



***LIVERMORE AREA RECREATION
AND PARK DISTRICT
MUNICIPAL SERVICE REVIEW FINAL***

January 10, 2013

Prepared for the
Local Agency Formation Commission of Alameda County
by
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. AGENCY OVERVIEW	2
FORMATION	2
BOUNDARY	2
SPHERE OF INFLUENCE	3
ACCOUNTABILITY AND GOVERNANCE.....	6
MANAGEMENT AND STAFFING	7
GROWTH AND POPULATION PROJECTIONS.....	9
FINANCING	10
2. MUNICIPAL SERVICES.....	13
RECREATION AND PARK SERVICES	13
3. MSR DETERMINATIONS	21
4. SPHERE OF INFLUENCE UPDATE.....	24

1. AGENCY OVERVIEW

Livermore Area Recreation and Park District (LARPD) provides public park operation and maintenance for local and regional parks and recreation services to the City of Livermore and surrounding unincorporated areas of South Livermore Valley and north Livermore. LARPD serves an expansive area, covering a substantial portion of the eastern unincorporated area in Alameda County. The last Municipal Service Review (MSR) for LARPD was completed in 2006.

FORMATION

LARPD was formed on June 10, 1947 as an independent special district. The District's purpose is to provide park and recreation services to residents within the District's boundaries as described above.

The principal act that governs LARPD is the Recreation and Park District Law.¹ The principal act empowers recreation and park districts to 1) organize, promote, conduct, and advertise programs of community recreation, including, but not limited to, parks and open space, parking, transportation, and other related services that improve the community's quality of life, 2) establish systems of recreation and recreation facilities, including, but not limited to, parks and open space, and 3) acquire, construct, improve, maintain, and operate recreation facilities, including, but not limited to, parks and open space, both inside and beyond the district's boundaries.² Districts must apply and obtain LAFCo approval to exercise latent powers, that is, those services authorized by the principal act but not provided by the district by the end of 2000.³

BOUNDARY

LARPD's boundary area includes the City of Livermore and most of the unincorporated area east, southeast, and north of Livermore, plus a few smaller unincorporated areas west of Livermore and east of Pleasanton. The unincorporated area within LARPD bounds is bounded by Contra Costa County to the north, San Joaquin County to the east, Santa Clara County to the south, and the cities of Pleasanton and Dublin to the west. There is some territory in the northeast corner of Alameda County that is not included in LARPD boundaries. The total land area within the boundary of LARPD is 243.5 square miles.

LARPD's bounds include two small portions of territory in the City of Pleasanton (which provides its own park and recreation services) in the Ruby Hills and Stoneridge

¹ California Public Resources Code §5780-5791

² California Public Resources Code §5786.

³ California Government Code §56824.10.

areas. These areas, which are both entirely residential, were annexed in the 1980's into the City and not successively detached from LARPD.

Extra-territorial Services

LARPD services are provided at facilities within its boundaries. Classes and facilities are made available to residents and non-residents. Non-residents are charged an additional 20 percent fee per activity for programs and classes offered by LARPD. Non-residents are charged higher park rental rates and facility rental rates depending on the park and facility.

LARPD also operates Camp Shelly, an overnight camping facility, located outside of its boundaries in South Lake Tahoe. Camp Shelley charges a fee of \$35 per night to residents and non-residents alike;⁴ however, reservations are initially only taken in person at the LARPD community center, in order to give residents of the District priority.

Unserved Areas

There are no areas within LARPD's existing boundaries that are lacking recreation and park services. However, in an effort to serve the expanding needs of the residents of Murray Township, East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD) is responsible for the maintenance and operation of new regional parks, open space and trails in the Murray Township area, which is in LARPD's boundary, but more appropriately maintained by EBRPD given its mission, which is more regional in nature. Under a formal tax sharing agreement with LARPD that was put into place in 1992, EBRPD receives a portion of LARPD's property tax dollars for this service to the new regional parks.⁵ LARPD continues to maintain five regional parks and preserves outside the City of Livermore that were created prior to the establishment of this agreement.

SPHERE OF INFLUENCE

LARPD's Sphere of Influence (SOI) was established on August 28, 1975 as coterminous with the City of Livermore SOI. On April 16, 1987, LARPD's SOI was amended to include the District's boundary area and the Mountain House School District area. Three subsequent changes were made to LARPD's boundary between 1987 and the most recent SOI update in 2006. Two areas in the City of Dublin were detached from LARPD without corresponding SOI amendments—194 acres in 1992 and 1,029 acres in 1994. In the Eastern Dublin Property Owners' Reorganization (PA-00-025) in 2002, 1,120 acres were detached from LARPD with a corresponding adjustment to its SOI.

⁴ http://www.larpd.dst.ca.us/camp_shelly/info.html

⁵ Agreement Between Livermore Area Recreation and Park District and East Bay Regional Park District for the Cooperative Provision of Park and Recreation Facilities and Services and Tax Sharing.

