

TO: Mayor and Members of the City Council  
Residents of Folsom, California

SUBJECT: Park and Recreation Commission Perspectives 2022

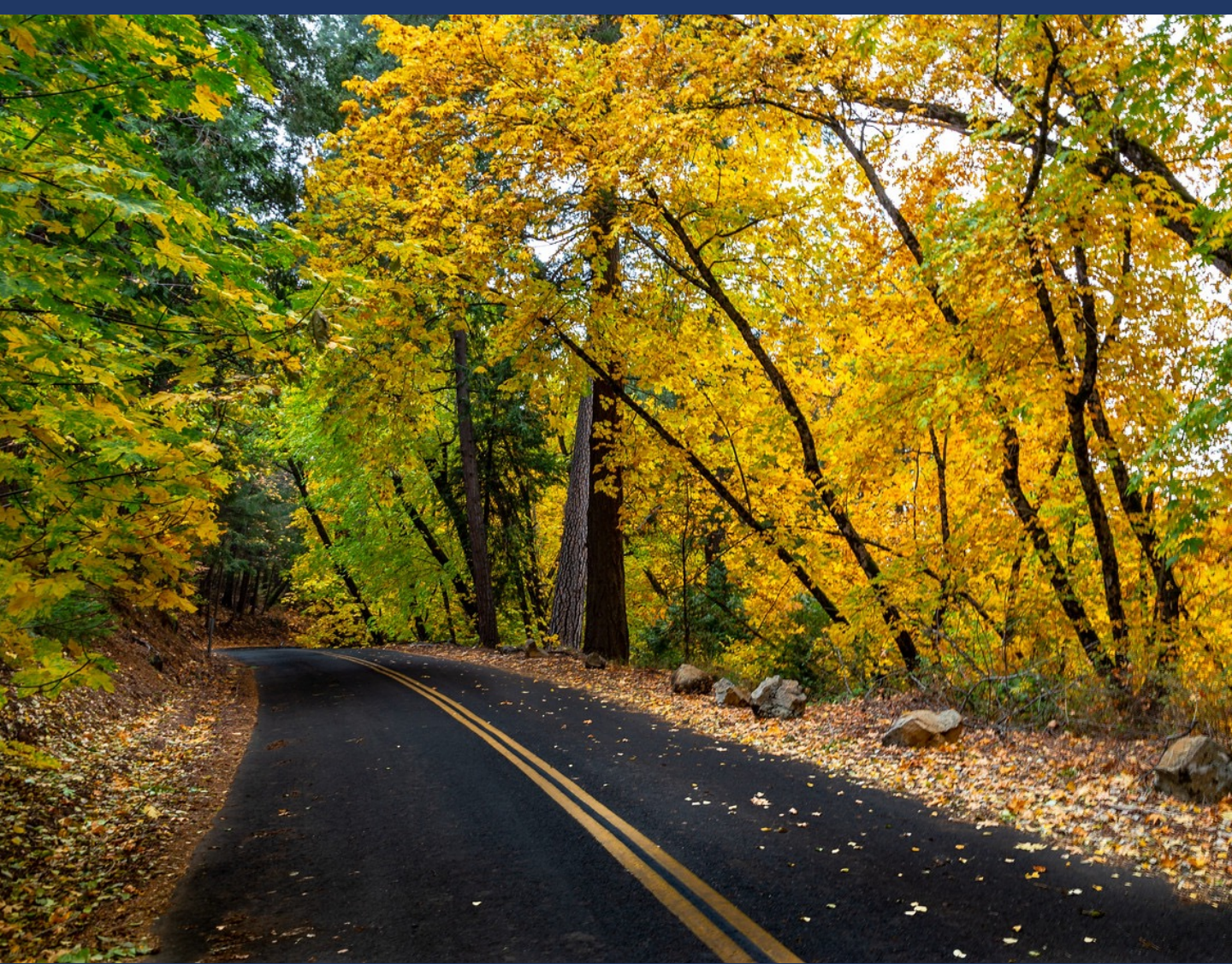
The purpose of this communication is to introduce an important document developed by the City's Park and Recreation Commission. This report, entitled "Park and Recreation Commission Perspectives 2022," reviews the status of Folsom's Park and Recreation system and discusses some issues regarding the system that the City faces going forward.

