



Watsonville
PARKS & COMMUNITY SERVICES

2025 IMPACT REPORT

Watsonville Parks and
Community Services

LETTER FROM DEPUTY CITY MANAGER & PARKS DIRECTOR

On behalf of the entire Watsonville Parks and Community Services team, I am excited to share our 2025 Impact Report. This report highlights the progress made throughout the year and reflects our ongoing commitment to creating exceptional experiences that improve the quality of life for Watsonville residents.

This past year, we've experienced tremendous success in expanding our programs, improving our parks and facilities, and increasing community engagement. Our department reached over 117,000 participants across programs, events and activities throughout the year, and welcomed more than 1,000,000 visits at our parks.

One of the year's biggest highlights was the grand opening of Watsonville's first pickleball courts at Callaghan Park. What began as a vision several years ago has become a reality!

Another milestone was California Arts Council's designation of Downtown Watsonville as one of California's ten new Cultural Districts for 2026. This recognition honors the artists, culture bearers, and community partners who have shaped Watsonville's strong arts and cultural identity.

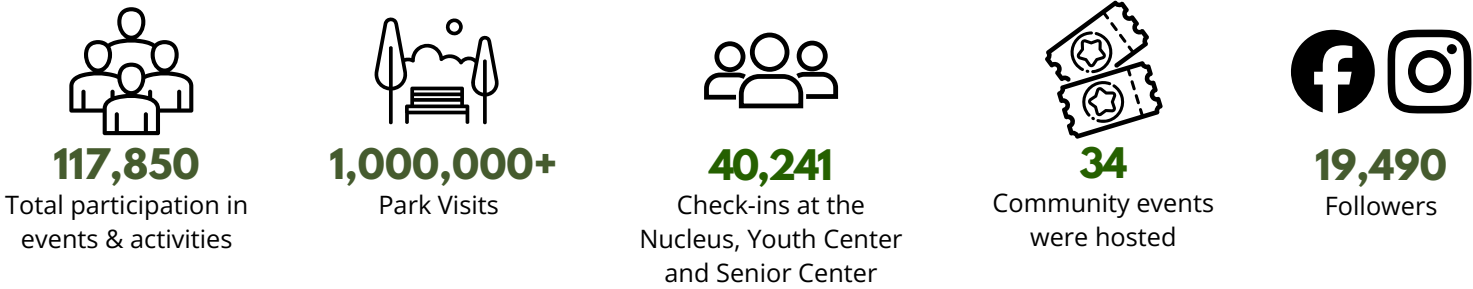
We have also made significant strides in enhancing our parks and facilities. Notable updates this year include reaching 70% completion at Ramsay Park, refreshing the Senior Center with a new coat of paint, and upgrading the Youth Center with a new sound system and projector.

We are thankful for your support and engagement during the past year and hope you share our enthusiasm for the coming new year.

Nick Calubaquib
Deputy City Manager & Parks Director



2025 AT A GLANCE





WE CREATE EXCEPTIONAL EXPERIENCES THAT ENHANCE THE QUALITY OF LIFE!

VISION

We strive to leave a legacy of equitable access to parks and recreation for future generations by creating exceptional experiences for those who live, work and play in our community.

MISSION

We are dedicated to enhancing health and wellbeing through people, outstanding parks and impactful programs, while prioritizing community needs, equity, and responsible use of resources.

BOARDS & COMMISSIONS

PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

Araseli Campos	District 1
Francisco Estrada	District 2
Fabian Leonor	District 3
Jennifer Schacher, Vice Chair	District 4
Celeste DeWald	District 5
Noe Ibarra, Chair	District 6
Emiko Stewart	District 7
Isabella Alvarado	Youth Representative

SENIOR ACTION COMMITTEE

Araseli Campos
Antonio Rivas
Anna Kammer
Christine Catanzaro
Fabian Leonor
Gina Cole
John Hunting

FRIENDS OF WATSONVILLE PARKS & COMMUNITY SERVICES



Ana Hurtado	President of the Board
Tony Camargo	Vice President
Daryl Wise	Secretary
Francisco Estrada	Treasurer
Alfonso Lobato	Board Member
Maria Orozco	Board Member
Guille Medrano	Board Member

TEEN ACTION COUNCIL

Camila Rocha-Roque	Cristina Nolasco
Anahi Cortez-Jacobo	Isabella Alvarado
Naomi Brunelli	Luka Chavez-Luna
Sofia Ibarra Buccio	Giovanni Melgoza
Eva Sophia Martinez Rodriguez	Amy Vasquez-Ortiz
Emily Elizabeth Rodriguez	Alysa Oliver

BIG 2025 WINS



ADOPT-A-PARK

In January, we launched the Adopt-A-Park program, creating new opportunities for groups and organizations to take an active role in the beautification of our community and help support the City's park spaces. In 2025, four parks were adopted and a total of 47 volunteer hours were dedicated to park maintenance and beautification.



