

City Parks Department Enters New Phase

The City strives to provide park amenities that support a diverse range of recreational activities for Cloverdale residents, providing important spaces that promote wellness and provide a space for the community to gather, play and relax. The City Council recently supported elevating Park services to be an integral component of the Community Development Department, now referred to as the **Community Development and Parks Department**.

The City Council approved the promotion of Hector Galvan to Parks Superintendent, paving the way for City staff to focus on supporting and enhancing park and recreational opportunities for our residents. The long-term vision is to develop park improvements coupled with new recreational programming (recreational classes, sport leagues, and kids' camps).



Community Development and Parks staff are working on a number of park improvement projects to improve the physical structure of our existing parks:

1. **Vegetation Management Phase 1 project at Porterfield Creek Open Space** Working with the Northern Sonoma County Fire Protection District, Parks staff are managing a vegetation management Project at Porterfield Creek Open Space to reduce fire hazards and improve visibility on park trails, removing dead vegetation and ladder fuels, to keep our community safe from wildfire.
2. **Basketball court improvement project at 2nd Street City Park** The city received a state Per Capita grant to improve 2nd Street City Park by developing two full-sized basketball courts. The current timeline for the project is late Spring / early summer 2022.
3. **Restroom project for the Cloverdale Plaza** The City is planning to install a public restroom facility at City Plaza. The City Council is anticipated to review the proposed restroom project at their January 26th Council meeting.
4. **Potential pickle ball courts at Furber Park** Staff are developing a project for pickleball courts at Furber Park in an area containing an underutilized sandbox. This project has great promise to bring a fast-growing sport to Cloverdale.
5. **Soda Springs (200-acre Lydia Ranch) Property Acquisition** City staff is coordinating with Sonoma County Ag + Open Space District on preliminary planning for the potential acquisition of the property for additional publicly accessible open space.
6. **Review of a new neighborhood Park** featuring a dog park, tot lot, picnic area and turf area proposed as part of the newly annexed Baumgardner Development Project.

Cloverdale parks staff continue their hard work of keeping the City's parks and landscapes in top shape. This proved to be a challenge during last summer's drought, when parks crews took extraordinary measures to address the impacts of the drought on our parks, playfields and landscape areas. Parks staff has worked diligently to reduce irrigation and conserve water while maintaining sports fields for our local sports leagues by targeting limiting irrigation on turf utilized by local sports leagues. By utilizing this strategy, Parks staff reduced water use by 35%, while balancing the recreational needs of the city. Parks staff are committed to reduce water usage in our parks through our continued efforts of removing water intensive landscaping and replacing with mulch and other water savings plantings.

The city welcomes your input and help planning for our future recreational needs through participating in either the Planning & Sustainability Subcommittee or Public Works Subcommittee.

Planning & Community Development Update

Are you interested in the participating in how Cloverdale grows and develops? A good place to start is the Planning & Community Development Department's webpage (www.cloverdale.net/73/Planning-Community-Development). In addition to coordinating with Hector on Park planning, Assistant City Manager and Community Development Director Kevin Thompson is overseeing the City's Community Development Processes with a focus on: 1) Current planning, which is the review of development projects, and 2) Long-range planning which focuses on long term future growth of the city.

In 2021, the Community Development Department has been busy reviewing current development projects, and updating key planning documents including

- The General Plan Safety Element
- Update of the Downtown & Transit Oriented Development Zoning Districts in the City's Zoning Ordinance.
- Initiation of the General Plan Housing Element Update.

In November the Council approved the update of the General Plan Safety Element. The Safety Element was drafted in conjunction with the creation of Cloverdale's Local Hazard Mitigation Plan. The updated General Plan Safety Element ensures that the city identifies and provides updated information related to seismic and geologic hazards, drought, evacuation routes, flood hazards, and fire hazards. Furthermore, the updated Safety Element provides a set of goals, policies, and objectives based on a vulnerability assessment, identifying the risks that climate change poses to the City and the areas of the City at risk from climate change impacts. Finally, the updated Safety Element identify evacuation routes and evaluates their capacity, safety, and viability under a range of emergency scenarios and identifies residential developments in hazard areas that do not have at least two emergency evacuation routes.

Additional Long-Range Planning in 2022

Zoning Update: In January, the City Council will consider proposed updates to the Downtown Commercial (DTC) and Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Zoning Districts. The Planning Commission unanimously recommended approval of various updates to the Zoning District outlined below at their December 7th meeting:

- Reduced parking requirements for restaurant, office and retail uses in the DTC and TOD zones.
- Allow restaurant uses in the TOD upon approval of a Plot Plan.
- Increase maximum allowable density in DTC and TOD districts.
- Allow for pedestrian oriented retail and general retail uses in the TOD.
- Expanded opportunities for personal/household services uses in the TOD.

The City Council will consider the Planning Commission's recommendation at their January 12th Council meeting.

Housing Element Update: In 2022, the city will embark on completing the update of the 2023-2031 Housing Element update. The Housing Element is a part of the city's General Plan, considered the blueprint for how the city will grow over the next several years. The Housing Element is the portion of the General Plan that centers on the City's housing needs. Completed every seven years, the Housing Element uses projections for housing needs over the next seven years, to ensure the city can accommodate the housing units.

The Housing Element update is a community effort, whose outcome is best with public participation. We plan to have community workshops, and other outreach. The City is currently seeking your input on Housing through a survey, which can be found on the City's website.