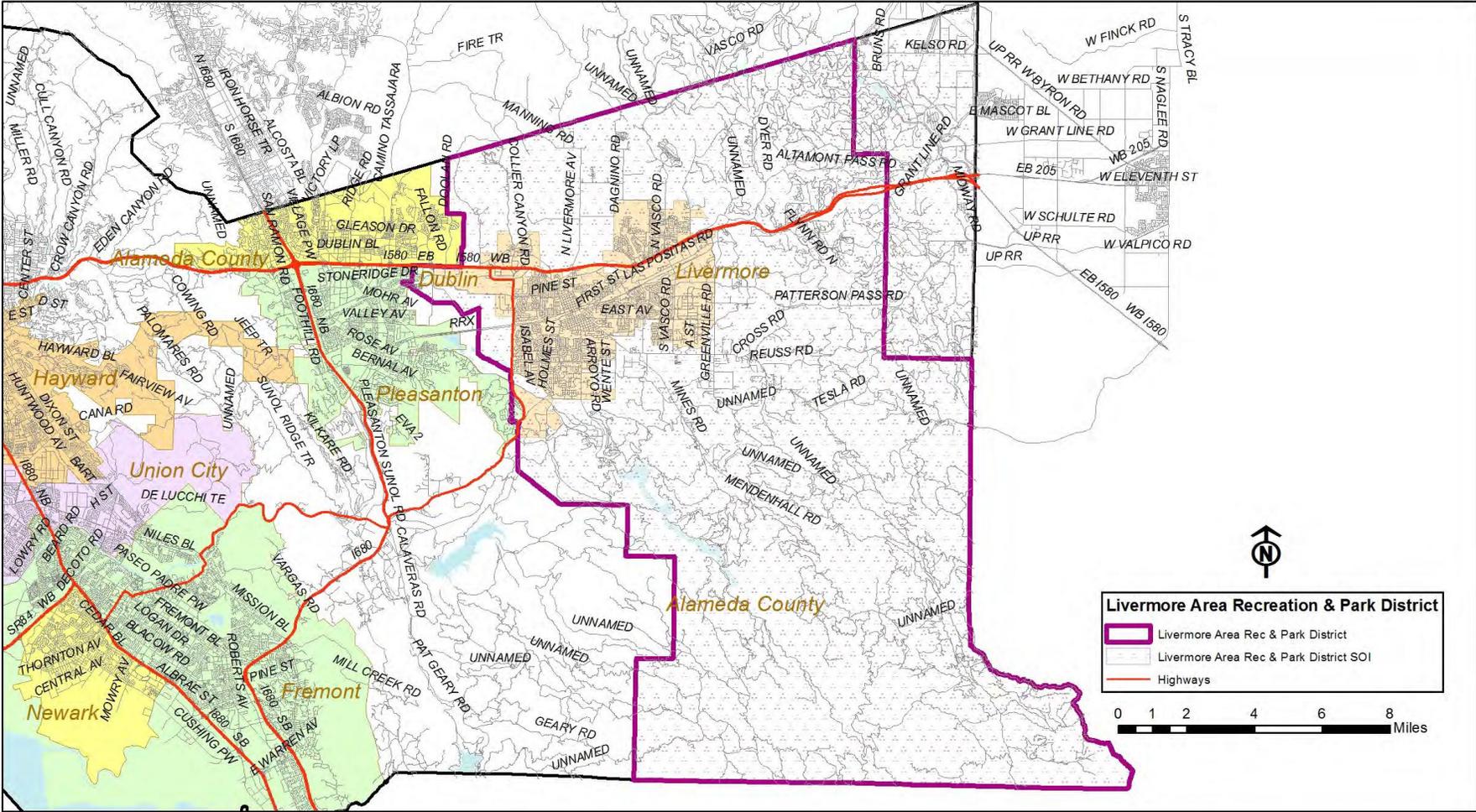
Most recently, Alameda LAFCo, upon recommendation found in the Municipal Service Review adopted in 2006, reduced the size of the LARPD SOI to exclude the two areas in the City of Dublin, which were previously detached from the District (as noted above). The justification for the reduction of the SOI was that it recognized the existing conditions and provided a technical correction for previous annexations. It was also noted that no change in regulation, land use or development would occur as a result of updating LARPD's SOI.⁶

LARPD's SOI is generally coterminous with its boundaries with the exception of an area that extends outside of LARPD's bounds to include territory in the northeast to the county lines (Mountain House). LARPD's current bounds and SOI are shown in Figure 1-1.

⁶ Alameda Local Agency Formation Commission Resolution No. 2006-49

Figure 1-1: LARPD Boundaries and SOI

Livermore Area Recreation & Park District Area and SOI*
July 2012



*Agency sphere differs from the service area boundary

Created for Alameda LAFCo by the Alameda County Community Development Agency

ACCOUNTABILITY AND GOVERNANCE

Accountability of a governing body is signified by a combination of several indicators. The indicators chosen here are limited to 1) agency efforts to engage and educate constituents through outreach activities, in addition to legally required activities such as agenda posting and public meetings, 2) a defined complaint process designed to handle all issues to resolution, and 3) transparency of the agency as indicated by cooperation with the MSR process and information disclosure.

LARPD was formed as an independent special district and has a five-member Board of Directors as its governing body. The five Directors are elected at large to serve staggered four-year terms of office. The role of President and Vice President of the Board rotates annually.

The Board of Directors meets twice a month on the second and last Wednesday at the Robert Livermore Community Center. The regular meetings of the Board are televised on public television. Agendas of all board meetings are posted at the district office and the Livermore Public Library, circulated to local newspapers and posted on LARPD's website. Board actions and meeting minutes are available at the district office, Livermore Public Library and via the internet. LARPD also discloses finances, plans and other public documents via the internet. Current board member names, positions (the positions of President and Vice-President are rotated annually), and term expiration dates are shown in Figure 1-2.

Figure 1-2: LARPD Governing Body

Livermore Area Recreation and Park District				
<i>District Contact Information</i>				
Contact:	Timothy J. Barry, District General Manager			
Address:	4444 East Avenue, Livermore, CA 94550			
Telephone:	(925)373-5700			
Fax	(925)447-0782			
Email/website:	www.larpd.dst.ca.us			
<i>Board of Directors</i>				
Member Name	Position	Term Expiration	Manner of Selection	Length of Term
Bob Coomber	Director	December 2014	Elected to complete vacant term	4 years
Maryalice Faltings	Director	December 2014	Elected	4 years
Steve Goodman	Director	December 2016	Elected	4 years
Dave Hutchinson	Director	December 2014	Elected	4 years
Beth Wilson	Director	December 2016	Elected	4 years
<i>Meetings</i>				
Date:	Second and last Wednesday of each month at 7:00pm			
Location:	Robert Livermore Community Center located at 4444 East Avenue, Livermore, CA			
Agenda Distribution:	Posted at the district office and the Livermore Public Library, circulated to local newspapers and posted on the District's website.			
Minutes Distribution:	Board actions and meeting minutes are available at the district office, Livermore Public Library and via the internet.			

To keep citizens aware of District activities, during the summer months, the Board of Directors conducts special meetings at neighborhood park locations to directly receive comments and questions from constituents. LARPD mails a program brochure three times a year to all mailing addresses within the District. LARPD also produces two special-interest newsletters, which are mailed to interested individuals on specified mailing lists. LARPD's public information officer provides news releases to local newspapers, local internet news outlets, radio, and TV on District activities and facilities. LARPD maintains a website with information on the District's programs, facilities and activities. It also maintains a Facebook page and answers citizen inquiries from both the website and Facebook page. LARPD provides outreach booths at many Livermore community events and at the Farmers' Market, where it provides information and responds to questions.

LARPD receives constituent complaints in person, in writing, by telephone, through the district website and Facebook page, or via email. Complaints can be submitted to Directors, the general manager or any staff member. LARPD's complaint resolution policy provides for resolution of complaints at the level of an appropriate responsible employee. If an individual registering a complaint is not satisfied with the disposition of the complaint by the responsible employee, the complaint may be filed with the general manager, and if the individual is still not content with the outcome, the complaint may be filed with the Board of Directors. The general manager, who ensures follow-through and communication back to the complainant, tracks formal complaints. In 2011, there were six written complaints to the general manager. By comparison, in 2002, there were no written complaints referred from staff to the general manager and two written complaints referred from the general manager to the Board of Directors for resolution.

LARPD demonstrated accountability in its disclosure of information and cooperation with LAFCo requests for information. The agency responded to LAFCo's written questionnaires and document requests and cooperated with map inquiries.