ADULT BASKETBALL LEAGUE

Athletics programs scored big wins this year with the return of the Adult Basketball League after a 6-year hiatus. The league tipped off in February and ran throughout the year, with 36 teams and 432 individuals participating.



RAMSAY PARK RENAISSANCE PROJECT

Construction is now 70% complete—we're officially more than halfway there! Recent milestones include the repurposing of harvested eucalyptus trees into new benches at the dog park, construction of the maintenance building, and the installation of posts for two bullpens at the multi-use field.



CALLAGHAN PARK PICKLEBALL RIBBON CUTTING

In June of 2025, we celebrated the grand opening of Watsonville's first Pickleball Courts and the reopening of our renovated basketball courts at Callaghan Park. Improvements were made possible by Measure R, Measure Y and Friends of Watsonville Parks and Community Services.



SPIRIT OF WATSONVILLE FOURTH OF JULY PARADE

The parade soared to new heights. For the first time ever, the procession kicked off with fifteen multicolored planes from the West Coast Ravens performing an aerial display.



SENIOR CENTER

The Senior Center continued to thrive as a vibrant hub for social and recreational activities. Attendance increased by 14%, with an average of 89 older adults visiting the Senior Center daily.



PUBLIC ART MASTER PLAN ADOPTED

In August, the Watsonville City Council unanimously adopted a public art master plan that lays out community-driven priorities for public art, cultural programming and artist support and sets a framework for spending the City's 'percent for the arts' developer fee.



VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

A total of 315 volunteers contributed over 2,114 volunteer hours. Volunteers supported community events, park clean-ups, youth and older adult programs throughout the year.



YOUTH CENTER COMMUNITY PARTNERS

15 generous local business partners offered FREE and discounted items to Passport to Fun members of the Watsonville Youth Center! Cafécto, Chilangolandia, Chubby Tacos, Conchitas, Forever Fly, Hot Birds, La Misma, Ranch Milk, Real Colima, Santa Cruz Bowls, Slice Project, Tacos El Jerry, The Lab, Togos, and Watsonville Cyclery



MAIN ST. TREE LIGHTS

Through Measure R and a generous \$13,000 donation from the Friends of Watsonville Parks and Community Services, new LED lights were installed on all street trees along Main Street from Riverside Drive to Freedom Boulevard and on two redwood trees in front of the Civic Plaza.



WATSONVILLE DESIGNATED AS A CALIFORNIA CULTURAL DISTRICT

On December 12, the California Arts Council (CAC) designated Downtown Watsonville as one of California's 10 new Cultural Districts for 2026.



NOCHE DE BRILLO

On December 14, downtown hosted the City's first annual Noche de Brillo event, featuring a snow play area, train rides, entertainment, a holiday market and more. We welcomed 4,000 event attendees and 45+ community organizations and businesses.

