

**CITY OF LAS VEGAS VISION ZERO PROGRAM  
GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR SAFE ACCESS TO CITY OF LAS VEGAS PARKS**

**A. INTRODUCTION**

The Imagine Las Vegas Parks - Park System Plan of the City of Las Vegas 2050 Master Plan, was adopted by the Las Vegas City Council on June 21, 2023. In accordance with the guiding principles of the 2050 Master Plan, the Imagine Las Vegas Parks report addressed park accessibility in the following manner:

“Access to parks and open space was repeatedly identified as a top priority throughout the 2050 Master Plan planning process. Residents highlighted the region’s natural features and recreation opportunities as key amenities. As the City of Las Vegas continues to grow rapidly, some parts of the city lack sufficient walkable and bikeable access to parks and open space. As the city prioritizes locations for new parks, safe, convenient access to those parks is paramount to help motivate residents to choose a healthier alternative to driving. Walkable and bikeable access is especially important in areas where personal automobile ownership is lower. While the City’s Transportation plans and the City’s Layered Complete Street Network address non-motorized connections more explicitly, this plan recommends design improvements to consider these connections as an extension of the park system. **Improving access to parks and open space meets the guiding principles to improve equitable neighborhood vitality and health.**”

**B. LAS VEGAS PARK ACCESSABILITY**

There are 130 public parks, recreational facilities and cultural centers in the City of Las Vegas, including:

- 78 regional, community, neighborhood and pocket parks
- 4 municipal swimming pools
- 11 recreational centers
- 4 sports complexes
- 4 active adult centers
- 8 cultural centers
- 6 galleries
- 4 municipal golf courses
- 11 dog parks

The City’s regional, community, neighborhood and pocket parks include:

- 11 regional parks exceeding 50 acres in size
- 16 community parks ranging in size from 10 to 50 acres



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- 42 neighborhood parks greater than ½ acre in size, and
- 3 pocket parks less than ½ acre in size.

According to the Imagine Las Vegas Parks report, in 2023:

- 81.2% of households visited parks during the past year
- 56% of residential units are located within ½ mile walk of parks
- 45% of residential units are within a 2-mile drive of a community center
- 77.4% of households drive to parks, and
- 50.5% of households walk to parks.

It stands to reason that the 50% of residents who walk to parks are among the 56% of residents who live within walking distance (1/2 mile) of a park. Logically, residents who live beyond walking distance from a park, as well as residents who frequent regional parks or specialized sports or cultural venues, such as municipal swimming pools, golf courses, soccer fields, etc. would likely drive.

### **C. IMAGINE LAS VEGAS PARKS GOALS AND TARGETS**

One of the key Imagine Las Vegas Parks goals is to “Improve access and connectivity of open space for ecological, social, health, and quality of life.” To achieve this, the 2050 Master Plan established a 2050 target of:

- “7 acres of park facilities per 1,000 residents within a ¼ mile walk.”

Based on the household survey conducted for the 2050 Master Plan, the single most important Parks and Recreation facility/amenity requested by residents is walking trails. The desire of Las Vegas residents to walk more indicates that providing and maintaining safe, convenient pedestrian access to parks should be a priority.

Contained within the 2050 Master Plan are “Fifty by ‘50” – the 50 most important outcomes within the plan that the City looks achieve by the Year 2050. For Parks and Connectivity, these outcomes include the following.

- Increase park acreage to 7 acres per 1,000 residents
- 85% of housing units within ½ mile of public parks
- 90% of housing units within 3 miles of a trail
- 75% of residents live within 2 miles of a recreation or community center, library, or cultural center.

The following tables show the current status of each of the 16 City Planning Districts with respect to the targeted Fifty by 50 outcomes.



