

# 6

## Health, Equity, Environmental Justice, and Parks



## 6. Health, Equity, Environmental Justice, and Parks

A primary objective of the General Plan is to present meaningful solutions to inequities and health disparities that exist in the community, especially when considering differences in demographics and socioeconomic status between residents.

This chapter focuses on promoting physical and mental health, equity, and environmental justice. Awareness of equity and environmental justice is increasing, with consensus building around concepts such as those presented here.

**Equity** is the state, quality, or ideal of being just, impartial, and fair. It involves providing people what they need to enjoy full, healthy lives.

*Source: Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2023*

**Environmental Justice** is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of people of all races, cultures, incomes, and national origins with respect to the development, adoption, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.

*Source: California Government Code, Section 65040.12(e)*

Health, equity, and environmental justice are key priorities for the Santa Rosa community. With the 2016 passage of Senate Bill 1000, the Planning for Healthy Communities Act (California Government Code Section 65302), environmental justice is now a mandatory element of a general plan. The law aims to make advancements in environmental justice for those living in underserved areas that have

historically suffered from a combination of economic, health, and environmental burdens and inequities. As introduced in **Chapter 2, Land Use and Economic Development**, in Santa Rosa these are termed Equity Priority Areas. Santa Rosa's Equity Priority Areas are depicted on **Figure 2-4** in **Chapter 2**.

The City of Santa Rosa uses the California Communities Environmental Health Screening Tool (CalEnviroScreen) to help identify significant community health factors impacting each Equity Priority Area. CalEnviroScreen (also discussed in Chapter 2) scores a range of factors related to pollution burden and population characteristics. **Table 6-1** shows scores for select factors for each census tract within an Equity Priority Area (which are mapped in **Figure 2-4**). The factors in the table are those for which any of the identified Equity Priority Area tracts has a score of 75 or greater (marked by an asterisk), indicating that it fares worse in that category than 75 percent or more of all census tracts in California. Each tract that includes an Equity Priority Area score in the top quartile for several factors.

**Equity Priority Areas** are areas in Santa Rosa where residents suffer most from economic, health, and environmental burdens. Environmental justice needs and health and equity considerations of Equity Priority Areas have priority in some of the goals, policies, and actions in this and other chapters of the General Plan.

Goals, policies, and actions in all chapters of the General Plan address the top factors detracting from environmental justice (see **Table 6-1**), health, and equity while prioritizing the needs of Equity Priority Areas and selected Equity Priority Populations, as appropriate. Similarly, some goals, policies, and actions prioritize implementation in the Areas of Change that the community identified for focusing City resources.

**Areas of Change**, identified through the General Plan community engagement process, are areas throughout the community where the City will focus efforts to address housing, services, connectivity, and/or infrastructure needs to help make these **complete neighborhoods**—neighborhoods with convenient, equitable access to goods and services needed to support daily life, such as access to fresh food, recreation opportunities, community gathering places, active transportation infrastructure, and transit.

Some goals, policies, and actions throughout the General Plan prioritize Areas of Change for activities that promote complete neighborhoods.

Areas of Change are depicted on **Figure 2-5** and discussed in more detail in **Chapter 2, Land Use and Economic Development**.

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- ➔ Health for All Residents
- ➔ Food Access and Urban Agriculture
- ➔ Recreation and Parks
- ➔ Children and Families

This chapter is organized around key goals intended to implement the community's vision for Santa Rosa. These goals and their associated policies and actions are especially pertinent to the following components of the Santa Rosa General Plan 2050 Vision Statement:

- **Just:** Social and environmental justice are achieved for everyone—all abilities, ages, ethnicities, gender identities, immigration status, income levels, language speakers, races, religions, sexual orientations and identities, **EVERYONE**.
- **Inclusive:** Everyone is welcome and actively encouraged to join in neighborhood and citywide decision making, and barriers to participation are identified and eliminated.
- **Healthy:** All neighborhoods have low pollution levels and good air quality, are vibrant, connected, full-service communities, with the resources to be civically organized, and anchored by inclusive and accessible public outdoor spaces and buildings offering safe and welcoming places for everyone. Every person has the opportunity to attain their full health potential.

- **Equitable:** Everyone has what they need to enjoy long, fulfilling, healthy lives, including affordable access to meet their daily needs—including healthy food, recreation, education, childcare, employment opportunities, reliable internet, and physical and mental health services.
- **Safe:** Streets are safe; public safety services are provided by caring and thoughtful community members who are representative of and familiar with the neighborhoods, groups, and individuals they serve; and everyone, including immigrants and people of color, can safely access these services.
- **Educated:** Life-long education, enrichment, and supportive services and resources engage and empower young people, strengthen families (of any family structure), connect and activate seniors, and foster the success and well-being of everyone.

**Figure 6-1** illustrates some of the key concepts addressed in this chapter.

## Relationship to Other Chapters

In addition to the goals, policies, and actions outlined in this chapter, other areas of the General Plan have goals, policies, and actions that pursue health, equity, and environmental justice, namely:

- **Chapter 2, Land Use and Economic Development, and Chapter 3, Circulation, Open Space, Conservation, and Greenhouse Gas Reduction,** have policies that support reduced exposure to GHG emissions from vehicular traffic and emissions reductions overall.
- **Chapter 3, Circulation, Open Space, Conservation, and Greenhouse Gas Reduction,** also includes policies and actions supporting increased opportunities for physical activity as well as improvements to the city's active transportation network.
- **Chapter 5, Safety, Climate Resilience, Noise, and Public Services and Facilities,** addresses safety from hazardous waste exposure and brownfield site cleanup.
- **Chapter 7, Housing,** includes goals, policies, and programs to address the community's housing needs, including housing quality and affordability.



TABLE 6-1  
CalEnviroScreen 4.0 Rankings of Santa Rosa's Census Tracts with Equity Priority Areas

Equity Priority Area (by Census Tract)	3104	3200
<b>Overall Percentiles</b>		
CalEnviroScreen 4.0 Percentile	<b>75*</b>	73
<b>Exposures</b>		
Diesel Particulate Matter	<b>96*</b>	31
Traffic	<b>78*</b>	73
Lead from Housing	<b>87*</b>	47
<b>Environmental Effects</b>		
Groundwater Threats	<b>98*</b>	<b>89*</b>
Hazardous Waste	47	<b>76*</b>
Solid Waste	36	<b>98*</b>
<b>Sensitive Population</b>		
Asthma	<b>80*</b>	<b>80*</b>
Cardiovascular Disease	<b>89*</b>	<b>89*</b>
<b>Socioeconomic Factors</b>		
Education	<b>82*</b>	74
Linguistic Isolation	<b>81*</b>	56
Poverty	<b>78*</b>	62
Housing Burden	<b>88*</b>	<b>83*</b>
Source: CalEnviroScreen 4.0, 2023.		
* Top 75 percent of all census tracts in California.		

Equity Priority Area (by Census Tract)	2801	2802	2100	2903	3001
<b>Overall Percentiles</b>					
CalEnviroScreen 4.0 Percentile	44	46	47	34	51
<b>Exposures</b>					
Diesel Particulate Matter	66	57	<b>88*</b>	22	64
Traffic	74	<b>78*</b>	<b>85*</b>	33	<b>79*</b>
Lead from Housing	23	47	62	56	53
<b>Environmental Effects</b>					
Groundwater Threats	<b>78*</b>	<b>91*</b>	<b>96*</b>	72	<b>97*</b>
Hazardous Waste	<b>96*</b>	59	<b>88*</b>	56	65
Solid Waste	36	0	59	13	<b>91*</b>
<b>Sensitive Population</b>					
Asthma	64	66	42	66	48
Cardiovascular Disease	60	62	36	62	50
<b>Socioeconomic Factors</b>					
Education	54	<b>81*</b>	49	<b>80*</b>	54
Linguistic Isolation	N/A	<b>79*</b>	62	74	44
Poverty	37	73	45	70	63
Unemployment	N/A	41	65	47	<b>78*</b>
Housing Burden	32	62	61	47	64
Source: CalEnviroScreen 4.0, 2023.					
* Top 75 percent of all census tracts in California.					