MANAGEMENT AND STAFFING

While public sector management standards vary depending on the size and scope of the organization, there are minimum standards. Well-managed organizations evaluate employees annually, track employee and agency productivity, periodically review agency performance, prepare a budget before the beginning of the fiscal year, conduct periodic financial audits to safeguard the public trust, maintain relatively current financial records, conduct advanced planning for future service needs, and plan and budget for capital needs.

LARPD has 499 staff. Approximately 63 of them are full-time staff, while 436 are part-time and/or seasonal staff. Since 2006, six full-time positions and 13 part-time positions have been eliminated.

LARPD is comprised of four divisions—Youth and Senior Services, Administration, Recreation, and Parks and Facilities. The head of each division reports to either the general manager or assistant general manager, depending upon the division.

LARPD conducts annual performance reviews for all staff.

LARPD evaluates district-wide performance by conducting a community needs assessment survey every five years. The survey asks residents how they use park and recreation facilities and programs and their satisfaction with the services LARPD provides.

The survey was last conducted in 2006. A total of 400 residents completed the survey, representing a total universe of approximately 52,705 residents 18 years and older⁷ in the Livermore area. The customer satisfaction rating for services provided by LARPD staff was very good, with 35 percent of the respondents reporting that the service was “excellent” and 34 percent reporting that it was “good.”⁸

Following completion of the needs assessment survey, LARPD conducted a series of community workshops and meetings geared towards soliciting additional input from the general public, user groups, stakeholder agencies, and also LARPD staff-park rangers, maintenance crews, and the Extended Student Services (ESS) staff. The objective of these public input workshops was to identify future needs, improvements, and priorities.⁹ Improvements that were consistently noted as priority issues in all of the workshops and stakeholder meetings included: restrooms in neighborhood parks, year-round lighting at facilities, covered or shade structures at existing facilities and better maintenance of existing facilities.¹⁰ Priorities and improvements were also identified for trails and open space parks, special use parks and facilities, historic facilities and recreation programs.

LARPD reported that its senior staff monitors workload and matches District resources to citizen demand for service. LARPD also tracks maintenance activities and compares them to other public and private service providers. Maintenance staff also keeps daily maintenance logs.

LARPD has an adopted mission statement and a 2008 Parks, Recreation and Trails Master Plan with a planning time horizon of 20 years. A five-year update is planned for 2013.

Financial planning documents include an annually adopted budget and annually audited financial statement. LARPD conducts capital improvement planning (CIP) in the annual budget. The CIP is updated twice a year with a planning horizon of up to three years. Growth projections are considered when setting budget priorities and when planning for programs, capital projects and facility expansion or maintenance.

All special districts are required to submit annual audits to the County within 12 months of the completion of the fiscal year, unless the Board of Supervisors has approved a biennial or five-year schedule.¹¹ In the case of LARPD, the District must submit audits annually. LARPD has submitted its audit to the County for FY 11-12 within the required 12-month period.

⁷ LARPD Parks, Recreation & Trails Master Plan, 2008, page III-1

⁸ LARPD Parks, Recreation & Trails Master Plan, 2008, page III-3

⁹ LARPD Parks, Recreation & Trails Master Plan, 2008, page III-5

¹⁰ LARPD Parks, Recreation & Trails Master Plan, 2008, page III-7

¹¹ Government Code §26909.

GROWTH AND POPULATION PROJECTIONS

This section discusses the factors affecting service demand, such as land uses, and historical and anticipated population growth.

Land Use

LARPD's boundary area is approximately 243.5 square miles. The City of Livermore has land use authority within the boundaries of the City. The County of Alameda has land use authority in the unincorporated areas within LARPD's bounds. Within the City of Livermore the predominant existing land use is residential. Approximately half (49 percent) of the land within Livermore city limits is designated for residential uses. The second major category of existing land uses within Livermore are agriculture, parks, and open space (19 percent) followed by industrial (13 percent) and retail and office (eight percent) uses. Outside the city limits, in unincorporated areas of Alameda County, within LARPD's jurisdiction, land is generally designated as large parcel agriculture as laid out in Measure D, a voter approved initiative. The growth boundaries under Measure D are intended to encourage infill growth and restrict urban sprawl and development therefore this designation permits only agricultural uses and recreation or open space uses in the specified areas.¹²

Existing Population

LARPD's population in 2010 as determined by GIS analysis of census data was 85,926, of which almost 81,000 live within the City of Livermore city limits.

Projected Growth and Development

LARPD anticipates continued infill residential development in the City of Livermore and a continued lack of growth outside of the city limits. Demand for services is anticipated to continue to grow with population growth and increased need for services by low-income families and seniors in the core area of Livermore.

Based on Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) growth projections and LARPD's estimated 2010 Census population, the population of the area within LARPD area is anticipated to reach 118,574 by 2035, with an average annual growth rate of 1.33 percent in the City of Livermore and 0.8 percent in the unincorporated areas. The projected population for LARPD in 2035 was determined by applying the City of Livermore's projected rate of growth over the 25-year period of 39 percent to the City's Census 2010 population of 80,968, and the remaining unincorporated population of 4,958 within LARPD was assumed to grow by 22 percent over the same period, consistent with ABAG's projections for all unincorporated areas in the County.

¹² 2008 LARPD Parks, Recreation & Trails Master Plan, page II-6

Planned and proposed developments within the City of Livermore that may impact the growth potential of LARPD are discussed in detail in the City of Livermore MSR.

FINANCING

The financial ability of agencies to provide services is affected by available financing sources and financing constraints. This section discusses the major financing constraints faced by LARPD and identifies the revenue sources currently available to the District.

Due to the general economic downturn beginning in 2008, LARPD reported that current financial levels are not adequate to deliver services in the same manner as prior to 2008. Services and staffing expand and contract according to income level fluctuations, and the recession has reduced both property tax and earned income levels, so the District has adapted with service and staffing reductions. LARPD noted that tax revenues have fallen while demand for services, unfunded mandates and cost of materials and utilities have all increased. The loss of property tax revenue and earned revenue has resulted in LARPD reducing staff and service levels in several areas, as well as consolidating certain programs and activities. LARPD has implemented a freeze on cost of living wage increases and merit increases for the past several years. LARPD has also reduced staffing through retirements, layoffs and attrition and several reorganizations. LARPD has asked staff to take on more of their pension and other benefit costs and increased program and rental fees where possible. LARPD has engaged citizen support groups such as Trail Dogs, LARPD Foundation, Camp Shelly Marketing Committee and the Save Valley Rock Committee to assist LARPD in enhancing program revenues, securing outside funding and assisting with construction projects.

While revenues have increased over the last seven-year period, expenditures have continued to increase as well and expenditures exceeded revenues in FY 10-11. In FY 03-04 (the last financial audit at the time of the 2006 MSR), LARPD had total revenues of \$12,556,787 and total expenditures of \$12,141,317. In FY 10-11, LARPD had total revenues of \$16,239,237 and total expenditures (including planned and budgeted for capital expenditures and debt payments) of \$17,195,673. General Fund revenue was less than expenses by \$956,000 for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2011. While expenditures were greater than revenues in this particular year, total expenditures consisted of \$1.1 million in capital outlays that were planned and saved for in previous years in a capital reserve fund. LARPD maintained operating reserves of 12.5 percent of annual expenses.