In June, 2021, the City conducted a Park and Recreation Needs Assessment Survey to gauge resident satisfaction with Folsom's system of parks to determine the relative importance and usage of City park and recreation activities and facilities and to learn about preferences for future park development. The Park and Recreation Commission is pleased with the results of that survey which showed that nearly 90 percent of respondents are satisfied with the City's system. However, as the City grapples with questions about the future of this system, we think that elected leaders and the public should also know about future challenges regarding the program and this report provides a summary of those challenges.

This document was not prepared by City staff. The perspectives contained in the report are the views and opinions of the Commissioners. We appreciate this opportunity to share these perspectives and trust that readers will find the information useful and constructive. Finally, we hope that making this document available will help lead to appropriate and effective decisions for the future of the City's Park and Recreation program. You can access this report by going to the city's website at [www.folsom.ca.us](http://www.folsom.ca.us) on the parks and recreation commission page.

Thank you for taking the time to review this report.

*This report is based on the opinions of the Folsom Parks and Recreation Commission and does not reflect the opinions of the City of Folsom, its staff, or elected city council members.*



Folsom Parks & Recreation Commission  
**Commission Perspectives**  
2022

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**Dave Nazworth**  
Commission Chairperson

Dear Folsom Resident,

The Parks & Recreation Commission is responsible for advising the City Council and City Manager on the development and administration of all parks and recreation programs, parks, and facilities in the City of Folsom. The Commission makes recommendations to the Parks & Recreation Department and works collaboratively with city staff.

The Commission has been working in smaller subcommittees for several years with Commissioners dedicated to a particular task or area. Subcommittees allow the Commission to dive deeper into specific topics and explore these areas of interest in greater detail. Subcommittees formally share findings and opinions with the full Commission in public meetings. Currently, there are 4 standing subcommittees. The subcommittees are as follows.

- Budget
- Planning & Development
- Youth Sports
- Renovation

As the Chairperson of the Folsom Parks & Recreation Commission, I am honored to deliver **Commission Perspectives 2022**. This document was produced by the Commission and highlights the work of the Park and Recreation Commission's subcommittees over the last year. This document also identifies the challenges facing the department from the Commission's perspective.

We believe that this may be the first time in the history of Folsom that a Commission has independently prepared an annual report for Folsom residents. This is not a document prepared by city personnel. The perspectives within this report are the views and opinions of the Commission and have been authored in the spirit of full transparency.

We appreciate this opportunity to share our perspectives with our neighbors and would like to thank city staff for supporting the Commission in their execution of this initiative.

I invite you to attend a parks and recreation meeting to learn more about what we do as a Commission. The Parks and Recreation Commission's meeting schedule can be found on the City of Folsom website.

Dave Nazworth  
Chairperson  
Folsom Parks and Recreation Commission

# Planning and Development Subcommittee

The Planning and Development subcommittee for the Folsom Parks and Recreation Commission serves to review and make specific recommendations for existing and new park development. The subcommittee works in coordination with staff to summarize public perspective along with an analysis of the city budget and the city's master plan to bring information forward to the larger commission. Those insights assist the commission to make official recommendations to help guide the Folsom City Council in park planning actions.

Over the course of 2021, the planning subcommittee engaged in several activities. A key project was to provide input to the 2021 Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment Survey which will serve as a guidance document for current and future park planning and programming projects. The subcommittee went on to collaborate with staff on a prioritization tool to align the needs assessment data and the city's master plan to begin the process of prioritizing new park construction. Additionally, the subcommittee also reviewed the concept plans for new parks (Prospector Park in the Folsom Plan Area and Benevento Family Park north of Highway 50).

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Collaborated with staff on developing a prioritization tool aligning the needs assessment data with a process to begin evaluating priorities for renovation and new park construction
- Reviewed concept plans for new parks
- Began master plan update analysis

## FUTURE CHALLENGES

- Budget and Staff Constraints
- Funding for a Master Plan Update
- Balancing public feedback and expectations against existing resources

## Commissioner Commentary



"Folsom is rapidly gaining state and national attention as a great place to live. This is largely due to the city's parks and recreation system. The planning committee plays a key role contributing to the momentum as our parks, trails and city programs contribute to not only the high quality of life in Folsom but they are also a powerful driver of our local economy." - Marina Leight

"In light of the current and projected growth of Folsom in the coming decade and to exceed the expectation of the residents, the Planning and Development subcommittee provides oversight of future park plans while maintaining a renewed focus on improving existing parks and developing those for which land has been acquired." - Samantha Davidson



# Budget Subcommittee

The primary mission and goal of the budget subcommittee is to work to ensure that the parks and recreation department have the funds needed to match the community expectations to deliver park services, renovate our existing parks, and create new parks in the City of Folsom.