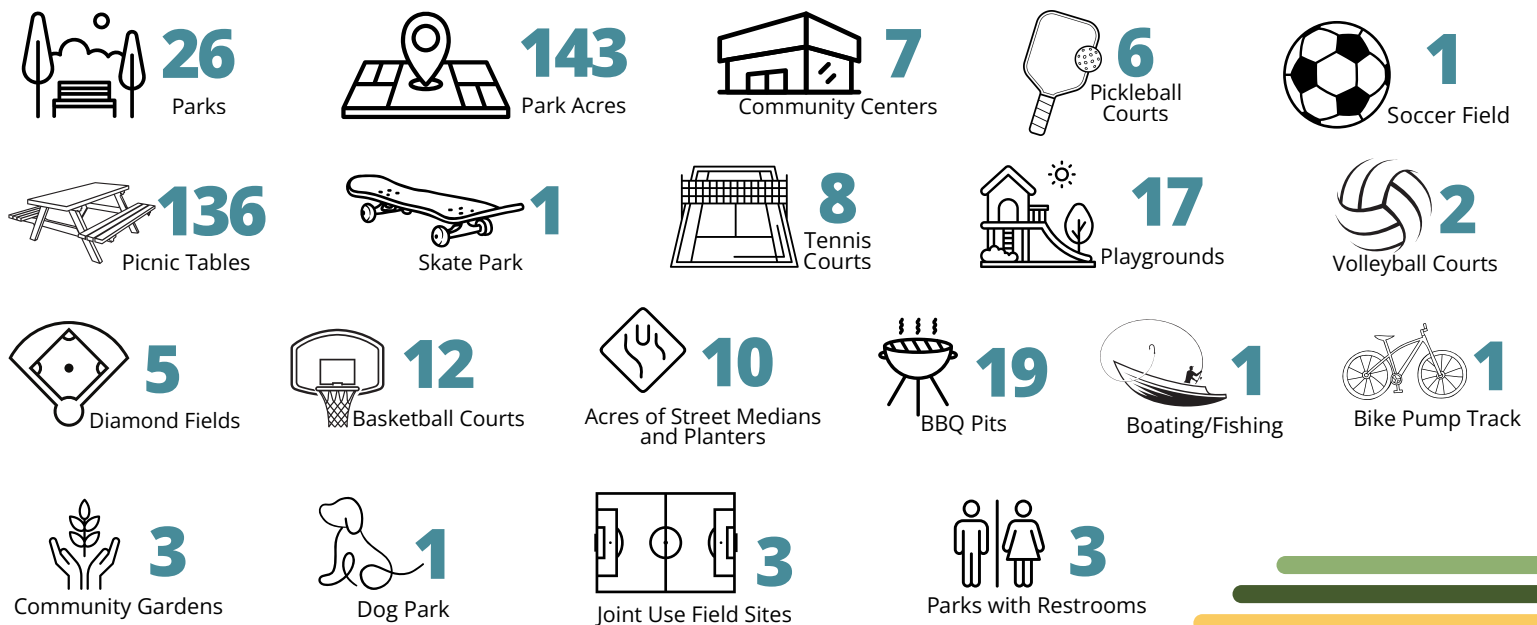


OUTSTANDING PARKS & FACILITIES

WE'RE COMMITTED TO PROVIDING SAFE, WELL-MAINTAINED AND ACCESSIBLE PARKS AND FACILITIES



PARKS AT A GLANCE





- ▶ The Senior Center got a fresh coat of paint, giving the space a vibrant new look and a welcoming feel. The conference room also received new flooring
- ▶ At the Freedom Library, parks teammates installed new drip irrigation, added plants, and refreshed the mulch to enhance the outdoor space
- ▶ In September, City Council adopted a new Park Ordinance. The new ordinance unifies rules for parks and public facilities (public buildings, parking garages/lots)



- ▶ In October, Council adopted a Resolution accepting a \$39,112 GameTime Community Champions Playground Grant for a new Cherry Blossom Park playground. Construction is expected to start in March of 2026
- ▶ New ADA-compliant bleachers were added for Little League at Pinto Lake Park
- ▶ A new sound system and projector were installed at the Youth Center, and the Jungle Gym for teen workouts was opened



- ▶ New drinking fountains were installed in several parks
- ▶ The Commemorative Tree and Bench program was finalized. This initiative offers a meaningful way to honor a loved one while enhancing the beauty of a city park, trail, or lake
- ▶ Engineered wood fiber was added to all playgrounds to meet safety standards
- ▶ In coordination with Public Works, repaired lifted sidewalks and installed new tree grates along Union and Maple

1,000,000+ PARK VISITS

***Over 10 min**

58 MIN AVERAGE VISIT TIME

Top 10 Most Visited Parks

Rank	Park	Visits	Unique	Freq.	Avg. Visit Time
#1	Ramsay Park	336,600	48,200	6.99	78 min
#2	City Plaza Park	311,500	113,000	2.76	60 min
#3	Franich Park	172,800	41,100	4.2	72 min
#4	Callaghan Park	57,400	21,400	2.69	67 min
#5	Pinto Lake City Park	56,100	22,100	2.54	108 min
#6	Joyce-McKenzie Park	13,400	5,600	2.4	67 min
#7	Marinovich Park	10,000	5,100	1.97	52 min
#8	Crestview Park	8,200	3,300	2.53	48 min
#9	Muzzio Park	8,000	1,800	4.35	92 min
#10	Seaview	7,800	3,800	2.05	56 min













