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CSD looks at future park needs

By: Raheem Hosseini, The Telegraph

El Dorado Hills Community Services District members were treated to a peek into the future last week. At a park and recreation facility master plan workshop meeting, MIG project manager Sharon McNamee showed directors what park needs would be created by the area's booming growth.

Currently, the community is ahead of the game when it comes to park and recreation facilities, providing more than it currently needs.

However, at full build-out, McNamee offered a strikingly different picture, saying El Dorado Hills would be short 13 fields, 4 neighborhood parks and 2 village parks.

To build just the neighborhood and village parks, the community would need a total of 32 acres of land.

The current picture is somewhat different.

McNamee said El Dorado Hills presently has nine more sports fields than it needs, and also counts 362 acres at 40 sites, both existing and future. The community also boasts 5.2 acres per 1,000 residents. The target, said McNamee, is between three to seven acres.

The Power Point presentation included various community surveys detailing what residents wanted to see developed.

One of the questions, said McNamee, was "What would you like to participate in if there were no constraints?" One of the suggestions was more bike trails, something CSD Director Larry Brilliant found a bit surprising.

"People don't come to parks and bike and walk," he said, a statement that was countered by the rest of the panel.

"This is what people want to do," McNamee said the study showed. "It's just telling us that's (bicycling) a big interest."

Regarding the wide array of interests among El Dorado Hills' youth, McNamee remarked, "We try to get a wide range of views, and not all kids play sports."

The study cast a wide net in seeking out input, surveying various stakeholders of different ages, including youth between ages 12 and 16.

One of the surveys was conducted at a local pool during the summer, piquing the interest of a number of participants.

"We were delighted to have that many kids involved," said McNamee.

The survey also found that community advisory groups that were surveyed felt schools were not doing an adequate job of maintaining sports fields for recreational use, and that residents don't want the area to become too urbanized.

Depending upon where growth takes El Dorado Hills, which is 95 percent built out, that is a discussion that could pop up again.

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