Achieving those goals will take an extremely large amount of funding that currently does not exist or is already allocated elsewhere. In order to do this, the budget subcommittee assists staff to highlight the current state of our parks system to city leaders and the community so that everyone understands the real status of our system, and so we can create an honest dialogue about the major challenges that stand between those needs and the status-quo.

The budget subcommittee is diligently working at highlighting this by having meetings with the Folsom City Council, and clearly identifying these needs to City staff.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Conducted a budget presentation to the City Council to have an honest discussion about the state of Parks and Recreation budget, and to chart a future path towards reaching our funding goals.
- Assisted with highlighting budget needs to City Council

## FUTURE CHALLENGES

- There is a major funding gap for maintaining the parks that we currently have in operation.
- There is a major funding gap for creating the new parks that have not yet been built.
- More funding for staff is needed to ensure that we can deliver adequate services to the community.

## Commissioner Commentary



"The Budget Subcommittee of the Folsom Parks & Recreation Commission was instrumental in outlining the budget shortfall that exists relative to park construction "North of 50" defined in the city's Master Plan. With impact fee revenue dwindling due to slowing growth in housing construction, the Subcommittee was able to highlight to the City Council a \$50+ million gap in funding vs. future park costs. That analysis is currently being used by Council to evaluate various revenue and other cost reduction options to solve the gap." - Dave Nazworth

"The Budget Subcommittee has provided a forum for identifying the financial needs of the City's parks and recreation program and providing the data necessary to focus limited resources on the park system's renovation, maintenance and capital needs. Working in collaboration with Department staff, this information has been vital in the development of effective budget recommendations for consideration by the City Council and in making investment decisions for the future." - Will Kempton



# Renovation Subcommittee

The renovation subcommittee is responsible for working collaboratively with city staff to determine how to best address the renovation needs of Folsom city parks. Our subcommittee works creatively to find solutions to address funding and resourcing gaps, while seeking out root causes and anticipating future challenges.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Established a fair and equitable approach to ranking and prioritizing park renovation projects.
- Introduced the concept of a volunteer coordinator to city staff and outlined programmatic details.
- Shared new tools to streamline reporting, data collection and management of park assets.

## FUTURE CHALLENGES

- Staffing levels. With a smaller team of resources dedicated to park maintenance and development, staff is limited in what renovation projects can be completed by city staff. Without staff to work on renovation, the city will have to hire contractors which will increase the cost of the renovation effort.
- Funding. Renovation has been underfunded and we are not keeping pace with the renovation demand. Many aging assets are costly to maintain and should be replaced based on age and condition.
- Awareness. The number of assets that require replacement within city parks is staggering. In 2019, there were \$5.9M in assets that were rated condition 1 and 2 (Condition rating is 1-5. Condition 1 and 2 are the assets in need of replacement). Many residents do not fully understand the number of assets that need replacement, as they are often being maintained as opposed to being replaced.

## Commissioner Commentary

"The Renovation Subcommittee played a significant role in developing an innovative new system to systematically prioritize future renovation projects. This effort has been instrumental in receiving more funding, as the funding gap now has significantly more clarity." - Matt Hedges



"Working with the director and staff, this subcommittee has worked hard to find solutions to a significant challenge that is facing our parks. We are looking deeper into how we address the needs at hand, as well as anticipate future challenges and plan accordingly." - Brian Wallace



# Youth Sports Subcommittee

The subcommittee's mission/purpose is to provide recommendations to city parks staff on the usage of, and other issues related to, the use of Folsom's city parks by youth sports participants & leagues in the greater Folsom area. Our ultimate goal is to ensure a safe and fun experience for all of Folsom's youth (and others) by ensuring that a well-equipped and well-maintained park system is available and suitable for their use.