Equity Priority Area (by Census Tract)	3002	3103	3102	1402	1401
<b>Overall Percentiles</b>					
CalEnviroScreen 4.0 Percentile	51	48	61	74	43
<b>Exposures</b>					
Diesel Particulate Matter	66	66	<b>83*</b>	<b>77*</b>	34
Traffic	<b>77*</b>	37	<b>86*</b>	<b>85*</b>	41
Lead from Housing	62	61	72	36	46
<b>Environmental Effects</b>					
Groundwater Threats	<b>98*</b>	<b>86*</b>	<b>92*</b>	<b>97*</b>	<b>82*</b>
Hazardous Waste	57	46	46	<b>76*</b>	54
Solid Waste	<b>91*</b>	51	12	<b>87*</b>	12
<b>Sensitive Population</b>					
Asthma	64	<b>80*</b>	<b>80*</b>	51	48
Cardiovascular Disease	71	<b>89*</b>	<b>89*</b>	56	53
<b>Socioeconomic Factors</b>					
Education	69	<b>83*</b>	<b>79*</b>	73	<b>77*</b>
Linguistic Isolation	56	<b>75*</b>	64	74	45
Poverty	51	68	69	<b>78*</b>	62
Unemployment	31	58	56	55	73
Housing Burden	40	26	41	68	46
Source: CalEnviroScreen 4.0, 2023.					
* Top 75 percent of all census tracts in California.					

Figure 6-1 Visualizing the Concepts

## ► HEALTH, EQUITY, ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE, AND PARKS



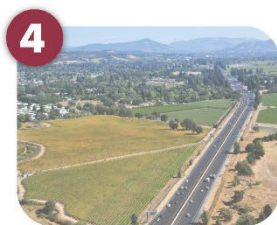
Fresh Food Access



Affordable Housing



Language Accessible  
Goods and Services



Clean Air



Economic Opportunity



Park Amenities



## Health for All Residents

The City of Santa Rosa is committed to maintaining and enhancing the health and quality of life for the community by integrating “Health in All Policies,” a practice that incorporates community and individual well-being into decision making across all City government sectors and policy areas. This philosophy recognizes that a variety of environmental, social, and socioeconomic factors impact health outcomes, commonly referred to as the “social determinants of health.”

**Social determinants of health** are the conditions in which we live, learn, work, and play. These conditions include a broad range of socioeconomic and environmental factors, such as air and water quality, the quality of the built environment (such as housing, land use, transportation access and availability; street, park, playground, and workplace safety), opportunities for employment, income, early childhood development and education, access to healthy foods, health insurance coverage and access to health care services, safety from crime and violence, culturally and linguistically appropriate services in all sectors, and protection against institutionalized forms of racism and discrimination.

*Source: Let's Get Healthy California*

Residents in Santa Rosa's EPAs suffer from high rates of asthma and cardiovascular disease (as shown in **Table 6-1**). Leading causes of these diseases include environmental factors like air pollution, as well as factors such as poor diet and smoking. Many residents in EPAs have lower life expectancies than in other local communities. Once an individual has a health issue requiring

medical assistance, addressing the issue necessitates access to affordable care, which is not currently available to all community members.

Social determinants of health impacting community outcomes in Santa Rosa are best understood and addressed by working in partnership with impacted community members and engaging EPAs and Equity Priority Populations in the planning and decision-making processes. Unfortunately, these processes have often overlooked or excluded low-income populations and people of color. To overcome this historical pattern and meaningfully address health, equity, and environmental justice, the City of Santa Rosa is committed to taking proactive measures to eliminate barriers to participation in these processes.

## Goals, Policies, and Actions

**Goal 6-1:** Improve health and well-being for all community members by emphasizing community health in all City policies, programs, actions, and activities.

**Policy 6-1.1:** Promote efforts to improve community health outcomes and ensure that City investments support community health goals.

**Action 6-1.1:** Periodically examine the Equity Priority Area boundaries and update, as appropriate.

**Action 6-1.2:** Seek resources to fund programs and projects to improve community health outcomes.

**Action 6-1.3:** Collaborate with health service organizations, including Sonoma County Health and Human Services, to identify environmental risk factors for asthma, especially in Equity Priority Areas and areas where more than 10 percent of adults have asthma.

**Action 6-1.4:** Integrate health, equity, and sustainability considerations into City decision making across all sectors and policy areas.

**Action 6-1.5:** As recommended by the California Air Resources Board, require projects that would result in construction activities within 1,000 feet of residential and other land uses that are sensitive to toxic air contaminants (e.g., hospitals, nursing homes, day care centers), as measured from the property line of the project, to prepare a construction health risk assessment in accordance with policies and procedures of the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment and the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) CEQA Guidelines that identifies mitigation measures and appropriate enforcement mechanisms capable of reducing potential cancer and non-cancer risks below the BAAQMD threshold. (EIR)

**Health Risk Assessments** help determine which potential air quality hazards from development projects are most significant on a community. An HRA estimates the increase in health risks for people living, working, or attending school near a development that may be exposed to a development's emissions of toxic air pollutants.

*Bay Area Air Quality Management District, 2024*

**Action 6-1.6:** Require an operational health risk assessment (HRA) for new industrial or warehousing development projects that (1) have the potential to generate 100 or more diesel truck trips per day or have 40 or more trucks with operating diesel-powered transport refrigeration units, and (2) are within 1,000 feet of a sensitive land use or Overburdened Community, as defined by BAAQMD. The operational HRA shall be prepared in accordance with policies and procedures of the State Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment and BAAQMD. If the operational HRA shows that the incremental cancer risk exceeds 10 in a million, the noncancer hazard index of 1.0, or the thresholds as determined by BAAQMD, require the project applicant to identify and demonstrate measures, such as those listed in the General Plan Environmental Impact Report, that can reduce potential cancer

and noncancer risks to acceptable levels. (EIR)

**Action 6-1.7:** *Require applicants for residential and/or other sensitive land use projects (e.g., hospitals, nursing homes, day care centers) to implement the best practices identified in the BAAQMD Planning Healthy Places Guidebook (Guidebook) where the site is located within the recommended screening distance of the Guidebook.*

**Action 6-1.8:** *Develop a process for inter-departmental collaboration to improve the health of Santa Rosa residents.*

**Action 6-1.9:** *Provide training for City staff and officials about how the built environment and transportation choices affect health equity, economic opportunity, well-being, and quality of life.*

**Action 6-1.10:** *Create healthy development guidelines or checklists to track and monitor how new developments are incorporating health-promoting features such as opportunities for physical activity, healthy food, drinking water, urban farming, affordable housing, and sustainable design.*

**Action 6-1.11:** *Update the Zoning Code to require health impact assessments for nonresidential projects of 100,000 square feet or more in Equity Priority Areas to identify and address any potential negative health implications of the project.*

**Action 6-1.12:** *In reports on General Plan implementation, include updates regarding community-wide health, such as changes in life expectancy and other relevant metrics related to social determinants, as data is available.*

**Policy 6-1.2:** **Ensure that all Santa Rosa residents can easily access primary and emergency health care facilities and medical services.**

**Action 6-1.13:** *Evaluate whether the circulation network or transit system needs changes to improve access to medical facilities and services, including by active transportation modes, for everyone in Santa Rosa, including transit-dependent people, low-income community members, seniors, and people with disabilities.*

**Action 6-1.14:** *Explore incentives for the establishment of neighborhood-serving health clinics and facilities. (EIR)*

**Goal 6-2:** Advance health equity by understanding and addressing key social determinants of health.

**Policy 6-2.1:** **Promote awareness of the role of social determinants of health and health inequities, and ensure that City policies, services, and programs can improve the lives and well-being of everyone in the community, especially in Equity Priority**

**Areas and among Equity Priority Populations at a higher risk for health inequities.**

- Action 6-2.1:** *Seek funding to identify resource distribution gaps and develop a process to provide and distribute internal and external City resources in ways that are equitable and transparent.*
- Action 6-2.2:** *Participate in public-private partnerships leading and supporting cross-sector efforts to reduce inequities identified in the 2021 Portrait of Sonoma report.*
- Action 6-2.3:** *Implement the City of Santa Rosa Equity Workplan to foster an internal culture of employee well-being, to advance diversity, equity, inclusion, and to improve City plans, policies, and practices.*

The **Equity Workplan** comprises 30 recommendations from City employees to improve equity, diversity, and belonging in City operations. These include better recruiting among underrepresented groups, promoting people equitably, decreasing workplace isolation, forming an employee task force, and hiring a Diversity, Equity, and Equal Employment Officer.

