



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

BONSALL COMMUNITY PARK

AN ACTIVE RECREATION PARK, SAN LUIS REY RIVER PARK MASTER PLAN

[Edited 10/18/24]

BACKGROUND

In 2015, the County of San Diego Department of Parks and Recreation (County Parks) acquired a 63-acre former golf course off Camino Del Rey. The site was formerly known as SLR Downs, and it is one of two active recreation parks identified in the San Luis Rey River Park (SLRRP) Master Plan.

The Master Plan for SLRRP is made up of more than 1,700 acres (or 9 linear miles) of parks, multi-use trails, staging areas, and open space along the San Luis Rey River between Interstate 15 and the Old Bonsall Bridge. While the master plan sets aside 95% of the San Luis Rey River Park for passive open space uses, it also includes two active recreation nodes (Bonsall and Rio Prado) on either end to meet the active recreation needs of the community. These are critical to meet the needs of Bonsall and Fallbrook residents and their diverse recreational interests and as well as providing health-enhancing opportunities.

Bonsall Community Park was selected for active recreation because of its location. The acreage is in a more populated area – next to Bonsall Elementary School, Bonsall Community Center, several housing developments and Highway 76. It is also land that is already disturbed which reduces the impact that construction and increased use will have on the environment. Building this park makes progress toward the County's goal of providing 3 acres of local, public parkland for every 1,000 residents. Currently, the Bonsall community does not have any public-access active recreation parks, so residents have to leave their community to visit them.

County Parks staff hosted three public meetings in addition to stakeholder meetings, focus groups and online surveys. Feedback from this outreach helped the design team identify the features residents valued the most and was used to develop a [Final Design Concept](#). This concept was approved by the San Diego County Board of Supervisors on Sept. 15, 2021.

The park will feature a mix of amenities designed to meet the needs of residents of all ages, abilities, and interests, including shaded playgrounds, multi-use fields, two baseball/softball fields (200' foul lines), one baseball field (300' foul lines), basketball courts, tennis/pickleball courts, open lawn spaces, a bike skills park, a skate park, outdoor exercise equipment and walkways, multi-use trails, a 2-acre dog park, restrooms, and a park office.

As of fall 2024 the project is out to bid. Construction is set to begin in 2025. Future SLRRP projects will focus on trail access, trail connections, and equestrian and vehicle staging areas. During construction, efforts will be made to keep surrounding trails open unless the safety of trail users or construction workers is compromised. Bonsall Community Park is anticipated to open in summer 2026.

GENERAL QUESTIONS

- 1. When did the County acquire Bonsall Community Park (formerly SLR Downs)?** The County acquired the 63-acre Bonsall Community Park site in 2015 as part of the greater San Luis Rey River Park (SLRRP) Master Plan. This parcel is located at Camino Del Rey and West Lilac Road, across from Bonsall Elementary School and Bonsall Community Center. Bonsall Community Park will be located approximately 6.5 from the future Rio Prado Park site, another active recreation park site within the SLRRP Master Plan.



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2. What is the timeline for Bonsall Community Park?

Bonsall Community Park is currently in the bid phase, ready to start construction.

- The County of San Diego Department of Parks and Recreation (County Parks) received funds to start the project in Fiscal Year 2019/20.
- Public outreach was conducted in 2019-2020.
- Environmental surveys and studies were completed in 2021.
- In 2022, Parks and Recreation secured additional funding to add phases to the final design.
- Throughout 2023 and 2024 construction plans were reviewed by County Parks, the County's Planning and Development Services and Public Works Departments, Rainbow Municipal Water District and SDG&E.
- In Fall of 2024, County Parks put the project out to bid.
- Construction is set to begin in 2025.
- The park is anticipated to open in summer 2026.