Revenues

Total revenues received by LARPD in FY 10-11 were \$16,239,237. Of this total amount, 42 percent was received from property taxes, 48 percent was received from park and recreation fees, eight percent was received from special taxes, one percent was received

from an EBRPD reimbursement,¹³ and one percent was received from capital development revenues.

LARPD registered voters approved a special tax in June 1997, which is restricted for use on maintenance and operation of park facilities. The purpose of the tax is to recover some of the revenue lost by LARPD to the State's Educational Revenue Augmentation Fund (ERAF), which amounts to \$74.9 million since 1992 and \$6.7 million in FY 09-10. The original measure allows LARPD to increase the tax two percent per year. The rate was set and renewed with a two percent increase at an LARPD Board of Directors meeting on April 28, 2010 for FY 10-11.¹⁴

Expenditures

Total expenditures in FY 10-11 for LARPD were \$17,195,673, of which 64 percent was spent on salaries, benefits, retirement etc., 28 percent was spent on supplies and services, two percent was spent on debt service and six percent was spent on capital outlays.

Total general fund expenditures exceeded total revenues by \$869,064 in FY 09-10 and by \$956,436 FY 10-11. While LARPD would rely on its unrestricted fund balance to cover excess unanticipated expenditures, the capital reserve fund is used to save for future planned capital expenses and the majority of the capital expenditures in these years were covered by the capital reserve fund.

Liabilities and Assets

LARPD maintains several reserve funds consisting of funds restricted for particular programs, fund committed to building maintenance, capital equipment, retirement savings, legal fees, and building replacement, funds assigned to capital projects, and unassigned reserves for contingencies. At the end of FY 10-11, LARPD maintained a total fund balance of \$5.8 million, of which 19 percent was restricted, 12 percent was committed, 47 percent was assigned to capital projects, and 22 percent was unassigned.

LARPD had \$336,276 in long-term debt at the end of FY 10-11. The debt has been paid off entirely in FY 11-12. In FY 10-11, LARPD repaid \$319,058 in principal toward this debt. LARPD and the City of Livermore, as the Governments of Livermore Financing Authority, financed the construction of a maintenance service center in 1992. LARPD's 38 percent share of the center was financed by the 1992 Installment Purchase Agreement, which required LARPD to make semiannual installments, including interest, to Union Bank through a sub-lease. In August 1997, LARPD signed a new Installment Purchase Agreement

¹³ LARPD has an agreement with EBRPD under which EBRPD is responsible for the maintenance and operation of new regional parks, open space and trails in the Murray Township area. Under this agreement a portion of the property tax revenues, which would otherwise be received by LARPD, is shifted to EBRPD. During FY 10-11, \$200,000 was returned to LARPD by EBRPD to cover certain regional park operational costs.

¹⁴ LARPD Meeting Minutes, Wednesday April 28, 2010.

with the City. Repayments of all long-term debt obligations are funded from the general revenues of LARPD. There were no new issues of debt in FY 10-11. The last lease payment for this debt was made in March 2012.

Financing Efficiencies

LARPD engages in joint financing arrangements related to insurance. LARPD receives excess workers compensation and liability coverage through the California Association for Park and Recreation Indemnity—a joint powers authority. LARPD entered into a tax sharing agreement with EBRPD in 1992 so that EBRPD could expand and maintain regional parks and trails within LARPD’s jurisdiction. In FY 10-11, \$3,726,372 was provided to EBRPD as a result of this agreement.

2. MUNICIPAL SERVICES

RECREATION AND PARK SERVICES

Service Overview

LARPD maintains and operates community, neighborhood, and open space parks and trails. LARPD provides maintenance of community centers, swimming pools and historic buildings, park areas, trees, trails, landscaping, buildings, sports fields, and other structures at its park sites and facilities. LARPD provides recreational programs at its facilities, private sector venues and joint-use school facilities. Activities provided by LARPD include, pre-school, youth, adult, and senior activities such as educational and art classes, child day care, sports leagues and training, aquatics classes, golf lessons, teen programs, and nature programs.

LARPD provides contract services to and receives contract services from other agencies. LARPD manages parks and historic buildings for the City of Livermore as well as the Veterans Building for the County of Alameda. The City of Livermore has provided planning, engineering, technical and related services to LARPD through an agreement since 2004. EBRPD and LARPD have had a tax sharing agreement since 1992 that provides funding for EBRPD to maintain and operate new regional parks acquired and/or developed after the agreement, open space and trails in the Murray Township area while LARPD provides maintenance and operation to all existing regional LARPD facilities and programs (prior to the 1992 agreement), as well as all future Murray Township community and local park and recreation facilities, resulting in a shift in existing tax revenues and no additional tax burden to the residents of Murray Township. Since 2007, Lawrence Livermore National Laboratories have used the Robert Livermore Community Center to provide emergency services. Alameda County Resource Conservation District provides mitigation project management for Sycamore Grove Park and has done so since January 2011.

Since 2006, LARPD has discontinued the Friendship Center Adult Daycare, the Scottish Games and the golf team.

Demand for Services

Knowledge of how, when and where people use parks is helpful in guiding managers in directing staff time, funding and many other decisions. However, like most providers of park facilities, LARPD does not track the number of park visitors, due to the challenges that an open park poses in collecting accurate counts. The exception is Sycamore Grove Park (750 acres) where park rangers on duty seven days per week keep track of attendance and report monthly figures.

The community needs assessment survey, conducted in 2006, consistently showed the importance and popularity of walking and hiking to the community, and the importance of those facilities—trails, neighborhood and open space parks—that provide opportunities for these activities. The survey also indicated that these activities and facilities have a wide appeal to a variety of age groups.¹⁵ Park demand and usage varies based on a number of factors, including age and income level, but is primarily measured through population growth. As the population continues to grow, park demand will increase (however, the aging of the population is expected to partially offset the growth in residents as elderly individuals become less mobile).

Another way to track recreation and program use is through sign up and registration requirements. Such data can be used to justify funding, help managers assess operational success, and guide performance improvement. In 2011, LARPD staff reported that the annual visitor count at the recreation center was 232,134 and 64,347 people were registered in classes or programs. Recreation participation counts for 2006 were not available for comparison purposes. The District reported that there is a growing demand, based on registration, for youth sports facilities, such as soccer, baseball and softball, lacrosse, cricket and field hockey, and an increased interest in senior activities.