In 2021, despite the presence of multiple COVID strains/outbreaks, the subcommittee and staff were able to provide multiple sports and other activity offerings to our residents. We were able to find outdoor options for indoor sports, craft and facilitate COVID safety protocols, and also finalize Memorandums of Understanding with multiple Youth Sports Leagues to ensure clear and equitable usage and scheduling of the various park fields/facilities.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Successful completion of Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) for multiple Youth Sports Leagues in the city of Folsom; facilitated an equitable sharing of facility space despite the fact that demand (participants) is beginning to outpace supply (facilities)
- Successfully orchestrated multiple outdoor offerings for indoor sports during the ongoing COVID pandemic

## FUTURE CHALLENGES

- Growth in sport participation, and overlapping sports seasons, which is causing demand to outpace field/gym capacity. This problem is significantly greater for indoor sports
- Future lockdowns due to future strains of COVID or other pandemic/emergency situations
- Securing proper funding to build/renovate our parks system to meet continued growth in demand for facilities & programs

## Commissioner Commentary

"Given the participation rate of Folsom's youth and the need for park space to support, this subcommittee stands ready to assist city staff in the planning, maintenance and scheduling of Folsom's park system. Having a dedicated group ready to quickly assist staff in reacting and responding to changing conditions helps keep our youth active and having fun with minimal lapses in programming." – Dave Nazworth



"This subcommittee is important to understanding the trends and demands related to youth sports programming. Our subcommittee helps in supporting staff in building strong partnerships with our community partners." – Brian Wallace



Photo Credit: Chad Vander Veen

# Looking Forward

As stated in the Chair's opening letter, we appreciate the opportunity to share our perspectives with the residents of Folsom. The Commission is proud of the current state of the City's Parks and Recreation Program, but we are facing some significant future challenges.

## Budgetary Considerations

In March of this year, the City Manager made a presentation to the City Council regarding the status of the Folsom's Budget. Due to prudent fiscal management, Folsom's budgetary resources have been relatively stable for the past several years. According to the City's Financial Officer, Folsom should be able to continue that stability for the next two years. At that point, City revenues, including primarily property taxes and sales tax receipts will not support current funding levels and Folsom will have to cut back on expenditures or find new sources of revenue to make up for any shortfalls.

This is not good news for the City's operations, including the Parks and Recreation Department. Over the past several years, fiscal constraints have been tight, but with careful management, Folsom has been able to retain a relatively high level of service, particularly in the area of programs servicing our residents. When revenues are limited, however, planned capital improvements, along with needed facility maintenance and renovation are often underfunded and/or deferred. Here is where we stand with planned capital development, needed facility renovation, ongoing maintenance of our current system, and the provision of a robust recreation program for the community in the future.

## Capital Improvements

Folsom is facing a \$50 million gap in funding for planned park facilities north of Highway 50. It should be noted that the development of parks planned for south of Highway 50 will be paid for with developer impact fees and don't figure into this discussion. However, of the parks included in the City's Master Plan, 12 parks north of Highway 50 are either unfinished or have not broken ground and the deficit continues to grow as the cost of finishing or constructing these facilities will only go up over time.

## Renovation Needs

Just as homeowners must take care of their properties, the City has to constantly repair and upgrade its existing park facilities. This is an expensive process, and, although the Parks and Recreation Department has done a good job of managing its assets, annually assessing expanding needs and addressing needed repairs in priority order, the Department is falling further and further behind due to the lack of adequate funding. Unfunded renovation needs are estimated at \$5.9 million and growing as the system continues to age.