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The following table shows the current acreage of accessible park space per 1,000 residents within ¼ mile for the 16 City of Las Vegas Planning Districts:

**Table 1 – Acres of accessible park space per 1,000 residents within ¼ mile**

Planning District	Acres of accessible park space per 1,000 residents within ¼ mile	Ward
Tule Springs	22.6 acres	6
Summerlin West	21.2 acres	2
Kyle Canyon	11.4 acres	6
<b>2050 MASTER PLAN GOAL</b>	<b>7.0 acres</b>	
Twin Lakes	6.8 acres	1,4,5
Centennial Hills	6.1 acres	4,6
Lone Mountain	5.8 acres	4
Summerlin North	5.7 acres	2,4
<b>2023 CITY AVERAGE</b>	<b>4.4 acres</b>	
Charleston	4.3 acres	1,3
Angel Park	3.9 acres	1,2
East Las Vegas	2.3 acres	3
Rancho	1.8 acres	5,6
West Las Vegas	1.7 acres	5
Downtown South	1.3 acres	3
Downtown Las Vegas	0.8 acres	1,3,5
La Madre Foothills	0.8 acres	4
Nu Wav Kaiv	N/A	6

Source: Imagine Las Vegas Parks



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The following table shows the current percentage of residential dwelling units within ½ mile to parks for the 16 City of Las Vegas Planning Districts:

**Table 2 – Number of dwelling units within ½ mile to parks**

Planning District	Dwelling Units within ½ mile to parks	Ward
Kyle Canyon	99%	6
Summerlin West	95%	2
<b>2050 MASTER PLAN GOAL</b>	<b>85%</b>	
Lone Mountain	77%	4
La Madre Foothills	75%	4
Tule Springs	73%	6
Summerlin North	73%	2,4
Centennial Hills	69%	4,6
Angel Park	69%	1,2
Downtown Las Vegas	66%	1,3,5
<b>2023 CITY AVERAGE</b>	<b>56%</b>	
Rancho	48%	5,6
Downtown South	46%	3
West Las Vegas	41%	5
Twin Lakes	33%	1,4,5
East Las Vegas	27%	3
Charleston	20%	1,3
Nu Wav Kaiv	N/A	6

Source: Imagine Las Vegas Parks



#### **D. PARK ACCESSIBILITY FACTORS**

The need for investment to improve the accessibility of park facilities may be prioritized based on a number of generalized quasi-quantitative accessibility factors which take into consideration the type of park, the characteristics of the local transportation network providing access to the park and other factors including:

- The number of households that have convenient access to the park
- If access to the park is from a Community of Concern (COC)
- If access to the park is from a street included in the City's High Injury Network (HIN)
- If access to the park is from a high-speed street (with a posted speed limit greater than 40 mph)
- If access to the park is from a street where motorists routinely exceed the speed limit
- The history of vehicular crashes involving pedestrians and bicycles in the vicinity of the park
- If access to the park is shared with a City of Las Vegas Suggested Route to School
- If pedestrian access is protected when crossing streets
- If access to the park includes multi-use trails
- If access to the park includes designated/delineated bike lanes
- If access to the park includes trees providing a shade canopy
- If access to the park includes adequate driveways and parking
- If access to the park includes convenient bus stops

**Communities of Concern represent areas that have a higher identified need and typically represent low-income and minority neighborhoods who rely more heavily on bicycling, walking, or transit as their primary form of transportation.**

**The City's High Injury Network includes those streets where a high percentage of severe and fatal traffic injuries occur.**

**Accessibility Factors:** The below factors can be used to prioritize or rank the relative need for investment in measures to improve access to park facilities.

Regional and community parks draw from a larger segment of the community than neighborhood or pocket parks. Therefore, the need for safe, convenient access may extend farther outward for regional and community parks than for neighborhood or pocket parks. While the Imagine Las Vegas Parks report and the 2050 Master Plan have established accessibility goals based upon achieving a 2050 target of ¼ mile distance from a park for residents, somewhat greater distances could be considered for a regional or community park, such as ½ mile walking distance or 2-mile driving distance, but keeping in mind that walking and biking are still the preferred modes of access for the local residents living near regional and community parks.

For comparison purposes, the accessibility factors are most relevant when considering like facilities. For example, when comparing neighborhood parks with neighborhood parks or when comparing regional parks with regional parks. Regional parks draw larger volumes of vehicular traffic and are more likely to be accessed from arterial streets and therefore inherently have a greater number of potentially adverse accessibility factors.

Recreational and cultural facilities could be rated using the same accessibility factors but should be compared to regional and community parks if they draw more vehicular traffic than pedestrian traffic.



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The following are twelve accessibility factors that could be considered in determining how to prioritize or rank the relative need for investment to improve park accessibility and the quantitative measurements which could be used to evaluate each accessibility factor.