Infrastructure and Facilities

LARPD owns and/or operates and/or maintains a total of 46 parks and facilities. The 41 neighborhood, community and special use parks and facilities comprise a total of 417 acres. Of these 41 parks and facilities, there are 27 neighborhood parks, three community parks and 11 special use parks and facilities. Existing neighborhood parks range in size from 2 to 15 acres. The target size for new neighborhood parks is 10 acres. Existing community parks range in size from 12 to 135 acres. The target size for new community parks is 30 acres. Since the size of special use parks and facilities is determined by their specific use, a target size is not applicable.¹⁶ LARPD owns and maintains five open space parks and preserves, which consists of 1,360 acres.

Since 2006, LARPD developed Holdener Park and Trails and Bruno Canziani Park.

Infrastructure Needs or Deficiencies

The public participated in the identification of needs or deficiencies through community workshops and stakeholder meetings that took place after the completion of the community needs assessment survey in 2006. These workshops and meetings identified a number of areas for improvement such as closing existing trail gaps to provide connectivity between existing open space and recreation areas and specific improvements related to equestrian use of trails and open space parks. Improvements that were consistently noted

¹⁵ LARPD Parks, Recreation & Trails Master Plan, 2008, page III-4

¹⁶ LARPD Parks, Recreation & Trails Master Plan, 2008, page IV-2 to IV-3

as priority issues in all of the workshops and stakeholder meetings included: restrooms in neighborhood parks, year-round lighting at facilities, covered or shade structures at existing facilities and improved maintenance of existing facilities. Improvement priorities by location were also identified: Robertson Park—lighting, converting certain fields to artificial turf, adding paved parking, converting locker rooms to restrooms, additional fields, and equestrian improvements such as manure dumps, horse debris pick up, and more directional and parking signs; historic facilities—upgrades and improvements were indicated as necessary for the Carnegie and Veteran Buildings and also for the Barn; and the Robert Livermore Community Center—updating facility, new equipment, and utilizing alternative energy measures, if possible. The need for an in-line hockey program/facility was mentioned consistently at both the public workshop and stakeholder meetings, as was the need for a multi-use sports park.

The LARPD Master Plan identifies conditions and improvements for the parks and facilities owned and/or maintained by the District. Many of the pocket neighborhood parks are older parks, built during the 1970's as part of new residential subdivisions in Livermore. Over half of these smaller neighborhood pocket parks are 30 or more years old.¹⁷ Typical improvements for these older parks include replacing tot play equipment, upgrading the tot lot area and park site to comply with accessibility requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), safety regulations per Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) guidelines and American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) standards, and replacing park equipment such as barbeques or benches, and also replacing or repairing older irrigation systems. In 2006, a total of five neighborhood pocket parks were upgraded with new play equipment and improved to meet accessibility requirements: Almond Avenue, Livermore Downs, Ravenswood, Ralph T. Wattenburger and Vista Meadows.¹⁸

Of the 27 neighborhood parks LARPD operates, only five were built within the last 15 years, many of the parks were built between 20 and 40 years ago. LARPD operates three community parks, each of which is in different condition and requires various improvements. LARPD owns and/or operates and maintains 11 special use facilities or parks several of which require some type of upgrade or improvement. LARPD owns and maintains five open space parks and trails with plans for upgrades or new facilities. Conditions and improvements for each park and facility can be found in Figure 2-1.

In the FY 11-12 Capital Improvement Plan, LARPD budgeted for the following improvements: sports field, respite/rest area and trail improvements for Robertson Park, land acquisition, restroom improvements, Wetmore entrance improvements, interpretive nature education and mitigation pond improvements for Sycamore Grove, Robert Livermore Park pump replacement, paving and concrete repair at various parks, Holdener Park trail construction and creek bank repair at Arroyo Mocho.

¹⁷LARPD Parks, Recreation & Trails Master Plan, 2008, page IV-9.

¹⁸ LARPD Parks, Recreation & Trails Master Plan, 2008, page IV-9.

Figure 2-1: LARPD Facilities and Infrastructure Needs

Livermore Area Recreation and Park District Parks and Facilities						
	Acreeage	Location	Condition	Year Built	Proposed Improvements	
Neighborhood Pocket Parks						
1	Al Caffodio Park	2	1361 Shawnee Rd.	Good	1971	No improvements proposed currently
2	Almond Park	4	1525 Almond Ave.	Good	1969	Updated in 2006; improvements proposed include new shade or gazebo
3	Big Trees Park	4.2	5470 Kathy Way	Fair	1971	Minor improvements proposed: replace tot lot, accessibility upgrades
4	Bill Clark Park	2.8	5451 Hillflower Dr.	Good	1990	Minor improvements proposed: accessibility upgrades to tot lot
5	Bothwell Park	2	2466 Eighth St.	Excellent	2009	Complete renovation, new tot lot, add bocce courts
6	El Padro Park	5	1731 El Padro Dr.	Good	1967	Improvements proposed: irrigation system renovation
7	Ida Holm Park	5.5	1106 Crystal Cir.	Good	1975	Tot lot was recently upgraded; no planned improvements currently
8	Jack Williams Park	4.1	2041 Neptune Rd.	Good	1970s	Tot lot was renovated in 2000; no additional proposed improvements currently, new tennis court surface 2012
9	Karl Wente Park	3.1	1455 Kingsport Ave.	Good	1977	Replacement tot lot installed in 2009
10	Lester J. Knott Park	5	655 N. Mines Rd.	Good	1995	No planned improvements currently
11	Livermore Downs Park	4.5	2101 Paseo Laguna Seco	Poor	1986	Needs new asphalt path, new turf and irrigation system.
12	Maitland R. Henry Park	4.6	1525 Mendocino Rd.	Good	1972	Remodeled in 1990; renovated in 2003; no improvements planned currently
13	Mocho Park	3.6	1130 Mocho St.	Good	1985	No planned improvements currently
14	Northfront Park	2.3	6315 Almaden Way	Good	2005	No planned improvements currently
15	Ralph T. Wattenburger Park	5.4	1515 Honeysuckle Rd.	Good	1984	Upgraded in 2005; no planned improvements currently
16	Ravenswood Park	3.5	2632 Tahoe Dr.	Good	1972	Upgraded in 2006; no planned improvements currently
17	Summit Park	3.9	6332 Tioga Pass Ct.	Good	2001	No planned improvements currently
18	Vista Meadows Park	5.4	2450 Westminster Wy.	Good	1975	Upgraded in 2006; no planned improvements currently

