

Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Commission (PRCC) Meeting
02/13/2024 | 6:00pm | San Carlos Library Community Room

PARK AND RECREATION CULTURAL COMMISSION MEETING NOTES

Attendees:

San Carlos City Team:

- Lisa Porras, Planning Manager
- Akanksha Chopra, Associate Planner
- Tyler Muela, Recreation Manager

WRT:

- James Stickley, Principal
- Rohit Tak, Urban Designer
- Can Liu, Landscape Architect
- Ashwin Nambiar, Urban designer

PRC Committee:

- Bob Bollier, Chair
- Cecile Lee
- Mark Maxwell
- John Durkin
- Julie Lubetkin (Alternate)

PRCC Meeting Agenda:

- Welcome and Intro (5min)
- Presentation with design and programming concepts (30 min)
- Hands on exercise + discussion with scaled maps (1hr)
- Wrap up.

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PRCC COMMITTEE FEEDBACK:

A. Parklets and Outdoor Dining

- The committee expressed concern about losing parklet space which could affect the businesses that rely on the parklets to provide outdoor dining experience, and the resulting loss of revenue for the city; and if alternate or outdoor dining is being considered in the public realm design concepts?

B. Parking and Alleys

- The committee wanted to know if existing street parking was considered in the overall parking strategy, and what was the net gain or loss of street parking spaces.
- The committee asked if the Sam Trans is moving out of San Carlos, will the Sam Trans garage be available for public use? and what strategy is worked out to encourage public to park in the garage space.
- The committee suggested to consider at least 5 minutes parking time for quick access to the businesses.
- The committee highlighted that the alleys on the eastside of Laurel Street on the 700 block offer an opportunity to accommodate organized parking.

C. Fire and Emergency Access

- Ensure consideration for emergency evacuation and fire access in the public realm design.
- The current alignment of market booths along the curb work better to provide fire access in the center. Consider maintaining that in the future.

D. Streetscape Design

- The committee recommended to incorporate median design on San Carlos Avenue as a part of street design strategy.
- The committee suggested to include the landscaping/street design strategy for Laurel Street to be continued beyond 800 block.
- The committee suggested to consider pet-friendly design strategies in the public realm design.

E. Harrington Park and Wheeler Plaza

- The stage in Harrington Park was in use when Farmers Market used to be on Thursday night. The committee asked if this use of the stage can be reintroduced for small events.
- The committee recommended restrooms to be included in Wheeler Plaza.
- The committee stressed on the need to rethink the new name for Wheeler Plaza Public Space.

F. Other Comments/Questions

- The committee recommended to include 500 block of Laurel Street in the streetscape design.
- The committee wanted to know about the extent of cohesive façade design that the city want the building edges to reflect.

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HANDS ON EXERCISE + DISCUSSION

This exercise was introduced work with the committee and gather feedback on the proposed programs as well as explore ideas to introduce new programs in the public space. In this process, the following program ideas were listed:

A. General Themes:

- Public restrooms
- Shade and seating
- ADA compliance

B. Elderly Oriented Programs:

- Seating with provision for parking walkers, and wheelchairs.
- Drop-off zones for seniors.

C. Family Oriented Programs:

- Seating for families to sit together.

D. Youth Oriented Programs:

- Dedicated skateboard zone preferably centrally located in downtown.
- 700 block should be a dismount zone for skateboards, cycles, scooters etc.
- Affordable small bite places such as boba, pita etc., supported by informal hangout spaces.
- Laser Tags
- Programs as provided in the Mission Bay such as bowling, mini-golf, etc.?
- Interactive dancing installation.
- Bouldering/ climbing walls.

E. Children Oriented Programs:

- Hopscotch – interactive patterns in the plaza.
- Play sculptures, animal forms.
- Chess pattern
- Tic-tac-toe
- Temporary ice-skating ring.

F. Utility and Services

- WiFi and power outlets.
- Restrooms beyond 800 block on Laurel Street.

G. Other programs to consider:

- Harrington Park
 - Retractable awning for Harrington Park stage.
 - Movie screen in Harrington Park.
 - Memorial Bricks in Harrington Park
 - Fountain for pets.
- Information posting kiosk/district map and better signage throughout.
- Public art engaging all ages.

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- Wheeler Plaza
 - Family and gender-neutral restrooms.
 - Stage
 - Event Space
- Storage for event space in the west-side alleys of 700 block on Laurel Street.

H. Capacity Study for Market Booths

- The committee recommended to increase the number and frequency of portable restrooms during high footfall events.
- The Park and Rec Department advised to ensure a 12-15 feet clear width for fire access is maintained when placing farmers market booths.
- The Park and Rec Department advised to consider relocating barricades along cross streets to Laurel, positioning them after the alleys, to ensure unobstructed circulation from El Camino Real into the alleys.
- The Park and Rec Department recommended to evaluate the feasibility of installing dismantlable shade structures at intersections during street closures, as these are highly utilized.