

# Salinas Parks & Recreation Summit

## March 2019 • Community Report



On March 9th, over 60 community members attended a parks & recreation summit hosted by the Big Sur Land Trust and Building Healthy Communities to discuss the formation of a parks & recreation alliance. There are three new parks & recreation developments adjacent to one another at Laurel Drive and Constitution Boulevard:

**Carr Lake** the co-creation of a multi-benefit park with the community at Big Sur Land Trust's property, in partnership with the Center for Community Advocacy

**Sanborn Ranch House:** the development of a multi-use community hub, being stewarded by the Acosta Plaza Resident Leadership Committee with support from the Center for Community Advocacy, CHISPA, and Building Healthy Communities

**Salinas Regional Soccer Complex and Learning Center:** being developed through the Salinas Regional Sports Authority, in collaboration with local soccer leagues and community partners..

We are coming together as a community to look at how we can best meet the resourcing, management and community engagement goals of these new

developments. These new developments are in proximity to additional parks & recreation projects interested in collaborating as well:

- **The First Tee & Future Citizens Foundation**
- **The CA Rodeo Association**
- **Tatum's Garden**
- **The Boys & Girls Club**

Community organizations providing Arts & Culture programming are vital collaborators as well:

- **Alisal Center for the Fine Arts**
- **Alisal Community Arts Network**
- **Baktun12**
- **Urban Arts Collaborative**

The City of Salinas is currently facilitating two relevant planning processes that will also have an impact on parks & recreation in Salinas:

- **The Alisal Vibrancy Plan**
- **The Parks & Recreation Master Plan**

# Why is Parks & Recreation a Priority for our Community Now?

*Community members reflected back the following after hearing about plans to initiate a parks & recreation alliance:*

- We need central spaces for families to gather; this contributes to community health, cohesion, and safety
- This is an opportunity for people to get involved, to contribute to the community, to think about the common good
- Youth need a pool and other structured recreational opportunities; there are very few healthy activities for youth in Salinas
- For projects to be successful, it is important that we center the voices and leadership of residents; it is good that this is a priority for this new alliance
- We are stronger when we collaborate
- We need to tell the positive stories of community health and transformation

## What are Community Questions and Concerns at this Stage?

*Resourcing & follow-through*

- How will we ensure long-term maintenance of these facilities?
- Will these projects be invested in? What is the commitment to follow-through?

*Information flow*

- The community needs to be informed - how are we consistently looping back to the community, especially those who aren't able to attend meeting?
- It is important that we sustain community engagement throughout the process.

*Public funding should reflect community priorities*

- How is it that there is \$65 million to build a new youth jail, and yet we have to struggle to fundraise for parks & recreation? If we invest in our youth, they will not turn to crime.
- This projects need to be seen as a right. The role of government is to prioritize the things that will make our community healthy.
- How are we planning for climate change? Projects like these can be part of the solution if we are intentional about that.
- If we are truly meeting community needs, we will also be looking at indoor facilities and the arts

*Prevention of unintended consequences*

- How will we prevent gentrification and displacement? How can we work together as a community to ensure rents are affordable for working families?
- Will these projects contribute to traffic congestion?

# Community Action Planning

Small groups met-up at the summit to develop plans for each of the following areas of interest:

## Community Involvement

*Focus on healthy flow of information. Lack of information causes confusion, frustration, and division within the community.*

- Create a one-pager that describes the projects - their current status, next steps, and how the community can support the effort.
- Share information at libraries, rec centers, health centers
- Monterey County Office of Education as a resource to share information
- Provide updates and summary of the process at community events
- Avoid misinformation that leads to confusion

*Involve community members in engaging their neighbors and peers in the process - this cultivates mutual accountability:*

- Trust residents, honor their perspectives, expertise and decision-making capacity, having a real space at decision-making tables
- Transparency and accountability around use of funds to serve the community
- Youth Leadership
- Bring children with special needs into the conversation
- Use community meetings to build unity

*When community members are involved they can advocate for the projects.*

- When community members are not involved, they can't warn against unintended consequences, projects can go wrong, and community is further disillusioned, can advocate against projects.

*Role of Government*

- We need to make sure that local government maintains good practice around healthy flow of information to the community regarding services, facilities and programming available, as well as new developments and how residents will be impacted.

## Parks & Recreation as a Public Priority

Let's consider the entire pie (of public resources) and the priorities it represents.

Current budget reflects reactive culture, prioritizes law enforcement set-up to protect property owners rights, but not to address the proactive priorities of community, such as physical and mental health



**Budget Our Values:** recommend using the \$45 million that is currently allocated for the juvenile hall to fund parks, recreation, and other prevention strategies

Need to build a shared narrative of how you achieve safety from downstream (punitive) to upstream (preventative = parks & recreation + other investments)

Community needs a tool to assess government allocation of resources over time (do resource allocations contribute to or narrow inequities?)