OUTREACH QUESTIONS

3. What outreach has happened for Bonsall Community Park?

- A public meeting for Bonsall Community Park and Rio Prado Park was held on April 29, 2019, to gather input on park design and desired amenities for each park site. A total of 131 people attended the meeting in person. An online survey was posted for those who could not attend and shared on the County Parks website and social media sites for 2 weeks after the meeting, and 672 surveys were completed.
- A second public meeting for Bonsall Community Park was held Oct. 3, 2019, to collect feedback on two proposed concept plans. A total of 70 people attended the meeting in person at the Bonsall Community Center, across the street from the park site. An online survey was posted for those who could not attend this meeting and was shared via the DPR website and social media sites for 2 weeks after the meeting, and 582 surveys were completed.
- Of the concepts presented, concept A was slightly more active, with more park amenities; concept B was slightly more passive, with more open space. The results of the survey showed the community preference was close, with a favor for a more active concept. We also asked survey takers to select which amenities they preferred most. There were many options and multi-use trails, multi-use sport fields, and playgrounds scored in the top 3.
- Results from this survey, public comments, feedback from the Bonsall Community Sponsor Group, a list of existing amenities in Bonsall, and national standards for recreational amenities were all reviewed against what was feasible on the land. This process was used to develop the final concept plan.
- A third public meeting was hosted on Nov. 5, 2020, at which the final concept plan was presented. [Click here](#) to view the pre-recorded public meeting.

In addition to the public meetings, representatives from the County have attended several Community Sponsor/Planning Group meetings with both the Bonsall CSG and the Fallbrook Community Planning Group (CPG). County staff have also attended Bonsall Unified School District



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Meetings, Community Service Area (CSA) 81 meetings, Rancho Monserrate HOA meetings, an SL Rey HOA meeting, meetings with Vista Palomar Riders (a local equestrian group) and has met with representatives of the State and Federal Wildlife Agencies – with the goal of including all perspectives when sharing information and updates and gathering input. All forms of feedback were documented and applied to the planning process by the project team.

4. How were these meetings publicized?

Meetings were publicized by mailed flyers to residents and businesses within a 1.5-mile radius of the park as well as through the County Parks website (sdparks.org) and social media channels (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram). Meeting flyers, project information was also shared with the Bonsall CSG, Fallbrook CPG, neighboring HOAs, local youth sports groups, and Bonsall Unified School District – and to all stakeholders who requested updates via phone or email throughout the planning process.

5. Will there be another public meeting?

Once when the construction timeline has been finalized, County Parks staff will send information about future public meetings. In the interim, please visit sdparks.org for updates or contact the Park Project Manager assigned to Bonsall Community Park (see below).

6. How can I stay informed?

If you would like to be included on a distribution list for project updates, please contact Faye Pokletar at Faye.Pokletar@sdcounty.ca.gov or 619-510-1278. She, and other members of her team, will continue to work with Community Sponsor/Planning Groups to relay information to Bonsall residents, and will post event announcements on the County Parks website and social media accounts.

7. Was the equestrian community involved in outreach for Bonsall Community Park?

Yes, the equestrian community has been involved in planning process. Equestrians are an important stakeholder in the development of the greater SLRRP and will continue to be included in planning of the river park, which is primarily open space and multi-use trails. In fact, trail alignments within the County Trails Master Plan for Bonsall and Fallbrook were shaped according to input from both Bonsall and Fallbrook equestrian communities.

Bonsall Community Park is designated as an active recreation space so its uses will be different, but its footprint should not impact existing trail access – for equestrians and other users. During the planning for Bonsall Community Park, County Parks staff visited the Vista Palomar Riders Club headquarters in Bonsall several times to share information and receive input from local equestrians. Members of the equestrian community also participated in surveys related to concept designs for Bonsall Community Park and rated multi-use trails as high priority. The final design concept for the park incorporates some walkways and does not affect the trail outside the perimeter of the park, however, future projects in SLRRP will be much more focused on trails, trail access, trail connections and staging areas for equestrians and vehicles.



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[Edited 10/18/24]

TRAFFIC AND SAFETY QUESTIONS

8. Have you studied the potential traffic impact of the park?

Yes. The County completed a traffic impact analysis report that was reviewed by the County Department of Public Works. Recommendations to minimize any potential traffic impacts from the park were incorporated into the final design plan.

9. Will the park be open to student drop-off and pick-up at Bonsall Elementary School?

County Parks staff have been in close communication with the Bonsall Unified School District. Currently, all parking within park boundaries is intended for recreational purposes, and officials at Bonsall Elementary School do not allow students to walk into school. Therefore, every child must still be dropped off on campus.

10. What will be done for fire safety?

North County Fire Protection District and San Diego County Fire have both reviewed the design plan for Bonsall Community Park – concluding in the Emergency Operations Assessment that the park will not create new demand for fire services. On the contrary, wildfire threat will be reduced, and having a developed park with open lawns and ample parking can provide emergency crews with temporary safe refuge areas during disaster situations. Safety is a top priority for County Parks and the properties this department manages are often crucial during evacuation events.

