Park circulation should be clear, identifiable, and well maintained. Paths should follow “desire lines” and not lead through any isolated areas.



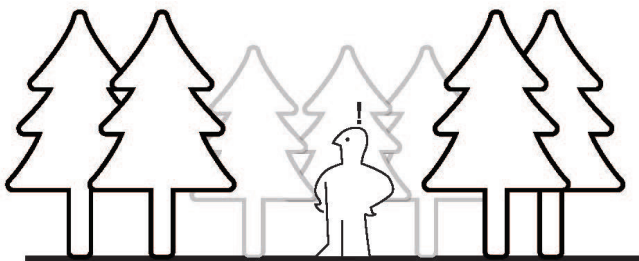
### WELL DESIGNED BOUNDARIES

Boundaries need to separate incompatible program uses in parks to avoid injury or conflict. Well-defined boundaries create a sense of security and comfort while also helping to guide users through the landscape.



### CLEARLY MARKING ENTRANCES & DESTINATIONS

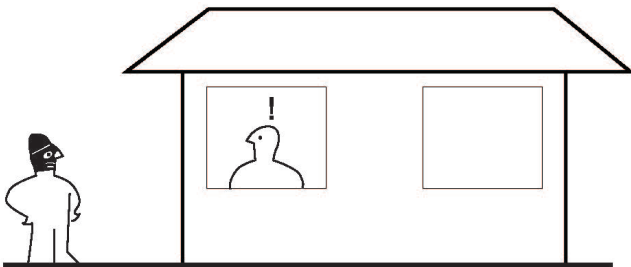
Having a clear understanding of paths in and out of a park allows visitors to feel more secure. Clearly marking access points.



### AVOID ENTRAPMENT AREAS

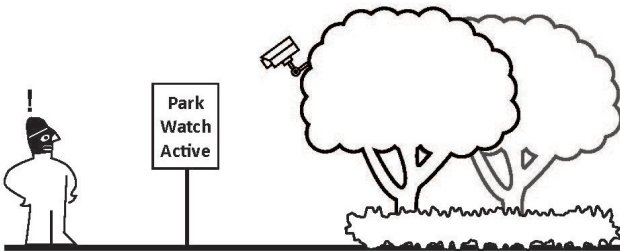
Entrapment areas are small, confined spaces that are blocked on three of four sides, trapping pedestrians “into a corner.” Avoid accidentally creating these areas in the site design process so criminals cannot linger in these spaces.

## PRINCIPLE THREE: TERRITORIAL REINFORCEMENT



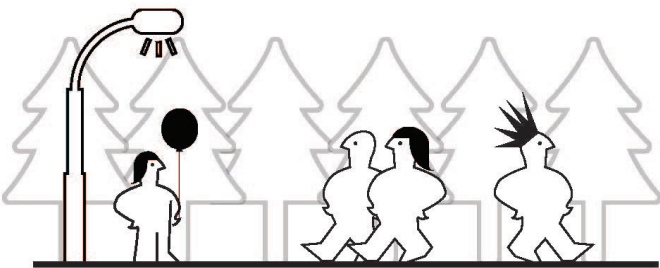
### USE COMMUNITY CENTERS AS WATCH

A community center has the opportunity to be a sort of caretaker for its park, acting as “eyes and ears” at all times. People coming in and out of a community center help activate a park, prevent crime from taking place.



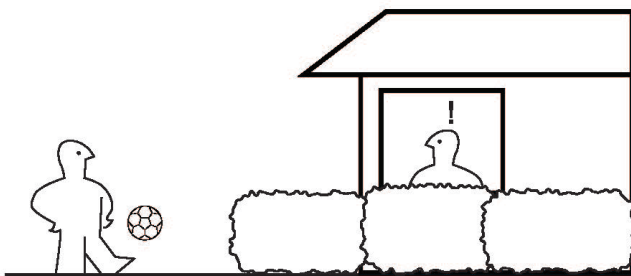
### PARK WATCH SIGNAGE & CAMERA VISIBILITY

Signage and surveillance alert criminals they are being watched. It prevents illegal activity by imbuing a sense of ownership over a park by the community.



### CREATE AN ACTIVE PARK PERIMETER

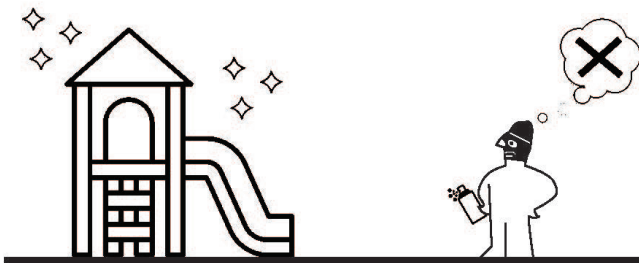
An active edge allows for people to observe what is happening in the park from the street, creating a perimeter of “watch.” People feel better about entering a park surrounded by other people.



### USE LANDSCAPE TO SEPARATE PUBLIC FROM PRIVATE

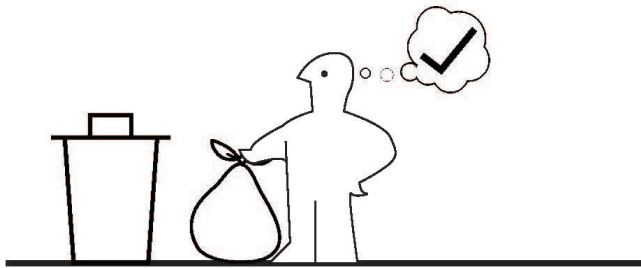
Well-defined boundaries let people know where they can and cannot be. Landscape features such as shrubs, trees, or fences should separate the public from private spaces.

## PRINCIPLE FOUR: MAINTENANCE & MANAGEMENT IS KEY



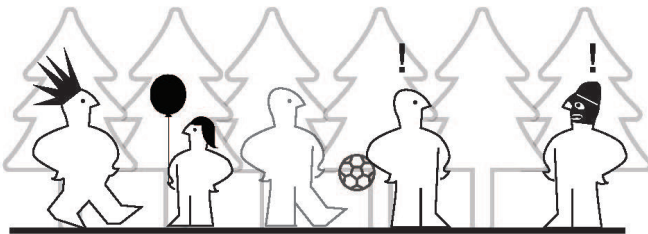
### BROKEN WINDOWS THEORY

The “Broken Windows Theory” states that visible signs of crime or vandalism further encourages crime and vandalism. A maintained park creates a perception of ownership.