1. Number of potential park users who walk, bike or drive to the park
  - a. Regional Park
    - Dwelling Units within  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile walk
    - Dwelling Units within 2-mile drive
  - b. Community Park
    - Dwelling Units within  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile walk
    - Dwelling Units within 2-mile drive
  - c. Neighborhood Park
    - Dwelling Units within  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile walk
    - Dwelling Units within a 2-mile drive
  - d. Pocket Park
    - Dwelling Units within a  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile walk
  - e. Cultural and Recreational Facilities
    - Dwelling Units within 2-miles
2. Community of Concern (COC)
  - a. Neighborhood or Pocket Park
    - Located within  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile of a COC
  - b. Regional or Community Park, Cultural or Recreational Facility
    - Located within  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile of a COC
3. High Injury Network (HIN)
  - a. Neighborhood Park or Pocket Park
    - Located within  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile of a HIN
  - b. Regional or Community Park, Cultural or Recreational Facility
    - Located within  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile of a HIN
4. High speed streets
  - a. Located within  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile of arterial street with speed limit higher than 35 mph
  - b. Located within  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile of arterial or collector street with actual speeds greater than 10 mph above the speed limit
5. Crashes
  - a. Number of pedestrian and bicycle crashes in the last 5 years with injuries or fatalities within  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile
6. Proximity of schools
  - a. Elementary school within  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile of park



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- b. Middle or high school within ½ mile of park
  - c. Suggested Route to School (SRTS) within ¼ mile of park
7. Pedestrian crossings within ½ mile of park
- a. Number of unprotected crossings of 100 ft. wide streets
  - b. Number of unprotected crossings of 80 ft. wide streets
  - c. Number of unprotected crossings of 40 – 60 ft. wide streets
8. Multi-use trail availability
- a. None connected to park
  - b. None within ¼ mile of park
9. Bike lane availability
- a. None within ¼ mile of park
10. Shade tree canopy availability
- a. None within ¼ mile of park
11. Driveway configuration and parking availability
- a. Insufficient for a Regional Park
  - b. Insufficient for a Community Park
  - c. Insufficient for a Neighborhood Park
  - d. Insufficient for a Pocket Park
12. Transit availability
- a. No bus stop within ¼ mile

**E. PRIORITIZATION OF ACCESSIBILITY FACTORS**

The above generalized accessibility factors have different levels of applicability depending upon the perceived needs of the local community. Therefore, the City of Las Vegas conducted a work session with participants from a broad section of the community assembled from the Vision Zero Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). The TAC members were asked to rank the importance of the above accessibility factors in considering the prioritization of individual parks, compared to other similar parks, for investment to improve accessibility.

For Regional and Community Parks, approximately 18 TAC members ranked the community importance of the accessibility factors as follows:



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**Regional & Community Parks**

<b><u>Ranking</u></b>	<b><u>Accessibility Factor</u></b>
1	<b>Community of Concern (COC)</b>
2	<b>High speed streets</b>
3	<b>High Injury Network (HIN)</b>
4	<b>Unprotected pedestrian crossings</b>
5	<b>Vulnerable road user crashes</b>
6	<b>Multi-use trail availability</b>
7	Proximity of schools
8	Number of potential park users who walk, bike or drive to the park
9	Driveway and parking adequacy
10	Shade tree canopy availability
11	Transit availability
12	Bike lane availability

For Neighborhood and Pocket Parks, approximately 12 TAC members ranked the community importance of the accessibility factors as follows:

**Neighborhood & Pocket Parks**

<b><u>Ranking</u></b>	<b><u>Accessibility Factor</u></b>
1	<b>Unprotected pedestrian crossings</b>
2	<b>Number of potential park users who walk, bike or drive to the park</b>
3	<b>High Injury Network (HIN)</b>
4	<b>High speed streets</b>
5	<b>Vulnerable road user crashes</b>
6	<b>Proximity of schools</b>
7	Community of Concern (COC)
8	Shade tree canopy availability
9	Driveway and parking adequacy
10	Transit availability
11	Multi-use trail availability
12	Bike lane availability