- Action 6-2.4:** *Coordinate with Sonoma County Health and Human Services and other health organizations to provide public outreach and education on how lifestyle changes can improve health, using newsletters, the City website, and social media.*

**Policy 6-2.2: Encourage community, social, and emotional health—the ability to understand and manage emotions and to form social connections and relationships—including by addressing inequities due to race and income.**

- Action 6-2.5:** *Support Sonoma County Health and Human Services and criminal justice, school, faith-based, and other organizations to create public awareness and sensitivity to the needs of people with behavioral health challenges., particularly in Equity Priority Areas and among Equity Priority Populations.*
- Action 6-2.6:** *Promote opportunities for Santa Rosa community members to experience or participate in arts, cultural, and related activities that can enhance mental health and connection with other community members.*
- Action 6-2.7:** *Continue to build City staff organizational and institutional skills and commitment to advance racial equity and eliminate institutional and structural racism.*
- Action 6-2.8:** *Partner with other public and private organizations to create public awareness of the existence of various forms of racism and discrimination, explicit and implicit bias, and the health inequities they exacerbate.*



**Policy 6-2.3: Prevent, disincentivize, and reduce harmful addictive behaviors.**

**Action 6-2.9:** Explore potential restrictions on tobacco and alcohol retailers, including distance requirements from sensitive land uses such as schools, parks, senior facilities, and open spaces.

**Action 6-2.10:** Partner with local, regional, and State organizations to promote public awareness about the potential risks of opioid abuse, and the use of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs that affect Santa Rosa community members.

**Policy 6-2.4: Address conditions contributing to risk of asthma and adverse air quality.**

**Action 6-2.11:** Consult with Sonoma County Public Health Division as appropriate to reduce risk of asthma through land use planning and community programs.

**Action 6-2.12:** Evaluate potential changes to the Municipal Code to minimize tobacco exposure.

**Action 6-2.13:** Support efforts by the County and agricultural producers to protect areas inside the Urban Growth Boundary from pesticide drift by restricting the use of pesticides in these areas and employing alternatives such as integrated pest management and regenerative agriculture.

**Action 6-2.14:** Disseminate information to tenants and property owners

*about methods to reduce asthma and other health issues by improving indoor air quality, including by adding air conditioning and reducing and preventing indoor mold growth.*

**Goal 6-3:** Promote meaningful community engagement and empower residents through inclusive communication, outreach, and capacity-building to participate in City planning and decision making.

**Policy 6-3.1: Ensure meaningful public engagement processes and events that make it possible for everyone—including Equity Priority Populations and in Equity Priority Areas, to participate and influence outcomes.**

**Action 6-3.1:** Engage all community members—particularly Equity Priority Areas, low-income populations, and individuals with limited English proficiency—in City planning and decision-making processes by using culturally appropriate and accessible channels.

**Action 6-3.2:** Use equitable outreach tactics that engage all segments of the community, including Equity Priority Populations and those living in Equity Priority Areas, including by:

- *Using participatory facilitation techniques.*
- *Holding meetings in Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)-compliant locations.*
- *Hosting pop-up outreach in popular community spaces and at well-publicized events, to reach people where they are already gathered.*
- *Holding engagement opportunities in different locations throughout the community at different times of the day and week and use parallel methods such as in-person and online.*
- *Offering free childcare and food at workshops and other organized events.*
- *Collaborating with local community-based organizations to help plan and conduct outreach, including providing a stipend when feasible.*
- *Offering free bus passes to those who participate in public outreach events or activities, such as surveys.*
- *Providing translation services for materials and discussions.*

**Action 6-3.3:** *Explore incentives to encourage low-income residents to engage in City planning and decision making to eliminate barriers to participation.*

**Action 6-3.4:** *Identify, evaluate, and eliminate existing barriers—such as age, income, and voter registration*

*status—for Santa Rosa residents to serve on and engage with City council, boards, committees, and commissions, prioritizing Equity Priority Areas and Equity Priority Populations.*

**Action 6-3.5:** *Consider maintaining an inter-departmental City staff working group to create standards for how best to engage community members and enhance effective and meaningful public participation, particularly in Equity Priority Areas.*

**Action 6-3.6:** *Develop City communication standards, style guidelines, and translation protocols, including for web and social media releases, and printed documents, to ensure accessibility to all community members.*

**Action 6-3.7:** *Consider methods to track issues and priorities identified at the neighborhood level to inform the development of policies, programs, projects, and services across departments.*

**Action 6-3.8:** *Continue to implement strategies to ensure that the composition of City committees, boards, and commissions reflect the diversity of the community, with particular attention to including Equity Priority Area community members.*

**Action 6-3.9:** *Consider equity as part of annual City budgeting and departmental work programs.*

**Policy 6-3.2:** Inform, engage, and collaborate with residents, organizations, the private sector, and public agencies to develop and implement plans and projects that improve community health.

**Action 6-3.10:** Support the establishment of neighborhood associations throughout Santa Rosa, particularly in Equity Priority Areas.

**Action 6-3.11:** Establish and continue ongoing relationships with individuals and organizations that represent and work with EPAs to build trust and create reliable channels for community participation and input, including engagement outside of specific projects or policy processes.

**Action 6-3.12:** Partner with community-based organizations that have relationships, trust, and cultural competency with non-English-speaking and English-as-a-second-language residents in Equity Priority Areas and stakeholders to reach out on local initiatives and issues.

**Policy 6-3.3:** Empower every resident of Santa Rosa, particularly those in Equity Priority Areas, to participate in local decision making and engage meaningfully in planning efforts.

**Action 6-3.13:** Develop bilingual educational content and provide training programs and workshops about civic involvement and processes for Santa Rosa residents, including

*how to participate in City Council, board, committee, and commission meetings, as well as how to apply for City jobs and become a Board, Commission, or City Council member.*

**Action 6-3.14:** Seek opportunities to involve young people throughout the city, including in Equity Priority Areas, meaningfully and authentically to develop their confidence and leadership skills.

**Action 6-3.15:** Maintain and expand existing City internship programs and fellowships so community members can get exposure to careers in the public sector while gaining professional experience.

**Policy 6-3.4:** Ensure meaningful public engagement processes and events that make it possible for everyone—especially those living in Equity Priority Areas, low-income populations, and limited-English proficient individuals—to participate and influence outcomes.

**Action 6-3.16:** Identify staff in each public-facing department of the City to engage with and empower residents to be part of planning and decision-making activities.

**Action 6-3.17:** Continue to ensure that all publicly noticed meetings, materials, and other engagement opportunities that use technology are accessible by mobile devices and support access for people with disabilities.