11. I live near the park; how will you keep visitors from entering or parking on my property?

The entrance/exit for the park will be clearly marked with signs, directing visitors to designated parking areas. There is ample parking included in the design plan for Bonsall Community Park, and based on the size and purposes of the amenities that are included, street parking should not be necessary.

12. Will there be security on site?

Park Rangers will patrol the park daily during park hours, seven days a week, 365 days a year. A park office has been incorporated into the design plan, so Rangers can be stationed there when not on foot, managing the property. Bonsall Community Park will also have two live-on volunteer hosts to help patrol the park after hours and provide a 24-hour presence. Additionally, County Parks staff maintain good relationships with local law enforcement, reporting and mitigating safety concerns as needed. All park users should report issues if they see or experience them by alerting a Park Ranger, the Sheriff's Office, or calling 911. This information will be posted in park kiosks and in other signs throughout the property.

13. Explain the role of a live-on volunteer host; how can they help?

Live-on volunteer hosts with the County Parks Department hold many responsibilities, including assisting with general park maintenance and after-hours support. They live at the park in designated sites reserved for RVs or large trailers. These are required to work a certain number of hours per week and are screened through a process similar to that of a regular County employee.



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BONSALL COMMUNITY PARK

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[Edited 10/18/24]

14. What happens if there is a homeless encampment?

Park Rangers will patrol the park daily and as part of their training have protocol for working with unhoused individuals. If an encampment is located on park land, they remind occupants that unpermitted camping is prohibited – then coordinate with homeless resource organizations to provide the necessary services and support. A notice to vacate is issued, and if occupants do not cooperate, the Rangers will work with law enforcement or other officials to facilitate safe relocation.

TRAIL QUESTIONS

15. When will the trails open?

Walkways within the park will be constructed at the same time as the park. Trails outside of Bonsall Community Park are still in the planning phase, as part of the larger trail plan for the SLRRP. The existing unofficial trail along the northern perimeter of the park will remain untouched as part of the final project.

16. What user groups were considered when building the walkways? What about the perimeter trail?

The existing perimeter trail made of natural materials will remain open to all users including pedestrians, hikers, dog-walkers, families, equestrians, mountain-bikers and others who are interested in spending quality time outside. Measuring 10-to-20-feet, with plenty of shoulder space, the trail offers room for everyone. Within Bonsall Community Park, the walkways will be hardscape and intended for foot and non-motorized wheel traffic, only (with the exception of ranger vehicles).

17. Will e-bikes be allowed on trails within SLRRP?

Yes, the State of California passed AB 1096, which now defines Class 1 and 2 e-bikes as bicycles that are allowed on trails. These classes of e-bikes have electric assistance with a Motor-Powered Speed Limit (MPSL) of 20 MPH. E-bikes are popular with older adults and with people with limited endurance or who struggle to ride a bike uphill. The electric assistance gives them the boost they need to access trails they might not otherwise be able to enjoy. All trail users must follow safety guidelines and use the trails in a way that respects and prioritizes the safety of all trail users.

18. What materials will be used for the trail and walkways?

The existing perimeter trail is composed of a mixture of decomposed granite and compacted native ground. The internal walkways will be either concrete or stabilized decomposed granite (forming a hardscape surface).

19. Will there be loop trails?

There will be numerous internal walkways, making many different walking/biking loops possible within the park.

20. How will equestrians access the trails?

County Parks staff are planning several access points to the trails within SLRRP, which will



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include staging areas for equestrians and vehicles distributed throughout the larger river valley. These are still in the planning phase, but staff anticipate a minimum of two equestrian staging areas will be integrated into the overall river park: One in the western portion and another in the eastern portion. The perimeter trail at Bonsall Community Park will connect to these future equestrian staging areas and will still be accessible for equestrians, once the park is constructed.

21. Will the construction and eventual opening of Bonsall Community Park close the existing perimeter trail?

No, the existing trail remains open for public use. There could be a temporarily closure of the trail, if safety risks are realized for trail users and/or work crews during construction, however, the trail would reopen as soon as those risks are mitigated.

PARKING/STAGING AREA QUESTIONS

22. How many parking stalls will be included?

There will be approximately 440 standard parking stalls and 16 ADA parking stalls within Bonsall Community Park. There will also be 3 pull-through stalls and stalls dedicated for electrical vehicle charging. The parking lot was sized according to the active recreation amenities that will be built and their projected visitorship; there should be ample room for vehicles, eliminating any overflow into adjacent neighborhoods.

