

# EL CERRITO PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES MASTER PLAN

## COMMUNITY WORKSHOP #1 Group Discussion Summary

Community Workshop #1 was held on November 18, 2017. As the first community meeting for the *El Cerrito Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan*, this workshop introduced the community to the planning process and gathered initial input regarding the needs and desires for the City's park network. Workshop attendees worked in groups to answer several questions. A summary of their responses follows. All community input collected at this workshop is shared following this summary.

### **I. What do you like about the City of El Cerrito's park and recreation facilities?**

Workshop attendees expressed an appreciation of El Cerrito's existing recreation program offerings, the City's supply of parks and open spaces, unique recreation facilities, active environmental stewardship, and certain recreation features. In programming, community members particularly like the City's offerings for seniors, youth, families, and opportunities for large community events. In the City's supply of park and open spaces, attendees noted that their locations, distribution, and overall quality are desirable. Additionally, attendees particularly appreciated the Ohlone Greenway and the Hillside Natural area, and the unique recreation opportunities they offer to community members. Regarding facilities, attendees enjoy access to the El Cerrito Community Center, the El Cerrito Swim Center, and the opportunity to rent clubhouse space for special events. Workshop attendees expressed a strong support for the City's ongoing work in environmental stewardship, recognizing that the City has supported projects such as the development of Baxter Creek Gateway Park and the acquisition of the Madera property. Finally, workshop attendees noted that they like certain recreation amenities in the City's park network, including El Cerrito's playgrounds, sport fields, and tennis courts.

### **II. What improvement suggestions do you have for the City's park and recreation facilities?**

Workshop attendees provided a variety of improvement suggestions for El Cerrito's park and recreation facilities. A major desire voiced at this workshop was the improved maintenance of sports fields and sport courts – attendees noted drainage and irrigation issues at several fields and tennis courts as well as a desire for updated equipment such as new tennis nets. Another desire voiced by workshop attendees was improved open space stewardship practices by the City. Though the City has provided active support, many attendees felt that there is opportunity for the City to better maintain and improve open space in El Cerrito. Suggested improvements included practices for landslide prevention, vegetation management, trail maintenance, and continued enhancement of the Hillside Natural Area. Improved restroom accessibility was another common desire voiced at the workshop as the current key system does not facilitate easy access for park users. Regarding El Cerrito's clubhouses, workshop attendees suggested that these spaces be more programmatically flexible and support more use; providing mixed programming, activating underutilized clubhouses, updating clubhouse restrooms, and offering affordable rental rates were improvement suggestions heard. Additional improvement suggestions from attendees included safety and pedestrian enhancements along the Ohlone Greenway, updated playground design for unique play opportunities, improved park sustainability, supported park maintenance and safety, and improved communication from the City regarding recreation programs for the community.

### **III. What recreation features, facilities, or programs would you like to see added for the City's park and recreation facilities?**

Workshop attendees shared a variety of recreation features, facilities, and programs that they would like added to El Cerrito's park network. In park features, many attendees prioritized the addition of lighting for parks, play fields, and sport courts to support safety while extending hours for use. Attendees additionally desired more outdoor fitness stations, seating, water fountains, accessible walking paths, and restrooms. Restrooms at the

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Cerrito Vista tennis court and the Hillside Natural Area are particularly desired. In addition to recreation facilities, workshop attendees expressed a strong interest in the creation of a dedicated pickleball court. Other desired facilities included a multi-use indoor gymnasium, a bike park and/or pump track, and an outdoor performance space. Workshop attendees strongly desired the support and addition of multi-generational recreation programming, with a special emphasis on offerings for toddlers, youth, and seniors. Overall, workshop attendees desired an expanded park network with an improved distribution of open spaces and better pedestrian connectivity between City parks. Attendees additionally expressed a desire for improved communication from the City regarding recreation offerings, recommending more park signage and public announcements for programs and events.