	Acreege	Location	Condition	Year Built	Proposed Improvements	
<i>Neighborhood Parks</i>						
19	Altamont Creek Park	6.9	6800 Altamont Creek Dr.	Good	2000	Fields renovated in 2005; no planned improvements
20	Bruno Canziani Park	14.7	5907 Charlotte Way	Good	2001	Upgrades to irrigation system in 2006; additional improvements needed include turf renovation
21	Cayetano Park	9.8	Portola Ave.	Not yet built	Not built yet	No upgrades needed
22	Christensen Park	7	5611 Bridgeport Cir.	Good	1976	Improvements needed: soccer field renovation
23	Hagemann Park	7.9	459 Olivina Ave.	Good	1983	No improvements proposed currently
24	Marlin A. Pound	9	2010 Bluebell Dr.	Good	1980	Park renovated in 2004; irrigation improvements
25	Pleasure Island Park	6.9	280 Pearl Dr.	Good	1973	Improvements needed: new tot lot play equipment; accessibility upgrades
26	Sunset Park	6.7	1055 Geneva St.	Good	1969	Improvements needed: asphalt improvement to walkway; potential tot lot renovation
27	Tex Spruiell Park	9.9	5411 Felicia Ave.	Fair	1986	Improvement to irrigation needed
<i>Special Use Parks & Facilities</i>						
28	The Barn	0.5	3131 Pacific Ave.	Poor	1922	Needs several long-term improvements including: accessibility upgrades to walkways and restrooms, structural improvements and fire sprinklers
29	Camp Shelly		South Lake Tahoe	Good		Improvements needed include: accessible restrooms, adding a climbing area
30	Carnegie Building	1.3	2155 Third St.	Fair	1911	A master plan will be developed for this site; City to take over landscape Oct. 1 2012
31	Hal Chestnut Memorial Field	10	4455 Raymond Rd.	Good		Proposed improvements include portable restroom, accessible parking space
32	Independence Park	17.7	2798 Holmes St.	Good	1976	Soccer fields require routine renovation; new pathway/perimeter connection, long-term: renovate irrigation system
33	Max Baer Park	11.8	1310 Murdell Ln.	Good	1967	No improvements proposed currently
34	Merritt Building	2.5	71 Trevarno Rd.	Good	1914	Pave parking lot
35	Ravenswood Historic Site	19.9	2647 Arroyo Rd.	Fair	1976	Short and long-term improvements planned: reconfiguring the parking area, stabilizing the winery ruins, restoring the carriage house and barn
36	Sunken Gardens Skate Park	8.9	3800 Pacific Ave.	Good	1959	Master plan updated is anticipated
37	Veterans Memorial Building	0.3	522 S. "L" St.	Good	1931	No improvements proposed currently
38	William (Bill) J. Payne Park	14	5800 Patterson Pass Rd.	Excellent	2002	Long-term improvements include: new restrooms and snack shop, lighting and increased parking

	Acreage	Location	Condition	Year Built	Proposed Improvements	
Community Parks						
39	May Nissen Community Park	12.2	685 Rincon Ave.	Fair	1962	Irrigation improvements, major pool renovation needed, new tot lot needed
40	Robert Livermore Park	29.9	4444 East Ave.	Good	1971	Below ground pump facility installed 2012; irrigation improvements
41	Robertson Park	135	3200 Robertson Park Rd.	Good	1966	Proposed improvements include: field renovation to artificial turf, landscaping, construct respite area, internal trail and tot lot; future improvements may include: third pedestrian bridge, temporary horse stalls, off-leash dog park
Open Space & Trails						
42	Brushy Peak Regional Preserve	507	Laughlin Rd.	Good		Improvements: boardwalk/walkway system in rock area, interpretive displays, small gravel staging/parking area, compost restrooms, picnic area
43	Garaventa Wetlands Preserve	24	Vasco/Garaventa Ranch Rd.	Good	1996	Improvements: interpretive display, perimeter trail
44	Holdener Park	55	2995 Hansen Rd.	Good		Improvements: internal trail system, add cross fencing, creek/habitat restoration, compost restrooms
45	Sycamore Grove Park	742	1051 Wetmore Rd.	Good	1979	Improvements: habitat restoration, paved trail renovation, improve view point area, new upper trail loop, new ranger station, Olivina Winery building
46	Sycamore Grove Park/Veterans Park	32	Arroyo Rd.	Good	1967	Improvements: refurbish restrooms, enlarge maintenance facility, realign paved trail, upgrade Cross house, new environmental education center, renovate winery and wine cave

Shared Facilities and Regional Collaboration

LARPD has joint use agreements with the Livermore Valley Unified Joint School District and City of Livermore. These three agencies have a joint bond measure approved by voters, which funded needed facilities for all three agencies. Since 1992, EBRPD is responsible for the maintenance and operation of new regional parks, open space and trails in the Murray Township area while LARPD provides maintenance and operation to all existing LARPD facilities and programs. EBRPD receives a portion of LARPD's property taxes for these services through a tax sharing agreement. Additionally, the City and LARPD share a maintenance yard and new equipment costs. LARPD and the City are also jointly working on trail connections and development. LARPD has two agreements with Tri-Valley Conservancy: a Cooperative Funding Agreement that will allow title transfer to LARPD for the 73-acre parcel previously known as the Bobba property. The Conservancy purchased the property in August 2009 with the intent to transfer it to LARPD and place a conservation easement on it. Another agreement allows for an extension to the existing Right of Entry agreement, which allows District staff and consultants to enter the property for maintenance and inspection purposes to produce a Resource Management Plan (RMP). These agreements allow LARPD to work toward obtaining the deed for the parcel, with the goal of using the land for a regional trail to connect to Del Valle Regional Park. District staff anticipates the RMP to be completed by fall 2012.

LARPD staff reported that the District always seeks to share resources and collaborate.

Service Adequacy

This section reviews indicators of service adequacy, including park acreage per 1,000 residents, recreation center hours per week, number and scope of facilities and the breadth of recreation services offered.

The amount of park acreage available to district residents is one determinant of service adequacy. The LARPD adopted guideline for neighborhood parks is two acres per 1,000 people or one park per 3,000-5,000 people or 17 neighborhood parks and for community parks it is two acres per 1,000 people or one park per 15,000-20,000 people or four community parks. LARPD operates 1,777 acres of park facilities, of which 1,360 acres are open space and 417 acres are developed. Park acreage per 1,000 residents for neighborhood parks is 1.5, which does not meet the District's service guideline of 2 acres; however, LARPD has 27 neighborhood parks, which exceeds the service guidelines for number of parks per population, calculated to be 17 parks. Park acreage per 1,000 residents for community parks is 0.8, which does not meet the service guidelines (two acres per 1,000 residents). The current number of community parks per population (three parks) also does not meet the service guidelines of four parks. As the land use authority, the City of Livermore has acquired most of the parkland for neighborhood and community parks through residential development requirements and turned over the parkland to LARPD to maintain and operate, which has determined LARPD's ability to meet these adopted standards.

LARPD staff reported that recreation center hours per week increased from 91 in 2006 to 96¹⁹ in 2011 indicating that the center is open longer to meet the demand of those using it.

LARPD owns and/or maintains a total of 46 parks and facilities, with a wide range of amenities available. Furthermore, the number of activities offered to a variety of age ranges is quite high. Survey results indicated that the community was generally satisfied with the selection of facilities and activities offered.