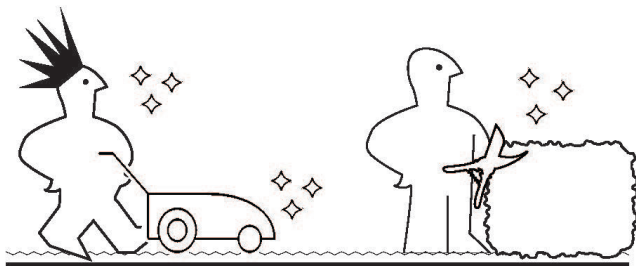
### ENSURE WASTE MANAGEMENT IS IN ORDER

Overflowing trash bins add to the perception that a park is not well cared for. It also provides an opportunity for trash fires and homeless congregation. Always make sure trash is emptied as often as necessary.



### “EYES ON THE PARK”

Activating a park with people will create a sense of security through numbers. Criminals will be less inclined to commit an illegal act if there are plenty of witnesses.



### GOOD TURF & LANDSCAPE CONDITIONS


Well maintained landscape are indicators that a park is adequately used and maintained. Managed shrubbery and plantings will also eliminate hiding spaces.

# Performance Measures for Benchmarking


Performance measures will provide a quantifiable way to show how Oxnard’s parks and recreation are improving. One set of measures can be obtained by a follow-up survey to city residents two or three years from the completion of the Master Plan. The survey would have the same questions as the survey used for this Master Plan and would look for positive changes in the responses. Other performance measures can be obtained via data collected by the City.



## PERFORMANCE MEASURES FROM FOLLOW-UP SURVEY


**Increases in...**

- “Agree” or “Strongly Agree” that Oxnard’s parks are well taken care of and programmed enough
- Number of people who visit the beach at least once per week
- Percentage of people visiting Oxnard park once per week or more
- Percentage of residents who think the parks are safe


**Decreases in...**

- “Agree” or “Strongly Agree” for opinion’s that Oxnard’s parks don’t have enough restrooms, don’t have enough amenities, don’t have enough lighting, and are not safe
- Percentage of residents who think the parks are not well-maintained

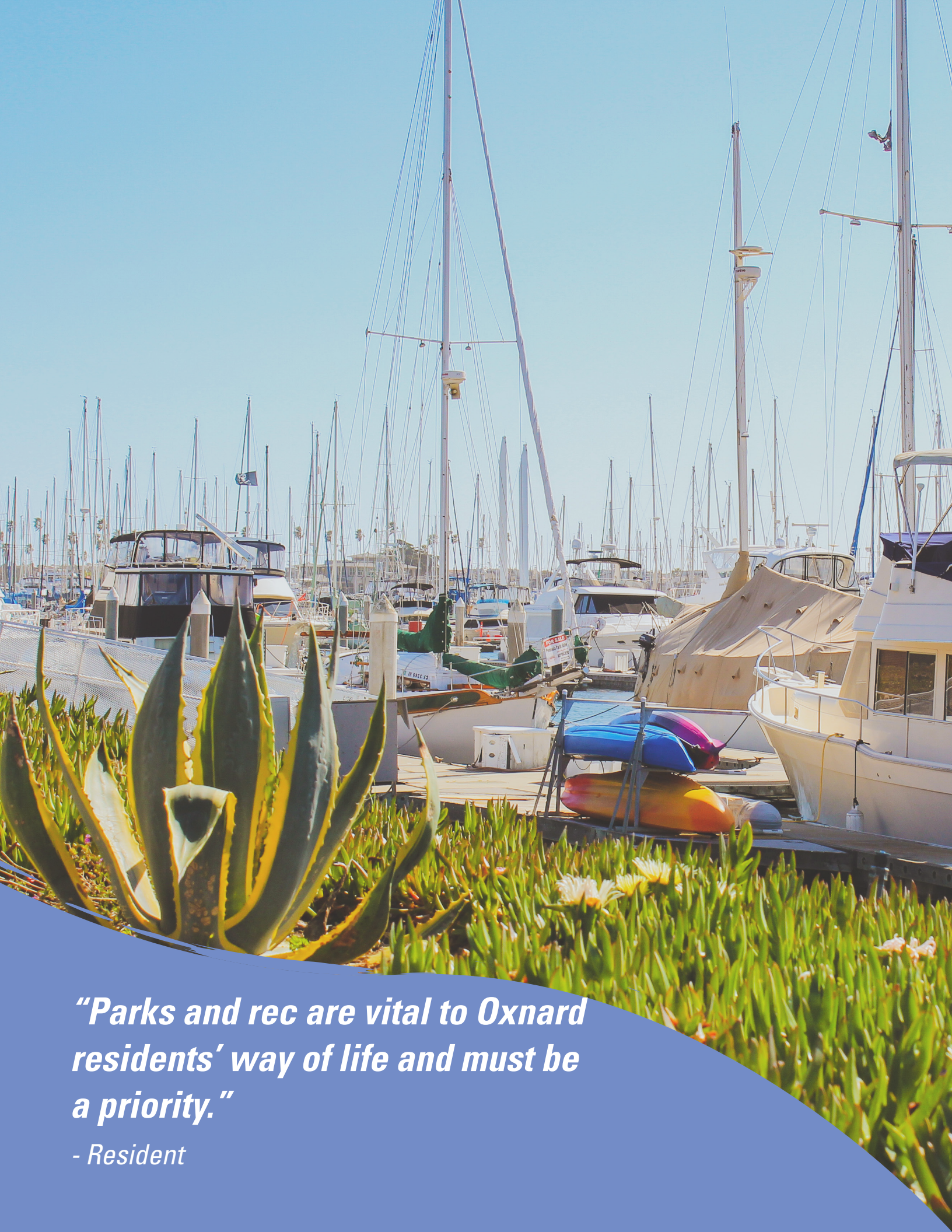
## PERFORMANCE MEASURES FROM CITY DATA

**Increases in...**

- Number of events held in parks
- Earned revenue from events
- Number of youth sports teams and participants, adult sports teams and participants, recreation class offerings and participants, and senior programming participants (Long-term)
- Per capita park and recreation spending (Mid-term)
- Maintenance standards across Oxnard parks
- Number of functioning stormwater management features
- Miles of walking/hiking trails
- Accessible programs and play equipment
- Lighted sports fields