In each case, six accessibility factors were ranked highest by the majority of the TAC members. However, as might be expected, the highest ranked accessibility factors differed depending upon the type of park. Specifically,

- The prevalence of unprotected pedestrian crossings, excessive automobile speeds or high speed limits, access via High Injury Network streets and history of pedestrian and bicycle crashes are considered as very important accessibility factors for all types of parks. These four accessibility factors are associated with an increased potential for vehicular crashes involving pedestrians and bicycles, which could result in serious injury or death.
- For Regional and Community Parks, proximity to a Community of Concern and multi-use trail





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availability are also considered as very important accessibility factors. Because Regional and Community Parks are generally located on major arterial streets, alternative access via multi-use trails has greater importance.

- For Neighborhood and Pocket Parks, the potential number of users walking, biking and driving to the park and the proximity to schools are also considered as very important accessibility factors. Because Neighborhood and Pocket Parks are more likely to serve the immediate neighborhood and to be more family oriented, proximity to residential neighborhoods and the prevalence of children are of greater importance. Conversely, for Regional and Community Parks, where users are more likely to drive, proximity to residential neighborhoods and child-oriented activities are of lesser importance.
- While bike lane availability, transit availability, driveway and parking availability, and shade tree canopy availability, were considered to be important by some TAC members, the majority of TAC members ranked them as having the lower importance.

### **F. PRIORITIZATION OF ACCESS TO PARKS FOR IMPROVEMENT AUDITS**

There are 130 parks in the City of Las Vegas. It is not possible to evaluate and improve access to all of these parks at once. Therefore, the guiding principles described above are recommended for use in prioritizing audits to identify investments needed to improve access to parks. Each of the Regional, Community, Neighborhood and Pocket Parks, as well as Sports Complexes, Municipal Sports Parks and Community Centers can be evaluated and ranked using the six most important accessibility factors identified above by the TAC in order to prioritize the parks for audits to improve accessibility.

Specifically, those parks which rank highest in terms of the five most important accessibility factors should be prioritized for audits. The audits may identify relatively low-cost measures which could be implemented in the short-term, or major upgrades which could be programmed for implementation in the intermediate or long-term.

The following Evaluation Forms are recommended for use to provide a relative ranking for each park. The higher the ranking, the higher the prioritization for an audit. A numerical rating scale for each accessibility factor may be used to provide a numerical score for each factor rather than a high or low designation. The relative importance assigned by the TAC members to the accessibility factors is such that differential weighing of the factors is unnecessary. In other words, it is not necessary to weigh any one factor greater than any other factor. Accessibility factors identified above but not included on the Evaluation Forms could be used tie-breakers, in case two parks receive the same score.



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There are differences in accessibility factors to be considered depending upon whether people predominantly walk or drive to the park. Regional Parks, Community Parks, Sports Complexes and Municipal Sports Parks may be evaluated using the same Evaluation Form because of the high percentage of people who drive to access the park. Neighborhood Parks, Pocket Parks and Community Centers may be evaluated using the same Evaluation Form because most users are expected to access the park by walking.

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### Regional Parks, Community Parks, Sports Complexes and Municipal Sports Parks

#### Evaluation Form

Accessibility Factor	Score*	Practical Consideration	Method of Measurement
Community of Concern (COC)		The park is located within walking distance for park users from a COC?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Park is located within ½ mile of COC</li> </ul>
High Injury Network (HIN) / Vulnerable Road User Crashes		Park users must cross or follow HIN roads to access the park?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Park is located within ½ mile of HIN</li> <li>➤ Number of recorded pedestrian and bicycle crashes in the last 5 years within ½ mile of park</li> </ul>
High Speed Streets		Park users cross or follow a street with high rates of speed to access the park?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Park is located within ¼ mile of an arterial street with a speed limit of 40 mph or greater</li> <li>➤ Park is located within ¼ mile of a street with actual speeds greater than 10 mph above the speed limit</li> </ul>
Unprotected Pedestrian Crossings		To access the park, crosswalks used by park users to cross streets are not signalized or equipped with flashing beacons?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Number of unprotected crossings of arterial streets</li> <li>➤ Number of unprotected crossings of collector streets</li> <li>➤ Number of unprotected crossings of residential streets</li> </ul>
Multi-use Trail Availability		Trail facilities not available to allow park users to reduce reliance on streets to access park?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Multi-purpose trail connected to park</li> <li>➤ Multi-purpose trail located within ¼ mile of park</li> </ul>

\*Numerical score based on a relative rating from High to Low.



