

4.12 LAND USE

This section reviews existing adopted plans, policies and regulations that pertain to the *Parks Master Plan 2030* (Project) as identified for review in the State CEQA Guidelines.

Public and agency comments were received during the public scoping period in response to the Notice of Preparation (NOP). No comments were received regarding land use. Public comments received during the public scoping period are included in Appendix A.

4.12.1 Environmental Setting

Regulatory Setting

The City of Santa Cruz General Plan 2030, the Local Coastal Plan, and Title 24 (Zoning) of the Municipal Code govern land use and development for parcels within City limits. The City has adopted master or management plans for some facilities that help guide future uses and corresponding management. Facilities with previously adopted master or management plans include the following:

- Arana Gulch Master Plan (2006)
- Cowell and Main Beach Management Plan (2014)
- DeLaveaga Park Master Plan (1960)
- DeLaveaga Golf Course Master Plan (2002)
- Depot Park Master Plan (2001)
- Jessie Street Marsh Management Plan (1998)
- Moore Creek Preserve Interim Management Plan (2002)
- Neary Lagoon Management Plan (1992)
- Pogonip Clubhouse Rehabilitation Plan (2002)
- Pogonip Master Plan (1998)
- San Lorenzo Urban River Plan (2003)

Relevant Plans and Zoning Regulations

General Plan 2030

The PARKS, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE chapter of the *General Plan 2030* includes goals, policies and actions that address parks and recreational facilities, open space, trails and recreation programs. This chapter includes three goals with 16 associated policies and 38 specific actions that address parks, open space and recreational facility public services. A fourth goal with policies and actions addresses recreational programs, activities and events. These goals are identified below. Several policies and actions in other chapters of the proposed General Plan also seek to protect, preserve

and/or manage open space and natural areas throughout the City (CD 1.1.3, LU 2.3, LU 3.11 NRC 1.1 river access]).

- GOAL PR1 Ample, accessible, safe and well-maintained parks, open space, and active recreational facilities.
- GOAL PR2 High-quality, affordable recreational programs, activities, events, and services for all.
- GOAL PR3 Well managed, clean and convenient public access to open space lands and coastline.
- GOAL PR4 An integrated system of citywide and regional trails.

The General Plan also strives to maintain park service standards, which call for a neighborhood park at ratio of 2.0 acres per 1,000 population (PR1.3.2) and a community parks ratio of 2.5 acres per 1000 population (PR1.3.3). The General Plan 2030 does not include any goals or policies regarding construction or expansion of a specific park or recreational facility, but does call for developing new or expanding existing athletic fields (PR1.2.2), and coordinating with local schools to expand park and recreation opportunities. However, specific sites or locations are not identified. General Plan Action PR1.1.2 calls for developing and maintaining a citywide Parks Master Plan that sets service standards and strategic goals for the development and maintenance of parks and related facilities.

The General Plan seeks to update and modify park system and services to accommodate changes in the population and its recreational need (PR1.1.1). A number of policies and actions seek to provide a system of parks and recreational facilities (PR1.1.1), planning for new parks and facilities (PR1.1.2, PR1.1.4), evaluating and acquiring parks (PR1.1.3, PR3.2 [parcels that provide access to City-owned open space lands]), developing new or expanding existing athletic fields (PR1.2.2), and coordinating with local schools to expand park and recreation opportunities (PR1.2.1, PR1.2.3). To this end, the plan establishes service standards (PR1.3, PR1.3.2, PR1.3.3), seeks to ensure that adequate park land is provided in conjunction with new development (PR1.3.1), and requires park dedication or payment of in-lieu fees from new development (PR1.7, PR1.7.1). Thus, while specific new park locations are not designated in the *General Plan 2030*, the policies and actions set forth a strategy to plan and acquire additional park lands in the future.

The General Plan also seeks to ensure ongoing maintenance needs are addressed in the development and funding plans for any new or expanded parks, recreational facilities, or open space areas (PR1.3.4, PR1.10). Maintenance of the City's Parks and Facilities tax also is recommended (PR1.9, PR1.9.1, PR1.9.2).

A number of policies and actions also promote provision of trails and access to open space lands and the coast (PR1.4) with enhancing the recreational value of the San Lorenzo River walkway and East and the West Cliff Drive pathways (PR4.1.3) and creating a continuous pathway along the coast by enhancing the physical links between West Cliff and East Cliff Drives and the Beach Promenade (PR4.1.4).