**Decreases in...**

- Crime in parks
- Water use (accounting for future increases in park space)
- Energy use (accounting future park & recreation growth)
- Staff turnover



***"Parks and rec are vital to Oxnard residents' way of life and must be a priority."***

***- Resident***

## **Goal 4: Connect the City With Natural Resources**



Strategy One: Creating Strong Connections

Strategy Two: Promoting Stewardship

Great parks do not exist as isolated entities. They are one of many overlays within a city's fabric that connect to and influence the city around them. Because of this, parks can be thought of as part of a recreational and social network throughout the city. As parks are social "hearts" of communities, it is the trails, bike lanes, and green-ways that act as arteries. If appropriately designed, these connections can link city parks to the larger natural systems—it is the beaches or mountains— that help defines the landscape.

The City of Oxnard is rich in natural resources. It is positioned between mountain ranges; one side flanks an agriculture preservation while the other is embraced by the Pacific Ocean. The Santa Clara River hugs the boundary to the north. Connecting Oxnard's residents to the beauty around them by bringing nature into parks and improving access to the river, ocean, and mountains is critical for making the most of the surroundings. This chapter focuses on how the City of Oxnard can utilize connections to more effectively link its natural resources to the urban fabric and capitalize on its geographic assets. Think of it as "bringing in" and "connecting out."

# Strategy 1: Creating Strong Connections

Oxnard's relatively flat topography makes it a **perfect place to bike**, yet most residents cited concerns for **safety** as reasons they didn't bike more.

## Utilize SOAR Boundary for Bike Trails

Along the perimeter of Oxnard are many agricultural fields aligned with rolling green hills in the distance. The SOAR initiative currently protects all areas outside the municipal boundary of Oxnard as green space. By requiring a majority vote for any new development, the SOAR initiative works to protect natural habitat, agriculture, and scenic viewsheds.

Constructing infrastructure for pedestrians and bicyclists along the SOAR boundary would create a beautiful recreation amenity. This should be considered in the City's mobility plan.



Implementing biking trails or lanes along the SOAR boundary is a great opportunity to create scenic routes for bikers, highlighting Oxnard's cultural landscape and natural features.

## Create a Multi-Use Trail on 5th Street Drainage Corridor

Oxnard's shoreline contains one of the largest preservations of natural sand dunes in California. Unfortunately, they are only able to be enjoyed and viewed while driving along Harbor Blvd. Create a multi-use trail that starts from Oxnard Beach Park, runs along the edge of the 5th street drainage corridor, through the Santa Clara Estuary Natural Reserve, and ends at McGrath State Beach and Campground. A path along this route will give pedestrians and bikers access to amazing natural features such as the Oxnard Dunes, McGrath Lake, and Estuary. Even though McGrath won't be open for several years, the project team recommends planning for this type of amenity begins soon, so that it can open with the most and best access. As these wetland areas serve as a nesting habitat for birds, the trail would need to be fenced off so as not to disturb the natural beauty of the landscape. This should be considered in the City's mobility plan.



A path will help activate Oxnard's beach while connecting it to a larger circulation system. It would make pedestrian beach access easier and promote outdoor recreation.

## Create Trails in Parks and Around Town

The Community Engagement process revealed there is great interest in introducing more walking trails both within parks and around the city. Residents wanted more places to exercise and enjoy nature close by, especially if they don't have the ability to get out further. New parks and larger existing parks should make incorporating walking trails a priority in the design.

In Downtown Oxnard, there is a great opportunity to create "urban trails" by incorporating art and planting into alleyways. The Oxnard Green Alleys Plan guides revitalization of the city's alleys by providing recommendations for bicycle and pedestrian connections, improving storm water quality, mitigating the urban heat island, creating open space for community recreation, and supporting local businesses. The plan is being used to transform Oxnard's underutilized alleys into amenities that provide multiple benefits to the entire community.

Plaques and brick dedications can form "historical trails" as markers that can lead pedestrians from Downtown to Heritage Square. Deteriorating infrastructure, such as outdated water channels, can also provide a setting to create trails in the urban environment.



Rock Creek Park in Washington D.C. has many asphalt trails that meander through a wooded park. The trails become an escape from the urban environment and allow pedestrians to run, bike, hike or Rollerblade. The park also provides habitat for small animals and birds.



## Strategy 2: Promoting Stewardship

Oxnard City Staff and Parks & Recreation Commission can utilize the **mobilization** and **outreach efforts** of the Master Plan to push coordination efforts with grassroots organizations.

The City of Oxnard must be strategic in utilizing existing stakeholder groups to progress projects and build upon work that has already been completed. It is important to involve stakeholder groups early within the planning process of any large environmental or development project. Working together, the City and local community can focus on creating partnerships that will focus on projects to drive positive change. It is recommended that the City not only have stronger collaboration with local groups but provide the resources, training, and tools to help them receive project grants.