IMPACTFUL PROGRAMS

CELEBRATE WATSONVILLE’S CULTURAL HERITAGE AND ENCOURAGE COMMUNITY BUILDING THROUGH PROGRAMS, SERVICES, EVENTS AND FACILITIES THAT ARE CULTURALLY RELEVANT, RESPONSIVE TO COMMUNITY PRIORITIES AND THAT SUPPORT HEALTH AND WELLNESS, PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT AND PUBLIC SAFETY

117,850 PARTICIPANTS  3.8% from 2024

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

	2024	2025	
Total Check-ins at the Nucleus, Youth Center and Senior Center	27,350	40,241	47% 
Passport to Fun & Senior Center Memberships	1,732	2,480	43% 
Hours of Operation at the Youth Center & Senior Center	2,589	2,814	9% 
Parks and Community Services-Led Community Events	24	34	42% 
Permitted Community-Led Special Events	45	45	0% 
Number of Indoor Facility Rentals	70	120	74% 
Number of Field Rentals	250	290	13% 
Fees Collected	\$229,630	\$358,895	56% 
Volunteers Onboarded		217	

Increased participation, memberships, and facility use reflect growing demand for recreation opportunities.





- Offered Itty Bitty Sports indoors during the winter months allowing youth to remain active and engaged throughout the rainy season
- 16 participants from the Nucleus embarked on a thrilling white-water rafting trip over the summer. Through teamwork, courage, and a sense of exploration, youth learned to paddle in sync, communicate under pressure, and embrace the excitement of the river
- In June, the Senior Center team entered into a contract to manage Meals on Wheels dining site to support the program



- In June, we partnered with REC Technology to elevate the community's tennis and pickleball experiences, making it easier to view court schedules, reserve courts, and register for lessons
- The Youth Center offered 27 field trips, including an overnight camping trip. Participants learned how to pitch tents, cook outdoors with a propane stove, and to work together to prepare meals and tidy up afterward
- The Strawberry Festival attracted more than 48,400 attendees and introduced new features, including a live art mural and a historical display



- Throughout the year, 34 free community events were hosted, including annual favorites like the Strawberry Festival, Downtown Candy Crawl, and Music in the Plaza - plus our newest addition, Noche de Brillo
- Through Measure R funding, soccer coaches received Positive Coaching Alliance training and gained access to the Mojo app, equipping them with tools to improve player development and enhance their overall coaching experience



- The Youth Center hosted its second annual Salsa Y Salsa event! A total of 16 contestants entered over 30 different salsas
- Our ELOP partnership provided more than 300 students across seven school sites with hands-on STEM learning opportunities and access to a diverse slate of athletic programs, including flag football, cheer, basketball, tennis, and baseball
- 160 youth and older adult programs were subsidized by Measure R funding



- The Youth Center forged partnerships with local farms and non-profits, bolstering healthy snack and cooking programs
- 7 events were supported through the Community Special Events Sponsorship Program
- The Nucleus launched a Bike Tech Club after identifying a community need. With support and connections to a local biking program, participants have already organized group rides and begun developing bike advocacy initiatives in Watsonville



- Our Senior Action Committee received and analyzed the data collected in the Age Well Survey, which allowed committee members to begin drafting the Action Items that will guide our 5-year Age-Friendly Action Plan
- We collaborated with businesses and non-profit organizations over 490 times, enhancing community events and program offerings
- Of the patients prescribed ParkRx by Salud Para la Gente providers and Rolling Hills Middle School Tier 2 staff, 213 completed consultations with our team, and 135 participated in our programs



ONE HIGH PERFORMING TEAM

ENSURE ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS AND FISCAL STABILITY FOR LONG-TERM COMMUNITY BENEFIT

33 FULL-TIME TEAMMATES

92 PART-TIME TEAMMATES

**26,900
HOURS WORKED BY PART-TIME TEAMMATES**

- ▶ Awarded \$16,040 in scholarships funded by Friends of Watsonville Parks & Community Services to 172 youth, allowing them to participate in fee-based programs - a 7% increase from 2024
- ▶ Updated Park ordinance including park hours, dog rules and signs on City property