**Action 6-3.18:** *Explore resources to fund the expansion of digital access and engagement opportunities by working with other public and private partners to support high-speed internet in communities that have low access to internet, particularly in Equity Priority Areas.*

**Action 6-3.19:** *Explore resources to fund free internet access in City-owned, public facilities, particularly those in Equity Priority Areas.*

**Goal 6-4:** Foster a culture of language access and justice in City communications and public participation in planning and decision-making processes.

**Policy 6-4.1:** **Identify language diversity gaps as a means to continue better engaging the community in City projects, programs, and services.**

**Action 6-4.1:** *Establish a working group charged with identifying barriers to language access and justice in communications and public participation and defining City policies and practices for translation and interpretation.*

**Action 6-4.2:** *Identify public documents, forms, and events that require translation and/or interpretation and develop a plan to ensure materials are translated.*

**Policy 6-4.2:** **Continue to provide interpretation and translation services as well as assistance to**

**access community meetings, services, and programs.**

**Action 6-4.3:** *Consider the development and implementation of a language access plan to recognize and address the city's language diversity; define policies and practices for translation and interpretation for every City department that engages with the public.*

**Action 6-4.4:** *Explore best practices to provide language assistance for front desks or counters, meetings, telephone communications, services, events, documents, forms, materials, websites, apps, and other points of contact with community members.*

**Goal 6-5:** Minimize risk of displacement and gentrification while ensuring housing is safe and sanitary for all residents.

**Policy 6-5.1:** **Minimize displacement and gentrification in Santa Rosa.**

**Action 6-5.1:** *Identify strategies to ensure that future improvements in Equity Priority Areas will not result in a net loss of affordable housing or significant preventable displacement of residents.*

**Action 6-5.2:** *Identify opportunities to preserve the affordability of federal- and State-subsidized units at risk of conversion to market rate or other affordable housing resources.*



**Policy 6-5.2: Ensure that housing in Santa Rosa provides safe and sanitary environments for residents.**

**Action 6-5.3:** *Incentivize property owners to repair and rehabilitate all substandard housing, especially in Equity Priority Areas, and to maintain properties free of Municipal Code violations.*

**Action 6-5.4:** *Expand the focus areas addressed by the City's Neighborhood Revitalization Program to include Equity Priority Areas, with the mission to improve living conditions and safety and increase property values.*

**Action 6-5.5:** *Seek grants and support current efforts to improve conditions in older homes that may have lead exposure.*

**Action 6-5.6:** *As the City's housing stock ages, pursue all available federal and State funds to assist with housing preservation and rehabilitation.*

**Action 6-5.7:** *Require applicants for residential remodel and rehabilitation projects to remediate environmental health hazards, such as lead-based paint, mold, mildew, and asbestos, as a condition of approval.*

**Action 6-5.8:** *Seek funding for identifying and remediating lead and other environmental hazards for low-income residents of those living in Equity Priority Areas.*

## Food Access and Urban Agriculture

Access to fresh foods, whole grains, and other unprocessed or minimally processed foods is essential to people's health.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture maps census tracts where a significant number or share of residents is more than a specified distance from the nearest supermarket. **Figure 6-2** shows the tracts in Santa Rosa where residents are low income and a half mile or more from the nearest supermarket, as identified by the U.S.

Department of Agriculture. The City designates such areas "Healthy Food Priority Areas" to target efforts to meet the nutritional needs of these communities. The City recognizes that supermarkets may come and go and therefore uses this map as a general indicator of need rather than a comprehensive market inventory.

In addition to retail stores, Santa Rosa currently features several community gardens that help provide healthy food options to community members. Community gardens play a critical role in the city, sometimes even serving as a primary food source when costs of and/or access to retail stores are limiting factors.

### Goals, Policies, and Actions

**Goal 6-6:** Ensure that all households and individuals have convenient, daily access to affordable, healthy food, including fresh produce.

**Policy 6-6.1:** Attract and support a range of fresh food retailers, particularly in Equity Priority Areas and Healthy Food Priority Areas, so that all residents have access to healthy foods within one mile of where they live.

**Action 6-6.1:** Encourage convenience stores, liquor stores, and neighborhood markets to carry fresh produce and participate in programs such as CalFresh, especially in Equity Priority Areas and Healthy Food Priority Areas.

**Action 6-6.2:** Consider an update to the Zoning Code to allow farmers' markets in all nonresidential zoning districts by right with standards and where they will not be located on the same parcel as an existing grocery store.

**Action 6-6.3:** Support local programs that provide healthy foods in schools and other public institutions.

**Action 6-6.4:** Support the distribution of information about food assistance programs.

**Policy 6-6.2:** Encourage the establishment of local restaurants and businesses that serve healthy food.

**Action 6-6.5:** Consider streamlining permitting for full-service grocery stores in Healthy Food Priority Areas and underserved areas, as well as areas identified for increased residential development and mixed use.

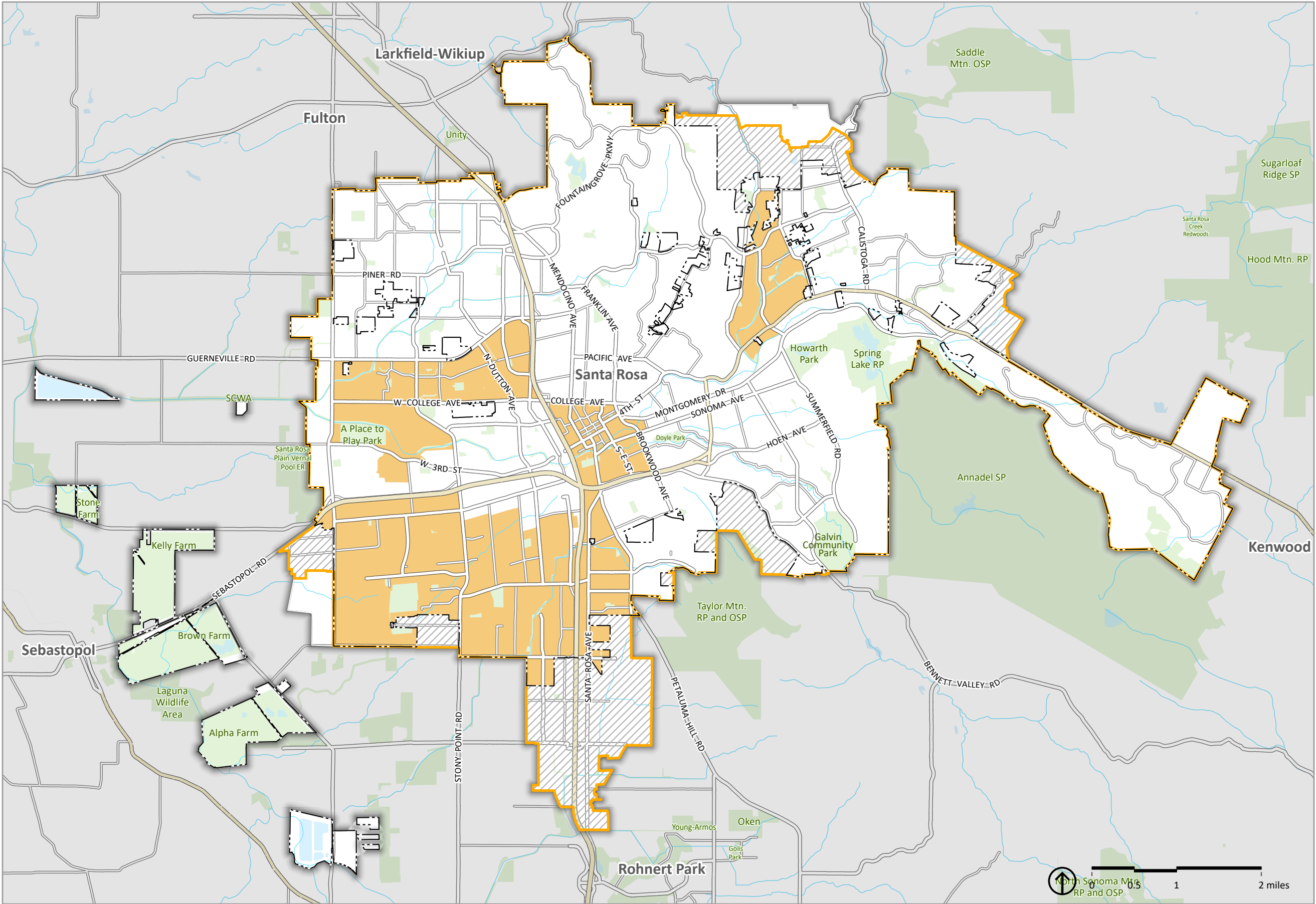


Figure 6-2  
Healthy Food  
Priority Areas

- City Limits
- Urban Growth Boundary
- City Sphere of Influence
- Planning Area
- Low-income areas 1/2 mile or more from a supermarket

Source: USDA Food Access Atlas, 2023.