GRASSROOT & NON-PROFIT  
ORGANIZATIONS CAN RAISE  
CAPITAL TO HELP INITIATE CITY  
FUNDED ENVIRONMENTAL  
PROJECTS



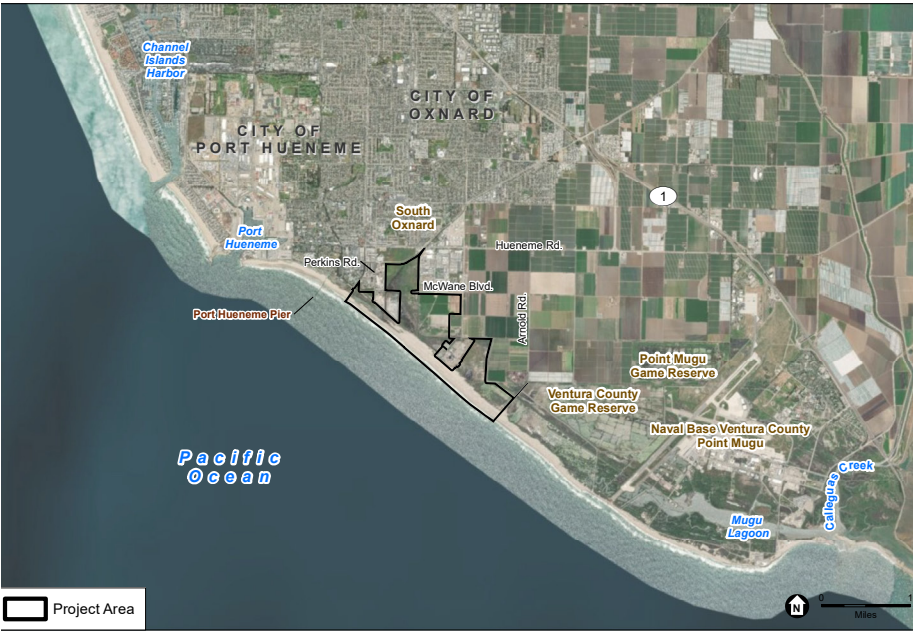
# Restore & Improve Access to Ormond Beach

Ormond Beach, just south of Oxnard, is home to beautiful natural sand dunes and is an important habitat and nesting site for a wide variety of birds. Promoting this with national and international bird groups would distinguish Oxnard.

The State Coastal Conservancy, the City of Oxnard and The Nature Conservancy are currently going through a public process to guide a restoration and access plan that balances habitat restoration and protection of sensitive plant and animal species with improved and increased public access referred to as the Ormond Beach Restoration and Access Plan.

Ormond Beach spans 630 acres in the City of Oxnard along the County of Ventura coast and is considered by wetland experts to be one of the most important wetland restoration opportunities in Southern California.

Unlike other coastal wetland restoration projects in Southern California, there is room to restore the approximate extent of historic wetlands, provide surrounding upland habitat to complete the ecosystem and accommodate sea level rise. When combined with the adjacent Mugu wetlands, it will be one of the largest wetland systems in Southern California.



Ormond Beach Restoration + Public Access Plan.  
Top: Project Area + Vicinity  
Bottom: Project Area Ownership

## Celebrate Agricultural Heritage

The surrounding agrarian landscape is one of those assets that separates Oxnard from many of the nearby cities, so the City should promote more agriculture-based eco-tourism. There is a strong regional tourist economy for programs such as bird watching, livestock feeding, beekeeping, farming tours, and agricultural fairs/festivals.

There is also the organic agriculture industry, which highlights how farming and food production can be environmentally sustainable and generate a positive impact on rural communities.

Marketing Oxnard's agriculture products as sustainable and locally grown can start to form an identity for the City while connecting to community gardens and boosting the amount of revenue from tourism and sales tax.



Agriculture is vital to Oxnard's economy.



Hiking and horseback riding in the Oxnard Plain



***“The City needs to make it a  
priority to keep parks safe,  
clean and well maintained.”***

***- Resident***



# Oxnard's Action Plan

Priority Project Recommendations Matrix

Operations & Maintenance Recommendations Matrix

Capital Improvements

Deferred Maintenance Needs

Overall Conclusion

This document has discussed Oxnard's geographic and cultural context, the existing condition of its parks and recreational programs, and the community's needs and perceptions. The project team has identified four goals and a host of strategies to achieve those goals. So now the question is: What should be done with all this information? Or, more precisely, what should be done first?

This chapter outlines an Action Plan that prioritizes the strategies and identifies a Capital Improvement Plan coordinated with the City's. The project team divided the recommendations into three categories: those that require time, those that require funds, and those that require both. Paramount to the success of Oxnard's parks are projects and actions that will result in increased funds or increased efficiencies. The City should prioritize these in order to unlock capital for future improvements.

# Priority Project Recommendations Matrix

## TIME RECOMMENDATIONS

These can be completed by utilizing staff-time versus supplemental grants or funding. They include goals that can be done in the present, including reforming Oxnard's maintenance regime, helping with park activation, and promoting staff networking for partnerships.

Making use of staff to find local and corporate partnerships could supplement the City's lack of financial resources. Partnerships with local businesses can fund improvements while also activating the parks. It would result in more economic opportunities, as well as foster the perception of enhanced safety. Re-evaluating the sunset ordinance on a case by case basis and allowing for more events in Oxnard by reforming the permitting process would also help this process. In addition, it is recommended that City staff develop park maintenance checklists to use their staff resources as efficiently as possible. It is also to ensure park maintenance is getting accomplished efficiently.

CHAPTER	PRIORITY PROJECT (TIME)
4	Develop Park Maintenance Checklists
6	Foster Existing and Potential Partnerships
6	Reconsider Oxnard's Sunset Ordinance
6	Reform the Permitting Process

## MONEY RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations that need money are capital improvements that require financial contribution upfront in order to improve the aesthetic, economic or programmatic condition of Oxnard's parks. They should be a priority as funding becomes available in time. The majority of these recommendations involve re-designing Oxnard's parks to be self-sustainable and less reliant on general fund revenue sources for maintenance. Some strategies will be expensive upfront but should be cost-effective over time. The City's goal should be for parks to assist in their own funding mechanisms to keep them safe, active, and open.

CHAPTER	PRIORITY PROJECT
4	Incorporate Revenue Generating Facilities into Parks
4	Reduce Energy Costs
4	Install Efficient and Controlled Irrigation
4	Transform from Turf to Native or Conservation Plantings
5	Ensure Accessible Programs and Equipment
6	Add Pedestrian and Field Lighting to All Parks

**TIME & MONEY RECOMMENDATIONS**

The recommendations that need time and money may take the longest to implement. First and foremost, creating an Oxnard Parks & Recreation District should be considered as an option to accomplish any of the improvements listed in this Master Plan. Without a Parks & Recreation District, there may not be a way to fund any improvements for Oxnard’s parks or provide recreational programming to even its current level of service. The additional recommendations that need time and money have to do with programming efforts that require capital improvements to become effective.