23. How many vehicle access points will be added?

Visitors will be able to enter and exit the park via two access points: One at the intersection of Camino Del Rey and Calle de las Brisas, and the other along Lilac Road. Vehicle gates will be installed at both access points and locked after hours. A third vehicle access point at the northern edge of the park, along Lilac Road, will be used by park maintenance vehicles, only.

24. Will there be intersection improvements at Camino Del Rey and Calle de las Brisas?

Yes, we will be making improvements to add a left turn lane into the park as well as adding new pedestrian crosswalks. These roadway improvements will be done in conjunction with the park construction.

25. Will new sidewalks be constructed on Camino Del Rey?

A new decomposed granite path along Camino Del Rey will be constructed to the southwest of the new park entrance/exit that will mirror the existing path to the northeast of this access point.

ENVIRONMENTAL QUESTIONS

26. Will the projects comply with California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)?

Yes. This project is within the SLRRP Master Plan Core Study Area, for which a Programmatic Environmental Impact Report (PIER) was prepared and certified by the County Board of Supervisors in 2008. The project will comply with all applicable mitigation measures identified in the Board of Supervisors adopted 2021 Addendum to the PEIR.



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27. What biological resources are anticipated to exist within the SLRRP open space preserve area?

The San Luis Rey River Park contains riparian and upland habitats that support or have the potential to support a wide variety of species, including the least Bell's vireo, coastal California gnatcatcher, southwestern willow flycatcher and arroyo toad. Environmental surveys for Bonsall Community Park and nearby land have identified the presence of least Bell's vireo and southwestern willow flycatcher near the footprint for the park in riparian habitat, but not on site, and the arroyo toad was not observed.

28. Are these projects part of the Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP)?

Bonsall Community Park is within the Draft Plan for the North County MSCP. For more information on the Draft North County MSCP visit <https://engage.sandiegocounty.gov/northcountyplan>. To connect with someone, send an email to mscp@sdcounty.ca.gov.

29. How is building this park supporting the reduction of Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions?

By building a park *within a community*, residents have a reason to stay and play local – versus driving far distances to enjoy the same amenities at other parks. This will help meet goals associated with the reduction of GHG emissions caused by activities in the area.

FACILITY QUESTIONS

30. What amenities will be built in Bonsall Community Park?

The park will feature a mix of amenities designed to meet the needs of residents of all ages, abilities, and interests, including shaded playgrounds, multi-use fields, two baseball/softball fields (200' foul lines), one baseball field (300' foul lines), basketball courts, tennis/pickleball courts, open lawn spaces, a bike skills park, a skate park, outdoor exercise equipment and walkways, multi-use trails, a 2-acre dog park, restrooms, and a park office.

31. Will there be restrooms?

Yes, restrooms are part of the design plan, including ADA stalls. The restrooms will be maintained by park staff.

32. What are the park hours?

The park is scheduled to be open from sunrise until sunset, seven days a week, 365 days a year. The gates will be locked at all other times.

33. What maintenance will be done at the site?

County Parks staff will provide general site maintenance which includes mowing, tree/shrub maintenance, stormwater management and erosion control, tree planting, protection of natural and cultural resources, debris removal, and enforcement of codes and policies. Live-on volunteer hosts will also assist, as needed.

34. Will there be a disc golf course?

While not feasible at this location given the current design plan, County Parks staff are considering this for other active recreation sites within SLRRP.



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AN ACTIVE RECREATION PARK, SAN LUIS REY RIVER PARK MASTER PLAN

[Edited 10/18/24]

35. Will there be rugby fields?

Currently there are no plans to incorporate rugby fields at any parks within the SLRRP Master Plan. Rugby was not one of the top amenities requested in public meetings, community planning sessions or outreach surveys. However, the lawns/multi-use fields being added to Bonsall Community Park can be used for a variety of purposes including casual rugby, and if there is enough interest in the community, park staff could work with residents to welcome a local program (per County policy).

36. Will the park have lighting?

After-hours lighting will be added for security purposes, only, and will not be sufficient for evening activities/events. *The park will be closed after sunset.*

37. Will there be a splash pad or aquatic feature?

There are no plans to incorporate a splash pad or aquatic feature into Bonsall Community Park. This was not listed as a top amenity requested by residents during the public outreach process.

38. Will shade be provided?

Yes, shade structures will be added throughout the park and over the playground area. Materials will be durable and designed to match the character of the park and the greater Bonsall community. Existing mature trees along with newly planting trees will provide additional shade throughout the park.