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**Policy 6-6.3: Facilitate urban agriculture, farming, gardening, and local food production, especially in Equity Priority Areas and Healthy Food Priority Areas.**

**Action 6-6.6:** Support retention of the city's existing community gardens and encourage development of new community gardens.

**Action 6-6.7:** Support the creation of additional community gardens or other urban agriculture opportunities, particularly in Equity Priority Areas and Healthy Food Priority Areas.

**Action 6-6.8:** Consider updating the Zoning Code to allow urban agriculture where appropriate.

**Action 6-6.9:** Consider developing an Urban Agriculture Ordinance that includes strategies to increase access to healthy food—particularly in Equity Priority Areas and Healthy Food Priority Areas—and standards for operation and soil mitigation.

**Action 6-6.10:** Explore the feasibility of enacting an Urban Agriculture Incentive Zone (per Government Code Section 51040) to allow landowners to receive tax incentives for putting land into agricultural use.

**Action 6-6.11:** Evaluate ways to support urban agriculture in schools, parks, hospitals, and other public land and spaces where appropriate.

**Action 6-6.12:** Encourage landowners to evaluate the potential presence of contaminants that may be

*harmful to human health on land proposed for urban agriculture, including by performing site history assessments and soil testing.*

**Action 6-6.13:** Identify financial resources for soil testing and remediation on identified sites for urban agriculture.

**Action 6-6.14:** Support partner agencies in providing education about the nutritional, social, economic, and environmental benefits of urban farming and locally grown and ecologically sound foods; urban agriculture opportunities; food production safety; food literacy; cooking; and food waste reduction.

**Action 6-6.15:** Encourage private property owners and developers to provide opportunities for residential gardening and urban agriculture, and similar opportunities to food producers who are emerging, have limited resources, and/or are people of color.

**Action 6-6.16:** Work with the County to protect the agricultural land base in the Sphere of Influence, including urban gardens, farms, and ranches.

## Recreation and Parks

Santa Rosa features a wonderful Recreation and Parks System that enhances the quality of life for residents and visitors alike. The City-owned system encompasses more than 1,000 acres of land or about 4 percent of the city's total land area. The park system features a diverse network of 107 City-operated parks and open spaces, including recreation centers, aquatic centers, a municipal golf course, four community gardens, one skate park, and 46 miles of paved trails.

The benefits of parks and recreation are wide reaching. They provide residents with space for social connection, active and passive recreation, and relaxation. Parks and community programs reflect neighborhood character and interests and help to draw and retain residents and businesses. Parks and recreation services provide activities and safe spaces for children after school and during the summer, and opportunities for teens and young adults to receive job training and experience. Green spaces improve mental well-being, provide opportunities to experience the natural world, support urban agriculture in areas with limited access to fresh food, and contribute to climate resilience. Parks and trails are part of the community's green infrastructure, helping to maintain ecological function, provide wildlife corridors, and mitigate environmental hazards.

Parkland in Santa Rosa is well-distributed geographically, and a majority of residents (68 percent) have access to parks within a 10-minute walk of their home. However, some areas do not yet have easy access to park space. The General Plan continues the City's long-established goal to provide 6 acres of parkland for every 1,000 residents, twice the State standard, but less than

the national average of 8.9 acres per 1,000 residents.<sup>1,2</sup> with:

- A minimum of 3.5 acres per 1,000 residents of Community Park and/or Neighborhood Park space.
- The remaining 2.5 acres per 1,000 residents may be met through a combination of Community Park; Neighborhood Park; qualifying Trail Parks, Open Space Parks, and/or agreements with schools and public-private partnerships that provide public access and help to meet the recreational needs of existing and future residents.

As of 2019 (the base year of this General Plan), Santa Rosa had approximately 4.3 acres of parkland for every 1,000 residents, which leaves another 370 acres needed to serve the existing population and 740 acres to serve the total future population accommodated by this General Plan. **Figure 6-3** depicts existing parks and general locations where new community parks or neighborhood parks are proposed so that all residents can live within a 10-minute walk to parkland.

To provide equitable access to parks for current residents and to meet the demand of future residents, as Santa Rosa continues to grow and develop, it is critical for the City to evaluate park access and to acquire and build new parks to

<sup>1</sup> TPL ParkScore (\*According to the Trust for Public Land's ParkScore: <https://www.tpl.org/city/santa-rosa-california>)

<sup>2</sup> National Recreation & Parks Association (National Recreation and Parks Association's 2023 Agency Performance Review: <https://www.nrpa.org/publications-research/research-papers/agency-performance-review/The> median acres of parkland per 1,000 residents for jurisdictions 100,000 – 250,000 residents)



serve all community members. This section includes policies and actions that support the delivery of equitable access, great spaces, and quality services and programs.

## Parkland Definitions

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As of 2024, Santa Rosa's Recreation and Parks System includes 58 Neighborhood Parks, 14 Community Parks, 7 Recreation Center Sites, 4 Special Purpose Parks, 6 Trail Parks, 13 Open Space Parks, and 5 Civic Spaces. Together, these parklands work to support the community's needs for recreation, gathering, and enjoyment of the outdoors. The following are descriptions of the distinguishing characteristics of each parkland type.

### Neighborhood Parks

Neighborhood Parks are the fundamental unit of the park system and should be equitably distributed across the city. They serve the daily recreational and social needs of people within one-half mile, or a 10-minute walk, by facilitating informal recreation, encouraging social interaction among neighbors, reflecting neighborhood identity, and improving the overall quality of life for residents. Neighborhood parks provide a mix of amenities, such as picnic areas, community gardens, exercise equipment, and children's play areas. They generally have one signature amenity, such as a skate spot, sports court, or a single athletic field.

Neighborhood parks generally support stays of one hour or less. Usually, neighborhood parks do not have restrooms (due to the intended proximity of the park to the neighborhood), lighting is limited to security lights, and there is no off-street parking because of limited space and to promote walkable communities.

Neighborhood parks contribute to the City parkland standard of 6 acres per 1,000 residents.

### Community Parks

Community Parks are the largest areas in the Santa Rosa Park system and are intended to offer a variety of passive and active recreational opportunities that attract users of all ages, especially from within one-mile, or a 20-minute walk, that is uninterrupted by barriers to access like highways, waterways, and railways. These parks are at least 10 acres (20 acres or more is preferable) and often include fields and courts for organized sports; support programming with community-wide participation, such as summer camps and special events; and are venues for cultural and social gatherings, such as concerts and farmers' markets. Community parks also include areas for children's play and group picnicking. Access to nature and wildlife viewing, paths, exercise equipment, bike and skate parks, off-leash dog areas, and other unique features that often require more space and attract larger segments of the community may also be included.