CHAPTER	PRIORITY PROJECT
5	Incorporate Signage in English, Spanish and Mixteco
7	Restore and Improve Access to Ormond Beach

# Operations & Maintenance Recommendations Matrix

RECOMMENDATION <sup>1</sup>	REVENUE IMPACT	O&M COST INCREASES
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Goal 1: Improve Maintenance & Operations Recommendations			
1.	Additional Revenue for Parks	+	staff effort
2.	Create Tax to Fund Parks & Recreation	+	staff effort
3.	Create an Oxnard Parks & Recreation District	+	staff effort
4.	Encourage Business Improvement Districts in Commercial Areas	-	staff effort
5.	Establish A Non-Profit Parks Foundation	+	staff effort
6.	Incorporate Revenue Generating Facilities into Parks	+	staff effort
7.	Reduce Energy Costs	+	staff effort
8.	Install Efficient and Controlled Irrigation	+	\$\$
9.	Use Durable and Sustainable Materials	+	\$\$
10.	Transform from Turf to Native or Conservation Plantings	+	\$0.14/sq. ft. <sup>2</sup>
11.	Use "Low Mow Turf" for Sustainable Landscapes	+	\$0.12/sq. ft. <sup>3</sup>
12.	Utilize Bio-Retention Technologies	cost savings for other departments	\$\$\$
13.	Use Artificial Turf in Parks for Sports Play*	+	\$0.45 to \$0.65/sq. ft. <sup>4</sup>
14.	Understand Worker Resources	-	staff effort
15.	Develop Park Maintenance Checklists	+	staff effort

Goal 2: Diversify Amenities & Facilities			
1.	Incorporate Habitats and Natural Features	n/a	\$0.14/sq. ft.
2.	Design Parks for Flexibility and Multi-Use	n/a	staff effort
3.	Focus on Existing Parks Before Adding More	+	staff effort
4.	Make Each Park Distinct	n/a	staff effort
5.	Park Design Recommendations & Standards on Park Classifications	n/a	staff effort
6.	Add Lifeguards	n/a	\$2,500/lifeguard per year
7.	Provide More Wayfinding Signage*	n/a	\$336/sign per year

<sup>1</sup> All recommendations do not include additional costs for staff additions for administration and programming.

<sup>2</sup> This will require transitioning 40-50% of existing sprinkler heads to a 12-inch head to spray over native grasses. This will also require a different density of sprinklers to provide coverage based on the size of planting and type of irrigation system. See row 8 for more detail.

<sup>3</sup> This will require transitioning 50-50% of existing sprinkler heads to a 12-inch head to spray over native grasses. This will also require a different density of sprinklers to provide coverage based on the size of planting and type of irrigation system. See row 8 for more detail.

<sup>4</sup> If these sports fields receive regular play, which is expected in Oxnard, the City can assume 50% higher water use to recover from such heavy use. This would be about \$16,900/acre per year in water costs.

RECOMMENDATION <sup>1</sup>		REVENUE IMPACT	O&M COST INCREASES
8.	Establish Programming & Economic Drivers	+	staff effort
9.	Add More Bike Parking*	n/a	\$163/rack per year
10.	Promote Regional & Private Events	+	staff effort
11.	Focus on Senior Center Development & Resources	-	staff effort
12.	Incorporate Signage in English, Spanish and Mixteco*	n/a	\$500/sign per year
13.	Joint-Use Strategies for Necessary Amenities	+	staff effort

14.	Design Parks that Reflect the Neighborhood Culture	n/a	staff effort
15.	Ensure Accessible Programs & Equipment	+	\$\$
16.	Address the Soccer Shortage*	+	\$18,000/field per year
17.	Create A Place for Baseball & Softball*	n/a	\$18,000/field per year
18.	Improve Tennis Facilities & Grow Interest in Pickleball*	n/a	\$2,000/court per year
19.	Support Indoor Basketball*	+	\$\$\$
20.	Evaluate the Future of the River Ridge Golf Course	+	staff effort
21.	Add Community Gardens	n/a	\$3,000/garden per year
22.	Address Program Gaps through Partnerships & In-House Programming	n/a	staff effort
23.	Provide Transformative Programming	+	staff effort
24.	Upgrade Capacity for New, Expanded Programs and Facilities	+	staff effort
25.	Explore Development of Wellness Initiatives	+	staff effort
26.	Provide Technology Resources for Users + Staff	n/a	\$\$

Goal 3: Create Safe & Active Parks			
1.	Reconsider Oxnard's Sunset Ordinance	n/a	staff effort
2.	Increase Programming	+	staff effort
3.	Reform the Permitting Process	+	staff effort
4.	Add Pedestrian & Field Lighting to all Parks*	n/a	\$360/unit per year
5.	Partner with Non-Profits to Provide Homeless Resources	n/a	staff effort
6.	Foster Existing & Potential Partnerships	n/a	staff effort
7.	Preventative Crime Efforts	+	\$
8.	Rely More on Cameras in Parks	n/a	\$
9.	Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design	n/a	staff effort
10.	Performance Measures for Benchmarking	n/a	staff effort

RECOMMENDATION <sup>1</sup>	REVENUE IMPACT	O&M COST INCREASES
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Goal 4: Connect the City with Natural Resources			
1.	Utilize SOAR Boundary for Bike Trails	n/a	staff effort
2.	Create a Multi-Use Trail on 5th Street Drainage Corridor	n/a	\$7,000/one mile of trail per year
3.	Create Trails in Parks and Around Town	+	\$7,000/one mile of trail per year
4.	Restore & Improve Access to Ormond Beach	+	\$\$
5.	Celebrate Agricultural Heritage	n/a	staff effort

\* These recommendations will also need to incorporate equipment and/or installation costs. They do not include additional costs for staff additions for administration and programming.

# Capital Improvements

The Capital Improvements in this chapter should be the first step towards **change**.

Capital Improvements can be defined as any addition or alteration that substantially adds value or appreciably prolongs a project's lifespan (Department of Tax, NY). For Oxnard, it is necessary to define the first projects needed to implement the Parks & Recreation Master Plan through capital improvements. This means defining the initial steps necessary for implementing the City's vision.

The first step is defining which recommendations from the goal chapters are the most critical to pursue. The capital improvements must be necessary, but also realistic. To account for Oxnard's lack of funding, the recommended capital improvements are divided into categories: those that need time, money, or both. These improvements have been identified through both the City's CIP for 2020-2025 and the master plan process. Using this Master Plan as a framework, the City should work to complete as many recommendations as possible. However, the recommendations that need more money may be prioritized only when funding becomes available. At a minimum, the City may focus on implementing recommendations that only require time as a starting point.