¹⁹ Recreation park hours per week are calculated as an average of all of the center hours in LARPD.

3. MSR DETERMINATIONS

Growth and Population Projections

- ❖ Livermore Area Recreation and Park District's (LARPD) population in 2010 as determined by GIS analysis of census data was 85,926.
- ❖ Based on Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) growth projections and LARPD's estimated 2010 Census population, the population of the area within LARPD area is anticipated to reach 118,574 by 2035.
- ❖ Demand for services is anticipated to continue to grow with population growth, as well as increased needs for services by low-income families and seniors in the core area of Livermore.

Location and Characteristics of Any Disadvantaged Unincorporated Communities Within or Contiguous to the Sphere of Influence

- ❖ Based on Census Designated Places, Alameda LAFCo determines that there are no disadvantaged unincorporated communities that meet the basic state-mandated criteria. Alameda LAFCo recognizes, however, that there are communities in the County that experience disparities related to socio-economic, health, and crime issues, but the subject of this review is municipal services such as water, sewer, and fire protection services to which these communities, for the most part, have access.

Present and Planned Capacity of Public Facilities and Adequacy of Public Services, Including Infrastructure Needs and Deficiencies

- ❖ Using a district adopted service guideline for acreage ratios, LARPD partially meets service standards. LARPD does not meet the acreage standard for neighborhood parks, but does meet the one park per 3,000-5,000 people for neighborhood parks standard. LARPD does not meet either of the service guidelines for community parks.
- ❖ LARPD will need to invest in and develop new parks and facilities in the future in order to attain adopted park standards and meet the anticipated demand for services of the growing population. It is also recommended that LARPD and the City of Livermore collaborate on any future development park requirements to ensure that adopted park standards are met.
- ❖ Based on recreation center hours per week, number and scope of facilities and the breadth of recreation services offered, services offered by LARPD appear to be adequate. However, as noted, LARPD should consider measures in order to meet acreage per person standards, particularly as the population continues to grow.

- ❖ LARPD staff have identified and reported infrastructure needs in the District, which can be found in Figure 2-1.
- ❖ Many of LARPD's neighborhood parks are older parks, built during the 1970's as part of residential subdivisions developed in Livermore. Over half of these smaller neighborhood pocket parks are 30 or more years old, which require improvements.
- ❖ Short-term planned capital improvements include the following: Robertson Park parking lot, sports field, respite area and trail improvements, land acquisition, restroom improvements, Wetmore improvements for Sycamore Grove, Robert Livermore Park pump replacement, paving and concrete repair at various parks, and creek bank repair at Arroyo Mocho.

Financial Ability of Agency to Provide Services

- ❖ Due to the general economic downturn beginning in 2008, LARPD reported that current financial levels are not adequate to deliver services in the same manner as prior to 2008. LARPD noted that property tax revenues have fallen while demand for services, unfunded mandates and cost of materials and utilities have all increased.
- ❖ LARPD appears to maintain healthy reserves, and recently paid off all long-term debt.
- ❖ Voters within LARPD approved a special tax in June 1997, which is restricted for use on maintenance and operation of park facilities in order to recover funds that are diverted to the state under ERAF.

Status and Opportunities for Shared Facilities

- ❖ LARPD has joint use agreements with the Livermore Valley Unified School District and City of Livermore. These three agencies have also passed a joint bond measure through voters, which funded needed facilities for all three agencies. Additionally, the City and LARPD share a maintenance yard and new equipment costs. LARPD and the City are also jointly working on trail connections and development
- ❖ EBRPD is responsible for the maintenance and operation of new (post 1992 agreement) regional parks, open space and trails in the Murray Township area, which is in the LARPD boundary, but more appropriately maintained and managed by EBRPD. As part of a tax sharing agreement between EBRPD and LARPD, EBRPD is reimbursed for this.

Accountability for Community Services, Including Governmental Structure and Operational Efficiencies

- ❖ LARPD practices good governance and accountability. LARPD makes efforts to engage and educate constituents through outreach activities in addition to legally required activities such as agenda posting and public meetings. LARPD has a defined complaint process designed to handle all issues to resolution. LARPD is transparent as indicated by cooperation with the MSR process and information disclosure.

- ❖ Since the majority of parks and facilities that LARPD owns and/or operates are within the boundaries of the City of Livermore, a governance alternative is for LARPD to become a subsidiary district of the City of Livermore, where the City would govern and manage the operations of the District. In this case, the territory of LARPD would need to be at least 70 percent within the City's limits. As LARPD's bounds presently exist, they include a substantial area outside of the City, and therefore a large area of the unincorporated territory to the south would need to be detached before this kind of reorganization could occur. Presently, LARPD indicated that it is not interested in moving forward with a reorganization of this sort.
- ❖ LARPD could annex the area in the northeast of Alameda County, which is currently within LARPD's SOI. The area in the northeast is primarily parcels of farmland with low population density.
- ❖ There are properties that are within both the City of Pleasanton and LARPD that receive similar services, but the City is the more logical service provider. Therefore, it is recommended that these parcels be detached from LARPD.
- ❖ LARPD's bounds overlap entirely with those of East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD). In an effort to serve the expanding needs of the residents of Murray Township, EBRPD is responsible for the maintenance and operation of new regional parks, open space and trails in the area, which is in LARPD's boundary, but more appropriately maintained by EBRPD given its mission which is more regional in nature. LARPD provides continued maintenance and operations at two regional parks that were in place prior to this agreement with EBRPD. While there is the potential for duplication of services, the two agencies operate under a formal tax sharing agreement that appears to clearly delineate the roles of each district.

4. SPHERE OF INFLUENCE UPDATE

Existing Sphere of Influence Boundary

LARPD's Sphere of Influence (SOI) was established on August 28, 1975 as coterminous with the City of Livermore SOI. On April 16, 1987, LARPD's SOI was amended to include the District's boundary area and the Mountain House School District area. Three subsequent changes were made to LARPD's boundary between 1987 and the most recent SOI update in 2006. Two areas in the City of Dublin were detached from LARPD without corresponding SOI amendments—194 acres in 1992 and 1,029 acres in 1994. In the Eastern Dublin Property Owners' Reorganization (PA-00-025) in 2002, 1,120 acres were detached from LARPD with a corresponding adjustment to its SOI. LARPD SOI also extends outside of its bounds to include the area in the northeast to the county lines.

Most recently, Alameda LAFCo, upon recommendation found in the Municipal Service Review adopted in 2006, reduced the size of the LARPD SOI to exclude the two areas in the City of Dublin, which were previously detached from the District (as noted above). The justification for the reduction of the SOI was that it recognized existing conditions and provided a technical correction for previous annexations.²⁰

LARPD's SOI is generally coterminous with its boundaries with the exception of an area that extends outside of LARPD's bounds to include territory in the northeast to the county lines.