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### Neighborhood Parks, Pocket Parks and Community Centers

### Evaluation Form

Accessibility Factor	Score*	Practical Consideration	Method of Measurement
Number of Potential Park Users walking, biking or driving to the park		How many households have convenient pedestrian or bicycle access to the park?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ No. of dwelling units within ¼ mile walk</li> <li>➤ No. of Dwelling Units within 2-mile drive</li> </ul>
High Injury Network (HIN) / Vulnerable Road User Crashes		Do park users have to cross or follow HIN roads to access the park?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Park is located within ½ mile of HIN</li> <li>➤ Number of recorded pedestrian and bicycle crashes in the last 5 years within ½ mile of park</li> </ul>
High Speed Streets		Must park users cross or follow a street with high rates of speed to access the park?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Park is located within ¼ mile of an arterial street with a speed limit of 40 mph or greater</li> <li>➤ Park is located within ¼ mile of a street with actual speed greater than 10 mph above the speed limit</li> </ul>
Proximity of Schools		Are school age children routinely present on streets providing access to the park?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Elementary school located within ¼ mile</li> <li>➤ Middle or High school located within ½ mile</li> <li>➤ Park access shared with Suggested Route to School</li> </ul>
Unprotected Pedestrian Crossings		To access the park, are crosswalks used by park users to cross streets signalized or equipped with flashing beacons?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Number of unprotected crossings of arterial streets</li> <li>➤ Number of unprotected crossings of collector streets</li> <li>➤ Number of unprotected crossings of residential streets</li> </ul>

\*Numerical score based on a relative rating from High to Low.



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Several additional factors were suggested by the TAC for consideration in prioritizing parks for audit. These included:

- Prioritizing audits equally across all City Council Wards
- Considering non-vehicular safety as a factor, based on local crime rates
- Prioritizing parks having discontinuous sidewalks on access roads
- Prioritizing parks without adequate streetlights on access roads.

However, the latter two items could be either used to prioritize audits and/or recommended as safety improvements by an audit.

### **G. VISION ZERO ACCESS RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEW PARKS**

The Guiding Principles for Access to Parks are also applicable to the development of new parks or the upgrade of existing parks. To achieve the “Fifty by 50” goal of the 2050 Master Plan, a great many more acres of park facilities will need to be developed. The Guiding Principles for Access to Parks suggest numerous accessibility factors that should be incorporated into park planning. Specifically:

1. Maximize the number of potential park users who can walk, bike, or drive to the park. For neighborhood parks, pocket parks, and community centers, this means siting the park facilities in areas that are predominantly zoned for medium to high-density residential development. For regional parks, community parks, and sports parks, this could mean balancing residential access with vehicular accessibility.
2. Pedestrian and bicycle safety accessing parks should be a primary consideration for parks located in the vicinity of Communities of Concern and/or with access roads included in the High Injury Network, as well as to prevent the park access roads from being added to the High Injury Network as result of preventable crashes.
3. Reduce speed limits and incorporate speed reduction measures on roads used to access the parks.
4. Evaluate historic pedestrian and bicycle crash data to identify locations where safety upgrades may be necessary.
5. Include pedestrian safety improvements on roads providing access to the park, such as continuous sidewalks, multi-purpose paths, street lighting, etc., especially on suggested routes to schools in the vicinity of the park.
6. Include designated crosswalks, flashing beacons, raised medians, bulb-outs, and other design features to avoid unprotected pedestrian crossings.
7. Particularly for Regional Parks and Community Parks, incorporate connections to trail systems to reduce reliance on streets for pedestrian and bicycle access, and to allow the parks to serve the biking community.
8. Delineate bicycle lanes or incorporate multi-use paths on streets providing access to parks.
9. Incorporate shade trees and landscape buffers into sidewalk plans for streets providing access to parks.
10. Ensure that park driveways are properly configured and parking is sufficient for the volume of traffic that may be expected during peak periods, depending upon the size of park and amenities available.
11. Coordinate with the RTC for potential bus stops along existing and potential future bus routes.