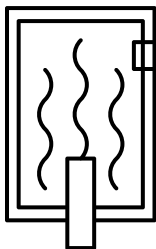
# Critical Amenity Projects

A great parks and recreation system should have the amenities that its residents want to see. In the Diagnosis phase of the Master Plan, the project team collected empirical data, participated in community interviews, and analyzed the public survey to paint a cohesive picture of what amenities are not only missing but needed in Oxnard’s parks and recreation system.

The amenities on this page are ranked according to what is most needed as determined through community engagement, best practices, stakeholder input and national trends. Oxnard should implement these amenities into existing or future planned park or open space developments as possible. The order to which they are implemented will most likely be determined by available grants or funding.

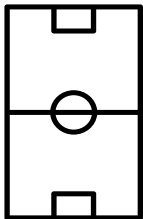
1

A SWIMMING POOL



4

SOCCER FIELDS



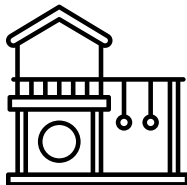
2

AN ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION CENTER



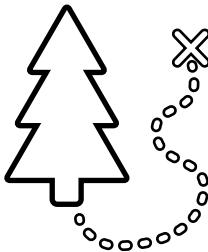
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PLAYGROUNDS



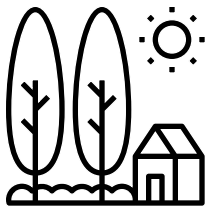
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NATURE TRAILS



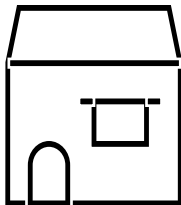
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COMMUNITY GARDENS



7

COMMUNITY CENTERS



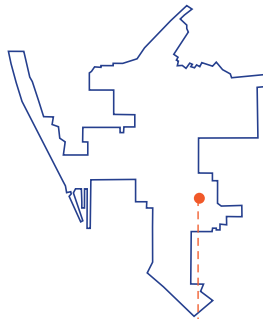
# Finish College Park

College Park is the heart of South Oxnard. It needs to unite the soccer community while providing nearby residents with the amenities they need.

The 35 undeveloped acres at College Park is an opportunity to provide residents in South Oxnard with a world-class recreational facility. The park should be developed to accommodate enough soccer fields for the sports community, as well as passive and economic-generating programming. As South Oxnard is very diverse, College Park should incorporate what people in the community need most— walking paths, bike lanes, as well as spaces for nature, play, and celebrations.

The local community has played Pelota Mixteca on the vacant area of College Park for over ten years; it's important that the final design includes a space for this sport as well, if a court is not constructed at Campus Park. For soccer, the City should provide the soccer community with a well-maintained, large outdoor complex to accommodate the needs of its leagues for practice.

In an uncertain future, with unfunded programming, it would also be good to leave the option open for an aquatic center in south Oxnard, as deemed feasible.



## RECOMMENDED PROGRAMMING

- Soccer complex
- Multi-purpose fields
- Pelota Mixteca (if a Pelota Mixteca court is not constructed at Campus Park)
- Seasonal city wide events
- Inclusive playgrounds
- Walking trails
- Bio-retention technology
- Swimming pool, as funding is achieved

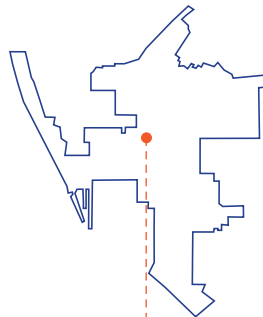


Pelota Mixteca is another popular sport in Oxnard. It's been played in College Park for years.

## Develop Campus Park

In 2020, Oxnard received an \$8.5M grant for Campus Park, which is funding a nature-themed park. This will include a skate park, bike pump track, pelota mixteca court, walking trails and lighting, natural habitat/meadow, a community garden, a playground, and a multi-use pavilion/venue. It will be a haven for recreational programming for all.

Campus Park deserves a planning process of its own. As the existing buildings on site are already being used for Police Activities League, it is in Oxnard's best interest to consolidate recreational programming facilities within Campus Park. The remaining site, not dedicated to the above active park programming, should be dedicated to natural resources and flexible programming. Space for a swimming pool should be planned, to be constructed as funding is achieved.



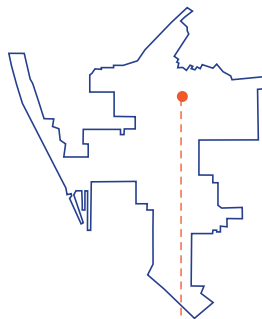
Through public outreach, the list of programming was prioritized to be the following:

- Bike pump track
- Community garden
- Community services
- Environmental education trails
- Natural habitats
- Pavilion
- Pelota Mixteca
- Skate park
- Playground
- Walking trails

# Build Sports Park

Sports Park should be a space devoted to a diversity of sports and fitness. Sports Park can serve various popular sports in Oxnard, including basketball, volleyball, and tennis/pickle-ball courts. It should include opportunities for bike and running trails, as well as outdoor fitness.

Sports Park will help to meet baseball and softball needs in the City. When baseball is not being practiced, the expansive outfields can be used for picnicking and other passive, flexible programming. Lawn spaces can also be built with pedestrian paths that include informational signage, educating residents about health, nutrition and fitness.



## RECOMMENDED PROGRAMMING

- Baseball/ Softball fields
- Basketball courts
- Passive lawn areas
- Inclusive playgrounds
- Walking trails
- Bio-retention technology

## Capital Improvements Identified in FY 2020-2025 CIP

In 2020, the Oxnard City Council approved the 2020-2025 CIP, which established a commitment for the following projects.

RESURFACING PROJECTS	COST ESTIMATE	DESCRIPTION
Basketball Court Resurfacing	\$500,000	Reconstruct three (3) basketball courts in Orchard Park and two (2) in Lemonwood Park. Additionally, resurface one (1) court in Orchard Park, one (1) in Rio Lindo Park, two (2) in Thompson Park, three (3) in Colonia Park, and two (2) in Beck Park.
Pleasant Valley Park Court Resurfacing	\$340,000	Full reconstruction and resurfacing of basketball courts and tennis courts.
Vineyards Park Playground Resurfacing	\$110,000	Replace existing poured-in-place playground surface with a tiled playground surface.
Tennis Court Resurfacing	\$1,530,000	Reconstruct eight (8) tennis courts in Community Center West Park, two (2) in Lemonwood Park & two (2) in Pleasant Valley Park. Additionally, resurface one (1) court in Wilson Park and two (2) in Marina West Park.
East Park Playground Resurfacing	\$155,000	Replace existing poured in place playground surface with a tiled playground surface.