The Parks & Recreation Master Plan is a great starting place - it's important that we, as an alliance and a community, stay involved with its development and implementation

It's also important that we focus on engaging our elected officials as partners in this effort and work to hold them accountable to community priorities

## Collaborative Management of Parks & Recreation Projects

*Establish a trusted hub responsible for facilitating collaborative management of the projects, including:*

- Maintaining a master calendar
- Ensuring community leadership & participation
- Building leadership of residents to serve as administrators of the projects
- Carrying shared resourcing strategies
- Facilitating trust and relationship building between projects
- Develop community agreements

*Prevent gentrification:*

- Community has priority in the local economy
- Create jobs for residents
- Make preventing displacement a priority of the alliance
- Address issues of cost; create scholarships

## Youth Leadership Pathways

*Inclusion of youth voices:*

- Youth representation at the alliance - possibly as part of an advisory group
- We are missing high school and middle school students - we should include them because they are our future and their ideas matter
- Young adults can encourage youth
- It is also important we get involved in the meetings so we can know what they are doing for us
- Following up on suggestions/ideas by youth
- Flexible meetings
- Focusing on things that affect the youth to keep them interested
- Listening to youth and what they want/need
- Know your voice is heard

*Importance of parent involvement:*

- Parents should be included so they understand and trust what youth are getting involved in
- Monthly informational meetings

*Draw on existing youth and family networks to make sure they are informed:*

- Students make presentations at school about parks & recreation programs
- Students need to spread the word of organizations; Staff communication with families; having

- conferences with family members
- Create a pamphlet or memes that youth can easily share
- School districts, School Administration, Teachers to inform students
- Going into schools to ask students to design parks, soccer fields, etc. it would impact future community structures
- Put the story on the news
- Flier at City Hall
- Gatherings
- Youth leaders as conduits of information to their parents and other family members

*Focus on Building Trust with youth and families*

- Work as a whole
- Make sure there is enough capacity
- Having enough staff
- Not just relying on one person to do youth programming
- More space
- Adequate funding

*Offer well-rounded, resourced programming*

- More arts/music
- Performing arts
- More gymnasiums that are free so kids can go and not worry about the money
- Not just the same activities
- Soccer fields
- Fields for drumline rehearsals
- Center for activities

*Invest in Opportunity Pathways*

- Creating career pathways
- Youth returning to Salinas
- Apprenticeships
- Keep programming affordable/free for youth: Not having to worry about money

## Shared Resourcing Strategy

*Why important?*

More informed, cooperative approach - better coordination on timing of proposals

More creativity around long-term resourcing

- Sharing space and resources

Come together to identify what government should be doing vs. what private philanthropy should be doing

- Sometimes private sector does what government should be doing.
- Experience that tax dollars don't come back into the community, particularly in East Salinas

*Next Steps/Approach*



Develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) - meet quarterly or biannually

Develop shared vision and plan for connectivity

- Be cooperative around going for the same dollars
- Tie all of the projects together (walking paths, bike paths, etc.)

Timing: bring the project to fruition before next shining new thing comes along

Multi-organization campaign to promote the relevancy of parks (hearts & minds)

- Expand steering committee to include youth and resident leaders
- Maybe develop an advisory committee later
- Advocacy: make the case for each other's projects
- Strategic planning, case statement
- I.D. backbone organization

Form spiral services district

- Folks would need to see immediate results, see tax dollars being reinvested, be aware of the potential burden
- Tangible results in the first few phases
- Communicate with Carr Lake landowners - anticipate needs

Release annual report

## **Racial Equity Impact Assessment (REIA) for Parks & Recreation**

The small group that worked on the following plan was made up of residents, community-based organizations, and staff of local government, which is the same set of stakeholders needed to develop the actual racial equity assessment.

The goal is to develop an assessment of current work to expand parks and recreation opportunities to understand the racial equity impact, and to make sure the development of the assessment tool is guided by community values, stories, voices and leadership of those most impacted

First we need to acknowledge the Salinas context: the intersection of race and income levels; the racial majority is the economic and political minority

Impacts to assess:

- Economic impacts (displacement, cost of rents)
- Community ownership - land, property
- Unregulated capitalism (avoid monopolies)
- Accessibility to the spaces
- Inclusiveness in planning processes

Next Steps:

- Develop a team
- Meet as a team
- Possible deadline for development of REIA tool: December 2019

We will make sure to:

- Talk about race, acknowledge indigenous peoples
- Use collective vision from different groups - Tool must reflect priorities, concerns, and questions of each group
- Gather data from similar areas

# Construction Timeline & Fundraising Goals

	Carr Lake	Sanborn House	Soccer Complex	The Alliance
Nov 2018	Community Vision Process		Initial Groundbreaking	
Dec 2018		Community Vision process complete		
Jan 2019				Rodeo Bridge Project \$395K
Feb 2019				
Mar 2019	Hydrological analysis and conservation planning process			
Apr 2019		Preliminary design complete \$200K	Fields reopen \$6M	Tatum's Garden announce new site
May 2019				
Jun 2019				
July 2019				Alisal Vibrancy Plan approved
Aug 2019				
Fall 2019				
Winter 19/20	Raise \$1.5 M for Phase 2 (community vision & planning)			
Spring 2020		Construction Drawing \$400K	Complete project \$15M	
Fall/Winter2020	60%+ design and permitting. Raise funds for Phase 3.			
2021+	Phase 3 begins (Construction)	Construction (est.) \$3M		

