



CITY OF LAS CRUCES

Parks and Recreation Advisory Board

December 19, 2024

The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board held a meeting on December 19, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. at City Hall, Room 2007B, 700 N. Main, Las Cruces, NM.

Members Present:

- Fred Raish – At large member
- Laura Haas - District 6
- Charles Beard – District 2
- Miley Sarah Grandjean - District 1
- Kylie Aleja Jenkins - District 5
- Aracely Tellez – District 3

Members Absent:

- Alana Bradley - District 4

Others Present:

- Steven Bingham, Director, Parks & Recreation
- Robert Nunez, Deputy Director, Youth Services, Parks and Recreation
- Hazel Nevarez, Senior Office Manager, Parks & Recreation
- Joey Dominguez, Parks Administration
- Miguel Terrazas, Diversion Specialist, Parks & Recreation
- Carol Montoya, Diversion Specialist, Parks & Recreation
- Camica Ramirez, Diversion Specialist, Parks & Recreation
- Kenneth Coppedge

The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Meeting of December 19, 2024, at City Hall Room 2007B, 700 N. Main, Las Cruces, NM was brought to order at approximately 6:00 p.m. by Chair Raish and recognized the meeting as having a legal quorum.

1. Introductions:

Board Members introduced themselves and stated the district they represent. Attending staff introduced themselves.

2. Conflict of Interest:

There was no conflict of interest.

3. Approval of the Agenda:

1
2 Vice-Chair Haas moved to approve the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board
3 Meeting Agenda for December 19, 2024, seconded by Board Member Beard.
4 Motion passed unanimously.
5

6 **4. Approval of the Minutes September 19, 2024:**
7

8 Vice-Chair Haas moved to approve the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board
9 Meeting Minutes September 19, 2024, seconded by Board Member Beard. Motion
10 passed unanimously.
11

12 **5. Public Participation:**
13

14 None.
15

16 **6. Action Items:**
17

18 **6.1 Realize Las Cruces Endorsement:**
19

20 Steven Bingham stated this is a process that has been going on for a few
21 years. The development code has not been updated since 2001. Realize Las
22 Cruces is the development code update. This update includes roads, right-
23 of-ways, landscaping, parks, trails, open space, tree preservation, screening
24 and fencing, zoning and zoning map, subdivisions, drainage, signs, outdoor
25 lighting.
26

27 Section 5.5 is parks and trails. Going forward with the passing of this new
28 code is require park dedication and construction of neighborhood parks.
29 Proposing instead of collecting an impact fee for the City to build or contract
30 with the developer to build a park and reimburse that, propose that there will
31 be a park dedication requirement. There are a variety of ways to get parks, go
32 for a bond. If you want the new housing that is creating the need for the park,
33 then there are two methods, impact fees and park dedication. Park dedication
34 has not been used by Las Cruces before. Park dedication has been around
35 since the 1960s. The requirement would be the developers build a
36 neighborhood park at their cost with no reimbursement, but pull it out of impact
37 fees and it will a minimum of three acres with a few exceptions. It would three
38 acres times the number of dwellings times the number of people per unit.
39 Basically it is three acres per 1,000 people. A copy of the park section of
40 proposed ordinance was given to the Board Members.
41

42 The purpose of this is to ensure that new master plan or subdivision
43 development allocates resources for accessible and usable parks and trails in
44 accordance with the adopted Parks and Recreation Master Plan, the
45 Comprehensive Plan, the Active Transportation Plan, and any applicable
46 adopted City plan. The Parks and Recreation department will be involved and

1 make recommendations for these parks to be built and meet the needs of the
2 community.

3
4 It was recommended that the impact fee should be used within a mile of the
5 residence. Recent study shows that people on average use between four and
6 six parks regularly throughout the course of a year. There are regulations like
7 the land must provide a minimum of 200 feet of street frontage. No parks
8 located on a cul-de-sac, but this is still being debated between Community
9 Development and City Council. Must be suitable to allow for convenient
10 pedestrian and bicycle access. There is a 20% grade limit on a portion of the
11 park to be built. Cannot be within 100 year flood plain, unless discretion of
12 Parks and Recreation director. Also a fee in lieu is allowed. A trail master
13 plan is in the works. Open space preservation to preserve natural
14 environmental sensitive areas.

15
16 Question about if lights are required. There is no requirement but that would
17 come into the design process negotiations. Improvements to existing parks
18 could also be discussed. Improvements must be completed no later than 50%
19 build out, or two years after the subdivision plat is recorded, whichever comes
20 first.