MASTER PLANNING PROJECTS	COST ESTIMATE	DESCRIPTION
Campus Park Activation	\$8,500,000	Expand Campus Park including a new BMX pump track, skate park, three basketball courts, pelota Mixteca court, playground, performing arts amphitheater/pavilion, multi-use field/meadow, community garden, public art, walking trails, creek, parking lot and stormwater improvements, and lighting and landscaping throughout the park.
Lemonwood Park Parcel Development	\$550,000	The park was acquired in early 2017 and requires a design to remediate the half acre site.

PARK IMPROVEMENTS	COST ESTIMATE	DESCRIPTION
Southbank Park Improvements	\$298,275	Construct walking path and lighting within park.
Seaview Park Improvements	\$2,227,623	Install new walking path/track, new LED lighting and new restrooms. New inclusive play area to accommodate ages 2 through 5 and 5 through 12 years old.
Del Sol Park Improvements - Phase 1	\$520,000	Construct a new restroom.
Cypress (Garden City Acres) Park Improvements	\$692,729	Install new smart irrigation and new controller. Repair and resod damaged turf. Install an additional basketball court with lights.
Community Center East Park Improvements - Phase 2	\$407,922	Replace play structure, install new LED security lighting, resurface parking lot, and install new park amenities

REPLACEMENT PROJECTS	COST ESTIMATE	DESCRIPTION
Riverpark Irrigation Control System Replacement	\$180,000	Replace irrigation control systems.
Seabridge Light Replacement	\$400,000	Replace the outdoor lighting throughout the Seabridge community.
Pfeiler Pocket Park Play Structure Replacement	\$155,000	Replace the play structure at Pfeiler Pocket Park.
Oxnard Trail Light Replacement	\$200,000	Replace lighting infrastructure, upgrade electrical and add community cameras along Oxnard Trail from Entrada Drive to the path adjacent to the Community Garden.
Greenbelt LMD 43 Lighting Replacement	\$300,000	Replace the outdoor lighting along the greenbelt off Williams Drive in Landscape Maintenance District (LMD) 43.
Community Center East Park Improvements- Phase 1	\$450,000	Construct new restroom at a location near the street with more security lighting

RENOVATION PROJECTS	COST ESTIMATE	DESCRIPTION
Via Marina Park Renovation	\$1,215,952	Install new sprinkler system, new play structures, a new rubberized walking track, and new LED security lighting.
Central Park Fountain Control Room Renovation	\$550,000	Replacing the existing fountain control system and placing the controls above ground, waterproofing the underground vault, upgrading the fountain lights to LED, repairing the water level auto-filler, repairing the chemical injection system pressure, and replacing the pressure differential.

## Projects Identified Through Master Planning Process (not yet funded or prioritized through CIP process)

PROJECT	COST ESTIMATE	DESCRIPTION
Finish College Park	\$18,000,000	Develop the remaining 37 acres
Develop Campus Park	\$15,000,000	Develop 34 acres of Campus Park
Build a Joint-Use Aquatic Center	\$10,000,000	With a City approved master plan, consider building an aquatic center in College Park
Create a Bike Trail Along the Santa Clara River	\$8,000,000	Implement trail proposed by the County of Ventura along Santa Clara River
Develop Sports Park	\$6,500,000	Develop 20 acres of Sports Park with a City approved Master Plan
Add Solar Powered Lighting to all Parks	\$3,500,000	Retrofit lighting to solar powered, LED lights
Install Efficient & Controlled Irrigation	\$3,000,000	Update and repair existing irrigation in all parks as able
Renovate Several Playgrounds to be Inclusive	~\$1,000,000 for each	Renovate three playgrounds to be inclusive
Build Protected Bike Lanes in the City	\$900,000/mile for Class I; \$150,000/mile for Class IV	Build Class I or Class IV bike lanes as proposed in the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan
Tree Trimming & Care (10-year tree trimming cycle)	\$550,000	Throughout the city
Renovate Parks to be Efficient and Sustainable	~\$10,000 per acre	Transform turf to native/conservation planting; convert play fields to artificial turfs; add walking paths

# Deferred Maintenance Needs

Both capital improvements and **deferred maintenance** are important factors to consider in **planning for the future**.

The deferred maintenance needs and park funding of the Oxnard Park & Recreation system were examined through four approaches:

1. Benchmarked Oxnard against a number of cities both regionally and nationally to understand Oxnard's level of park funding as a percentage of the city's annual budget and CIP
2. Compared Oxnard to the National Parks and Recreation (NRPA) research
3. Considered deferred maintenance needs in a Total Asset Management context, establishing replacement costs and depreciation schedule for each type of improvement
4. Compared Oxnard to Trust for Public Land research

## Annual Budget + CIP Benchmark Approach

Oxnard currently spends approximately 2.0% of its annual CIP on parks and recreation. This percentage appears to fare well compared to Ventura (1.9%) and Camarillo (1.1%) but behind Thousand Oaks at 5.1%. This CIP comparison between these four cities, however, varies widely and may not be the best measure of appropriate spending.

## NRPA Research Approach

NRPA found that the average parks and recreation agency has annual operating expenses of \$78.69 per capita. This compares to Oxnard's annual per capital expenditure of \$55.38 per person or \$96.84 per person with grants. NRPA found that the denser the population, the higher the per capita operating expenditure. NRPA data would suggest that the upper quartile of cities with

the population density of Oxnard had annual budgets of \$15,969,309, the lower quartile had budgets of \$2,598,163, and the median quartile had budgets of \$6,625,000. With an annual general fund budget of \$11.6 million (\$23.8 million including grants), Oxnard is in the upper quartile of all park systems nationwide for deferred maintenance.