Community parks can accommodate stays of four or more hours, with amenities including parking; restrooms; and lighting for recreation areas, parking areas, and paths. Community parks must also consider bicycle and pedestrian access for nearby neighbors, and public transit access and links to local and regional trail systems for community members living farther away. Community parks contribute to the City parkland standard of 6 acres per 1,000 residents.

### Recreation Center Sites

Recreation Center Sites are buildings and related amenities that provide space for

community programs, classes, services, events, and sports. They may include gymnasiums, aquatic centers, community centers, senior centers, or similar facilities. Ideally, recreation center sites and their related programs and services will be equitably distributed throughout the city and will be owned and run by the City or through partnerships with recreation and community organizations. Recreation center sites do not contribute towards the City's parkland standard.

## Special Purpose Parks

Special Purpose Parks are park buildings and associated lands that typically serve a single purpose or specific user group, such as, but not limited to, golf courses; historic sites; cultural sites; or social sites such as museums, botanical gardens, amphitheaters, performing arts centers, and cemeteries.

Because of their uniqueness, special purpose parks do not share any general characteristics, instead they vary in size and area served, types of amenities, and typical length of stay. They are located throughout the city and are intended to serve the needs of all city residents. Special purpose parks do not contribute towards the City parkland standard.

## Trail Parks

Trail Parks are typically linear parklands used for both active and passive recreation, including walking, biking, hiking, jogging, and wildlife viewing, and can also be used as a safe, active transportation network that connects people and places locally and regionally. They may provide a variety of other benefits, including visual enjoyment, natural resource conservation,

water quality protection, flood control, fire management, and transportation corridors.

Trail parks vary in scale and acreage. Trail parks provide multipurpose, paved paths and minimal amenities generally limited to benches, waste receptacles, wayfinding and interpretive signage, and lighting. Trail parks comply with building codes related to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and California State Parks' Trails Handbook guidelines. Trail parks may contribute to the parkland standard of 6 acres per 1,000 residents, provided the following minimum amenities are developed:

- A paved path that meets State Parks' Trails Handbook guidelines and complies with building codes related to ADA compliance for surface type, slope, width, and access;
- Wayfinding signage;
- Waste receptacles at access points;
- Lighting;
- Road crossings; and
- Transit stops, as applicable.

## Open Space Parks

Open Space Parks are areas of land that are essentially unimproved and support passive outdoor recreation. They are always open to the public and may include, but are not limited to, areas of outstanding scenic, historic, and cultural value; areas particularly suited for park and recreation purposes, including access to lakes, rivers, and streams; and areas that serve as links between major recreation and open space areas, including banks of rivers and streams, and trails.

Open space parks are generally used as public spaces for viewing and experiencing natural areas and paved trails are not expected. Open space park amenities may include benches, trails, shared use paths, waste receptacles, and interpretive signage. They are owned and maintained by the Recreation and Parks Department.

Open space parks may contribute to the City parkland standard of 6 acres per 1,000 residents, provided they comply with the following minimum standards: land is unencumbered, accessible, and does not contain environmental hazards.

## Civic Spaces

Civic spaces are urban parks that provide flexible, publicly accessible space for a range of cultural and recreational activities, often in places without enough land for a neighborhood or community park. Civic spaces are privately or publicly owned; publicly accessible year-round, at least during daylight hours; contain vegetation; are large enough for people to stop and stay; contain places to sit; and contribute to an interconnected system of public spaces that meet the needs of the surrounding neighborhood. To qualify as a Civic Space, the area must have a deed restriction to ensure the property remains a maintained park in perpetuity.

Civic spaces are generally less than two acres and provide green space to residents living within one-quarter mile or a five-minute walk. They include multipurpose plazas for community gathering, events, or recreation; rooftop green spaces; and pocket parks. These spaces can feature paseos, pedestrian paths, stairs, or other connections; off-leash dog runs;

and children's play areas. Civic spaces do not contribute towards the City parkland standard.

## Goals, Policies, and Actions

**Goal 6-7:** Create a safe, accessible, equitable Recreation and Parks System for all users.

## Recreation and Parks Funding and Resources

**Policy 6-7.1:** Ensure adequate funding to keep parks safe, attractive, and responsive to community needs, including funding for park acquisition, planning, capital improvements, lifecycle replacement of amenities, recreation programming, recreation centers, and maintenance operations.

**Action 6-7.1:** Seek ongoing operating funding for recreation and maintenance that keeps pace with population growth.

**Action 6-7.2:** Evaluate park development impact fees annually to address projects that meet the Quimby Act guidelines, as well as those for projects that do not meet Quimby Act guidelines, to ensure sufficient funds for park acquisition, development, and maintenance from developers.

**Action 6-7.3:** Use the Parks Condition Assessment and Prioritization Report's data-driven evaluation of park assets to develop a

*replacement schedule for park amenities and plan for future budgetary needs.*

**Action 6-7.4:** *Explore funding strategies that go beyond park development impact fees, grants, and tax measures, to support replacement of park amenities and achieve the General Plan Park Standard of 6 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents, such as public-private partnerships, tax districts, and general obligation bonds.*

**Action 6-7.5:** *Adopt protocols to ensure that recreation programming is financially sustainable.*

**Policy 6-7.2: Provide equitable access to park resources across the city.**

**Action 6-7.6:** *Develop and maintain a five-year capital improvement plan for acquisition, development, and replacement that considers equity by providing opportunities for public input and prioritizing investment in the parks and recreation sites in areas of the city where need is greatest.*

**Action 6-7.7:** *Invest in recreation centers and provide access to recreational services to all Santa Rosa residents, especially those in Equity Priority Areas and Areas of Change.*

**Policy 6-7.3: Preserve the basic function of City-owned parks as public open spaces and prevent parkland conversion to other land uses.**

**Action 6-7.8:** *When diversion or disposal of parkland is determined to be in*

*the public interest, acquire additional parklands to replace those lands, preferably within the same quadrant of the city.*

## Park System Planning and Land Acquisition

**Policy 6-7.4: Plan for and provide an equitable supply and variety of parkland to serve the city's current and future residents.**

**Action 6-7.9:** *Develop a Recreation and Parks System Master Plan, to be updated every 10 years, that studies existing parks and recreation assets, resources, and operations and provides a framework to strategically and equitably improve, protect, and expand the City's Recreation and Parks System (to replace the Recreation & Parks Business and Strategic Action Plan).*

**Action 6-7.10:** *Use the Recreation and Parks System Master Plan as the basis for updating the Capital Improvement Program.*

**Action 6-7.11:** *Generate master plans and management plans for parks that lack them, which reflect user group needs, development priorities, development and maintenance costs, program opportunities, financing strategies, and community input.*

**Action 6-7.12:** *Improve parks and recreation center sites in accordance with adopted master plans.*

**Action 6-7.13:** Continue to implement the general recommendations for each type of park, as defined by the Recreation and Parks System Master Plan.

*identify the needs and priorities of all segments of the community, including individuals in Equity Priority Areas and those unable to attend public meetings.*

**Action 6-7.14:** Acquire and develop new parkland, and expand existing parks, to achieve the citywide standard of 6 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents.

**Action 6-7.15:** Achieve an equitable distribution of quality parks across the city by prioritizing new park acquisition and development in:

- More densely populated neighborhoods with limited parkland;
- Areas that are more than a half mile from a neighborhood or community park;
- Areas where substantial new housing growth is expected, based on the forecasts of the General Plan; and
- Areas where social and economic conditions compel a greater investment in parks to improve health, public safety, and community well-being.

**Action 6-7.16:** Update the City Code to require dedication of new parkland or recreation center sites when redevelopment of a developed site results in increased residential densities that create a need for such facilities.