21
22 Vice-Chair Haas asked about what is put in the parks. Steven Bingham stated
23 the requirement is the land and the improvements. A negotiation will go on
24 between the developer and the City. Vice-Chair Haas asked who determines
25 the age appropriate infrastructure in each park. Steven Bingham stated there
26 is data out there that the home builders are aware of that if they want to attract
27 an older demographic, there are certain amenities in building the house. Vice-
28 Chair Haas asked Chris Faivre if there is anything that Community
29 Development think the PRAB should take from this. Chris Faivre stated this is
30 a completely different approach and the community will benefit from
31 extensively. The intent is to create a structure that will allow Parks to not have
32 to focus all their resources on the neighborhood parks and allow them to focus
33 on other things. The new code makes it easier to build duplexes, triplexes,
34 apartments to better accommodate the housing shortage. At any given time
35 there is about a 5,000 units short in the housing market.

36
37 Steven Bingham stated impact fees prohibit from charging to increase the level
38 of service. If we are at 0.85 acres we cannot say we are going to charge new
39 people to be at three as it is against the law. Impact fees keep the same level
40 of service, but park dedication can raise to a higher level of service. One of
41 the concerns from the developers is that they will have to add a couple of
42 thousand dollars to the price of the home. The current impact fee is currently
43 \$2,600, for a 30 year mortgage this would be \$16.86 per month. In 2022
44 Clemson University did a study that said research shows the annual average
45 healthcare cost was \$374 lower per person per year for those living near the
46 most green space than for those living near the least green space. Areas with

1 the most green space have the lower crime rates versus areas with least green
2 space.

3
4 Steven Bingham stated there is a tree preservation. This is unless a tree is
5 dead, diseased, or nuisance, that you have to get a permit to cut it down if it is
6 more than six inches. The Planning and Zoning Commission approved with
7 two proposed modification, asking to delay that option 5.5, remove it, and to
8 address it later and not include as part of this Realize Las Cruces, or to accept
9 a proposal by the Home Builders Association to reimburse them 50% of the
10 neighborhood park. City Council at their work session did not agree with P&Z.

11
12 Vice-Chair Haas propose endorsing the Parks section of Realize Las Cruces
13 as is; seconded by Board Member Tellez. Motion passed unanimously.

14 15 **7. Discussion Items:**

16 17 **7.1 Presentation to Kenneth Coppedge:**

18
19 Presentation to Kenneth Coppedge for his service on the Parks and
20 Recreation Advisory Board. Vice-Chair Haas thanked him for all his work.

21 22 **7.2 Presentation of Award to Youth Development and Diversion Program -** 23 **Steven Bingham, Director of Parks and Recreation:**

24
25 Steven Bingham stated they want to recognize the Youth staff as they won the
26 New Mexico State Youth Program of the Year. Robert Nunez introduced the
27 staff: Miguel Terrazas, with the City for over nine years; Carol Montoya with
28 the City for two years; Camica Ramirez with the City for two years. They are
29 the diversion specialists. They work with the youth in the educational aspect.
30 In the field they visit with them, a lot of follow-ups are done with the youth after
31 going through the program. There are others, Pat Acosta, the supervisor,
32 Kiana Sandoval, intake specialist, and Samantha Armendariz, intake
33 specialist. There is a staff of six, but budgeted for a staff of nine. They cover
34 north to Hatch and south to Sunland Park, Chaparral, and Anthony. They work
35 normally Tuesday through Saturday, and until 7:00 p.m.

36
37 Originally were the Juvenile Citation Program as law enforcement was giving
38 more citations. Those have been reduced and then they looked at
39 preventative aspect, so now Development and Diversion Program. This
40 program has been within the City of Las Cruces for 21 years.

41
42 Steven Bingham offered lunch to the Youth staff. He also stated there is
43 research about 15-20 years ago that talked about for every dollar spent
44 working with youth you save seven dollars in juvenile delinquent system. This
45 staff is hard working and deal with youth who need good influence, that value
46 the youth. The City has some very committed people in this area.

1
2 **7.3 Board Orientation:**
3

4 Vice-Chair Haas is proposing a work session for the Board Members to get an
5 overview/orientation from the City Clerk as there are numerous new Board
6 Members. January 30th is the only date the clerk has available, at 6:00 p.m.,
7 which is the following Thursday after the board meeting. She will send an e-
8 mail to confirm to attend.
9

10 **7.4 Land use Assumption - Steven Bingham, Director of Parks and**
11 **Recreation:**
12

13 Steven Bingham stated this report was done by a consultant, TischlerBise, and
14 they have done the previous two land use assumption reports and impact fee
15 studies. This report is just the land use assumption and level of service. By
16 state statute required to at least every five years perform this study. This is a
17 45-year national practice. TischlerBise have done over 1,000 impact
18 analyses, impact fee studies, economic impact analyses, real estate and
19 market feasibility, and revenue enhancement options, all across the country.
20