The General Plan 2030 includes a Parks land use designation (PR), which includes neighborhood, community, and regional parks that are owned by the City, County, or State, and which are used by residents and visitors for passive or active recreation. This designation also allows limited development of structures to support these recreational uses. The General Plan's Natural Areas (NA) designation includes land that should remain in an undeveloped state in order to protect vegetation or wildlife habitat, ensure public safety, or provide for public recreation. However, areas designated NA may include public recreational and educational uses. The suitability of these uses is determined by the Planning Commission on a case-by-case basis, and any such uses must be consistent with the Natural Resources and Conservation chapter of the General Plan. Existing City parks are primarily designated Parks, but some areas also have the following General Plan land use designations: Natural Areas, Coastal Recreation, Regional Visitor Commercial, and Community Facilities.

Local Coastal Program

A portion of the City of Santa Cruz is located within the coastal zone, which is subject to the requirements of the California Coastal Act (Public Resources Code Section 30000, et seq.). The Coastal Act is intended to “protect, maintain, and, where feasible, enhance and restore the overall quality of the coastal zone environment and its natural and artificial resources.” The Coastal Act requires preparation of a Local Coastal Program (LCP) for areas of cities and counties within the coastal zone, which must be certified by the California Coastal Commission (CCC).

The City of Santa Cruz prepared and adopted its LCP as a part of the 1990-2005 General Plan and Local Coastal Program document. The City's LCP was originally certified by the CCC in 1985. The LCP consists of a land use plan, implementing ordinances and maps applicable to the coastal zone portions of the City, and applies to all private and public projects located within the coastal zone. The Land Use Plan consists of: text; policies, programs and maps identified by a wave symbol; Area Plan coastal policies and maps; and a Coastal Access Plan. The Implementation Plan consists of ordinances and regulations used to implement the Land Use Plan, including sections in the Zoning Code. The City is in the process of updating and revising the LCP Land Use Plan as a separate document from the General Plan. The LCP applies to private and public projects located within the coastal zone. Until the revision is adopted by the City and certified by the California Coastal Commission, the 2005 document (with specific coastal policies, maps, and implementing ordinances) is the governing LCP for the area.

The LCP includes policies and actions that support parks and recreational facilities. In particular, the LCP calls for development of plans to repair, maintain and maximize public access and enjoyment of recreational areas along the coastline consistent with sound resource conservation principle, safety, and rights of private property owners (PR1.7). The LCP supports preparation and implementation of a beach management plan for Main and Cowell Beaches (PR1.7.3). LCP policy 4.2 calls for development of a system of recreational trails providing access to and connections between the City's various parks, recreation facilities, and natural, coastal and urban areas. Supporting LCP Action 4.2.2 provides criteria for determining appropriate uses, location and design of trail systems and

recreational corridors to minimize the impact on areas through which they travel, which include designing trails to fit the contour of the land.

Zoning

The City's Municipal Code's Zoning chapter (Title 24) includes a parks (PK) District, the purpose of which is to designate sites for public parks, and to ensure that there is a compatible relationship between such parks and the surrounding area. This section of the Zoning Ordinance is also part of the LCP Implementation Plan. Some types of recreational facilities are located in other districts as well. Most of the City's parks are zoned PK. However, some parks and recreational properties also include the following zone districts: Exclusive Agriculture (E-A) - Moore Creek Preserve only, Floodplain (F-P), Ocean Front Recreational (OF-R), Beach Commercial (C-B), and Public Facilities (PF)

Parks Plans

The City has adopted master or management plans for some facilities that help guide future uses and corresponding management actions for specific parks, open spaces, and beaches. Not all park assets have management plans. Facilities with previously adopted master or management plans include the following; key provisions related to recreational uses are summarized below:

- Arana Gulch Master Plan (2006)
- Cowell and Main Beach Management Plan (2014)
- DeLaveaga Park Master Plan (1960)
- DeLaveaga Golf Course Master Plan (2002)
- Depot Park Master Plan (2001)
- Jessie Street Marsh Management Plan (1998)
- Moore Creek Preserve Interim Management Plan (2002)
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- Pogonip Clubhouse Rehabilitation Plan (2002)
- Pogonip Master Plan (1998)
- San Lorenzo Urban River Plan (2003)

Arana Gulch Master Plan. The *Arana Gulch Master Plan*, adopted by the City in 2006 and approved by the CCC, includes a trail system featuring paved multi-use trails (wheelchair accessible), a new west entrance and bridge spanning Hagemann Gulch, unpaved pedestrian trails, interpretive displays and overlooks. Most of Arana Gulch would continue to remain undeveloped, with a focus on management and protection of the sensitive habitat areas. No on-site parking or restrooms are proposed within the greenbelt property. Specific public use guidelines contained in the Master Plan are outlined below. The Master Plan also identifies three resource management areas for coastal prairie/Santa Cruz tarplant (30.2 acres), riparian and wetland areas, and Hagemann Gulch riparian woodland; resource management guidelines are included in the Master Plan for each of these areas.