**Action 6-7.17:** Facilitate equitable, authentic community engagement in recreation and parks planning to

**The Southeast Greenway** is a continuous linear space extending almost two miles and connecting Sonoma County's Spring Lake Regional Park to Farmers Lane via an approximately 300-foot-wide swath of grasslands and woodlands bisected by two creeks and three roads. The property, located in southeast Santa Rosa, is approximately 47 acres. The land use designation for the greenway is Parks and Recreation.

A potential future Park Master Plan will identify improvements and amenities for the greenway that may include separated bicycle and pedestrian paths, bicycle and pedestrian connections to surrounding neighborhoods, and park amenities and recreation center sites that promote and support active and passive recreation. An interim management plan will be necessary to steward the property until it is planned and developed.

## Recreation and Park Development

**Policy 6-7.5:** Ensure high-quality design and construction of new parks and park improvements that are sensitive to the natural environment, respectful of historic structures and important cultural landscapes, responsive to the needs of people of all ages and abilities,

**and compatible with surrounding land uses.**

**Action 6-7.18:** *Provide a range of recreation programs in flexibly designed spaces capable of evolving as residents' needs and interests change.*

**Action 6-7.19:** *Incorporate trauma-informed services and culturally appropriate programming to ensure that parks and recreation center sites are safe spaces for everyone and offer relaxation opportunities as well as active and passive recreation.*

**Trauma-informed services** are services provided based on the principles of trauma-informed care. Trauma-informed care understands and considers the pervasive nature of trauma and promotes environments of healing and recovery rather than practices and services that may inadvertently re-traumatize.

Trauma-informed services create a physically and emotionally safe environment, establishing trust and boundaries, supporting autonomy and choice, creating collaborative relationships and participation opportunities, and using a strengths and empowerment-focused perspective to promote resilience.

*Source: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (2014). A Treatment Improvement Protocol: Trauma-Informed Care in Behavioral Health Services, Tip 57. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 14-4816.*

**Action 6-7.20:** *Consider renovating and expanding existing parks to provide more acreage (while maintaining park standards), increased capacity of fields for organized sports, and a greater range of improvements that respond to changing demographics and community needs and preferences.*

**Action 6-7.21:** *Develop new fields and courts and retrofit existing fields to support year-round use at expanded hours. These fields and courts should include lighting for night use.*

**Action 6-7.22:** *Seek land and partnership opportunities to develop large sports complexes and/or multiuse event venues to accommodate tournaments, concerts, and other athletic and community events and activities.*

**Action 6-7.23:** *Encourage development of Civic Spaces to enhance recreation, particularly where they can connect to existing public spaces using sidewalks, alleys, bike lanes, shared use paths, trails, or other forms of connection.*

**Action 6-7.24:** *Design new parks using Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) standards.*



**Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)** is a multidisciplinary approach that uses urban and architectural features 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, reduce crime, and minimize fear of crime.

*Source: The International Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design Association, 2023*

**Action 6-7.25:** Continue to coordinate with all applicable City departments from the beginning of discussions regarding large-scale land redevelopment sites.

## Park System Connectivity and Accessibility

In addition to quality parks, a healthy park system requires a robust network of shared use paths and trails. Children especially need to be able to walk or bike safely to nearby parks. From bike lanes and shared use paths to sidewalks and trails, these routes should be comfortable, and well-maintained, integrating wayfinding signage, lighting, and safe road crossings. City parks and connecting networks can link to larger regional parks and trails to create a significant recreational and ecological amenity for the entire region.

**Policy 6-7.6: Make parks accessible by foot, bicycle, and public transportation.**

**Action 6-7.26:** Integrate planning, design, and construction of shared use paths

and trails with the city's broader transportation network to provide convenient and safe access to the park system.

**Action 6-7.27:** Design safe walking and biking routes in neighborhoods and around schools with high crime and gang activity, using Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED), to ensure that all community members can live, work, and play without fear.

**Action 6-7.28:** Develop Trail Parks along creeks designated in the Santa Rosa Citywide Creek Master Plan.

**Action 6-7.29:** Design paths and trails in parks to be accessible to all ages and abilities.

**Action 6-7.30:** Continue to coordinate capital improvement planning across City departments to improve pedestrian and bicycle connections to and within parks.

## Land Stewardship and Maintenance

The City's parkland stewardship and maintenance duties cover developed parks, including their various amenities, and undeveloped parklands and natural areas. As a steward of public land and cultural, historic, and natural resources, the City must manage with the combined goals of efficiency, equity, quality, and long-term public benefit; all of which require adequate staffing and funding resources.

**Policy 6-7.7: Manage City parklands to provide safe and welcoming places.**

**Action 6-7.31:** *Provide continuous maintenance, renovation, and rehabilitation of the City's parklands to maintain the long-term viability of the parks system and enhance quality of life of all community members.*

**Action 6-7.32:** *Adhere to clear maintenance standards for both City staff and contractors to follow, based on industry best practices for improving service levels for parks, trails, roadway landscapes, and medians.*

**Action 6-7.33:** *Identify funding to replace park amenities that have reached the end of their lifespan or are unsafe.*

**Action 6-7.34:** *Prioritize re-investment in park amenities, like playgrounds, paved paths, court surfaces, and other amenities to ensure that minimum health and safety standards are met.*

**Action 6-7.35:** *Consider maintenance requirements when acquiring and developing new parks, trails, roadway landscapes, and medians.*

**Action 6-7.36:** *Encourage innovative approaches for maintenance of parks by developing and sustaining partnerships with schools, neighborhoods, and businesses.*

**Action 6-7.37:** *Offer volunteer opportunities to enhance stewardship, programming, social cohesion, and ownership.*

**Action 6-7.38:** *Continue to encourage neighborhood groups, businesses, and others to participate in the City's Adopt-a-Green Space and Park-a-Month programs and widely market the programs.*

**Action 6-7.39:** *Support community groups in stewarding, advocating, and hosting fundraiser events for park sites to help maintain them and assist in the park planning process.*

## Recreation Services

Santa Rosa Recreation and Parks provides programs and centers that let people play, learn, and lead healthy, active lives, offering exposure to opportunities and programs that include aquatics, arts, athletics, nature, seasonal break camps, and other services. Recreation programming is one of the core elements of recreational service delivery. Santa Rosa already delivers more than 2,300 programs a year at its recreation centers and partner facilities, and the City aims to enhance opportunities even further for people of all abilities and families to enjoy a high quality of life with age-appropriate services and the chance to age in place.

**Policy 6-7.8: Provide and promote a balanced recreation system offering a variety of quality social activities and recreational opportunities for all community members.**

**Action 6-7.40:** *Program diverse recreational activities to promote healthy living for persons of all ages and cultural backgrounds.*

**Action 6-7.41:** *Continue and expand use of mobile recreation to fill recreation*

*service gaps, enhance events, and provide quality recreational opportunities across the entire city, especially in Equity Priority Areas and Areas of Change.*

**Mobile recreation** is a practice of bringing recreational equipment, games, and toys to populated areas for short-term use.

**Action 6-7.42:** *Reduce access barriers to recreation centers, services, and programs, including those caused by financial, physical, language, and perception challenges.*

**Action 6-7.43:** *Establish and maintain partnerships with public and private organizations to increase accessibility of programming that supports residents' needs and interests. Coordinate activities with recreation and community service providers to maximize the effectiveness of service delivery.*

**Action 6-7.44:** *Collect and analyze data, including customer and resident feedback on satisfaction, needs, and trends to improve experience, increase participation, and advance equity.*

## Violence Prevention Partnership

Santa Rosa has experienced an increase in violent criminal street gang activity, and the Santa Rosa Police Department acknowledges that the City cannot “arrest our way out of a gang problem.” Although effective law enforcement efforts are critical, enforcement alone cannot adequately address the root causes of youth and gang-related criminal activity. The Santa Rosa Violence Prevention Partnership is a model of shared responsibility to strengthen youth and families and create safe neighborhoods through mobilizing and engaging parents, schools, community-based organizations, faith community, businesses, government, and local law enforcement. The current collaboration involves over 50 organizations from across multiple sectors of the community and uses a public health approach to violence and gang prevention.