SOI Options

Three options were identified with respect to LARPD's SOI.

Option #1 – SOI reduction to exclude area outside of LARPD's bounds and areas within the City of Pleasanton

As the SOI presently exists, it extends outside of LARPD's bounds in the northeast to include a pocket of land in the northeast corner of Alameda County. The land use in the northeast corner is predominately farmland with very low population density, and a state recreation area. This area has been continuously included in LARPD's SOI, and the District has not yet taken action to annex or indicated interest in annexing the area over the last 25 years. Given the lack of interest indicated by LARPD and the current land use in the area, the Commission may wish to consider excluding this area from the District's SOI.

In addition, there are two areas within the City of Pleasanton's bounds, where similar park and recreation services are provided. When these areas were annexed by the City in the 1980s, they were not subsequently detached from LARPD. Residents in these areas

²⁰ Alameda Local Agency Formation Commission Resolution No. 2006-49

continue to pay an assessment into LARPD and pay property taxes to the City for park and recreation services. Should the Commission wish to define a single park and recreation provider for the area, reducing LARPD's SOI to exclude territory within Pleasanton would be appropriate.

Option #2 – Retain existing SOI

Should the Commission wish to continue to reflect the existing service boundary, then it should consider maintaining the current SOI, which is generally coterminous with LARPD's boundaries.

Option #3 – SOI reduction so that 70 percent of LARPD's territory lies within the City of Livermore's bounds

The Commission may wish to consider reducing LARPD's SOI so that 70 percent of the District is within the City of Livermore as an indicator that a reorganization to enable it to become a subsidiary district of the City should be pursued. Since the majority of the parks and facilities owned and/or operated by LARPD are within the City of Livermore, this SOI reduction may reflect the service area more accurately.

Recommended Sphere of Influence Boundary

With respect to Option 3 above, LAFCo notes that both the City of Livermore and LARPD have studied the potential financial gains of LARPD becoming a subsidiary district of the City. In particular, both agencies focused on the impact of such a reorganization on the Educational Revenue Augmentation Fund (ERAF) shift. Ultimately, both agencies concluded that there would be no change in the ERAF shift; however, the City and the District noted that the State Controller's Office never responded to multiple inquiries. LARPD noted a concern that parks and recreation services and facilities might deteriorate under city control as property tax dollars, previously dedicated to the special recreation and park district, would become general fund dollars available to the City which could be used for other services such as police, fire, and public works. Therefore, both LARPD and Livermore report that there is no interest in pursuing such a reorganization at this time. For these reasons, it is not recommended at this time that the SOI be altered to indicate anticipation of such a reorganization.

The territory in the northeast corner of the County, which is presently excluded from LARPD but within its SOI, is predominately farmland with very low population density, as previously mentioned. This area is not in close proximity to the parks and facilities that LARPD owns and/or operates; therefore there is uncertainty as to whether the few residents in the northeast area make use of services from LARPD. A reduction of LARPD's SOI to exclude this area would not result in a lack of park and recreation services, as EBRPD serves Alameda County in its entirety.

Given that this area has been continuously included in LARPD's SOI, and the District has not yet taken action to annex or indicated interest in annexing the area in the short term, it is recommended that the Commission reduce the SOI to be coterminous with LARPD's boundary in that area.

Additionally, given LAFCo's intent to promote orderly growth and provision of services, it is recommended that a single provider of park and recreation services be identified for the two areas within the City of Pleasanton that overlap with LARPD's bounds.

As Pleasanton would likely be the identified provider of park and recreation services within its future bounds, it is recommended that LAFCo also consider aligning LARPD's SOI with that of the City of Livermore in the territory that lies between the two cities during the next SOI update.

Proposed Sphere of Influence Determinations

Nature, location, extent, functions, and classes of services provided

- ❖ LARPD maintains and operates community, neighborhood, and open space parks and trails. LARPD provides maintenance of community centers and historic buildings, park areas, trees, trails, landscaping, buildings, sports fields, and other structures at its park sites and facilities. LARPD provides recreational programs at its facilities, private sector venues and joint-use school facilities. Activities provided by LARPD include, pre-school, youth, adult, and senior activities such as educational and art classes, child day care, sports leagues and training, aquatics classes, golf lessons, teen programs, and nature programs.
- ❖ LARPD provides contract services to and receives contract services from other agencies. LARPD manages parks and historic buildings for the City of Livermore as well as the Veterans Building for the County of Alameda. The City of Livermore has provided planning, engineering, technical and related services throughout LARPD since 2004. Since 2007, Lawrence Livermore National Laboratories have used the Robert Livermore Community Center to provide emergency services. Alameda County Resource Conservation District provides mitigation project management for Sycamore Grove Park and has done so since January 2011.
- ❖ LARPD's boundary area includes the City of Livermore and most of the unincorporated area east, southeast, and north of Livermore, plus a few smaller unincorporated areas west of Livermore and east of Pleasanton. The District's bounds include a small area within the City of Pleasanton.

Present and planned land uses, including agricultural and open-space lands

- ❖ Within the City of Livermore, the predominant existing land use is residential. Approximately half (49 percent) of land within Livermore city limits is designated for residential uses. The second major category of existing land uses within Livermore are agriculture, parks, and open space (19 percent) followed by industrial (13 percent) and retail and office (eight percent) uses.
- ❖ Outside city boundaries, in unincorporated areas of Alameda County, within LARPD's jurisdiction, land is generally designated as large parcel agriculture. This designation permits only agricultural uses and recreation or open space uses.

Present and probable need for public facilities and services

- ❖ Results of the community needs assessment survey, the number of parks and facilities and the breadth of activities and services offered suggest that there is existing demand for parks and services from LARPD residents.
- ❖ Based on current demand and anticipated population growth, it is concluded there will be future demand for LARPD parks, facilities and services.

Present capacity of public facilities and adequacy of public services that the agency provides or is authorized to provide

- ❖ LARPD owns and/or maintains 1,777 acres of parks, facilities and open spaces equaling over 20 acres per 1,000 residents. This is generally sufficient based on service guidelines, although additional facilities are needed to meet specific park-type standards.
- ❖ Based on recreation center hours per week, number and scope of facilities and the breadth of recreation services offered, services offered by LARPD appear to be adequate. However, as noted, LARPD, the City of Livermore and the County of Alameda should consider measures in order to meet acreage per person standards, particularly as the population continues to grow.
- ❖ It is recommended that LARPD update its master plan to reflect the changes that have taken place in the District. It is also recommended that LARPD conduct another community needs assessment survey to identify current needs as perceived by the community.

Existence of any social or economic communities of interest

- ❖ The residents of the City of Livermore, which is considered the primary community of interest, primarily use the parks and facilities owned and/or operated by LARPD. The residents of the area pay taxes for the operation of the parks and facilities by LARPD and thus have an interest in the District's functions and activities.