- Provide multi-use wheelchair accessible interpretive trails connecting the surrounding neighborhoods to the Upper Santa Cruz harbor.
- Establish a new west entrance at Hagemann Gulch to provide a trail connection between Arana Gulch and the Seabright neighborhood. Provide a multi-use trail and bridge crossing over Hagemann Gulch, featuring an interpretive overlook.
- Provide a pedestrian-only interpretive loop trail encircling the coastal prairie.
- Improve the existing pedestrian trail along the western edge of the Arana Gulch Creek management area.
- Allow dogs on-leash on designated trails. Prohibit off-leash dog use and off-trail use to avoid impacts to tarplant populations and other plant and animal species.

Delaveaga Park Master Plan. This Master Plan was prepared in 1960 and identifies improvements, including picnic areas, campgrounds, and hiking trails. The Plan also identifies a Natural Science Center-museum, clubhouse, amphitheater with a capacity for 1,000, and an archery-rifle range as potential uses at the park. The plan includes a trail map, many of which currently exist. The plan includes a trail concept to create a loop around the entire park.

Jessie Street Marsh Management Plan. The *Jessie Street Marsh Management Plan* was adopted by City Council in 1999 to provide a long-term plan to preserve and enhance the natural resources of the marsh, improve water quality, manage flood waters, and provide appropriate public access. In addition to public access and use recommendations, the Management Plan proposes to modify the marsh area to increase the tidal exchange with the San Lorenzo River and enhance salt/brackish marsh and freshwater marsh habitat areas. Both marsh and upland woodland habitats would also be enhanced by removing invasive, non-native plants and revegetation of degraded areas. The management approach is to maximize the biodiversity of the marsh areas and enhance the biotic resources.

Moore Creek Preserve Interim Management Plan. The *Moore Creek Preserve Interim Management Plan*, adopted by City Council in 2002, serves as a guide for management of the Moore Creek Preserve until preparation/approval of a long term Park Master Plan for the property. The State of California conservation easements include restrictions on various uses and activities. Existing interim uses include hiking trails (approximately 3 miles), cattle grazing, and study, preservation, enhancement and protection of native species and their habitat. Dogs are prohibited within the Preserve. The interim trail system is based primarily on trails and unpaved service roads which existed prior to City ownership and are largely a result of cattle grazing operations. No onsite parking, public access road, or restroom facilities are included in the Interim Plan. A coastal development permit was approved for construction of a bridge to mitigate existing trail impacts to Moore Creek. The *Interim Management Plan* also identifies three plant community resource management areas and addresses specific management of habitat areas for special status species.

Neary Lagoon Management Plan. The *Neary Lagoon Management Plan* was adopted by City Council in July 1992 and the Coastal Commission in August 1992 in fulfillment of a condition of Coastal

Commission approval in 1975 of a coastal permit for the City to construct park and wildlife refuge improvements. The Plan is a comprehensive guide that addresses public access and use, hydrology, water quality, vegetation management and habitat restoration, wildlife and fishery management, cultural resources and aesthetics. The plan also addresses management of water lagoon levels, important for flood protection, water quality, management of vegetation and wildlife habitat, and mosquito control. Specific management actions are included for each of these elements. The plan also identifies habitat types and Management Zones A through J. The habitat areas include:

- ❑ Freshwater Marsh
- ❑ Open Water
- ❑ Riparian and Mixed Oak Woodland
- ❑ Grassland, Recreational and Ruderal Areas

Pogonip Master Plan. The Pogonip Master Plan, adopted by City Council in 1998, addresses public access, recreational uses, historic resource rehabilitation and preservation, and natural resource management and protection. The Master Plan includes a trail system, rehabilitation of the historic clubhouse as a community facility, a permanent agricultural garden site for the Homeless Garden Project, and outdoor education areas. Limited parking within the lower and main meadow areas, minimal improvements to the one-lane access road to the clubhouse, and a Ranger facility are also addressed in the Master Plan. Dogs on-leash are allowed, but off-leash dog and off-trail use is prohibited. Specific uses identified in the plan include:

- ❑ A 9-mile trail system featuring both unpaved service roads and single-track trails open primarily to pedestrians.
- ❑ A multi-use trail (pedestrians, bicycles, horses) connector trail linking Henry Cowell Redwoods State Park, Pogonip and the University of California property.
- ❑ Rehabilitation of the historic clubhouse to serve as a staging area for educational programs, a meeting and retreat center, and a site for special events.
- ❑ Preservation and interpretation of the historic limekilns, roads and associated features.
- ❑ An outdoor education camp in the lower meadow and a nature/education area within Sycamore Grove.
- ❑ A permanent garden site for the Homeless Garden Project.

To date, the trail system has been implemented including a multi-use regional trail connection linking State Park lands, Pogonip, and the UC campus open space. Limited rehabilitation of the historic Clubhouse has occurred, but it remains closed to public access and complete rehabilitation for public use is presently unfunded. At present, the parking lots, outdoor education areas, and Homeless Garden agricultural garden have not yet been implemented.

San Lorenzo Urban River Plan. The *San Lorenzo Urban River Plan (SLURP)* is the outcome of a planning process initiated by City Council in 1999 to update previous plans for the San Lorenzo River, Jessie

Street Marsh, and Branciforte Creek that guided flood control, vegetation restoration and public access improvements along the San Lorenzo River. The plan, adopted by City Council in 2003, articulates a community vision for the corridor encompassing the lower Lorenzo River, Branciforte Creek and Jessie Street Marsh as both a wildlife area and as a community recreation and public open space amenity. It contains recommendations for habitat enhancement, as well as public access and ideas to promote river-oriented development.

Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Thresholds of Significance

In accordance with CEQA; State CEQA Guidelines (including Appendix G); City of Santa Cruz plans, policies, and/or guidelines; and agency and professional standards; a project impact would be considered significant if the project would:

- LAND-1 Physically divide an established community; or
- LAND-2 Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect.

Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Areas of No Project Impact

LAND-1 *Division of an Established Community.* The project consists of a Parks Master Plan that includes goals, policies, actions and recommendations for improvements at existing parks and recreational facilities throughout the City, as well as consideration of some new uses. Implementation would not result in development that would physically divide an established community. Therefore, the project would result in *no impact*.

Project Impacts

Impact LAND-2: Conflicts with Plans. The proposed project will not conflict with policies or regulations adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect, and therefore, will result in *no impact* related to consistency with local plans and policies.

The proposed *Parks Master Plan 2030* was developed to be consistent with the park and recreation goals and policies of the *City's General Plan 2030*. The Master Plan does not conflict with plans, policies, or regulations adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect. Master Plan actions that call for protection of sensitive resources and avoidance of impacts are consistent with those of the General Plan.

Some parks and recreational sites are located in the coastal zone and subject to policy and regulatory provisions in the LCP. Comments from the California Coastal Commission on the January 2018 IS/MND indicates that the extent to which the Parks Master Plan “aligns” with the City’s LCP is relevant in assessing environmental effects of the Plan. The letter references the City’s LCP regarding West Cliff Drive, East Cliff Drive, sensitive habitat near Neary Lagoon, and regional trails. Review of the proposed Parks Master Plan did not identify any conflicts with the City’s LCP policies or regulations adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect. The Parks Master Plan specifically calls for conserving creek, riparian, and wetland resources in accordance with the City-wide Creeks and Wetlands Management Plan, San Lorenzo Urban River Plan, Moore Creek Interim Management Plan, Jessie Street Marsh Management Plan, and the Neary Lagoon Management Plan (Goal IV-Policy B, Action 2m). The Master Plan also includes policies and actions to protect sensitive habitats and special status species as discussion in Section 4.3, Biological Resources.

Recommendations in the Parks Master Plan are consistent with adopted management plans for the City’s open spaces, and the proposed Parks Mater Plan would not conflict with policies or regulations adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect. However, the Parks Master Plan indicates that some amendments to existing management plans, such as Jessie Street Marsh, Moore Creek Preserve, and Pogonip Open Space, may be necessary to implement some of the recommendations in the Parks Master Plan. Updates to existing plans would need to conform to the General Plan and would undergo a future planning process prior to implementation. The Master Plan does not amend or supersede the existing adopted management or park master plans.