**Policy 6-7.9:** **Lead, mobilize, and align resources to create a safe and healthy environment where all youth are empowered to reach their full potential and all community members thrive.**

**Action 6-7.45:** *Engage residents, including youth, in communities most affected by crime and violence with planning through prevention-based and place-based strategies/solutions for their neighborhoods to address safety.*

**Action 6-7.46:** *Collaborate among the Violence Prevention Partnership's Policy and Operational Teams to create*

*comprehensive annual implementation plans that include equitable resource allocation across the city and strategies to prevent and interrupt violence.*

**Action 6-7.47:** *Proactively engage at-risk, high-risk, gang-impacted, and gang-involved youth through intervention programs facilitated by the Violence Prevention Partnership.*

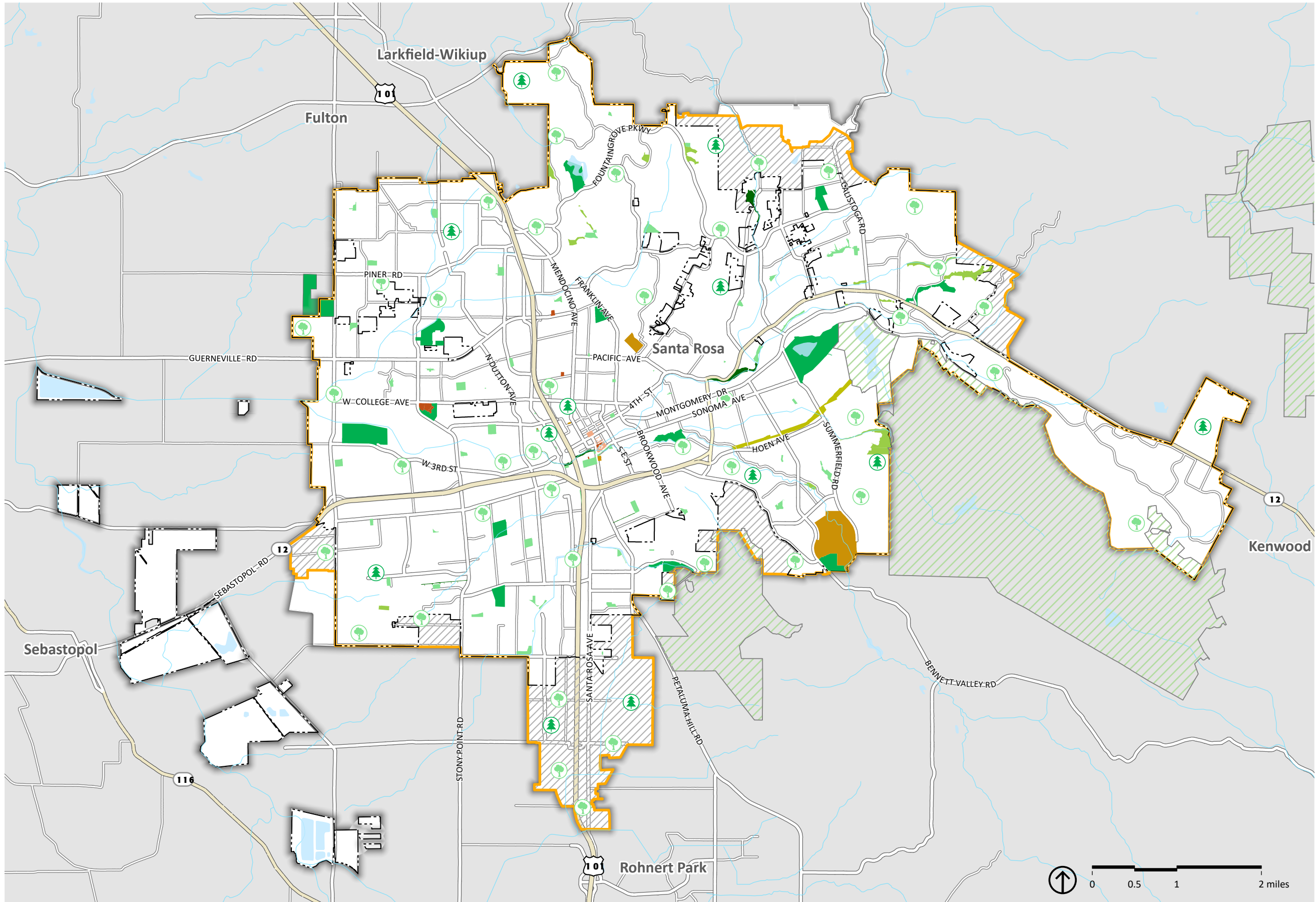


Figure 6-3  
**Current and Potential Parks**

- City Limits
- Urban Growth Boundary
- City Sphere of Influence
- Planning Area
- State and Regional Parks**
- State and Regional Parks
- Santa Rosa City Parks**
- Community Park
- Neighborhood Park
- Open Space Park
- Trail Park
- Civic Space
- Recreation Center Site
- Special Purpose Park
- Southeast Greenway
- Potential Park Locations**
- Potential Community Park
- Potential Neighborhood Park

\* The boundary of the Southeast Greenway is approximate and is in the process of being verified.

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## Children and Families

The health, safety, welfare, and support of residents of all ages are high priorities for the City of Santa Rosa.

Affordable childcare is fundamental to protecting the welfare of youth and families so that parents and caregivers are able to earn a living. The cost of childcare is a challenge for many families. Some may qualify for subsidies or other financial assistance, but they may stay on long waitlists before they can access care. Although childcare services are generally offered by private and nonprofit organizations and may be funded in part or full by private grants and State programs, like the California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) Childcare Program, the General Plan offers policies and actions for the City to follow to help enhance the availability of affordable childcare in the city.

The built and social environments also affect the health and well-being of families and community members of all ages. Goals, policies, and actions in this section and throughout the General Plan are intended to foster a supportive community environment with amenities, services, and programs that serve the needs of youth and families.

### Goals, Policies, and Actions

**Goal 6-8:** Foster environments that support families and community members of all ages with high-quality, equitably accessible amenities, programs, and services.

**Policy 6-8.1:** Create an environment where children can grow and develop in secure and supportive families and neighborhoods.

**Action 6-8.1:** Collaborate with parents, youth, schools, libraries, businesses, nonprofit agencies, religious organizations, law enforcement, and others to prioritize the needs of children and youth, especially in Equity Priority Areas.

**Action 6-8.2:** Coordinate with community-based organizations to provide educational and community services, including childcare/early education, English-as-a-second-language courses, after-school programs, and recreational activities.

**Policy 6-8.2:** Expand childcare services to meet the existing and future needs of Santa Rosa.

**Action 6-8.3:** Update the Zoning Code to require new residential development to provide places for childcare and youth-oriented facilities and programs.

**Action 6-8.4:** Work with schools to continue and expand the provision of before- and after-school care on or near school sites.

**Action 6-8.5:** Continue to streamline approval of childcare facilities in all areas of the city, including residential neighborhoods, employment centers, and school sites.

**Action 6-8.6:** Promote development of new childcare facilities during review of new development projects.

**Action 6-8.7:** *Continue the City's permitting fee deferral and rebate program for provision of childcare facilities.*

**Action 6-8.8:** *Participate in partnerships with the business and childcare communities to provide information to employees about childcare options, including childcare provided by businesses.*

**Policy 6-8.3: Design and improve City facilities and programs to meet the needs of seniors.**

**Action 6-8.9:** *Work with local senior groups that serve the elder community on facilities planning and needs to support seniors.*

**Action 6-8.10:** *Consider opportunities for intergenerational facilities that help seniors maintain connections with all age groups.*