Trainings & Certifications

- ▶ Park Teammates received training in: Chemical Safety, Public Service, Traffic Control, Tree Planting, Forklift, CPRS Maintenance Management School, ISA Tree Risk Assessor Qualification and Contracting/Insurance/Risk Management
- ▶ Two Youth Coordinators completed Outdoor Recreation Leadership training
- ▶ A Recreation Supervisor earned the designation of Certified Festival and Event Associate

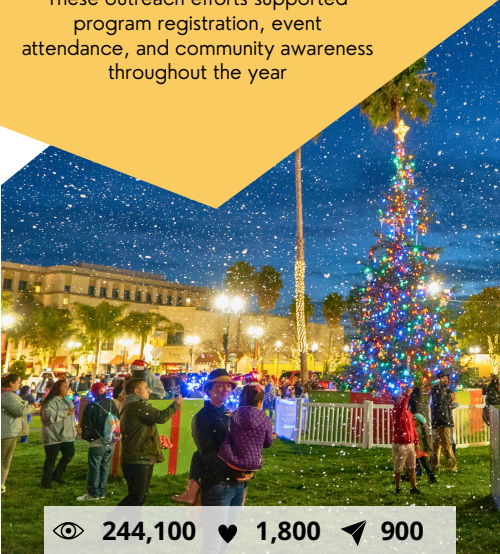
Teammates on Committees or Boards

- ▶ SCCRTC Elder and Disabled Transports Advisory Committee as the District 4 rep
Katie Nunez
- ▶ Teammates leading the Asset Builders Collaborative of Pajaro Valley
Nick Merolla, Jason Hall, Diego Aguilera, Uriel Mendoza, Eugene Bragado, Gustavo Hernandez
- ▶ Dominican Hospital Family Medicine Residency Program Community Advisory Board, Child, Youth and Family Well-Being Cabinet, Children's Network of Santa Cruz County
Nick Merolla
- ▶ Pajaro Valley Collaborative & South County Triage
Nick Calubaquib
- ▶ Board of Director for the Central Coast YMCA & Executive Board of Sports Association of Northern California Recreation Agencies
Joey Barrera
- ▶ Teammates involved in California Park and Recreation Society District 6 Board
Joey Barrera - President, Jessica Beebe - Vice President, Sara Jewell - Secretary, Eli Shea - Marketing Director, Nick Calubaquib - Admin Rep, Imelda Negrete - Legislative Rep, Nick Merolla - Youth & Teens Rep



ENGAGEMENT

These outreach efforts supported program registration, event attendance, and community awareness throughout the year



👁 244,100 ❤ 1,800 📍 900



👁 157,200 ❤ 1,800 📍 1,500



👁 68,000 ❤ 899 📍 167

Social Media Insights

19,490 FOLLOWERS

REACHED 694,260 PAGES

66,160 CONTENT INTERACTIONS

Top Engaging Posts by Views

The Rex Report - monthly newsletter	2025
Emails Sent	23
Open Rate	44.5%
Total Opens	60,030

AWARDS & RECOGNITION



- ▶ The Youth Center Ambassador Program and Watsonville Brllante each received a CPRS District 6 Award of Excellence
- ▶ Recreation Supervisor Jessica Beebe named 2025 Park Hero at Annual Cesar Chavez Awards
- ▶ City Council proclaimed May as Older Americans Month
- ▶ The 12,500-square-foot Watsonville Brllante mosaic mural on the Civic Plaza Parking Garage was awarded the Helen Putnam Award for Excellence from the League of CA Cities



- ▶ The Watsonville Strawberry Festival took Silver in the Pajaro Valley 2025 'Best Event' awards, while The Nucleus won 'Best Place to Take the Kids'
- ▶ City Council proclaimed July as Parks and Recreation Month
- ▶ Sports Supervisor Joey Barrera was recognized as a California Park & Recreation Society (CPRS) Hero
- ▶ On December 12, the California Arts Council (CAC) designated Downtown Watsonville as one of California's 10 new Cultural Districts for 2026









2025 Star of the Month

Elizabeth Shea	January
Jazmyn Cornejo	February
Elyzabeth Hodgins	March
Alicia Lopez and Patty Zendejas	April
Mikey Camargo	May
Ebony Gonzalez	June
Sara Jewell	July
Jessica Beebe	August
Joey Barerra	October
Cesar Sanchez	December



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