21 Impact fees are a onetime payment for level of service contributions at the time
22 a building permit is pulled, which is charged to a residential unit. All new
23 housing has to provide the same level of service as the previous housing has
24 put in service. There are 500 acres of parkland for the first 100,000 people.
25 The next 5,000 has to stay at the same proportions financially. This fee cannot
26 be used for operations, maintenance, or repairs. It is not taxed. It is a land
27 use regulation. Growth creates the need for the infrastructure, proportionality,
28 growth pays it fair share of the cost and benefits, growth receives the benefit
29 from the infrastructure.
30

31 Land use assumptions look at the household sizes per unit, population
32 estimates and projected growths, housing unit estimates and projections, and
33 projection summary. The levels of service are neighborhood parks,
34 community parks, athletic facilities, dog parks, trails, recreation centers, indoor
35 and outdoor aquatic facilities.
36

37 In the study found single-family housing 2.68 people per household but living
38 in the unit only 2.44 people. As part of this study they used the Public Safety
39 Impact Fee produced occupancy density which was done recently, rather than
40 redoing information. Historical growth chart was shown from 2010 to 2021, an
41 average of 1.25% growth per year, this is from the U.S. Census. Projected
42 growth from 2023 to 2033 is 1.2% increase in population. Housing unit
43 estimates and projected growth which looked at single-family and multifamily
44 units. Projected units by the year were shown with a growth of 4,391 for single-
45 family and 1,619 in multifamily. Residential projections were shown in housing
46 units.

1
2 Level of service, community park is greater than 10 acres with smaller being
3 neighborhood parks are between three and 10 acres in the industry. Here in
4 Las Cruces our parks are a bit smaller. Amenities in the park determine
5 whether it is a neighborhood or community park. Level of service for every
6 1,000 people there are 0.85 acres of neighborhood parks, 1.29 acres for
7 community parks.
8

9 Charles Beard asked if the parks had to be in the area of improvement. Steven
10 Bingham stated impact fees have a seven year lifetime, so if not spent in seven
11 years it has to be returned. The City of Las Cruces has one service area for
12 Parks and Recreation, the whole City. Most communities only have one
13 service area because the older sections will collect very little impact fee and
14 never be enough to use. The national standard which is adopted in the Parks
15 and Recreation Master Plan is everyone should be within a quarter mile
16 walking distance. Speciality parks like dog parks, skate parks, airplane park
17 is 38 acres but is 0.33. Butterfield shooting range is a park but was removed
18 from speciality parks as it inflated too much. Trails per 1,000 people is 0.24
19 miles. Recreation center for which there are three; East Mesa, Frank O'Brien
20 Papan, and Meescheidt. There are 0.49 square feet per person. Aquatic
21 center is 0.54 square feet per person, but level of service is set for population
22 through 2043.
23

24 Vice-Chair Haas asked who provides the data to the consultant. That would
25 be the City. Time is not extensive in doing this as the data is kept and updated
26 regularly.
27

28 Aracely Tellez asked who this is reported to. That would be City Council. This
29 report is an analysis of where we are and where we should be and what the
30 national standards also. Also in preparation for impact fee study and proposals
31 for adjusting impact fees to meet current cost to maintain the same level.
32

33 Question on how impact fees are collected. They are collected as part of
34 pulling the building permit.
35

36 **8. Staff Member Comments:**
37

38 Joey Dominguez stated Parks does not have any comments at this time. The dog
39 park rules will be on the agenda for January.
40

41 Robert Nunez stated their out of school programs are registering for the holiday
42 camp which starts on Monday. Last full school day is today. Keep Las Cruces
43 Beautiful program is still doing monthly neighborhood dumpster days. Mr. Catanach
44 could not attend the meeting but would like to thank everyone that participated and
45 assisted with the tree lighting. Wished everyone happy holiday, happy new year.
46

1 **9. Board Member Comments:**

2
3 Board Member Grandjean she met people in her district and shared their concerns
4 in a smaller forum. A big concern was why are we letting the trees die in Cruces.
5 Joey Dominguez stated the study for Apodaca was done for multiple parks. This
6 study looked at the current trees and then what would be the proper trees to plant.
7 Steven Bingham stated the City does have a forester who has a crew.

8
9 Vice-Chair Haas thanked the staff or all the hard work they do all year.

10
11 Chair Raish thanked everyone.

12
13 **10. Adjournment:**

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15 Vice-Chair Haas moved to adjourn, seconded by Board Member Beard Haas.
16 Motion passed unanimously.

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19
20
21
22 _____
Chairperson

DRAFT