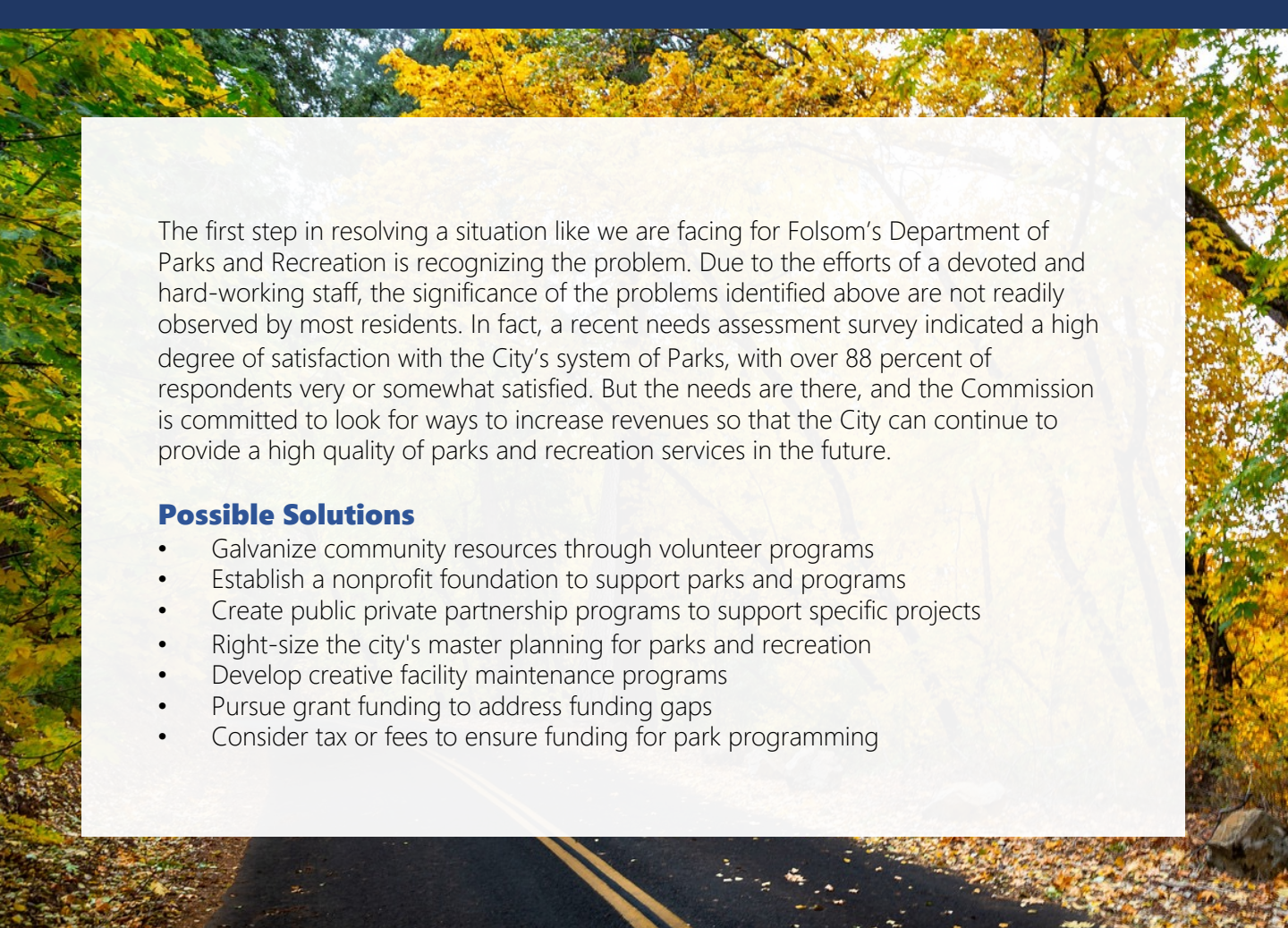
## Maintenance Requirements

Department staff maintains nearly 1,000 acres of open space and performs trail maintenance on more than 50 miles of publicly owned trails. In spite of the sterling efforts of maintenance crews and contracted support, necessary staff and monetary restrictions have limited the ability to expand maintenance operations and respond to immediate or unplanned needs. With an increasing inventory due to the development south of Highway 50, this problem will be severely exacerbated in the coming years.

## Staffing Problems

Despite a growing system and an increasing population, the staffing levels of the Parks and Recreation Department, like other City operations, have been limited based on budgetary constraints. There have been steps taken to improve efficiency of operations, but recreation needs for a City the size of Folsom require an adequate cadre of trained staff to ensure a viable and robust program. Additionally, planning and development staff must be able to keep pace with the implementation of system improvements, and maintenance and renovation is a critical aspect of an effectively functioning Department. The existing staff does a great job of managing our Parks and Recreation activities, but additional staff would materially benefit our overall operation.





The first step in resolving a situation like we are facing for Folsom's Department of Parks and Recreation is recognizing the problem. Due to the efforts of a devoted and hard-working staff, the significance of the problems identified above are not readily observed by most residents. In fact, a recent needs assessment survey indicated a high degree of satisfaction with the City's system of Parks, with over 88 percent of respondents very or somewhat satisfied. But the needs are there, and the Commission is committed to look for ways to increase revenues so that the City can continue to provide a high quality of parks and recreation services in the future.