Specific Parks Master Plan recommendations include:

- East Cliff and West Cliff Drive Plans.* Goal VI-Policy A, Action of the proposed Parks Master Plan calls for development and implementation of an integrated design, land use, recreation, cliff stabilization, and landscape plan for West Cliff and East Cliff Drives to enhance public safety, access, connectivity, preservation, and recreational enjoyment along the coastline. This is similar to and consistent with existing LCP policies that call for preparation of this plan. Specifically, the LCP calls for development and implementation of an integrated design, land use, recreation, cliff stabilization, and landscaping plan for West Cliff and East Cliff Drives to enhance public access, safety and recreational enjoyment in these areas (PR1.7.6). Preparation of this plan is currently underway. In the section of recommendations for specific facilities, the Parks Plan recommends inclusion of Bethany Curve in a planning analysis of a West Cliff Drive Master Plan.
- DeLaveaga Park Master Plan.* Potential additional trails and expanded use at the Audrey Stanley Grove amphitheater at DeLaveaga Park are consistent with recommendations in the DeLaveaga Park Master Plan.
- Jessie Street Marsh Management Plan.* The Parks Master Plan recommends improving the connection from Jessie Street Marsh to the Santa Cruz Riverwalk; hiring a consultant to work through design issues and public concerns with the Jessie Street Marsh Management Plan; and to discuss potential modifications to the management plan through a public process. The Parks Master Plan does not identify changes to the Jessie Street Marsh Management Plan or

a specific design to address issues related to tidal exchange. The recommendations included in the Master Plan for Jessie Street Marsh are to: improve the connection from the marsh to the Santa Cruz Riverwalk; hire an engineering consultant to work through design issues and public concerns with the Jessie Street Marsh Management Plan; and discuss potential modifications to the plan through a public process.

At this time, it is not known if the Jessie Street Management Plan would be modified, and if so, in what ways. Thus, there is no proposal or concept to analyze. It would be speculative to try to determine what potential changes to the Jessie Street Marsh Management Plan may be considered and/or proposed in the future as a result of the process recommended in the Parks Master Plan. If a revision to the Jessie Street Marsh Management Plan or new improvement is proposed in the future, it would be subject to environmental review either as part of a plan amendment or project-level review. Additionally, the City’s LCP calls for developing, implementing, and maintaining “updated” management plans for the protection and enhancement of natural areas throughout the City, including Jessie Street Marsh (LU3.4). To the extent that future changes in the Jessie Street Marsh Plan or improvements may result in environmental impacts, such as impacts to wetlands, the nature of the impact is addressed in this EIR.

- ❑ *Pogonip Master Plan.* Under recommendations for specific facilities, the Parks Master Plan recommends “exploring modifications” to the existing Pogonip Master Plan in two ways:

- 1) Conduct a trails assessment to evaluate existing trail conditions and use issues and identify ways to improve access, recreational enjoyment, and connectivity. The assessment will help inform the determination of whether or not future trail modifications or improvements are appropriate and provide for a range of uses (hiking, horseback riding, mountain biking). As part of the process, the City would create clearer maintenance standards, identify use conflicts and solutions, develop a signage and educational program, assess long-term maintenance costs associated with any future improvements, and evaluate potential environmental impacts and mitigations through the CEQA process.
- 2) Consider adding a parking area near the Emma McCrary trail on Golf Club Dr. in the meadow immediately to the northwest of the vehicle access gate.

These recommendations would only be undertaken after completion of assessments. Similarly, potential additional trails would only be proposed pending results of the future trail assessment. Therefore, the Parks Master Plan would not result in significant conflicts with the Pogonip Master Plan.

- ❑ *Moore Creek Preserve.* Under the recommendations section for Moore Creek Preserve, a recommendation has been added to consider developing a parking area off of Highway 1 to improve access to the property. Potential addition of a trail also is included.

The adopted master plans for Pogonip Open Space and Moore Creek Preserve would require amendment to allow parking areas, which would be separate actions in the future should the City pursue these improvements. Both an amendment to existing management plans and facility

improvements would be subject to environmental review at the time a site is selected and plans are developed. This would not result in significant conflict. The Parks Master Plan indicates that some of these management plans could be updated to accommodate new facilities and activities to meet current needs and desires, but the proposed plan does not amend or supersede the existing adopted management or park master plans.

The project site is not subject to any Habitat Conservation or Natural Community Conservation Plans.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required as a significant impact has not been identified.