## Trust for Public Land Research Approach

The Trust for Public Land data provides useful information about Oxnard. For example, 83% of Oxnard residents are within a 10-minute walk of a park. Five percent of Oxnard is park land versus 15 percent for the national median. Unfortunately, the Trust for Public Land does not have complete ParkScore data for Oxnard, so it's difficult to know where the city ranks relative to other cities in investment relative to the top 100 United States cities in terms of population.

# Total Asset Management Approach

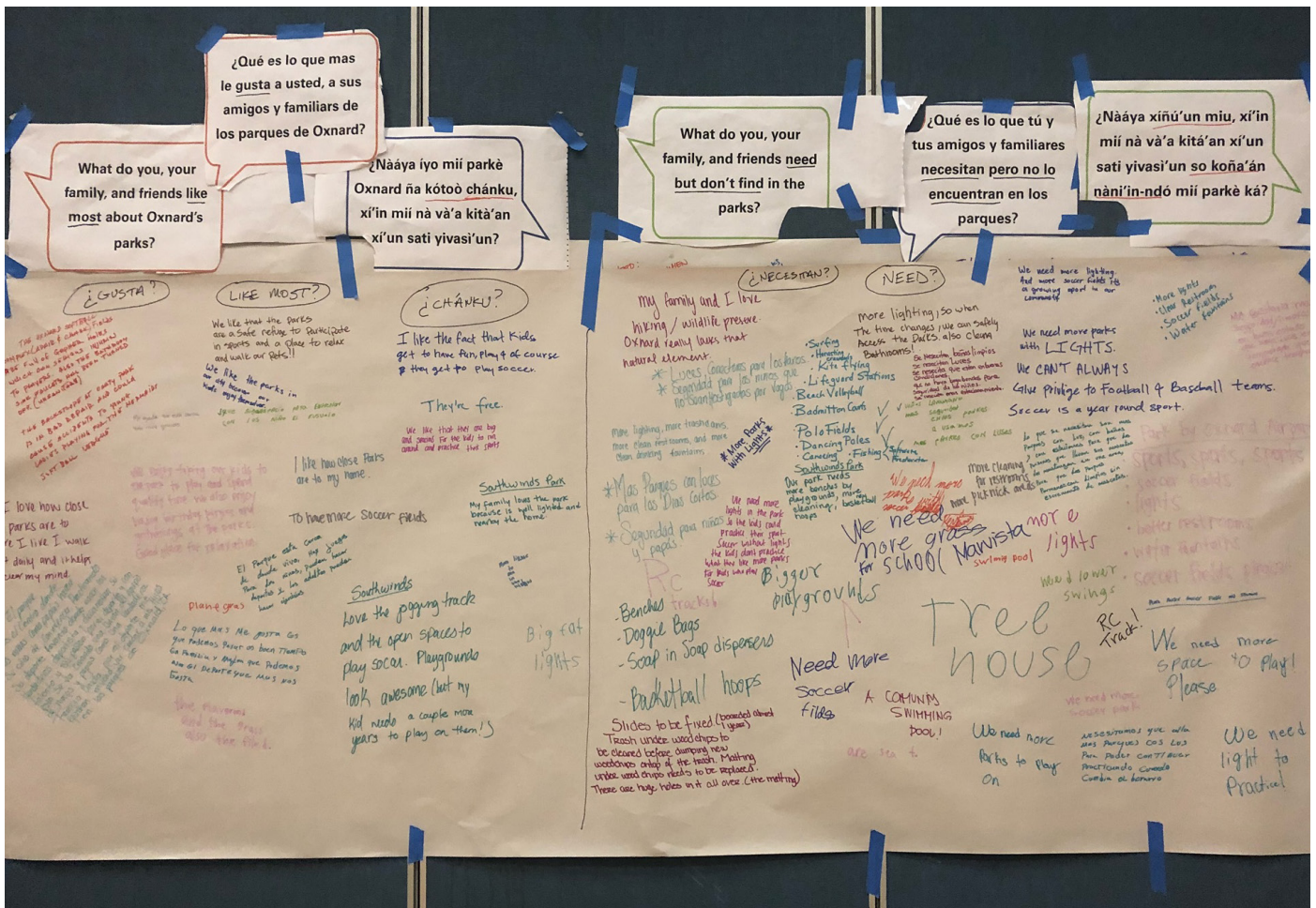
The latest trend in public facilities management is Total Asset Management. This concept is regularly applied in Canada and is increasingly finding its way into the United States, and California in particular. San Diego, for example, has a total asset management system applied to its parks. Simply put, a city develops an accurate inventory of the existing components of its park system (playground, ball fields, sport courts, etc.) and assigns a replacement cost and useful life for each type of component. A condition assessment report determines where in that useful life each of the system components lies. This in turn allows a reasoned judgment of total deferred maintenance in the system.

While a condition assessment is beyond the scope of this master plan, the project team provided an understanding of replacement cost and useful life of the major components of the system. This suggests that annual deferred maintenance in the system is about \$3,900,000 per year. This basis framework can be refined over time to add additional system components (such as benches and trash receptacles) and a condition assessment report will further refine these numbers. Some cities now have trained staff in place to manage their Total Asset Management program and Oxnard should consider initiating such a program. The city should develop a GIS inventory of all park improvements as a key element of this program. There are a number of software programs that can assist with this, but the City would need to acquire one.

A Condition Assessment Report is recommended for all parks and recreation assets. There are now multiple providers of software programs which assist in condition assessment reports and in total asset management. These programs utilize geographic information systems to track the location and condition of assets and use tablet devices for parks and recreation staff to locate resources utilizing GPS tracking. The project team recommends that Oxnard also obtain such a system to further improve management of the parks and recreation system.

## CONCLUSION

Based upon the analysis above, an annual deferred maintenance expenditure between \$2,700,000 and \$4,232,600 is reasonable, with an average of \$3,500,000 recommended.



Community thoughts on the future of Oxnard's parks and recreation shared during the first Master Plan community meeting.

# Overall Conclusion

The City of Oxnard has **many assets**— its rich history, diverse population, and prime location. By improving its parks and recreation system, the City will reveal its **true potential** and capitalize on these assets.

This Master Plan provides the tools to create and fund a Parks & Recreation system that will **serve Oxnard's residents** and **attract new businesses and investment**. Oxnard will find, like many other cities have, that dollars put toward public realm improvements will return several times over.



Oxnard Baseball