### **Possible Solutions**

- Galvanize community resources through volunteer programs
- Establish a nonprofit foundation to support parks and programs
- Create public private partnership programs to support specific projects
- Right-size the city's master planning for parks and recreation
- Develop creative facility maintenance programs
- Pursue grant funding to address funding gaps
- Consider tax or fees to ensure funding for park programming

## **How to Get Involved**

There are many opportunities for community members to get involved support parks and recreational programming in the City of Folsom. Here are a few ways that Folsom residents can get involved.

### **Attend Parks & Recreation Commission Meetings**

The Commission meets at 6:30 p.m. the first Tuesday of each month in the City Hall Council Chambers. The public is welcome to address the Commission and is offered the opportunity to speak.

### **See, Click, Fix**

Report non-emergency maintenance issues to the City of Folsom with customer service tool called See, Click, Fix. Learn more by visiting <https://seeclickfix.com/>

Please be advised that this application is not to be used for emergencies. For urgent matters that require immediate attention, call 911.

### **Participate in Parks and Recreation Programming**

Looking to pick up a new skill or make new friends? Try one of our classes, camps, activities, or events. Our calendar is packed with recreational activities designed to delight everyone from preschoolers to seniors. You can challenge your body and mind while having fun in Folsom's natural environment and premier facilities. Learn more at <https://www.folsom.ca.us/>

# About the Commission

The Parks and Recreation Commission consists of 7 members. The Commission shall consist of 5 members appointed by councilmembers. Each councilmember appoints 1 Commission member whose term shall run concurrently with that of the councilmember so appointing. Two members shall be appointed by the council for 2-year terms.



**Dave Nazworth, Chair**  
Term ends: 12/2022  
Appointment: At-Large  
dave\_nazworth@yahoo.com



**Brian Wallace, Vice-Chair**  
Term ends: 12/2022  
Appointment: At-Large  
wallace95630@yahoo.com



**Will Kempton**  
Term ends: 12/2022  
Appointment: Aquino  
willkempton1947@yahoo.com



**Samantha Davidson**  
Term ends: 12/2022  
Appointment: Howell  
SamanthaDavidsonRE@gmail.com



**Matt Hedges**  
Term ends: 12/2022  
Appointment: Kozlowski  
matthedges@gmail.com



**Marina Leight**  
Term ends: 12/2024  
Appointment: Chalamcherla  
marina.leight@gmail.com



**Tanya Morales**  
Term ends: 12/2024  
Appointment: Rodriguez  
Tanya@MoralesRealtor.com

## Subcommittee Assignments (2021-22)

### Planning & Development

- Samantha Davidson, Chair
- Tanya Morales
- Marina Leight

### Budget / Finance

- Matt Hedges, Chair
- Dave Nazworth
- Will Kempton

### Parks & Recreation Renovation Plan

- Brian Wallace, Chair
- Samantha Davidson
- Matt Hedges

### Youth Sports

- Dave Nazworth, Chair
- Brian Wallace
- Will Kempton

*A person is not eligible to hold office as a park and recreation Commissioner unless he or she is, at the time of appointment, a resident and registered voter of the city. If, during his or her term of office, a member of the park and recreation Commission moves his or her residence outside the city limits, or ceases to be a registered voter of the city, such member's office shall immediately become vacant. (Ord. 709 § 3, 1990)*

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## **Folsom Parks and Recreation Awards**

**2020** Sierra Chapter American Society of Landscape Architects – “Parks and Open Space” award for Broder Family Homestead Park

**2020** APWA Design Award for the Oak Parkway Trail Undercrossing Project

### **CPRS Awards**

**2021** Marketing and Communications Digital Media Award of Excellence to Parks and Recreation for the 2020 Virtual Wayne Spence Veteran’s Day Parade

**2021** CPRS Award in the Facility Design and Park Planning Award Category for Broder Family Homestead Park

**2021** CPRS District II Award in the Facility Design and Park Planning Award Category for Broder Family Homestead Park

**2020** Excellence in Design – Park Planning for Broder Family Homestead Park

**2020** Champion of the Community – Will Kempton for his many years of dedicated service on the Parks and Recreation Commission.

**2020** CPRS District II - J.R. Needy Professional Award – Chad Gunter

**2020** CPRS District II – Facility Design & Park Planning Award – Broder Family Homestead Park



Photo Credit: Chad Vander Veen